

TOP-STRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION TO CONTINUE AT PULLMAN ACCRA AIRPORT CITY IN EARLY 2021



While construction on the Pullman Accra Airport City Hotel & Serviced Apartments in Accra has been halted due to the Ghanaian general election on 7 December, the entire development is ready for top structure construction. The rooms and apartments will form part of the next set of construction activities, which will continue early in 2021, reports Project Director **Henning Rasmuss** from Paragon Architects of Johannesburg.



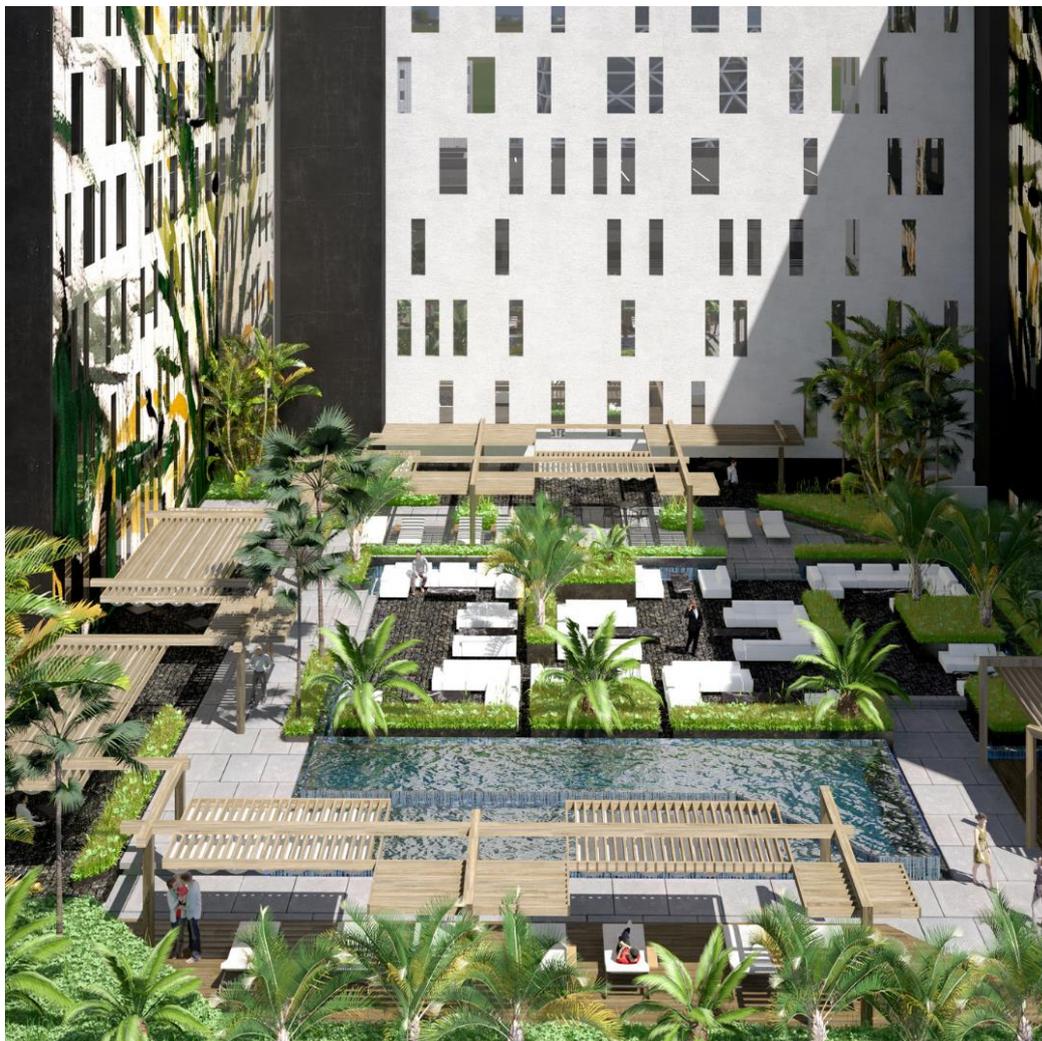
The project, the largest designed by Paragon Architects and under construction at present, has been underway since January 2019. “Pullman Accra Airport City is by far our most complex and advanced hotel project to date,” reveals Rasmuss. Earthworks, excavations, foundations and basements were completed first, with the ground, mezzanine and podium floors topping out in mid-2020.

While the procurement model was Design Build, the actual construction was phased into an Early Works Contract (EWC) and a main Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contract. The EWC saw the core and shell built up to the podium level, while the EPC will take the project through to completion and commissioning.



The 13-storey above-ground structure consists of a 219-key business hotel and 149 units of branded serviced apartments, with basement parking for 211 vehicles. The hotel includes an elaborate and generous banquet hall for conferencing and events. The lifestyle offering is centred on an open garden terrace with façades that integrate artworks by local and international artists, mainly Ghanaian, which is still being developed.

The design brief from client Inter-Afrique Properties, led by Chairperson **Dr. Kwame Nyantekyi-Owusu**, was for a strong sculptural form and colour contrasts and a rooftop entertainment area with an infinity pool. “The vision of an after-hours, urban, upmarket lifestyle deck was of paramount importance from the outset,” notes Rasmuss. The end result will be a superior hospitality asset that responds to both current and future demands of the market in Accra. Inter-Afrique Properties also drove the interior design vision in conjunction with **Shiralee Darley** and the team from DIAD in order to absorb and implement the brand standards for the hotel and serviced apartments. The initial brief was for a large single-phase mixed-use hotel and apartments building along with a small shopping galleria over two levels.



This scheme was to be developed on an adjacent site at Airport City in Accra. However, in response to market dynamics, the project size and product mix changed over time. The current brief and scope were bedded down in 2017, in close collaboration with Accor as operator, following its appointment and the selection of the Pullman brand in 2014.

Joining the team as multi-disciplinary engineer in 2015, Arup worked with the Accor technical assistance team and Paragon Architects to rationalise the structure around the specific Pullman room sizing over an intensive four-month period in early 2018. The main challenge from a

technical viewpoint has been the roads system in Airport City. In addition, the ground conditions in Accra required seismic risk to be taken into account, adding to the structural complexity.

Paragon Architects collaborated with **Robert Hayford** and **Kweku Hayford** from rhayCAD Architects, its partner firm in Ghana since 2014, as part of the client's requirement for local participation. Diagonal Projects, as project manager under **Moses Honu**, ensured that the Ghanaian and South African working cultures meshed seamlessly.

Crane Construction Consultants steered the project through the changing cost implications of the construction sector over the years with an even hand. The main contractor is MAN Enterprise, a Lebanon-based international contracting company with extensive hotel experience in West Africa, including Ghana.

The technical side of the project has been ably driven by engineer **Ernest Larmie** and supported by **Emmanuel Yartey**, a project analyst at Inter-Afrique Properties, both key client representatives. IBC Equity Partners, led by **Anthony Siaw**, oversaw the negotiation of the EPC contract and raising the capital for this landmark US\$120 million project.