

E¹⁸ VITORIA-GASTEIZ

RE-LIVING IN BUSTALDEA

SCALE:
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LOCATION: Vitoria-Gasteiz (Álava)

TEAM COMPOSITION: Architect mandatory

POPULATION: 250,000 inhabitants

REFLECTION SITE: 3,5 ha

PROJECT SITE: 5.000 m²

SITE PROPOSED BY: Department of Housing and Urban Agenda. Basque Government

ACTORS INVOLVED: Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council, Department of Housing and Urban Agenda. Basque Government

OWNERS OF THE SITE: Public (Basque Government, after transfer by the Vitoria-Gasteiz City Council).

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION:

Social housing, support for intermediation with residents, detailed study, building project, construction management



SITE / CONTEXT

Vitoria-Gasteiz is a city that has managed to grow while respecting its natural surroundings.

Located in Álava, the southernmost of the three provinces that constitute the Basque Country, it is the political capital and seat of government of the regional government. The orography of its surroundings, smoother and flatter than in the north, has allowed it to develop in a moderate urban development, a circumstance that it has taken advantage of to integrate sustainability criteria into its city design, with large natural spaces that make up the green ring, recognised at European level.

Part of this green space surrounding the city is the Olárizu park, an area next to which the smaller entity of Aretxabaleta is located.

The Bustaldea neighbourhood, in Aretxabaleta, is a housing development from the late 1960s that was doomed to disappear but has recently been agreed with the Basque government to be recovered as social housing.

It is made up of 5 buildings of a humble character, with 57 small dwellings that require total adaptation and with an urban implantation initially discordant with the rural environment, until it has been taken over relatively naturally by a residential urban fabric that has partially hidden the character of the village.

The project area is proposed within an extensive area of reflection that aims to enhance the natural aspects of the environment: the botanical garden and orchards of Olárizu, the crops that extend to the foot of the Montes de Vitoria or the Zapardiel river; the remaining values of the rural environment of Aretxabaleta, as well as the possibilities of relationship with the area destined for undeveloped facilities, to the south of the plot.

It is formed by the 5 blocks, protected from the immediate surroundings by green areas, with a completely open intervention approach, ranging from maintenance and adaptation to partial reorganisation or replacement, aiming for urban improvement and integration into the environment.



How can an urban action be planned that re-appropriates the natural values and rural identity of an environment that has evolved in a heterogeneous way due to new urban developments?



QUESTIONS TO THE COMPETITORS

The aim is to propose social housing in residential blocks located in the southern periphery of the city, which has lost its original character due to several subsequent residential developments. The purpose is to understand the needs, opportunities and challenges of the site. Recovering or reinterpreting the configuration of the architectural elements that have their buildability clogged up, based on flexible, novel or even gradual approaches. Seeking cohesion with the area of reflection, which should be respectful of the natural landscape. The modernisation of spaces for coexistence and social cohesion can be considered, as well as improvements in terms of habitability and energy efficiency. It will be necessary to provide tools that favour the well-being of the community, as well as intervening in the improvement of the environment by adding value to the neighbourhood and the natural landscape, integrating the rural landscape on the outskirts of the city and recovering the character of the village. In summary, the aim is to improve the quality of life of the current residents and offer a space for the new inhabitants to live together, through rehabilitation and urban renewal.



How to integrate social cohesion and sustainability in urban and residential design in order to rebuild what already exists, adapting it to current needs?