



**CATEGORY :** Urban/architectural  
**TEAM REPRESENTATIVE :** architect / urban planner / landscaper  
**LOCATION :** Marseille, quartiers nord  
**POPULATION :** City : 850 600 inhab. - Conurbation 1 040 000 inhab.  
**STUDY SITE :** 4,27 ha **PROJECT SITE :** 0,44 ha  
**SITE PROPOSED BY :** Marseille Rénovation Urbaine and City of Marseille  
**OWNER(S) OF THE SITE :** Le Plan d'Aou Property Company  
**COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION :** urban design project, redesign of public spaces, architectural project management in connection with partners

**HOW THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY?**  
Plan d'Aou is the outcome of three decades of successive construction, demolition and reconstruction. This 900 unit housing estate, opened in 1972, experienced its first demolitions in 1987. Several housing programmes, mostly private, have been built since, along with public amenities. The recent inauguration of a north-south highway has opened up the district and reintroduced activities.  
At a time when an important phase in the urban renovation project is coming to an end, European is an opportunity to look forward and maintain the impetus of change, to design a new method of intervention and simulate the adaptations possible over time, around a place of residence, of temporary accommodation and of intergenerational relations.

**CITY STRATEGY**  
Marseille Rénovation Urbaine (MRU) is a Public Interest Group responsible for the strategic management of 14 urban renovation projects in partnership with ANRU (national urban renovation agency), either underway or approaching completion. By participating in European 12, MRU and the City of Marseille wish to stimulate creative ideas on the design of evolving urban and architectural forms, appropriate to metropolitan ways of life and existing social practices. The project forms part of the City of Marseille's objectives for the regeneration and development of the northern districts: better public transport provision, higher quality housing and public spaces, improved neighbourhood image, support for economic activities and community life.





## SITE DEFINITION

Located on the northern edge of Marseille, Plan d'Aou forms an urban promontory offering remarkable views over the wider landscape and the Bay of Estaque. The area is bounded by slopes used in the past for clay extraction (former tileworks and brickworks). The site is characterised by significant differences in level, which affect its accessibility.

Six hundred metres from the project site, Saint-Antoine Station links the district to the stations of Marseille Saint-Charles (16 min away) and Aix-en-Provence (20 min). To the south is the Grand Littoral shopping centre, built in 1995. The residents of Plan d'Aou reflect the cosmopolitan nature of Marseille and its different waves of immigration. Several generations of residents live side-by-side here, sharing cultural and community activities, social problems and attachment to the neighbourhood and its eventful history.

## ADAPTABILITY : MAIN ELEMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

The connection with the theme of the adaptable city takes several forms:

- extending the dynamic initiated by the urban renovation plan, conceiving urban and architectural forms that are adapted to social practices applicable at the metropolitan scale,
- considering the timeframes and evolutionary potential of the project, planning future adaptations or changes relating to architecture, building processes and the design of housing and public space,
- thinking about housing types that are appropriate and adaptable in the light of an ageing population, and designing places of intergenerational community,
- incorporating the social and economic dimensions into the project process, by leaving space for initiatives by residents and community groups, or by social economy actors.

Guidelines of the programme proposed for the project site:

**Intergenerational community housing:** a residential and living space for the elderly, reception facilities and temporary accommodation for families, artists and students.

**A lasting and sustainable, but also evolutive and adaptable architecture:** an urban programme that is open to initiatives by people who live or work there, by creating the conditions for community life.

**Business activities and local services:** including or stimulating initiatives by residents or social economy actors, relating to human services, catering, growing or gardening.

**Public spaces for shared uses:** at district scale or connecting with Parc de Séon.





View of the Canovas belvedere



View of the project site





Canovas and Saint-Antoine mall



Des Malouins street



Project site



Millie Mathys avenue