

Vulcan Wood Decking & WPC Decking





WPC or wood plastic composite decking had been proclaimed as the answer to problems with wood decking. It rose in popularity during the last few years as a solution to the challenges natural timber offered in terms of maintenance in outdoor exposed applications.

Moving on to current times, what was being proclaimed as the answer has now thrown similar challenges. Lowering quality standards, issues with installations, concerns on sustainability have led architects, homeowners to look again for alternative deckings.



A WPC decking gone wrong!

The rise of WPC

One of the main reasons why WPC decking started gaining ground was the issue of maintenance with natural unmodified wood when it was installed in fully exposed applications such as decking, cladding etc. It was more so in decking as sunlight falls on a much steeper angle on a horizontal surface such as decking, leading to fading and surface cracking. During those years, the modern real wood technologies such as Vulcan modified timber had not arrived yet hence WPC was considered an answer.

One thing is to be noted though - Consumers and Architects always wanted real wood products and even in the alternatives they sought, they wanted them to look like real wood. In fact one of the key selling points most producers and marketers of synthetic flooring and decking materials made of plastic use is that their material copies the look of real wood closely. This shows the affinity we have for natural timber or wood.

Basic issues with WPC

Appearance

While all products have their pros and cons, the biggest challenge with WPC is the fake wood appearance. One look at real wood decking and WPC decking make this point very clear. Most consumers do not like the idea of so much plastic on their feet. Having said that, it is a subjective decision based on individual choice.

Dents and Scratches

Composite decking scratches and dents rather easily. Moving outdoor furniture, kids playing, dropping objects, dog nails etc are part of life in any active home. This may lead to irreversible damage in a WPC decking board. In a real wood decking board such as Vulcan, it could always be sanded and refinished. Another thing to know is that WPC deckings have an outer covering which is called the protective cap. If this is penetrated with a sharp object, the exposed core of the decking can cause serious issues.

Temperature

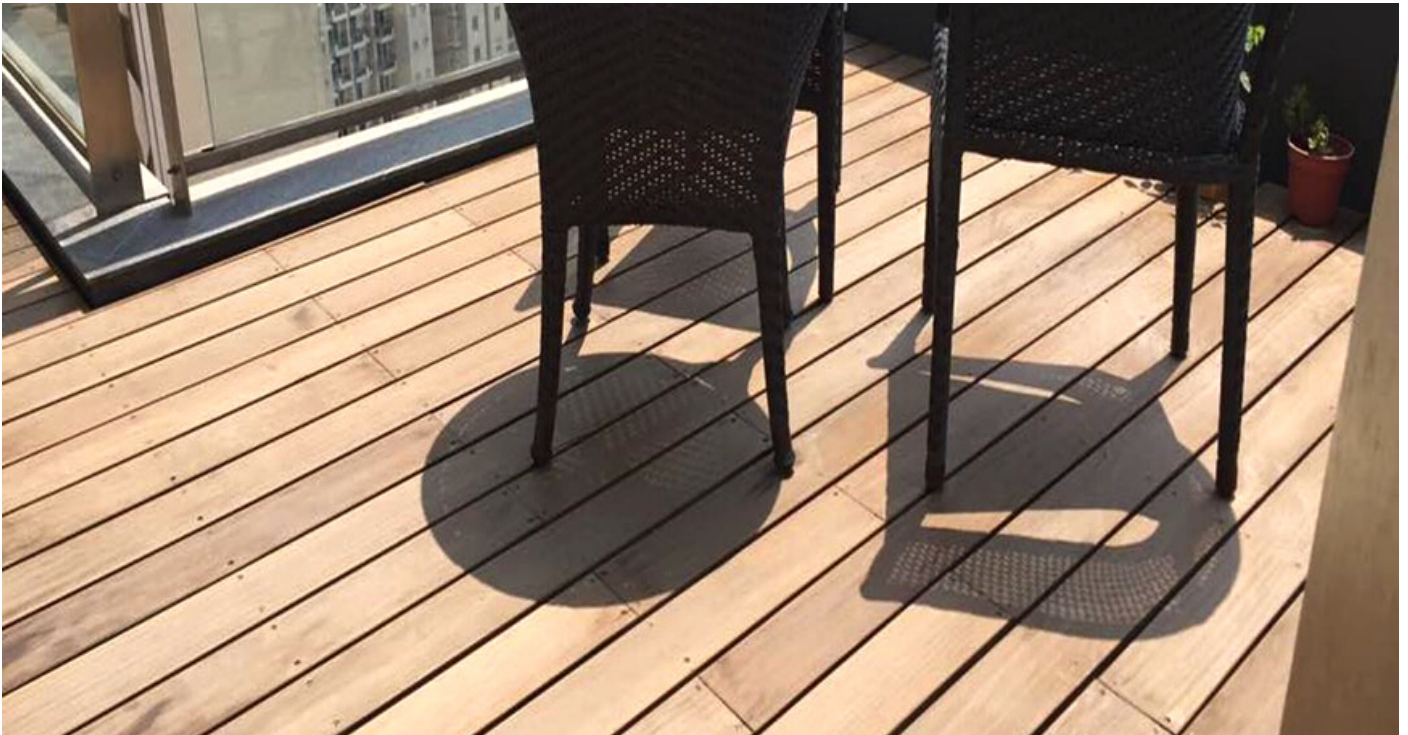
Talking about the Indian climate, for most parts of the year and in most geographies within our country, you can imagine the decking to be exposed to our scorching sun. WPC tends to get rather very hot under the feet. Dark colours tend to get much hotter as compared to lighter ones.

Strength

Another point to note is the strength part. Even though it is very heavy, you would find that it is actually weaker than modified wood. Gauging its strength only by weight and not by actual performance may lead to wrong conclusions.

Environment

Sustainability being a key issue nowadays, WPC has been proclaimed as being “Eco friendly”. Let us look at how we could correctly gauge the impact of a product on our planet. In order to do so correctly, we will have to look at the life cycle, from manufacturing to transportation to end of life disposal. WPC has a significant energy consumption during this entire life cycle. Also recycling plastic is not so simple and cost-effective as it is shown to be.



Vulcan modified wood decking



As Research evolved in the area of real wood, newer solutions came into existence. One of the best solutions to the problems of natural timber is the Vulcan decking. Made out of plantation timber (from forests specially grown for the purpose of commercial use without harming natural forests) thus sustainable, Vulcan decking is also very stable (taking care of the warping concerns with natural non modified timbers), can be left uncoated/unfinished even in the Indian sun or can be coated to the desired colour using proprietary protector oils and other coatings to provide a nice finish and long term protection. One of the prime concerns people have is insect attacks. Vulcan timber has been demonstrated to be very resistant to termites and fungal decay due to the specific treatments involved.

In terms of day to day maintenance, no material is 100% maintenance-free. Vulcan decking requires simple cleaning with water and at times with household gentle detergents. WPC is similar in this instance in that it also needs the above treatment however with one major difference. As shared above, it can not be sanded and restained like Vulcan real wood in the event of scratches and staining.

Natural wood beauty

Real timber has a warm, inviting and natural appeal thus it is ideal for creating outdoor relaxation and entertainment spaces. When exposed to sun, it turns to a beautiful silver-grey colour which can be refinished or stained to any colour at any time.





Vulcan decking at a terrace in a Delhi home

There is nothing more beautiful than a natural wood deck. Wood has a warm ambience to it and makes for a very inviting entertainment or relaxation space. Vulcan wood decks also age to a beautiful, silver patina over time. In order to make this grey, aged appearance even and uniform, a new coating has been specifically developed. This is a very long-lasting finish and provides additional protection to the wood.

Conclusion

How one chooses to solve the problems in natural timber decks is an individual choice and preference. One thing is clear though - Vulcan wood decking can now handle all of the traditional issues with natural timber as well as WPC decking boards as discussed above but with one clear advantage. It is still 100% real wood! All in all, Vulcan wood outperforms composite decking in nearly all categories.

Homeowners and Architects looking for a decking solution can opt for Vulcan decking over natural timber or WPC decks. Not only Vulcan wood is 100% natural wood, but it is also very attractive and combined with easy maintenance and the ability to be renewed whenever desired to a new colour, it is the ideal choice for modern homes.



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