

AIRPORT HILLS

TESTIMONIES

IN JULY 2004, AFTER RETURNING HOME TO GHANA IN 2003, I MADE THE DECISION TO PURCHASE TWO PLOTS OF LAND FROM FINALI LIMITED. A FRIEND HAD SHOWN ME AROUND AIRPORT HILLS. AT THAT POINT, I HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR LAND IN ACCRA FOR ALMOST A YEAR AND WAS INCREASINGLY DISILLUSIONED BY THE WHOLE PROCESS OF FINDING LAND; SPEAKING TO REPRESENTATIVES WHO TURNED OUT TO BE ANYTHING BUT; SUDDEN AND WILD PRICE HIKEs AND FAILED PROMISES. I LIKED THE DEVELOPMENT, WAS PARTICULARLY EXCITED ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD MY OWN HOME AND WAS PLEASANTLY SURPRISED BY THE EASE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH FINALI. IN LESS THAN A MONTH, I HAD PAID MY DEPOSIT, RECEIVED MY INDENTURES AND THE PROCESS COULDN'T HAVE BEEN SMOOTHER.

BY OCTOBER THE FOLLOWING YEAR, I HAD PAID FOR THE LAND IN FULL, DEVELOPED MY DESIGNS AND, AS AN ARCHITECT WITH A PARTICULAR INTEREST IN SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE, WAS DELIGHTED TO FIND THE DEVELOPERS, KOFI AND ESI GBEDEMA, FULLY SUPPORTIVE AND ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT MY DECISION TO BUILD WITH ADOBE MUD BLOCKS. THE ENTIRE AIRPORT HILLS DEVELOPMENT IS BEAUTIFULLY APPOINTED WITH STRONG BREEZES COMING OFF THE COAST. TOGETHER WITH THE ENGINEERS, WE DID A SERIES OF WIND TESTS AND FOUND THAT THE LOCATION OF THE SITE WAS PERFECT FOR BOTH SOLAR AND WIND-TURBINE POWER. WE BEGAN CONSTRUCTION IN DECEMBER 2005 ON THE GUEST HOUSE, IN WHICH I NOW LIVE—A MODERNIST MUD-HOUSE WITH A FANTASTIC VIEW. I'VE BEEN IN THE HOUSE FOR ALMOST A YEAR AND A HALF AND COULDN'T BE HAPPIER ABOUT THE AIRPORT HILLS DEVELOPMENT. IT IS COOL, BREEZY, QUIET (NO HAWKERS, KIOSKS OR CHURCHES!), NEIGHBOURLY, AND SECURE. FRIENDLY SECURITY GUARDS AND A GENUINE NEIGHBOURHOOD RESPECT FOR THE PEACE AND QUIET OF OTHERS HAS TURNED THIS SMALL PART OF ACCRA INTO A LITTLE, STILL RELATIVELY UNKNOWN GEM.

IN THE EARLY EVENING AFTER A WEEKEND BBQ, FRIENDS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO COMMENT, WHILST SITTING ON MY VERANDA AND LOOKING OUT ACROSS THE LIGHTS OF THE NEIGHBOURING ESTATES, THAT THIS IS LIKE A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN—AN ALL TOO RARE COMMENT IN ACCRA'S DUSTY, NOISY CHAOS. I CAN'T RECOMMEND IT MORE HIGHLY

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