



aerial photo with strategic elements

CATEGORY : Urban/architectural
TEAM REPRESENTATIVE : architect / urban planner / landscaper

LOCATION : Saint-Herblain
POPULATION CITY : 43119 inhab. Conurbation : 582 159 inhab
STUDY SITE : 71.1 ha
PROJECT SITE : 17.8 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY : City of Saint-Herblain and Nantes Métropole
OWNER(S) OF THE SITE : Saint-Herblain Municipality, Nantes Métropole, social housing investors

COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION : Urban design project, urban project management, redesign of public spaces ; architectural project management will be certainly introduce with social housing investors associated

HOW THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY?
 Located 5 km west of the city of Nantes, the Preux district is at the centre of an urban sector currently under strong land pressure, the focus of several projects managed by Saint-Herblain Municipality and Nantes Métropole. Although linked to Tramline 1 and ringed with structural roads, the site remains shut in on itself. Designed to a tight and rigid urban scheme, poorly connected to the peripheral districts and surrounded by detached housing, the Preux district is failing to adapt unaided to the emerging new dynamics. The goal is therefore to explore the district's deficiencies and qualities, and to propose a graft strategy of metropolitan adaptability.

CITY STRATEGY
 Built between 1979 and 1982 on a garden city model, the district won an international prize in 1984, but is now being overtaken by metropolitanisation. Invisible from the main communication axes, under competition from nearby shopping centres, it has lost most of its businesses and shops. Despite an attractive living environment, the neighbourhood is gradually closing in on itself and is beginning to decline. Saint-Herblain Municipality and Nantes Métropole are therefore now looking for innovative project strategies based around:

- connecting Preux with the surrounding districts and the new public transport systems,
- regenerating a neighbourhood through innovative and high-quality living conditions.



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aerial photo with project site

SITE DEFINITION

Located at the intersection of several urban fragments, the project site constitutes a strategic area for the restructuring of the district. It encompasses Place de Preux, a former focal point that has now lost its shops and activities, and a complex of detached houses and apartments within an inward-facing urban layout. To the west, it backs onto the Preux Business Zone (Z.A.). To the east, it is bounded by the back of the Crémétterie district which has several significant local amenities. In the centre, Rue Pablo Neruda forms a north-south axis where the land is under municipal ownership. Ultimately, this street will connect the future la Baule (north) and Allende (south) Designated Development Zones (ZAC), which will accommodate housing, offices and amenities along two major east-west urban roads

ADAPTABILITY : MAIN ELEMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

Reflecting the aspiration of the designers of the Preux district in the 1970s, the goal will be to devise a new urban and architectural concept in tune with metropolitan lifestyles, whilst exploiting the site's intrinsic qualities and harmonising with recently completed or planned urban operations. This will mean, for example, exploring the urban framework with respect to travel modes and interdistrict relations. It will also mean devising new relations between housing and work: what to do with currently empty premises (shops, workshops, etc.), how to adapt the Preux Business Zone and reconcile, even integrate, it with small business activity in order to avoid the creation of superspecialised urban archipelagos? Submissions will also need to explore the future of the district's declining central square.

Teams will also be invited to explore evolutionary scenarios for the district: how to adapt it to energy priorities (energy inefficient housing), social priorities (a population that is ageing or with reduced mobility), how to accommodate new inhabitants (densification of three plots, BIMBY type strategies, changes to the fabric...), how to implement building processes that are themselves adaptable, flexible, and even reversible? Etc. While Saint-Herblain municipality and Nantes Métropole are seeking forward-looking ideas on the future of Preux, these will nevertheless need to take the form of processes and scenarios that are themselves adaptable to ongoing and future urban dynamics.

Saint-Herblain - France - european 12





Photo 1 : vue of the Place de Preux



Photo 2 : Le bois



Photo 3 : the east entrance of the district from the Crémeterie



Photo 4 : The Preux Business Zone (Z.A.)