

# Centres adapt to local environment

GLOBAL shopping centre architect HOK is showcasing two projects at MAPIC that highlight the need for shopping-centre projects to adapt to their immediate environment if they are to be both commercially viable and sustainable.

At The Exchange in Ghana's capital Accra, Ghana-based developer and fund manager Actis is on site with the country's first true mixed-use project, which incorporates a four-star Radisson Blu hotel, offices and residential alongside 10,500 sq m of retail.

HOK vice-president Vance Thompson said the key to developing in emerging markets like Ghana is to be pragmatic. "It's important not to be too aspirational — we've been conscious of the construction capabilities there and the project relies on locally sourced materials," Thompson said.

At the other end of the scale is Marina Mall in Doha, Qatar, which will provide 110,000 sq m of retail inside the pebble-like structure. "We worked hard to bring new technology to enable the project, going beyond the current limits of BIM (building information modeling)," Thompson explained. The structure brings managed amounts of natural light down into the mall where flowing water creates a calming ambience. "Sunlight is the enemy there so the mall cuts through the structure like a crevice through a mountainside," Thompson said.

Sunlight and water are a theme at HOK's Marina Mall in Doha

