



## **The Northern Area of the City of Alicante (Spain): The Challenge of a New Urban Role**

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The city of Alicante had during the sixties and seventies one of the most important developments along the twenty century, specially the northern coast that was seen during those decades as an important opportunity for tourism. Not only had the master plan foreseen this coastal area as a tourist city that should be developed according to the Modern Movement principles, but also the developers and architects decided to adopt the modern blocks instead of the traditional urban fabric.

Even though those areas were design in the same period, we can find very different proposals, depending on the urban situation of those projects. As an example of the variety of approaches that we find in that area, two different examples -designed by the same architect, Juan Guardiola- could be mentioned. The first one -the Albufereta project-, a narrow strip of land between San Julian mountain and the sea where a housing area has been developed following the Le Corbusier's Obus project for Argel, an attitude in which nature, infrastructures, buildings and public space are understood as a whole. The second one -San Juan beach housing development-, on a wide and a flat space close to San Juan beach where the housing proposal has been organized following the north European modern tradition of grouping several blocks forming residential units; in this project hierarchy of different buildings -towers and higher blocks- and public spaces offer other kind of relationships between buildings open space and landscape. As seen both projects, with an important urban interest, show a different approach to nature and landscape and also require different approaches in future urban reconsideration.

If those areas have been used as a tourist space during the last decades, in the last years more and more citizens have decided to move to those housing areas to establish their permanent residence and this tendency is supposed to be increasing in the future. Those neighbourhoods will take in new uses and activities that require a reconsideration of facilities, accessibility and public space conditions.

Also the regional and local civil services are investing economic resources to implement a new public transport -tramway- that will redefine the connection of all those housing areas with the city centre.

In the future those old tourist areas far away from the city centre will become a new neighbourhood of Alicante in which the tourist use will be only a part of the new role of that area.

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