













Context

The project is located in Pedroso, a town in the outskirts of the city of Vila Nova de Gaia (Oporto region, Portugal), and where the compact urban form is already diluting and fragmenting into different shapes and contrasts of use and occupation: residential areas, infrastructures, industrial areas, agriculture fields and woods. It's a landscape based in the road, where we find an extensive proliferation of activities and uses. The square, as an elementary figure in the articulation between public and private, is less perceptible and the use of "public space" mostly comes out in close relationship with the private spaces and services: some exisitng sidewalks, the spaces in front of the houses, the spaces in front of cafes, etc.

Site Analysis

The site is near a roundabout and its surrounded by two small cafés, an elderly resting home, a cemetery and a monastery (dated between 10th and 11th century), classified as a monument of public interest since 2014. There is a clear absence of public spaces. The only place that meets some desirable conditions for a public space is an enclosed place that surrounds the monastery, mostly used in religious events.

Project Background and History

The site near the monastery has remained empty for several years. It was part of the residential fabric that was demolished to create a new property investment, which unpleased the inhabitants due to its large scale and its "damaging" relationship with the monastery. Thus, to avoid the construction of the new residential block in front of the monastery, the Parish Council acquired the land plot, which, during the last years, its being used as a parking lot.

Genesis of Project

As the owner of the plot, the Parish Council, intended to create a public space in harmony with the monastery. To achieve that, was launched a competition establishing the project main concerns and guidelines: the creation of a flexible public space that should be embedded in the monastery surroundings in a harmonious way and also the creation of a monument to honor the soldiers in "Ultramar" Colonial War;

The Planned Landscape, mainly composed with a meadow and several autochthonous species and vegetation from northern Portugal.

