



#### ORIGINAL STATE

Malgrat de Mar is a seaside town in the province of Barcelona with a population of approximately 18,500. It belongs to the Maresme region, situated in the north of the province.

The Barri del Castell neighbourhood was built on former farmland and became an area of unplanned urban growth. The neighbourhood's most essential flaws were addressed by the town's first democratic councils over twenty five years ago. Today, the neighbourhood's needs are no longer what they were.

Barri del Castell can be distinguished from the rest of the town thanks to its physical features -which arise from its topography-, its origins and its current economic and social conditions. It encompasses the area between the steep slopes of the Castell hill to the southeast and the Sant Genis river to the northeast. At either end of the neighbourhood are two spaces where the most severe urban planning and habitability failings are concentrated. These have been earmarked within the town's general urban planning as two sectors for urban improvement. Located near the town centre, the area has not been developed due to its topography, and interrupts the town's urban fabric. To these physical barriers can be added pronounced social inequalities resulting from the town's role as host to the first immigrant arrivals from southern Spain, during the 50s, 60s and 70s, who settled in Malgrat de Mar in precarious conditions and self-built housing.

Today, despite the regeneration of the urban fabric and buildings and reduction in social inequalities, Barri del Castell continues to be a segregated and stigmatized urban area, affected by major urban, social and economic issues.

#### AIM OF THE INTERVENTION

In 2009, we began to work within the framework of the acces\_SOS project, which undertook research into urban public space and its accessibility for all sectors of the population. It is our opinion that designing smoothly integrated, universal and free accessibility is a question of attitude. We organized a workshop with local residents in order to define the characteristics that the streets of Barri del Castell needed to recover their capacity as community builders.

The project developed in collaboration with local residents enabling us to detect the shortfalls and needs of the neighbourhood's structural thoroughfares, resulting in our focusing on problems of accessibility and quality of public space.

The urban elements, road signage and arrangement of handrails, benches and trees free the road of vehicles, helping to mark circulation routes and create small meeting and rest spaces on the way. The street becomes an urban square.