

E¹⁸ SANTA POLA (ES) SCALE

VARADERO / CANTERA L/S

How to recycle the space that has lost its use ?

LOCATION: Ensanche de Levante/Santa Pola. Geographical coordinates: Lat.(Y): 38°11'35 "N; Long.(X): 0°32'10 "W

TEAM COMPOSITION: Architect mandatory

POPULATION: 37,816 inhabitants (census)

REFLECTION SITE: 5,831 ha

PROJECT SITE: 24,5 ha

SITE PROPOSED BY: Valencia Regional Government + Santa Pola City Council

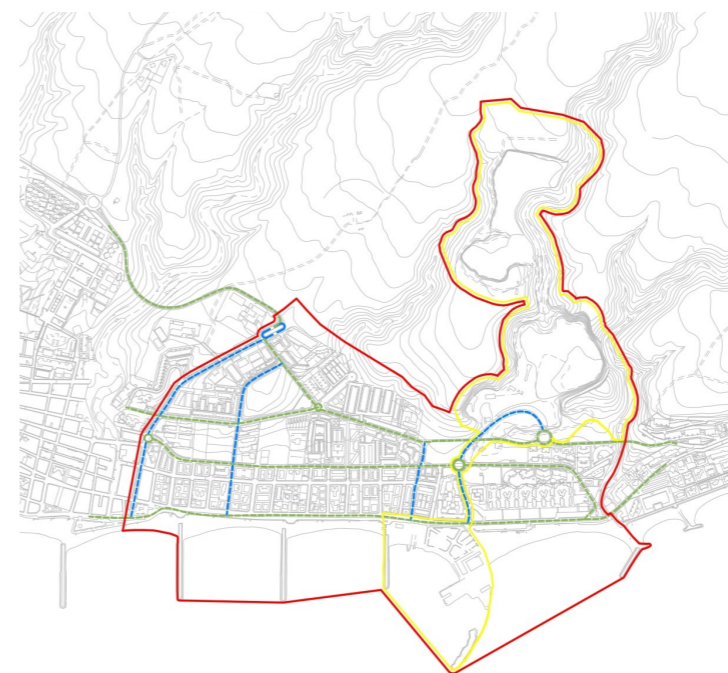
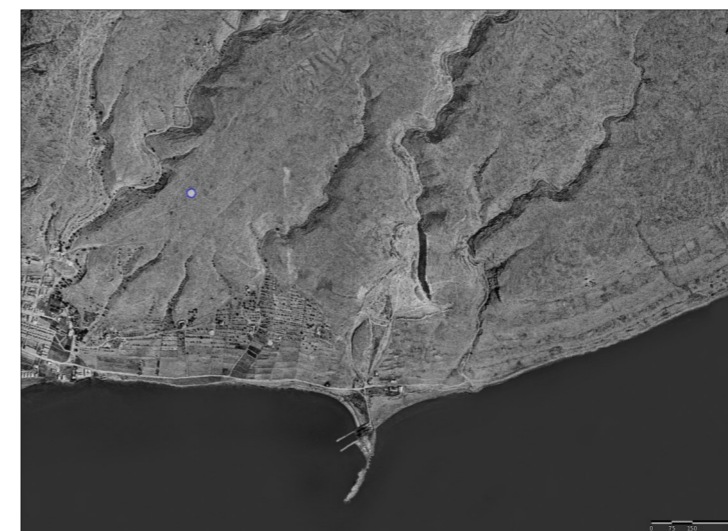
ACTORS INVOLVED: State, Regional and Local administrations + private

OWNERS OF THE SITE:

Santa Pola Municipality, State administration (DPMT).

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION:

Special Plan Project. Urbanisation Project and Health and Safety Study. Works management of the Urbanisation Project and the Health and Safety Study. For the follow-up and implementation of the project, it is necessary for practical purposes to have two teams that cooperate simultaneously: the international winner team and a local (municipal) team, also with the capacity to make proposals.



SITE / CONTEXT

Santa Pola is a tourist municipality on the southeast coast of Spain, located between two centres of activity: Alicante, the capital of the province, and Elche, the second city in terms of population, and immediately next to the international airport. The Alicante-Elche metropolitan area, where the Alicante-Elche-Santa Pola triangle is located, comprises 20 municipalities, with 900,000 inhabitants (2023). It has experienced strong urban expansion and population growth in recent decades.

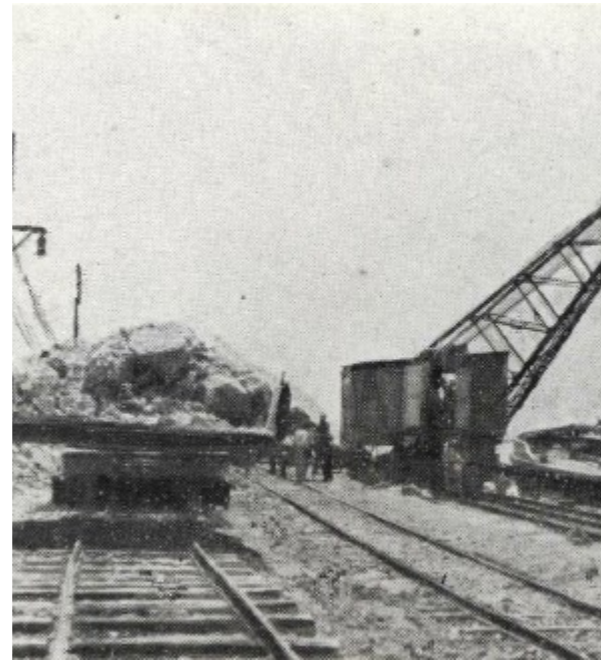
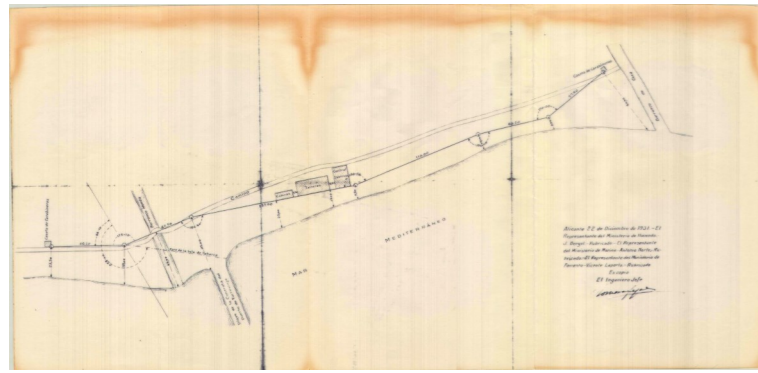
Santa Pola has a long coastline. It was and still is a fishing village, but tourism is now its main source of income. The floating population increases fivefold in summer. The site is located in the privileged area of the municipality; the 'Ensanche de Levante': an urban development parallel to the coast, with soils of different classification and use.

The project area has its historical origin (1923): in the quarry from which the material for the breakwater of the dyke of the port of Torrevejeja, a neighbouring town, was extracted. Specifically, in the breakwater of the stone jetty and in the sloping plane that connected the quarry and the jetty by means of a railway track. When the Torrevejeja project was completed, the quarry breakwater, which was an auxiliary and provisional work, was not removed.

After the Civil War (1946), two dry docks and shipyards were built in the shelter of the breakwater, popularly known as the engineers' breakwater, to serve the town's important fishing fleet (still the largest in the Spanish Mediterranean today).

The project site therefore comprises:

- 1.- The quarry, nowadays, in disuse, which has left large slopes and cuttings.
- 2.- On the old sloping ground: some blocks of urban land and housing, all of them crossed by infrastructures at different levels.
- 3.- And, in the first line, the Varadero beach, which housed the dry dock and the warehouses of the two shipyards that have now been demolished.



Is it possible to be reborn by forging an alliance between inhabited environments and natural elements?



QUESTIONS TO COMPETITORS

This space, which has become an urban void, needs to be regenerated. But would it be possible to use this need as a driving force for regeneration?

Would it be enough to regenerate the over-exploited space and remove the old warehouses in order to restore the centrality, the previous use, to cover the sloping ground and leave an empty space where there were warehouses to repair the boats? Or would it be better to take advantage of the urban void for new activities?

Environmental studies consider the Varadero to be ideal for the practice of nautical sports. Behind the Varadero, the Quarry (Cantera), currently Non-urbanisable land (*Suelo No Urbanizable*), is a magnificent enclave: a window to the sea; but there are the limitations of planning.

Should the proposals follow the planning or should the planning be modified by the proposals, we firmly believe that the territory and its complexity should guide the planning.

Is it spatial planning, administrations, location or uses that can make sense again?

Is it possible to shape the empty space and endow it with memory?

How can we take advantage of the new generations' ways of inhabiting and using their leisure time?



Could this alliance restore the lost centrality of these spaces within the territorial strategy?