



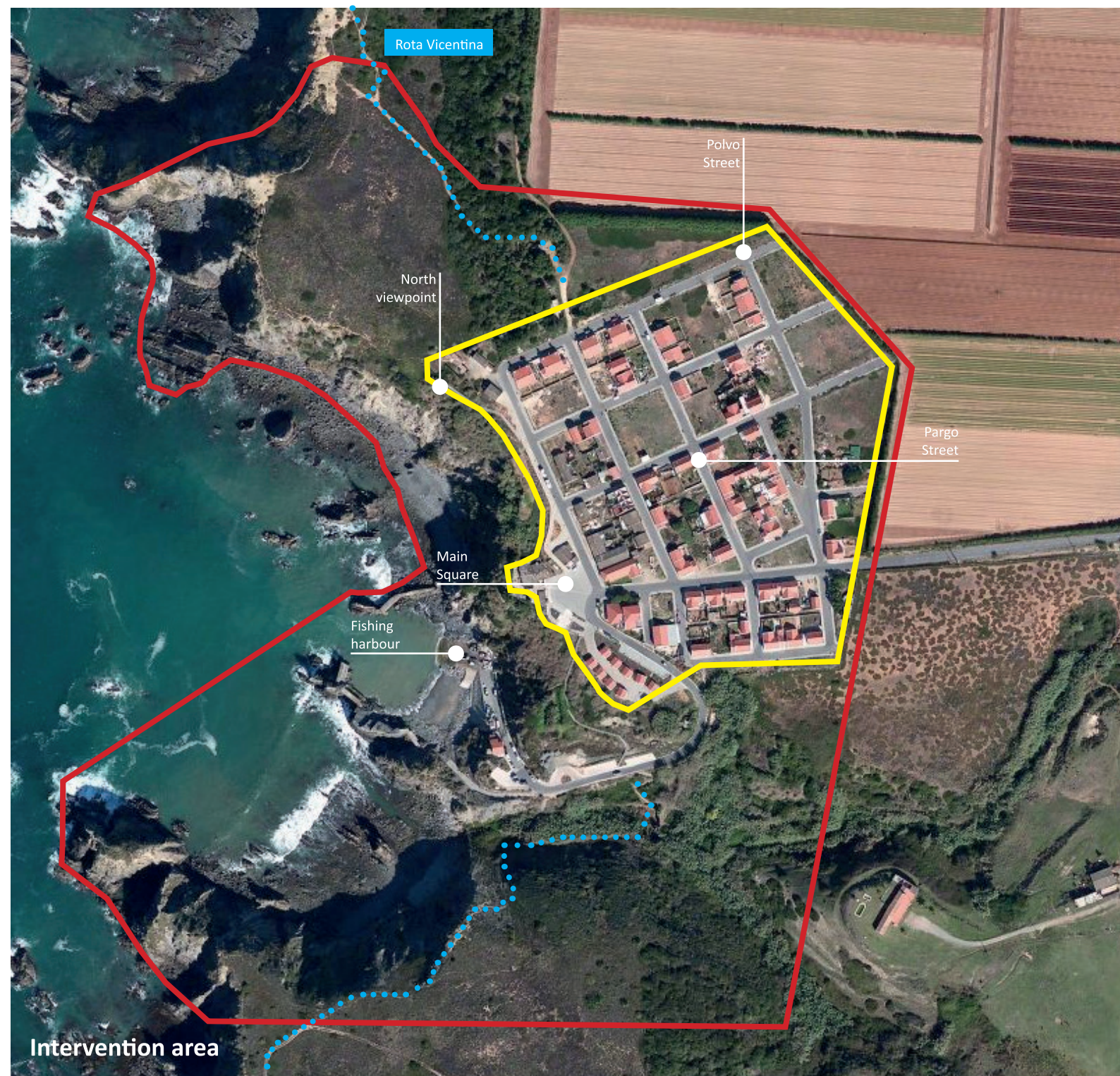
Azenha do Mar

**CATEGORY** urban/architectural  
**SITE'S FAMILY** How to create positive dynamics from a difficult situation?  
**LOCATION** AZENHA DO MAR, Odemira [Southwest coast of Portugal, 230 km from Lisbon]  
**POPULATION** Village 130 habitants Municipality of Odemira 26000 habitants  
**STUDY SITE** 25 ha  
**PROJECT SITE** 6,5 ha  
**SITE PROPOSED BY** Municipality of Odemira  
**OWNER OF THE SITE** Municipality of Odemira  
**COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION** Concept and development design for a urban study that can evolve to include public space urban design and architectural and landscape design.  
**REPRESENTATIVE OF TEAM** Architect, urban planner or landscape architect

**HOW CAN THE SITE CONTRIBUTE TO THE «ADAPTABLE CITY»?**  
Azenha do Mar is a recent fishing settlement. Its adaptability corresponds to a challenge regarding the dynamics of a contemporary society, related to a particular place's identity. It is aimed at urban complementarities articulating natural landscape and activities (agriculture and fishing), through the enhancement of local resources, including sea products (fish, shellfish, algae), vegetables (subsistence farming), energy resources (sun, wind, tides) and landscape resources (paths and biodiversity). And also, to promote flexibility on these areas in a way which allows specific targets of hosting and providing greater diversification of economic, cultural and social activities.

**CITY STRATEGY**  
It is intended to counteract degradation and exclusion by transforming Azenha do Mar in a sustainable cluster (increasing its production capacity associated to local resources) and making it attractive in a perspective of nature related tourism (hiking, diving, walks on the waterfront) and wellness related tourism (relaxation, meditation, natural therapies) with a diversity of capacities to sustain them along time. The aim perspective of structured development is a responsible tourism, where tourism experience is to be diluted with the local experience and generates a demand for visitors throughout the year.





## SITE DEFINITION

The natural characteristics of the rocks “towards open sea”, the green cliffs and picturesque fishing toil, make this conurbation a symbol of handmade fishing and shellfish activity and is currently part of a section of the multi-awarded Rota Vicentina (hiking path with 350 km). Integrated in the Natural Park of Southwest Alentejo and Costa Vicentina and in the Natura 2000 network, the study site covers vacant areas of a former municipal allotment (that was never fully implemented) also integrating shed buildings that show a degraded urban image and accentuate the problems related to economic fragility and social exclusion.

## FUTURE OF THE SITE IN RELATION OF SITE’S FAMILY AND ADAPTABILITY

The very low population density that characterizes the municipality of Odeira, and also the limited human and financial capacity to maintain a high number of facilities, landscaping, urban public spaces and buildings, require local areas and facilities to be the most flexible and adaptable as possible, to host different events and activities. The commitment to efficiency gains requires architectural and public space solutions allowing the accommodation of different activities with reduced maintenance requirements, respecting the site’s scale and identity. The aim is to increase the supply of housing, both tourist (short-term) and residential (long-term), giving preference to architectural solutions adapting to a wider range of socio-economic needs on medium and long terms with efficiency in resources consumption.

The challenge is to design tourism facility’s concept to create positive dynamics connected with existing conditions, and that may be adapted to a daytime center with residences for the elderly; and create design housing typologies that suit both residential tourism and first or second residential types. The location of a parking area and boats repair area should be implemented as well as it should be planned small commercial units for the installation of basic neighborhood shops and/or to promote local products, restaurant and bar. Public spaces are required to emphasize the relationship between land (upper area of the conurbation) and sea (lower part of the small port), respecting the natural and landscape features of the site. Community gardens may be integrated into the urban context and connections with walking routes, with the boats’ pier and with places for the practice of recreational fishing are to be structured.





South view of Azenha do Mar



North viewpoint





Main square



Pargo Street



Polvo Street



Fishing harbour