

A PRESENTATION OF LOW-TROP ARCHITECTURE OF YOLA

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Low Trop Buildings in Yola, Adamawa State Capital

The Low Trop is a name denoted for a style of architecture for the masses, it is the architecture of the masses or low income earners, the architecture of draughtsmen reminiscent of low income estates in Europe.

In Yola, low trop architecture is very common and found in all parts of the state in areas like Jambutu, Damilu, Massacare , Nassarawo Demsawo



Low trop architectural designs are also found in government estates like Shagari , Karewa, Bekaji and State low cost estates and buildings found in areas like Jambutu , Damilu Luggere , Nassarawo , Demsawo in Yola. The buildings have been built with local labour, designs and sometimes with locally found building materials.



MATERIALS

The basic materials used are laterite, cement, wood, block, thatch, cornstalk, mild steel, zinc, stones etc

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LOW TROP BUILDINGS IN YOLA

These buildings come in different shapes but mostly in rectangular and polygonal shapes having Gable, Lean-to, and Hipped roofs. In the Face me I face you houses they are

generally characterised by long verandas running across the whole frontage of the building used for services and kitchen areas.

WALLS AND FLOORS

The walls of the low top houses in Yola are poorly constructed. In the sense that they could be unplastered, plastered and unpainted, or painted poorly using locally made paints



The walls are not straight and floors are not level as no plum was used during construction, rather the builders depend on their eyes and hands. The result is that most houses are misshapen and asymmetrical. The mixing ratio for the blocks and plasters contains too much sand in a bit to reduce cost cement and the result is that most houses start falling apart within months of construction. The heights of the walls are

mostly not up to the standard for residential buildings, this is because the landlords minimise expenditure when erecting these kinds of houses. The heights are mostly less than 3000mm and some of the rooms have no ceilings.

DOORS

The doors used in these types of houses are of soft wood , mild steel, zinc with wood , untreated wood doors .These are crudely cut ,shaped and fixed and being of a height of less than 2100mm making people squat before entering into these buildings



TOILETS AND BATHROOMS

They have general bathrooms and toilets which are sometimes just *zana* mat is used to surround a small platform of a floor having a hole leading to a pit serving both as a latrine and a drainage or when built are dark due poor lighting , stuffy due to lack of good ventilation ,and very despicable from their poor maintenance.

ORNAMENTS

In the low trop architecture of Yola, there is poor or no ornaments in the buildings. This is because the people of Yola are not interested in the use of ornaments or have insufficient resources for extra beautification of their buildings.



SIZE

The sizes of the building are generally small with internal dimensions of the rooms ranging from 3200mm X 3200mm or less. The outward size of the house is small.

ORIENTATION OF THE BUILDINGS

A building whose site has been studied bring out the best of the site . Climatology , Wind direction ,solar radiation Direction of driving rain , Nature of soil , it's bearing capacity should all be considered before a building is erected.



These factors are not considered mainly because of the lack of education of the local builders, lack of consideration of the buildings structural stability and congruence of the building has to its users.

In the students' village in Sangere and Sabon-Gari, classic examples of poor workmanship which is to be expected from cheap local labour can be seen. Basically all the houses regardless of material used in building them have the traditional architectural pattern of the villagers since most landlords have no approved design or plan, but leave that to the ideas of the local builders. Such builders experience is limited to the type of houses they grew-up in, so they end up using modern materials like zinc, cement and concrete to build structures that are not different from mud houses.



These buildings are characterised by lean-to roofs and no opening other than the doors and the single window in the front of the building beside the door. In the village such a design is to ensure security, but the poor ventilation and lighting results in serious health problem for the inhabitants.

The buildings which have different plans from the traditional or village style are not much better. Walls are not straight and

floors are not levelled as no plumb was used during construction, rather the builders depend on proportion with their eyes.

Since the designers and builders of such houses have security as their primary concern no thought is given to comfort. Doors and windows are made of mild steel or zinc, which retain heat during the dry and rainy seasons rising the overall temperature inside the room to unbearable level.



The direction of wind and path of sun are not considered in the orientation of the buildings so the inhabitants are at the mercy of the elements. Obviously, the low level of education or enlightenment of the builders has made them to construct vaults and not houses and since students are desperate for accommodation and the landlords will at no time whatsoever live in these structures, the situation is allowed to continue.

