

11. DOCUMENTACIÓ ANNEXA

PRESENTATION OF LA GUINEUETA HOUSING ESTATE

11.1 Translation

SUMMARY

This end-of-degree dissertation focuses on the study of the residential fabric in La Guineueta housing estate, built between 1962 and 1964 in the north-eastern area of Barcelona, next to the former Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital.

The housing shortage became evident in Barcelona in the wake of the Spanish Civil War, and especially in the 1950s. The creation of the housing development was the product of the proposal put forward by the local authorities to respond to the marked demographic impact within the framework of the Social Emergency Plan.

The construction of the housing estate was carried out by three different property developers: Obra Sindical del Hogar, DARSA real estate agency and La Puntual Cooperative. The dissertation focuses on the construction work undertaken by Obra Sindical del Hogar. The importance of the housing estates built in Barcelona by public bodies during the second half of the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s not only lies in the huge impact borne on the city, but also on the very transformation of housing estates as a form of intervention.

The proposal put forward for La Guineueta housing estate comprised a total of 128 buildings over a surface area measuring 30 hectares. The project was based on eight different types of separate buildings, providing a total of 1,517 homes. The housing estate's internal arrangement was accomplished by laying out the tower blocks of varying heights, which ran along two main thoroughfares: Passeig de Valldaura and Via Favència. Spaces were created between the blocks to provide the residential estate with green and recreational areas, as well as other amenities planned in the project.

The aim of the dissertation is to gain an in-depth understanding of the mass housing development from the concept of an isolated housing estate, while studying the origin of the neighbourhood's population and its creation. The other measures being implemented in the city of Barcelona will have to be taken into consideration, as well as European models that inspired the establishment of the housing estate in order to gain an insight into its conception.

Therefore, this study is based on the analysis of La Guineueta neighbourhood from the original 1960 plan, comparing the planned housing development with its current state. A study will be conducted of the various housing proposals within different separate blocks of buildings, including the amenities and open spaces that were planned and subsequently constructed. To gain first-hand understanding of all the housing, a visit was paid to a flat in each type of tower block. Use has been made of graphic documentation of the era to set forth the parameters for comparison with the utmost degree of clarity. Finally, the improvement measures undertaken in the housing estate will be examined, discussing the aluminosis problems suffered by a number of buildings.

- Location and total surface area of the housing estate

La Guineueta neighbourhood consists of two major housing estates. La Guineueta housing estate is found in the northern part, bound by Via Favència, comprising buildings constructed in the 1960s and surrounded by spaces that were landscaped in the 1990s. In this section lies La Guineueta Park, a large green area that delimits the neighbourhood to the east with Carrer de l'Artesania. In the southern part are the housing estates of Barcinova and Calinova, built in the 1970s. Both sets of buildings are separated by Passeig Valldaura.

The Barcinova and Calinova estates surround the former Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital, a historic building dating from 1889 and which is now the seat of the Nou Barris District Council, among other amenities.

The entire area of La Guineueta is bound to the south-west by the modern Nou Barris Central Park, a major urban planning initiative which extends as far as the square, Plaça de Karl Marx. It constitutes one of the largest parks in the city, with 16 hectares.

La Guineueta housing estate has a total surface area of **30 hectares**. Below we outline the quantitative data concerning the entire development, which is to be examined.

- Total constructed area

In order to calculate the total constructed area of La Guineueta housing estate, the subdivision has been carried out in four phases that delimit the four islands built by Obra Sindical del Hogar respectively (field of study), as originally conceived in the project designed by the architect Julio Chinchilla.

The total constructed area is **22,413.069 m²**.

- Total number of dwellings

La Guineueta housing estate comprises **1,517 homes**.

- Total constructed area for amenities

In the first phase of the original project, the construction of a community centre was considered in the north-east of the island, surrounding the existing parish of San Mateu de la Guineueta. Between 1967 and 1983, it became the Paladium cinema, and it is currently a Sorli Discau supermarket next to a centre for senior citizens with a pharmacy, optician's, orthopaedic surgery and a branch of "la Caixa" bank on the rear side. In the south-eastern part of the island, next to Passeig de Valldaura, a Social Security outpatient clinic was planned, which is still there today.

In the second phase, a school was planned which is now the private school Jesús-Maria Claudina Thévenet, upholding the original concept in the northern part of the second island.

Finally, in the fourth phase of the project the Institut Francisco Franco was planned, a school which opened in 1968, renamed the Col·legi d'Educació Infantil i Primària Marinada years later.

Total area for amenities: **11,784 m²**

- Total constructed area for commercial premises

The ground floors of the various blocks of buildings were designated for commercial use (specifically, block types TD, T2D and F), giving a total of **41 commercial premises**.

- Open spaces

Initially, no urban development was planned, leaving open spaces between housing blocks without completion, as shall be explained further on in the dissertation. Given the high level of degradation which the open spaces in La Guineueta had reached, in 1989 an initiative was undertaken in the housing estate, which sought to arrange and qualify the internal public spaces in the various constituent islands. A renewal of the urban furniture was carried out and the area's deficiencies as regards sewers, paving, lighting and landscaping were rectified.

Total area of open spaces: **106,823 m²**

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD'S HISTORIC AND URBAN PLANNING CONTEXT

- Emergence of the Nou Barris neighbourhood

The territory nowadays known as Nou Barris has been historically related to the territory of Sant Andreu del Palomar, as it belonged to the old town which was annexed to Barcelona on 20 April 1897, and became the ninth district, until the last division of Barcelona in 1984, which led to the current separation into two different districts.

The new district was named Nou Barris by the association created in 1970 to fight against the partial plan for Torre Baró-Vallbona-Trinitat, which sought to prioritize the construction of roads and the demolition of 4,370 houses to leave more land available to real estate agencies. There were nine neighbourhoods affected: Ciutat Meridiana, Torre Baró, Vallbona, Trinitat Vella, Trinitat Vella, Prosperitat, Roquetes, Verdum and Guineueta.

The first initiatives in the field of housing in Nou Barris did not start until the mid 20th century with the industrial area of Torre Llobeta. The immigration and urban expansion that this area generated was

spectacular and monopolized the meaning of the concept Nou Barris. There was an urban chaos under Franco's dictatorship, the frantic pace of construction and the strategy followed by the real estate capital, based in an immediate profit and a municipal negligence, made them forget about creating public buildings in those areas where workers lived. As a result, in a context of intense struggle in the pursuit of democracy, in those times many neighbourhood associations fought to have more urban services and the basic infrastructures.

In the early eighties, with the new democratic city council, there was the need to bring the municipal administration closer to the north of the district, with its headquarters in Sant Andreu. Because of the vast extension of the area and the huge population growth in recent decades, a new administrative boundary was needed. Taking as a basic dividing line the Meridiana, in 1984 the former ninth district was divided in the current district IX, based in Plaça Orfila, in Sant Andreu, and the district VIII, based in the remains of the Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital.

- Previous situation in the area

What we know nowadays as Guineueta was, during the first half of the 20th century, an area divided by the road that connected Cornellà to Fogars de Tordera, built in 1878 by the Diputació of Barcelona. It was the old road to the chapel of Sant Iscle. There were a group of vines, the remains of an aqueduct, three or four farms and some houses built during the 20's at the initiative of Rito Navarro, one of the owners of the land.

The border with the city was marked by the building of the Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital, a psychiatric facility inaugurated on 19 December 1886, run by Dr. Emili Pi i Molist. The construction of the asylum responded to the most advanced trends in the treatment of mentally ill people, and besides its interest as a relevant healthcare institution, it was the first major milestone in the process of urban development that took place during the first half of the 20th century.

- Can Guineueta

The area was known as Guineueta due to a house situated in the north of the district, it was a simple construction from the 18th century owned by the Gaig family. The property extended over about 3 hectares from the current area of Canyelles, where stood the house that gave its name to the village composed of small houses, which were later known as Guineueta Vella.

Can Guineueta was demolished in the early 70s. The etymology comes from the presence of foxes in the rural area in that time, as it was a wild and natural place where hunting was practiced and where people cultivated vines. The other houses were Can Rius, now demolished; Can Carreras, that has given its name to some apartments; and Ca n'Ensenya (1876), now transformed into a leisure centre and a teaching centre for teenagers with mental health problems.

- The first urban development

Urban growth was non-existent while the area of Can Guineueta belonged to Sant Andreu. The council of Sant Andreu concentrated its development initiatives on Vilapiscina, where the cemetery was built in 1839 and Rambla de Santa Eulalia in 1875, around the chapel of Santa Eulàlia. In principle, the urban development projects in the north-east of Barcelona had been inspired by concepts related to the idea of a “garden city”, but at the end this concepts did not come true.

Until 1918, the pace of construction was slow in La Guineueta. Around the Psychiatric Hospital and Vilapiscina there were only small two-storey houses and self-built one-storey houses, although there were some isolated chalets. The buildings were built around the fields and vineyards and well-off families of Sant Andreu purchased the parcels.

During the period 1922-1926 there was a change in the trend. From that moment we could talk about the first wave of urban development, stimulated since 1916 by Passeig Pi i Molist, which communicated Rambla de Santa Eulalia with the Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital, run by Rito Navarro. In the late 20s and because of the housing shortage, many people moved to the outskirts, which led to the development of neighbourhoods of Sant Andreu in areas only occupied by vineyards up until then. However, this expansion did not cross the road that connected Cornellà with Fogars de Tordera.

In 1929, considering the expected growth in the area, the City Council began the works for a two-way road, of 40 and 60 metres, which 60 years later would become the current Via Júlia and Via Favència, a preamble of the urban development boom that would make disappear foxes, vineyards and farms, such as Can Guineueta.

An example of the growth of the area is The Cheap Houses built by the Patronat Municipal de l'Habitatge between 1929 and 1931 on Can Paguera lands, between el Turó de la Peira and the Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital. They were initially called Ramon Albó, and they are the only ones that still have the singular urban and architectural physiognomy of those developments: one-story houses, most of them with a rustic roof and small gardens.

- 'El Poblado de la Guineueta' (The Town of La Guineueta): Roberto Bassas housing estate

In the late 1940s, the ineffectiveness of the policies of the Franco regime with respect to the housing shortage had become evident with the increase of uncontrolled migration and the backwardness of the Spanish construction industry.

The lack of housing in Barcelona was expressed strongly before the Eucharistic Congress held in Barcelona in 1952. About 60,000 people lived in shacks and the administration intensified the construction of social housing that had to be carried by organizations such as the Obra Sindical del Hogar and the Patronat de l'Habitatge.

In December of 1953 the *Pla Comarcal de Ordenació Urbana de Barcelona (Local Plan for the Urban Development of Barcelona)* was approved. It was written by the architect of the city council called Josep Soteras, who tried to foster an orderly development of Barcelona and the 26 municipalities of the region by creating residential areas, areas dedicated to industrial facilities, and other areas for parks and gardens, as well as road communications. The *Comissió d'Urbanisme (Urban Planning Commission)* was created, a body that determined the capacity of the urban land and set limits to the housing market. Between 1950 and 1954, the Patronat Municipal de l'Habitatge, the Obra Sindical del Hogar, the National Institute of Housing, the Civilian Government and the Patronato de Correus i Telègrafs promoted about 3,667 homes. The amount of homes was doubled to 7,078 between 1955 and 1959, and it increased to 8,398 from 1960 to 1965 when the Obra Sindical del Hogar built La Guineueta housing estate, finally called Roberto Bassas housing estate.

In the midst of this social urgency, the Guineueta Partial Development Plan was published in 1956, written by Emili Bordoy. The plan had the characteristics of the public housing of the moment: precarious location and sale of plots by the Planning Commission. Some of the urban developers of the 20s, as Rito Navarro and the Guix Gaig brothers, owners of Can Guineueta, sold their 3 hectares of land, to which we have to add the 12.000 m² of Can Amell Xic, the land not used of the Santa Creu Psychiatric Hospital and 1.7 hectares sold by Joan Grau, owner of the so-called Cova dels Gitanos.

Conceived as the building agency of the Franco's National Movement, Obra Sindical del Hogar was founded on 11 September 1941 to promote the social housing with the qualification of “protected housing”. Among its architects, Julio Chinchilla stood out. He was in charge of planning the 1,517 homes and 49 commercial premises of the area called “Poblado de la Guineueta”. With an initial amount of 187 million pesetas, the housing estate was carried out in four phases.

In La Guineueta neighbourhood the transformation of the landscape was radical. Streams and fields were occupied, on the one hand, by buildings promoted by the OSH, and on the other hand, by the promotions of Telefonica, the Cooperative La Puntual, la Caixa d'Estalvis and the real estate agency called DARSA. When the neighbourhood was born, the migratory pressure was particularly strong. In 1963 it is estimated that about 33,000 immigrants arrived in the province of Barcelona, where there was still a shortage of housing.

In June of that year, Francisco Franco, the Spanish head of state, visited the Roberto Bassas housing estate on the occasion of a visit to Barcelona, and the following day he appeared on the front page of *La Vanguardia* newspaper. The newspaper also talked about the green spaces and all the facilities that would be built (schools, health centre, cinema, etc.), as well as the extent and capacity of dwellings.

While the buildings were erected, the north-eastern part of the housing estate was a landscape with an uneven relief of about 6 hectares, which before the works of 1967 were useful to connect La Guineueta with Roquetes. This place opened its doors in 1971 as La Guineueta park with the aim of providing green spaces.

- Relationship with the existing urban fabric

Most of the housing estates built by the Obra Sindical were located on rural areas of the outskirts, they were not very well communicated with the urban fabric and suffered from a total lack of infrastructures and facilities, as usually buildings were built before the implementation of an urbanization plan. The construction of the estate destroyed the vineyards and between the buildings there were some slopes where rats run and trash was accumulated.

The lack of communications with the city centre soon became too evident. In the Lluçmajor square, originally conceived to have different tram lines, only two trams stopped and it wasn't up until 1959. It was a commuter neighbourhood without an active life and which suffered from a lack of services. Because of the isolation of La Guineueta, its market, that opened its doors in 1965, was one of the key commercial centres.

The lack of public transportation and communications until the construction of the subway line 4 in 1982 is an important factor that can explain why the district took so long to be connected with the urban fabric of Barcelona.

In the buildings of Roberto Bassas housing estate called Nova Guineueta, the living conditions seemed better than the conditions on the other side of Via Favència, where Guineueta Vella was an inhospitable area composed by a group of one-story houses without the minimum living conditions, with one or two rooms without ventilation or running water. There was no sewerage system, the rubbish was dumped in streams and dry wells and the streets were not illuminated.

The existing urban fabric in La Guineueta was very small due to the abundance of fields and the uneven relief of the area. The urban development was made step by step. It can be said that the commercial activity was fostered in 1969 when the Artesania street was opened, as the population density grew progressively. It was a key factor for the proliferation of an urban fabric surrounding the estate. The number of stores increased and among sellers it became a common place to go. Thus, the area of Barcinova and Calinova during the 70s attracted more commercial activity and, later, the urban development of the 80s made of Via Júlia one of the most important streets, as it became a meeting point and it helped to close the urban fabric of the area.

PROMOTING ENTITIES

- Contextualization of construction works in Barcelona. Guineueta Development Plan (1956)

The sixteen-year mandate of the mayor Josep Maria Porcioles between 1957 and 1973 had an enormous effect on the urban development of the city, not only because of its length but also because during those years there was an extraordinary population growth. Emili Bordoy Alcàntara was the chief architect of the City Planning Unit of the Barcelona City Council, and he drafted La Guineueta Development Plan in 1956, among others. The urgent need for housing and the previous decade deficits were used to justify many things. Construction was the priority and during the four years between the approval of the Regional Plan in 1953 and the election of Porcioles as mayor, 12 urban plans were approved, which implied the urban development of 840 hectares. In the first four years of the Porcioles mandate 16 plans were approved, with a total of 1,600 hectares, and 13 more during the next eight years, a total of 1,341 hectares.

The result could not have been other than a general unbalanced urban system, an accumulation of isolated actions, independent of each other, with a lack of facilities and a dense human occupation. Because of the different partial development plans that led to major changes in the land use and increased disproportionately the buildable area, and the public actions to build groups of houses even without partial plans, Barcelona did not grow with the future in mind, but thinking in the immediate private benefit. According to the authors of the largest study on Barcelona partial development plans — Carles Teixidor, Marçal Tarragó and Lluís Brau—, the changes introduced by the partial developments plans to the General Development Plan with the aim of increasing the buildable area multiplied by 1.8 the foreseen global density.

Promoters

- Comissió d'Urbanisme (Urban Planning Commission)

The regional plan of 1953 was a regional plan that projected the future planning of the municipality of Barcelona and the 23 municipalities in the area. It was prepared by the High Commission for the Urban Planning of the Province of Barcelona, created on 25 May 1945 by a decree. In this commission the municipal architect Josep Soteras played a key role and the urban plan was approved by law on 3 December 1953. Fourteen months later the rules resulting from this law were approved and the Urban Planning Commission was constituted. From that moment on, it was the highest governing body of the Barcelona urban planning and replaced the Eixample Commission.

The main role of this commission was the approval of partial development plans, but it also led initiatives to create developable land. The commission expropriated lands, created the urban infrastructure, such as streets, sewers and lighting, and sold them in plots for building purposes to real estate agencies, cooperatives or to the public administration.

The expropriation and development of La Guineueta housing estate was carried out by the Urban Planning Commission between 1956 and 1959, and the works were made by the Obra Sindical del Hogar, the DARSA real estate agency and the La Puntual Cooperative between 1962 and 1971.

- Obra Sindical del Hogar

Obra Sindical del Hogar (OSH) was created under the Ministry of the Interior in 1942. The purpose of OSH was the construction of protected housing in collaboration with the National Institute of Housing (INV). Its main functions were the disclosure of the advantages of the housing law, the planning of housing for workers, the promotion of housing construction, etc. OSH was, since its foundation, the more important public body in the promotion of housing. Most of the funding was provided by the Estate via the INV, which provided an interest-free advance that covered between the 40% and 80% of the total cost, and granted non-repayable premiums which represented the 20%.

Between 1943 and 1951 OSH built in Spain 16.045 homes, and between 1952 and 1960 the total result was 122,552 homes constructed. The base of this increase in the housing construction is a higher public investment capacity and the reorganization of the social housing laws.

These figures show the importance in Spain of the Obra Sindical del Hogar related to the building of housing estates as a result of its mass housing initiatives. Many of these housing estates had common characteristics such as poor quality of the construction, with leaky roofs, damp walls, and serious problems in the sanitation system, poor electrical installations, flooded basements and cracks. However, the biggest problem was the lack of funds for the maintenance, which led to a fast degradation of the buildings and the urban environment. Nobody seemed to look for a solution and the municipality council did not even deal with the damages in the streets and public areas. Many years had to pass, and some neighbourhood's fights, before these streets could have an urban planning dignity.

- DARSA real estate agency

The real estate agency called DARSA was created in the mid-sixties. In 1964 DARSA built around 500 housing units in Barcelona commissioned by several companies, including Catalan de Gas, Telefónica, Cristaleros and several banks, with the aim that workers of these companies could live there when they were obliged to leave from their usual place of residence due to reasons related to their job.

Among its buildings, DARSA built in the Bon Pastor neighbourhood around 100 housing units, which due to their poor quality gradually were left unoccupied as workers who had to live there preferred to look on their own for a place to live. Later, the apartments were occupied and the real estate agency wanted that people were evicted arguing that there were people who had a contract to live there.

In 1966 DARSA began the construction of some blocks of flats and the buildings of two companies, Catalana de Gas and Telefónica, in the part of the Guineueta estate between Gasela street, Rambla del

Caçador, Isard street and Passeig Valldaura. Because of the rush in the construction, some problems appeared, specifically in Rambla del Caçador, buildings number 18 and 24.

As mentioned above, Guineueta was crossed by streams. As Santiago Carbonell, one of the neighbours, points out, "there was a stream coming from Canyelles, that flowed through Rambla del Caçador and then made a turn". Very soon the buildings suffered cracks and dampness on the walls because water was flowing underneath. The stream continued flowing down the street and hit some buildings that later collapsed". The stream of Sant Andreu was poorly covered and the foundations of the building suffered. As a result, firefighters had to brace the building in April 1975.

- La Puntual cooperative

At the end of the fifties, La Puntual cooperative was willing to build housing units to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Urban Planning Commission. The Commission defined and chose the different kind of promoting entities and builders who could work on the housing estates and build flats for the companies. La Puntual cooperative built in the Guineueta estate different housing units intended to be for the employees of Telefónica, FECSA and Catalana de Gas. Thus, on 22 May 1960 the first stone of the buildings of flats was placed. They would be built in the next four years between Isard, Esquirol, Rambla del Caçador and Passeig Valldaura streets.

Management bodies

- First decisions

Between 1962 and 1964 the construction of 2,500 housing units was carried out in Guineueta. Of these, 1,517 homes and 49 commercial premises belonged to the Obra Sindical del Hogar. The project was made on 6 September 1961. The rest belonged to the La Puntual cooperative and DARSA real estate agency, as explained above.

With an initial amount of 187 million pesetas, the houses were commissioned to INGAR S.A., BECOSA, CONSTRUCTORA ASTURIANA S.A. AND MATO Y ALBEROLA S.A., awarded by means of a public tendering procedure on 28 February 1962. Works began in March of the same year and the project was subdivided in four phases under the architectural direction of Julio Chinchilla Ballesta.

- Planning

The project of the Guineueta estate contains a range of different types of buildings (elongated medium-height block, high-rise tower block) to build 2,500 housing units.

At this point, the concept of the isolated block of flats appears consciously, which is closely linked to the concept of the housing estate, and it is then when different options and alternatives are tested and there is a debate about the concept itself. In addition, issues related to the optimal density standards, the facilities

and services in the housing estates are addressed. The organization inside the housing estate is also considered a technical problem which needs to be addressed: the different volumes, the module or the orientation of the housing units are some of the arrangement criteria taken into consideration. All these concepts and the problems inherent to the housing estate proved the importance of considering the housing estates as a planning figure.

The project included the old Sant Andreu stream that crossed the land and transformed it in the Rambla del Caçador. The arrangement of the housing blocks followed the old road from Cornellà to Fogars de Tordera, built in 1878, which changed its name to Passeig Valldaura and was an important element of the Guineueta housing estate. The cross streets that connect the Passeig Valldaura to the old stream do not have a relationship with the position of the building, they divide the housing estate in blocks of similar size.

The general shape of the housing estate is defined by the option of taking the Valldaura road as the main guideline of the design. On the other hand, there are no references to the Lluçmajor Square —future nodal point of the area— or to the Via Favència, due to their minor territorial and urban relevance when the project was carried out. The relevance of the Valldaura old road in the topographical map of the area before the construction of the building estate is a demonstration, to a certain extent, of its great influence in the project.

The housing units promoted by the Obra Sindical del Hogar were described as “protected housing”. People had to give a deposit and after paying a monthly fee for 20 or 50 years they could become the owner of the flat. According to its technical secretary, Fernando Chinchilla, the houses built “had to last for at least forty years”.

Regarding the planning of the housing blocks, the architect Luis Nadal Oller said: “We have to talk only about the buildings built by the Obra Sindical del Hogar as there are so many of them that they give the character to the whole Guineueta housing estate. The absurd repetition of the same building, sometimes longer, sometimes shorter, sometimes higher or sometimes smaller doesn’t allow us any comparison. The effect of monotony and boredom of this profusion must produce to the inhabitants of the Guineueta, for sure, the feeling of eternal discomfort and unease. We, as sporadic visitors, could have never ignored this painful feeling”.

The aesthetics of the blocks pretended to convey a rationalist style, always limited due to the reduction in the cost of materials and the maintenance of the profit margin. In many cases, the materials and the funding did not cover the budget, a situation that was even recognised by the representatives of the trade union organization. Even Chinchilla admitted that in some of the public tenders for different buildings the funding was not enough. He said: “...we have to face the problems related to the material commands. One thing is to order the materials and the other to receive them. Many times we cannot force the contractors to comply with the terms and specifications of the public tender and the implementation deadlines”. That is why the stages of the project dragged on longer than expected, and because of the

problems related to the supply of materials and funding, the works in Guineueta housing estate did not finish until 1971.

- Phases of implementation

The polygon Roberto Bassas made by the OSH was subdivided into four phases for each island between 1962 and 1964.

1st phase: 399 housing units + 12 commercial premises

2nd phase: 392 housing units + 3 commercial premises

3rd phase: 342 housing units + 24 commercial premises

4th phase: 384 housing units + 2 commercial premises

MANAGEMENT OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The architect Luis Nadal Oller did a fantastic review regarding the nonexistent and devastating urban organization of the Guineueta housing estate in 1965: “Although being aware of the problem resulting from the unavoidable and urgent need to provide new houses to a city like Barcelona, one sincerely believes that we should proceed with some order. The urban development should be carried out before the construction of houses and, at the same time, the first buildings to be constructed should be those that can fulfil the more urgent needs of people [...] Guineueta is not an exception and some of its many public areas are in a deplorable condition. We should insist once again on the need of giving to these neighbourhoods a definitive planning; when works are permanently unfinished people don’t feel comfortable and this situation make the visitor lose hope to see a definitive planning. As long as this situation goes on and until we don’t have a tangible reality, we can renounce to further discuss the urban development of the Guineueta”.

This urban chaos in the housing estate is due mainly to the lack of foresight of the urban development, as in the project the function and use of the free public areas was not taken into account and this led to a lack of interest during the works. This was reflected in the project report, written by the architect Julio Chinchilla, as he washed his hands in the paragraph related to the urban development and said that the Urban Development Commission was only responsible for the total urban development of the perimeter streets the access roads, and the areas inside the blocks, but it wasn’t responsible for the water supply network, electrical facilities, public lighting, sanitation, paving and landscaping.

Later, the areas between all the buildings had to be arranged. This is why the Urban Planning Commission of Barcelona carried out a project for the management of the area with the aim of taking the first steps to improve the conditions of the unbuilt land of the Guineueta housing estate. Later, ADIGSA was in charge of the intervention project in the unbuilt areas of the housing estate.

GUINEUETA HOUSING ESTATE: URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL APPROACH

Understanding the housing estate in the European context

- The CIAM: Introducing the new functional city

The *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* — CIAM (International Congress of Modern Architecture), founded in 1928 and dissolved in 1959, was the store of ideas of a modern movement in architecture. Statements made in that congress demonstrate that technological advances that brought a new vision in the field of industry and engineering (mass production and assembly lines in the industry, and the use of iron and concrete in engineering) have not been reflected in the world of architecture, which is “indifferent” to these technological advances and keeps working with the academic models. The reaction against the academicism of architecture and education was one of the key elements for the foundation of CIAM. They wanted to create an international forefront to take advantage of cultural elements in the most innovative architectural points of view.

The creation and evolution of CIAM as an international movement was possible because of the presence and enthusiasm of a number of people who considered the international conventions to be the only relevant element to spread reflections about the architecture and the city with the aim of giving them the cultural, technological and social level of the time.

Le Corbusier, Sigfried Giedon and Walter Gropius, among others, had a very important and decisive role in its foundation and in the organization of conferences. In fact, the absence of the so-called “masters” was a determining factor for its dissolution.

The introductory text of the first conference in 1928 in Le Sarranz made clear what the goals of the CIAM were and transmitted the will of placing architecture in its true economic and social context. From the point of view of dwellings, this philosophy was conveyed in different new approaches for residential areas.

In this line, we can emphasize the principles relating to housing as defined in this first congress, which will have an effect on the statement of principles and on the organization of these conferences based on housing. For example, the Third Congress in Brussels in 1930 on rational land use, W. Gropius presented a reflection on high, medium and low blocks that went beyond the advantages and disadvantages of each type in the city, the traditional ways of growth or the rules that regulated construction. The block height, the angle of the sun and the number of inhabitants were factors that he related: "...in the congress it is not proposed the high-rise building as the only form of residential planning, but it was noted that this form of building can lead us to solve the problem of housing for the minimum standard of living".

In 1933 the Fourth Congress was held in Athens in the cruise ship *Patris II*, where the criteria for a functional city were established and where the conditions that would allow its implementation in the so-called “Athens Charter” were defined. It was based on the analysis and comparison of 30 cities.

- The Interbau Hansaviertel as a modern benchmark

The residential group built in the Hansaviertel neighbourhood during the International Exhibition in Berlin in 1957 (Interbau) represents the principles of open order, with different types of isolated housing blocks in large green spaces. It was built in 1874 but it was completely destroyed after World War II. That is why in the Exhibition the best architects of the time met to rebuild the neighbourhood and leave their mark: Walter Gropius, Luciano Baldessari, Egon Eiermann, Alvar Aalto, Oscar Niemeyer and Max Taut, among others.

This is how the Interbau was created, it was convened by the West Berlin Senate in order to present an alternative of housing development to the houses built in the socialist paradise; it was a statement of principles of the western architecture, that built buildings that differed from the aesthetics of the Nazi architecture. Through a public tender for the creation of social housing, Interbau proposed to the architects a new point of view of the lines developed by Bauhaus: clarity, simplicity and functionality. 36 social housing buildings were constructed under the direction of Otto Bartning. They were isolated buildings, without main façade, of different shapes and sizes. A couple of churches, a library and some schools were also built. Hansaviertel consists of different buildings, with vegetation between the buildings and open spaces, so the residential area is isolated from the devouring noise of the big city.

If we analyze the configuration of La Guineueta housing estate made by the architect Julio Chinchilla Ballesta of the *Obra Sindical del Hogar*, we see very similar characteristics to the composition and arrangement of the Interbau housing blocks: several types of separated buildings of more or less height, which generated spaces between them and which would later be arranged, as explained above.

The new generation of Spanish architects in the 60s began to be interested in what was taking place in Europe, and gradually projected buildings that differed from the classical style of the Franco regime. This new generation of architects gave a touch of modernity to the housing estates that had to take up the increase in the number of immigration that arrived to the country at that time.

The houses that were built met the minimum requirements of a functional house, established during the first half of the 20th century in the CIAM conferences. The architect Julio Chinchilla took as inspiration for most of its types of blocks the buildings of Interbau, which didn't have a main façade. Clear examples are the blocks made by Alvar Aalto, the elongated block with a rectangular ground plan, the repetition of modules of 4 floors of Günther Gottwald, the first skyscraper project of Luciano Baldessari, etc.

- The arrangement of housing blocks

La Guineueta housing estate consists of elongated four-storey blocks (types A and B), isolated blocks of 7 and 9 floors (types C, D and E) and isolated blocks of 15 store low for commercial use (type F).

Block types D and TD T2 are variants of type D, with 8 floors and the same type of dwellings, with the difference that the ground floor is adapted for commercial use.

Block types A, B and D are mainly composed of different modules, creating linear and rectangular built-up areas.

Usually, the distribution of blocks is designed so that the north and south façades of blocks organized horizontally, and the west and east façades of the blocks organized vertically, are oriented towards the interior of the islands, isolating the neighbourhood and giving peace and privacy to people who live there.

As there were no main façades, the access to the block was in the back, in the opposite side of the main streets that created a separation among the different islands. The arrangement alternates blocks of more height and less, respecting the needed separation so the shadows of the blocks do not overlap and a balance is kept between the dimensions and the sun in the area that is not built.

The roofs of the blocks are not passable, and usually the maintenance personnel have to be registered.

- Housing blocks type A

The block type A is a rectangular and linear block with a basement, 4 floors and 2 flats per floor. Each module has a length of 15.40 m and a width of 7.35 m., and each module is repeated in a staggered way because of La Guineueta topography, where we can find slopes more or less pronounced depending on the sector where we are. In total there are 63 blocks type A, with 504 flats in the four islands that make up the housing estate, composed of 2, 3 and 4 long modules.

- Housing blocks type B

It is also a rectangular and linear block with a basement, 4 floors and 2 flats per floor. Each module has a length of 16.80 m and a width of 8.10 m., and each module is repeated in a staggered way because of the topography. In total there are 38 blocks type B, with 304 flats in the four islands that make up the housing estate, composed of 2, 3 and 4 long modules.

- Housing blocks type C

The block type C is an isolated rectangular block with a basement, 7 floors and 4 flats per floor. The floor measures 20.15 m per 18.575 m. In total there are 4 blocks type C, 112 flats in the first and second

island of La Guineueta housing estate. Julio Chinchilla quotes verbatim in the original report of the project that for the construction of this block he has been influenced by the project carried out by Alvar Aalto in Interbau.

- Housing blocks type D

The block type D is a rectangular and linear block with a basement, 9 floors and 2 homes per floor. Each module has a length of 22.48 m and a width of 7.70 m. In total there are 11 blocks type D, 198 flats in the first, second and third island that make up the housing estate, composed of one or two long modules.

- Housing blocks type T2 D

The block type T2 D (original nomenclature of the project) is a variation of block D. The only differences are in the ground floor, intended for commercial use, which is why instead of 9 floors we have 8. It is a rectangular and linear block with a basement with a porter's lodge; it has 8 floors and 2 flats per floor. The only block of this type is located at the 4th island of the housing estate. In total there are 16 flats and 2 commercial premises.

- Housing blocks type TD

The block type TD (original nomenclature of the project) is the last variation of the block type D. It is the same type of block but with two modules aligned. At the ground floor there is an element that protrudes from the façade, it is a space intended for commercial use. It is a rectangular and linear block with a basement and a porter's lodge; it has 8 floors and 2 flats per floor. It has a length of 45 m and a width of 7.70 m. The only block of this type is located in the second island of the housing estate. In total there are 32 flats and 3 commercial premises.

- Housing blocks type E

The block type E is an isolated block with a rectangular ground plan, with two arms on either side at the corners, with basement, 9 floors and 4 flats per floor. In total there are 6 blocks type E, 216 flats in Castor street, in the 4th island of La Guineueta housing estate.

- Housing blocks type F

The block type F is the last type of isolated block in La Guineueta housing estate. It is inspired by the first skyscrapers designed by the Italian architect Luciano Baldessari for the Interbau in 1957.

It has 15 floors with a three-pronged star shape, and each arm corresponds to a flat. It is the highest block of the housing estate, with a height around 48.30 m. It has a mezzanine that widens to give place to 12 commercial premises and the porter's lodge. In total there are 3 blocks type F with 135 flats along Via Favència, in the first and third island of the housing estate.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The starting point for this project was the study of various documentary sources to gain an insight into and an understanding of the urban and residential framework of the city of Barcelona, where the social housing of the large housing developments began to be the most common type of intervention from the second half of the 1950s.

Following this preliminary work, the first step was to locate the records and original documents concerning La Guineueta housing estate, which are kept in the Contemporary Municipal Archives of Barcelona. There it was possible to obtain some of the plans and original project reports, corresponding to the first and second intervention phase in the housing development, undertaken by Obra Sindical del Hogar.

This documentation provided me with a good basis to start working from and to gradually understand the different types of housing blocks initially planned. We must point out that we did not locate any building plans. For this reason, during the study, references are made to the construction characteristics of the different buildings based on descriptions made by the architect Julio Chinchilla in the project report, but which could not be examined in-depth.

A fundamental detail is the quotation made by the architect in the report where he mentions the influence of the Berlin Interbau in 1957 to design one of the blocks built in the housing estate. Thanks to this piece of information, I was able to relate many of the neighbourhood's characteristics based on the Interbau model and its layout principles, which constitute the composition and morphology of the buildings and houses that comprise the housing development.

The next step involved conducting a visual analysis of the current state of La Guineueta housing estate, noting many deviations from the original plans dating from 1960. For this reason, it was necessary to reformulate all the plans based on the original heights and floors, vectorising them to achieve a solid foundation from which to begin evaluating the current state of the housing development, analysing all the morphological changes undergone by the buildings block by block.

In two of the blocks, type E and type TD, which correspond to the third and fourth phases of the project, no kind of graphic documentation was found. Therefore, to conduct the study of the two typologies I did the corresponding graphic surveys to understand their particular composition.

Moreover, thanks to social networks, I got in contact with a private Facebook group called "Fotos de la Guineueta por décadas" [Photos of La Guineueta by decade], made up of a large number of residents in La Guineueta housing estate. This proved to be a very important tool for obtaining many of the visual sources shown throughout the project, since the group administrators are in direct contact with the Roquetes-Nou Barris Historic Archive. Any questions arising in relation to the changes experienced by the neighbourhood were rapidly solved through active responses from the neighbourhood's residents that take part in the group.

To make some conclusive remarks, the housing blocks in La Guineueta housing estate were built without prior urban planning. The failure to consider the function and use of the open spaces at the planning stage triggered the first demonstrations by residents, who voiced demands for green areas and amenities to improve their living conditions.

The neighbourhood was cut off from the rest of the city, since the road network was non-existent. Consequently, since its inception, the housing development was in a constant work process, where the lack of maintenance and urban planning were the main premises to be remedied.

However, the housing estate promoted by Obra Sindical del Hogar offered good living conditions for its inhabitants, built in such a way that they met the minimum housing and functional requirements established in the first half of the 20th century at the International Congresses of Modern Architecture, where the architect Julio Chinchilla drew inspiration from the compositions of the housing built in the Interbau. One such example would be the layout of the house built by the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. The common features presented by the different blocks and houses that comprised La Guineueta housing estate are as follows:

- They mainly comprised an entrance hall, kitchen, laundry area, living room, roofed terrace, bathroom and three bedrooms.
- Access to the interior of the blocks was gained via the façades that overlooked the interior of the islands. Here the openings corresponding to the kitchen and laundry area were located. On the other hand, the roofed terraces, which connected with the living room, were located on the façades that overlooked the main streets.
- The nighttime and daytime areas were differentiated in most of the housing typologies.
- The illuminating surface area is one eighth bigger than the useful floor space in all the rooms and common areas thanks to the openings planned on the façade.
- They present cross ventilation that considerably improves the thermal conditions and prevents problems with damp. All the rooms and common areas have natural ventilation on the façade.
- They were built with a mixed structure of ceramic brick in walls and load-bearing walls, and concrete in the one-way framework, comprising small beams and vaults of the same material.
- The external walls were made of exposed brick and hollow brick, separated by a five-centimetre air chamber.
- Both the openings on the façade of the laundry areas of the housing blocks and those corresponding to each landing of the stairwell were made of concrete lattice.
- The blocks equipped with a lift stopped on the penultimate floor; access to the top floor had to be gained via the stairs.
- The roof terraces are not accessible and are of exclusive use to maintenance staff with registered access.

Once the Government of Catalonia took over the management and administration of the publicly-owned social housing developments, as of 1985 ADIGSA was in charge of managing the first works to call a

halt to the degradation of the neighbourhood and to undertake the first urban planning tasks, which gave rise to the current state of the housing estate. These improvement measures, coupled with the increase in the number of amenities and better communication with the city, have facilitated the gradual integration of La Guineueta neighbourhood into Barcelona's urban fabric.

In short, the execution of this dissertation has allowed me to gain a thorough understanding of the origin and evolution of the residential fabric of La Guineueta housing estate, analysing the features of the different constituent tower blocks and housing. It was constructed to address the need to alleviate the housing shortage endured by the city at that time without giving thought to connecting it to the pre-existing urban fabric. It is for this reason that construction was mainly undertaken in isolated land on the periphery, such as in the case of La Guineueta.

PLÀNOLS: ESTAT ACTUAL

**PLÀNOLS ORIGINALS:
OBRA SINDICAL DEL HOGAR Y
ARQUITECTURA**

Font: Arxiu Municipal Contemporani de Barcelona