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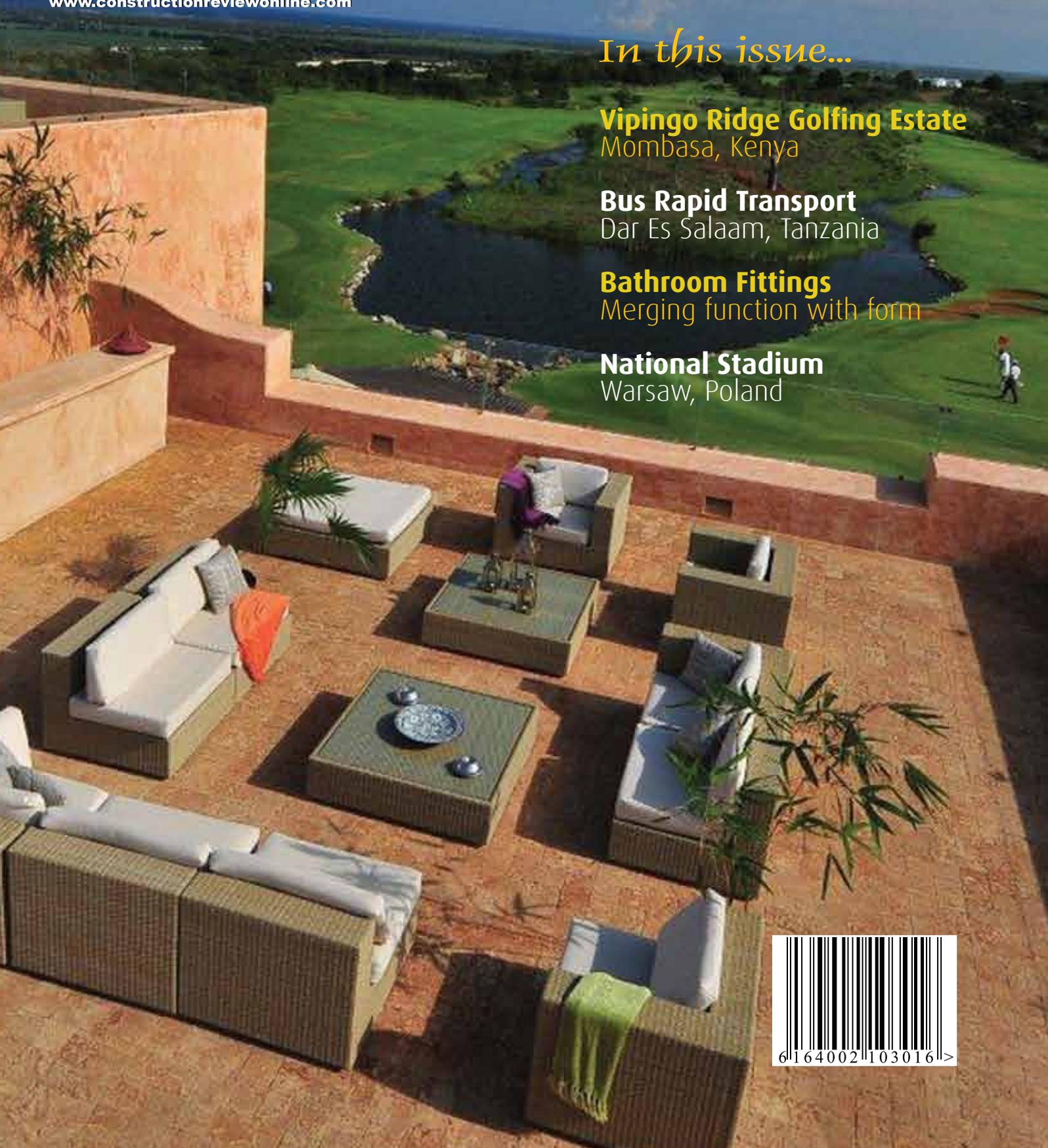
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# Vipingo Ridge

## The Making of a World Class Golfing and Residential Development

*Luxury living on private residential estates is becoming increasingly popular in East Africa and golf courses often form part of the facilities available to residents living on private estates. One of the most successful and fastest growing developments in East Africa is Vipingo Ridge, located 35km North of Mombasa in Kilifi County.*

### By Robert Ward

The Vipingo Ridge development has quite literally risen out of nothing but sisal and overgrown bush. The developers of the project felt there was a need for a world class residential and golfing estate on Kenya's North coast. Initially the search was focused on beachfront land on the North Coast.

When they visited the Vipingo area in 2004, they were initially looking at land in the area of Vipingo Beach. The land here was extremely flat and it

would have been difficult to create an interesting golf course and residential development.

When they enquired on other land in the area, a person showing them around quite literally pointed to the Ridge in the distance and informed them: "That Ridge is for sale".

After driving up through the old sisal plants that used to occupy the Ridge as part of the REA Vipingo sisal estate, the developers arrived at the top of the Ridge and were greeted by stunning

views out towards the Indian Ocean. To the west were equally impressive views of the African bush. From that moment, the seeds for Vipingo Ridge were planted and the developers made the decision to purchase the 2500 acres that make up Vipingo Ridge.

### Stunning views

Despite the natural beauty of the Ridge, it was always going to be a huge challenge to turn it from an overgrown sisal estate into functioning





Golf course and residential estate. There were no roads, no power and the only water available was from a large dam located to the west on the inland side of the development. This large dam was one of the unique features of the land that made it very suitable for a golf course. Many landowners with dreams of developing golf estates have found that the lack of water has made it impossible. A golf course can use up to 2,000,000 litres per day during the dry season.

The developers carefully designed the golf course using experienced golf architect David Jones, and developed a master plan for roads and plots.

Once this was complete, a team lead by experienced Golf course builder, Saleem Haji, mobilized on site in 2006 to start the arduous task of building a golf course and what would essentially be a small town. Huge amounts of vegetation had to be cleared to start building roads which were surfaced using cabro blocks.

Grass nurseries were established to start growing grass for the golf course. The grass stocks started out as an area of 10m<sup>2</sup> which had to be hand planted and then propagated to create enough grass to cover an area of nearly 400,000 m<sup>2</sup>. It was decided that the first of the two golf courses to be built at Vipingo Ridge would be given pride of place on the top of the ridge so that golfers could enjoy fantastic views out to sea and inland while playing. The golf course would start and end at one of the highest points of the Ridge – a height of 130m above sea level.

The hill leading up to this high point was considered quite steep for the golfers completing their round so over 250,000 cbm of soil was moved and shaped to create a gentler climb to the clubhouse.

To create the shapes and mounds that make a golf course interesting and exciting to play, a professional golf course shaper was employed

from America to help build the golf course. A further 200,000 cbm of soil was moved to create the rest of the golf course. The end result is the Baobab Golf course which is now open for golfers to enjoy and is considered one of the finest golf courses in Africa.

#### Infrastructure

While construction of the golf course was ongoing, the infrastructure construction team were also busy building the cabro roads and a drainage system to ensure that during heavy rains both houses and roads would not be damaged. It was also essential that as much rainwater as possible was collected and recycled back into the main dams and water features on the golf course to use for the golf course irrigation.

All the cabro roads have a single camber and single drain to collect water. Using a system of single camber and drains was an extremely efficient and cost effective way of building.



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**We are proud to be associated with Vipingo Ridge**

**PROJECT TEAM**

**CEO**

Robert Ward

**Golf Architect**

David Jones

**Golf Architects**

Urko Sanchez/Pankaj Pandaya

**Golf Course construction**

Vipingo Ridge Ltd/Rainbow Projects

**Civil Engineers**

Vipingo Ridge Ltd/Rainbow Projects

**Electrical works**

Powertechnics/Mehta electrical.

**Water reticulation**

Vipingo Ridge Ltd

**Main VR Buildings contractor**

Seema Builders

**Structural Engineers**

Manor Consultants

**Security**

Vipingo Ridge Ltd/Saladin

**Interior design**

Lyn Angell/Reynard Africa

**Landscaping**

Vipingo Ridge Ltd

Junglescaper – Bruce Hobson

The development now has over 13 km of paved roads within the estate and over 12km of drainage to ensure as much rain water as possible is collected. A 22km long, 3m high wall was also constructed around the estate. A water reticulation system was designed to supply the 256 plots in phase one with a reliable water supply. Boreholes were also established to supply most of the domestic water.

**Power Station**

Vipingo Ridge also owns a unique, state-of-the-art power system built with modern equipment and technology. The power system comprises 5MVA 132/11KV Power station and a reticulation system consisting of eight 11/0.433 KV substation. Vipingo Ridge enjoys a stable and continuous power supply by having the power station fed from the grid 132KV transmission line from Rabai to Kilifi.

From the main power station, power is transmitted to the 11/0.433KV distribution substation via an 11KV underground network. The design of the 11kv network is of ring topology to ensure continuity of supply and minimize outages during

maintenance. The 11/0.433 KV substations are strategically positioned in the entire property to serve all home owners and Vipingo Ridge utilities.

The purpose of the 11/0.433KV substations is to step down power from transmission to distribution voltage levels of 415 and 240v respectively.

These stations feed the special outdoor feeder pillar distribution boards which are designed to meet the coastal climatic conditions, technical specifications and aesthetic standards of an international golf estate. The feeder pillars provide distribution point to the various individual clients via consumer stubs located adjacent to each individual development or plot.

There is no doubt that the bravery and vision of the developers and owners of Vipingo Ridge has resulted in a truly world class facility that many people felt was too ambitious. The dream is now a reality and continues to go from strength to strength. Phase two of the development is expected to be launched in 2013. Accommodation is now also available on Vipingo Ridge.

