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LOOKING AT THE MOUSE



View of Getaria and the sea from the boundary of the site of project

CATEGORY urban/architectural

LOCATION A.U XVIII_ Potzuaga-Gaina, Getaria
POPULATION 2.628 inhab..
STRATEGIC SITE 28 Ha. **SITE OF PROJECT** 2,85 Ha.
SITE PROPOSED BY Basque Government / Getaria Municipal Council .
OWNER OF THE SITE 11 different owners

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION
Detailed planning. Commission for construction is not ruling out, depending on the Development Agent's management of the competition proposal.

TRANSFORMATION OF SITE
The study area, Potzuaga-gaina, is an allotment south of the urban area of Getaria, set on a hillside that drops towards the town centre and the sea. It is now an independent urban sector that has been zoned entirely as residential land. The aim is to respond to the municipality's housing demand by proposing a new type of residential development overlooking the sea, in continuity with the consolidated urban area.
Proposals should tackle the issue of integrating the new buildings into the landscape, especially in the area near the cemetery. They should also provide an appropriate solution for the connection to the town, and resolve the transition into the countryside, without restricting the possibility of future developments on the hillside.

CITY STRATEGY
By subjecting the development of this site to open debate, several issues will be tackled, not only on the urban scale, but also in terms of work on proposals for architectural styles that are suitable for this unique environment. There must be a particular focus on the character of the public spaces that are generated, and the promotion of social life.
The operation is intended to insert 130 new homes in the area, 85 of which will be social housing.
The project area is adjacent to the Balenciaga Museum, currently under construction, dedicated to the world-famous fashion designer who was born in this town.

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Aerial photo of Getaria and strategic features



Orphofoto of Getaria and site of project

SITE DEFINITION

The Getaria municipality covers a stretch of the Gipuzkoa coastline on the Bay of Biscay. It consists of steep cliffs with a series of coves and points shaped by erosion.

It is a picturesque seaside village, a popular Basque tourist destination, set on the isthmus linking the mainland with Mount San Antón, known popularly as "The Mouse" on account of its striking shape.

The current township covers the slope between the cliff tops and the harbour at sea level. The site chosen for the EUROPAN competition lies to the south of the town, on the way up the hill from the Balenciaga Museum towards Alto de Meagas.

NEW MOBILITY

Several lanes, streets and roads cross the project area, connecting the village to the cemetery. One of them is the “Coastal Route” of St. James Pilgrim's Way, which runs along the entire Basque Coast. Proposals must resolve its alignment through the study area, and also improve the intersection between the cemetery access road and the existing road network.

The proposed plans should also consider the connection between the various areas around the perimeter of the site, reshape the roads and improve the street intersections. They should take into account future potential growth in a southward direction from the study area.

NEW WAYS OF LIFE

The site has good accessibility. Proposed plans, making the most of recently installed escalators, must generate a set of appropriate, accessible public spaces that foster social life and urban complexity and prevent its conversion into a dormitory suburb.

NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The hills and meadows in this area are the elements that have shaped the landscape, along with its character as a boundary for the urban area and the proximity of the cemetery. Proposed plans should resolve the integration of this area into the landscape and prevent it from becoming a screen or barrier, while at the same time allowing the possibility of future development.

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Aerial photo of Getaria



Aerial photo of Getaria



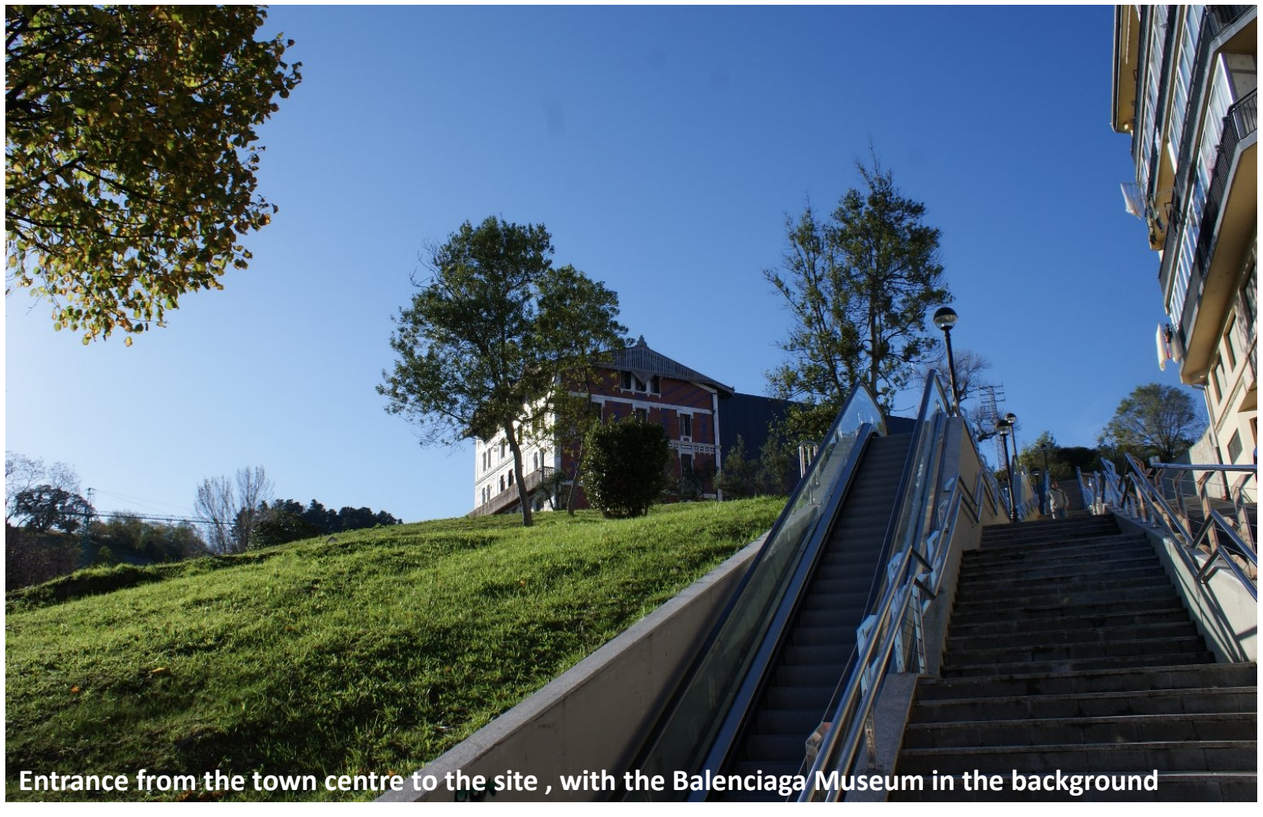
Panoramic view of Potzuaga-Gaina site



Entrance to town area with Balenciaga Museum on the right and the “mouse” in the background.



Cemetery entrance.



Entrance from the town centre to the site , with the Balenciaga Museum in the background



Balenciaga Museum