



City	Área Metropolitana de Asturias
Location	
Population	850.000 inhab
Study site	11,6 ha
Site of project	2,5 ha

TOPIC

Thirty abandoned collieries, covering approximately 390 ha, lie scattered down the valleys at the Coal Mining Basin in the Asturias Metropolitan Area (AMA). On October 2005, an agreement was signed between the National Mining Company HUNOSA -owner of the land- and the Regional Government, aimed at recycling and redeveloping these sites into employment, affordable housing and community facilities areas. The main purpose is to demonstrate one of the key sustainability principles: the feasibility of redeveloping previously-used land as an alternative to greenfield development. To generate employment and residential opportunities for local residents at the Coal Mining Basin (120.000 inhab.) is a key factor to territorial balance at the AMA. In the main, the sites are located in or adjacent to urban areas, and include elements of the industrial heritage (pits, winding engine and compressor houses, pithead baths) The proposed site should not be regarded only as a local problem, but also as an opportunity to generate ideas and criteria for the remaining 29 sites.

TERRITORIAL SCALE : CONURBATION

The Asturias Metropolitan Area (AMA) is a polycentric urban system structured by three major cities and a number of minor urban areas ranging from 50.000 to 5.000 inhabitants. All these settlement areas are located within a radius of 30 Km and 30 minutes-journey by railway and motorway. The importance of the AMA at the regional level lies in the fact that it holds 85% of the region's population. Accordingly, the Regional Government's aim is to improve sustainability promoting metropolitan spatial planning, a Public Transport System and the Green Areas Network.





URBAN SCALE : STUDY SITE

The study area is a peri-urban fringe with an average width of 200 meters, 800 meters long, located in between two urban areas, Moreda (pop. 5.100) and Caborana (pop. 1.600), at the Aller Council. A linear settlement pattern is observed along the narrow valley carved by the river Aller and a recently-built major road linking the AMA with a ski resort up at the headspring. The questions coming up here are those common to the many former fertile floodplains put under development during the economic boom in the sixties at the Coal Mining Basin: lack of urban planning, spatial chaos, juxtaposition of uses (employment, social housing schemes, single-family homes, community facilities) accessibility problems, industrial wasteland, urban voids... Consequently, the challenge is to generate tools and criteria to introduce some kind of order, urban form, limits, and identity for these chaotic urban landscapes.

PROXIMITY SCALE : SITE OF PROJECT

The site is a working colliery to be closed in the short term, according to the HUNOSA's plans. Its boundaries are: the highway and the river, on the North; a local road linking Moreda and the village of Boo, on the South; a residential block with newly-built public housing on the East; and the local Cemetery and Funeral Home on the West. The colliery comprises a number of buildings, but only two of them are listed as being of architectural significance: the shaft head frame and the winding engine house. The site is designated by the Aller Council Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as an Employment Area. Besides, according to the UDP, a 40-meter-wide fringe all around the Cemetery should be kept free of construction. However, a more complex program is envisaged both by HUNOSA and the Principality of Asturias, including affordable housing and community facilities.





