The town of Gironella is formed on both sides of River Llobregat, in the Berguedà region. Its growth has caused that the most modern part extends to the right river bank, while on the left, the old part of the town extends above the river, on a cliff and in the remains of the old wall. At the foot of this slope is located the former textile colony of Cal Metre, which is part of the Berguedà Colonies Road.

The location of an elevator to facilitate access to the historic centre has transformed Cal Metre’s path from an underused state, where cars usually parked, onto an everyday road. The intervention responds to a demand for accessibility improvement and at the same time intends to turn this old path into a new public space of the town, as a place for rest and contemplation of the river landscape and also as a stage for events and cultural activities.

The objective of the project is to enhance the relationship between the walkway and the river, proposing an approach to the limits with a series of meeting spaces, which are materialized by reusing 2795 paving stones from the streets of the historic centre that were stacked in a municipal warehouse, installed with an open joint to enable the spontaneous growth of vegetation.

Green borders

Two intensities are differentiated in the pavements: a central strip made with an exposed aggregate concrete continuous paving, to facilitate access for emergency situations and maintenance of the elevator, and soft side margins, proposing an idea of a green tapestry that will extend through the surrounding of the colonies. The limits of the concrete pavement are softened by creating a greenway with variable length and 5 or 15cm wide boards, where spontaneous vegetation grows. The intervention enhance existing trees by placing a series of concrete slabs and recovered ashlars benches, creating spots to stay linked to the old wall or to the river.