

CAIS DO CAVACO

VILA NOVA DE GAIA, PORTUGAL

2020

The project comprises the design of a residential development on the riverfront of Gaia, based on an existing allotment plan. The property, once part of a 19th-century industrial compound called “Cais do Cavaco”, or “Vale dos Amores”, occupies a riverfront of 300 metres of the South bank of the Douro river, overlooking the Porto's historical skyline. Recurrent in Douro's banks, the topography of plot is extremely steep and retained by a series terraces that cascade down to a narrow road embankment. The existing allotment license, which allows very limited planning modifications, consists of four residential plots and with a height limitation of GF+3-storey.

The proposal seeks to avoiding an excess of volume, by reconfiguring the topographic datum of each parking by way of terracing the cascading parking floors and creating pedestrian streets within the development that have walk-outs or sunken courtyards that receive sunlight from South. The otherwise extensive parallel blocks are broken down and crisscrossed by a system of three large green corridors from south to north and opening towards the river, offering both views and a public and private panoramic promenade. The language of the buildings draws from both the vertical composition of the surrounding historical wine cellars and warehouses, as well as the brickwork tectonics characteristic of the English wine trade influence in Porto's architecture.

In addition, and in conjunction with the project, PROMONTORIO was asked to explore opportunities for a small marina for tourists and residents, using both the available parking and the newly created retail front to the river.

Location: Vila Nova de Gaia riverfront (greater Porto), Portugal

Client: Promiris/ TP

Scope of Services: Architecture and landscape architecture

Project Brief: Residential development with marina and retail

Plot Area: 62,350 sq. m

Gross Floor Area: 31,850 sq. m and 11,950 sq. m of landscape

Parking: 520 places (plus 282 for the marina)

Project Status: 2020 (shortlist competition)