



Aerial photograph of the site with the St-Sever station (left) and the Lacroix Island (right)

CATEGORY : Urban/architectural
TEAM REPRESENTATIVE : architect / urban planner / landscaper
LOCATION : city of Rouen
POPULATION : City : 113 500 inhab.
 Conurbation: 486 200 inhab.
STUDY SITE : 111 ha **PROJECT SITE :** 35 ha
SITE PROPOSED BY : City of Rouen, with those partners on the project : RFF - SNCF
OWNER(S) OF THE SITE : City of Rouen, RFF - SNCF, State (waterways et main roads)
COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION : Urban design project liable to lead to urban project management, redesign of public spaces, urban scenography, architectural project management introduced by partners (civil engineering)

HOW THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY?

The proposed site encompasses an area around the Seine to the east of the city centre. It runs from the St-Sever railway brown field site (future left bank station) to Île Lacroix. Though both major urban landmarks, there are few connections between the two. The purpose of the project is to provide coherent proposals for the development and integration of the embankments, through their respective changes. Establishing the terms for a profound transformation of this area means thinking about future uses, links and connections, a diversity of alternative practices, which will contribute to a future sustainable city.

Over the next 15 years or so, there needs to be reciprocal adaptation between the station and the Island, a built-up and inhabited space with remodelled boundaries. For an urban whole to emerge from these distinct territories, with the river as its common denominator and its banks as a unifying factor, requires a long-term approach that anticipates project changes, reflection on the rhythms of change, and an adaptation of current and future uses.

Proposals will need to respond to urban divisions in the dense city by establishing crossings, continuities, permeabilities, and devising infrastructures that will guarantee high quality public space.

For the city centre location, using the Seine as a source of opportunity, projects will need to propose urban and architectural forms imbued with the presence of nature and biodiversity.

The compatibility of uses with the desired urban quality, their sustainability, the experimental nature of temporary events, changes, juxtapositions in time, will need to be explored right through to the end of the process of transformation of the site and help to tackle the challenge it raises.

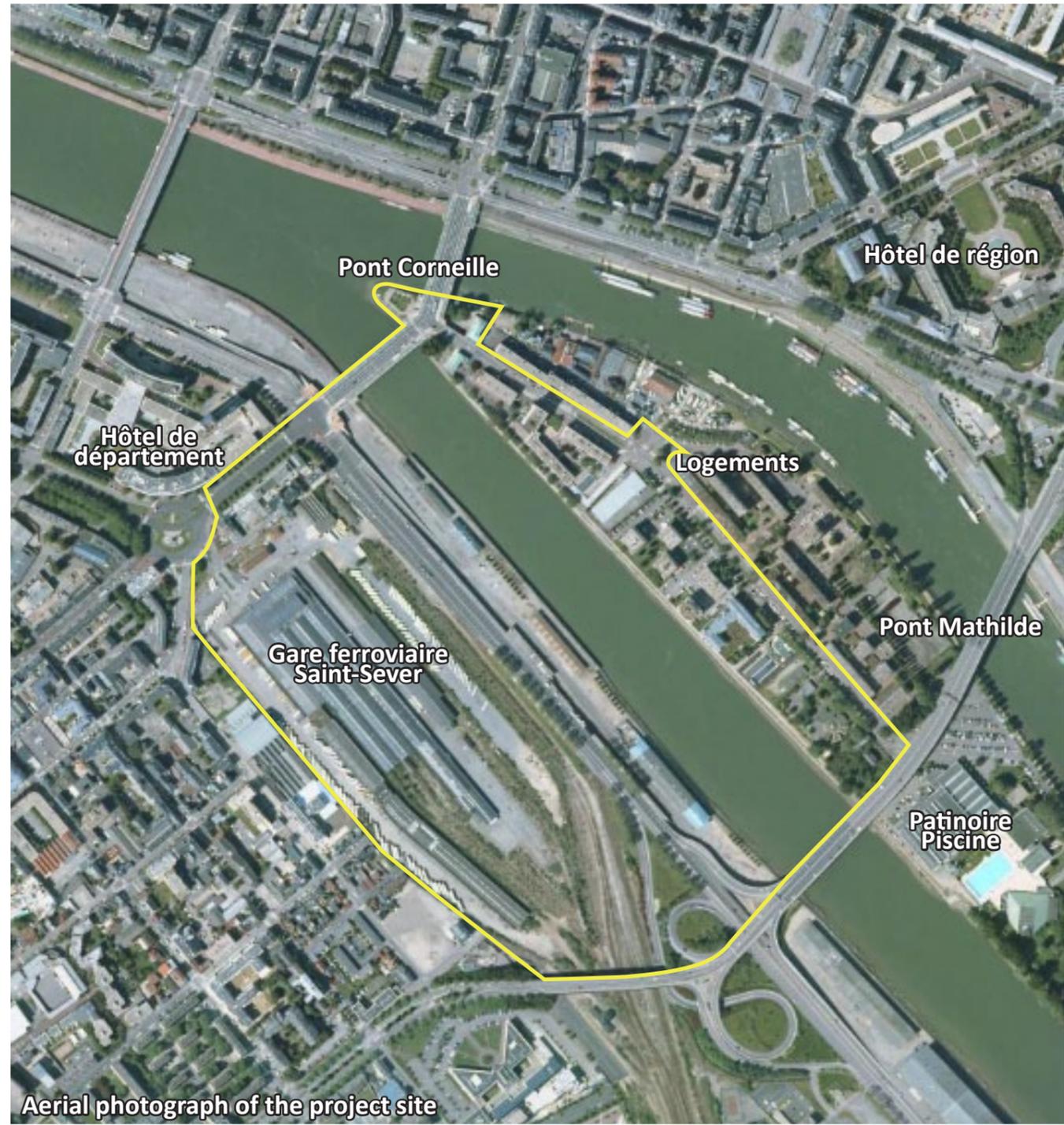
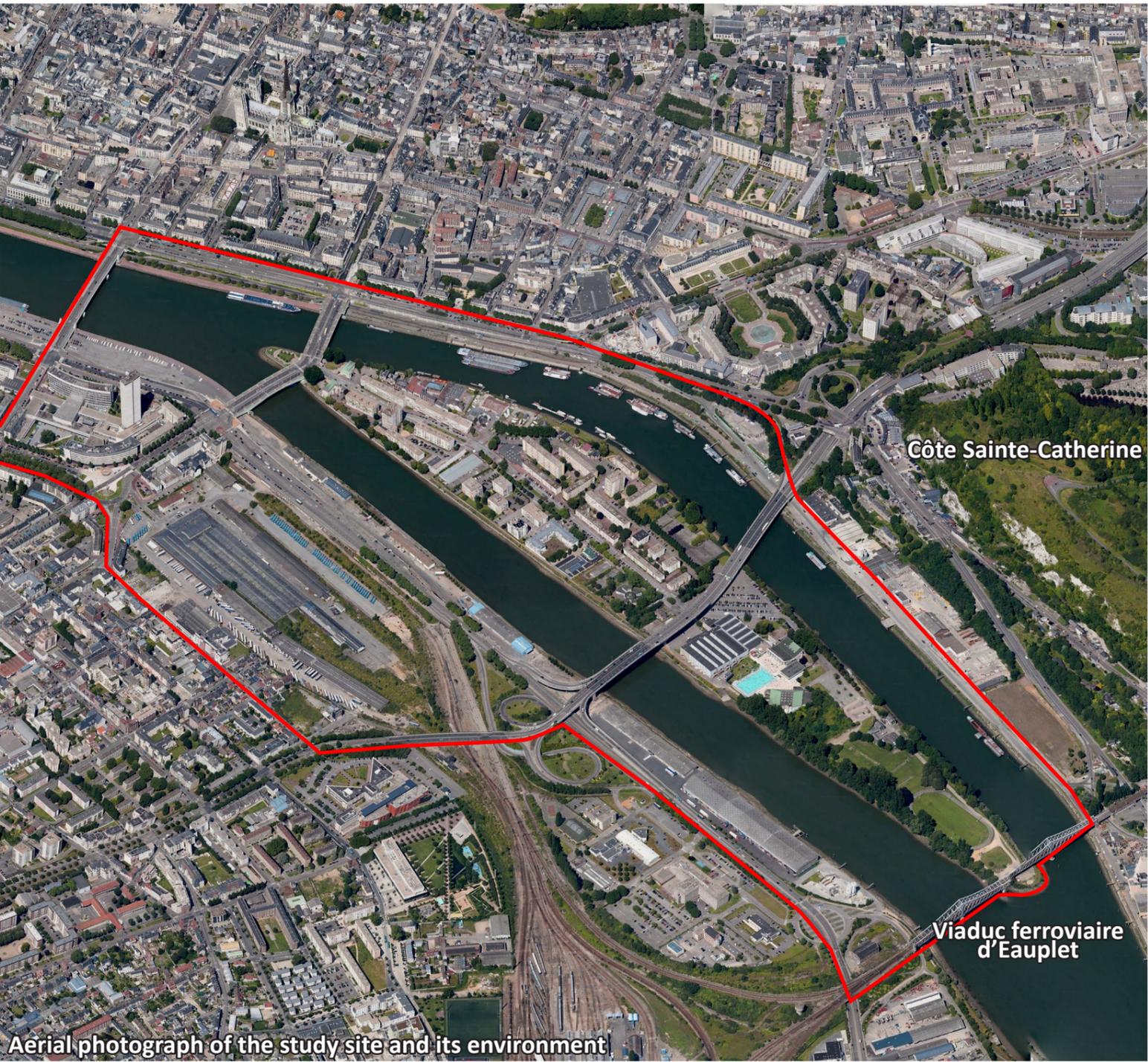
CITY STRATEGY

Geographical coherence makes the banks of the Seine an essential guiding thread in the transformation of the city centre. More broadly, these ideas of metamorphoses relate in passing to different scales, where the Seine axis emerges as a vector of integration and territorial development:

- the scale of the wide territories through which the river passes between Paris and Le Havre (an economic, structural, logistical and ecological network), including the arrival of a high-speed railway between Paris and Normandy;
- the scale of the Rouen conurbation which favours its strategic position as a major landmark and development hub that should see growth in all its sectors of activity;

- the scale of the city, with the revival of the attraction between town and river. As a showcase of the city's modern image and the community structures it is developing, it aims to change the city's perception of its river, offering the people of the city multiple ways of appropriating and using these spaces.

The arrival of the station, the renovation of the Island, the treatment of the Seine embankments, all significant events, are essential factors in the transformation of the eastern districts and require a transversal approach that incorporates sociocultural components (presence of Art in public space), relating to notions of permeability, mobility, accessibility, mutability, mixity and the role of nature and landscape in today's sustainable city. The creation of housing, amenities and activities will entrain a revival of economic activity, along with a long-lasting reinforcement of events associated with leisure, relaxation and culture.



SITE DEFINITION

Numerous projects (urbanism, architecture and public space) mark and punctuate the curve of the river, producing the city of tomorrow, whilst remodelling neighbourhoods deep within the urban fabric. The site is part of the city of Rouen's strategy to revitalise and recapture its embankments, the focus of the project. In this process, the project is the preparation for the final phase of intervention on the eastern part of the city centre, with two distinct and markedly different entities.

The first is the Saint-Sever Station land situated within the ring of central boulevards, an isolated brown field site which currently operates as a logistics centre. This isolated space will become the new left bank Station which, with its multimodal role, will form part of a new transport network that will underpin the emergence of a neighbourhood of an estimated 300,000 m², guaranteeing the diversity of an urban centre.

Since "Reconstruction", Ile Lacroix has lost its natural character. Its downstream section is home to large estates, housing some 3000 people (rental and condominiums). Upstream, it is separated from the residential area by Mathilde Bridge, which spans the island and houses several sports facilities and green leisure spaces. As a distinctive area within the city, its location and island character give it a strong identity, closely linked with the rhythms of the river.

ADAPTABILITY : MAIN ELEMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

- Taking a global approach to transformation; the dimension of the projects developed on the Seine axis (a land area of almost 150 ha) constitutes a major opportunity for the future of the city. This means that the potential changes in this sector need always to be approached from a twofold perspective, the local scale and the metropolitan scale. This transformation of the riverside landscape is a source of potential that needs to reflect new ways of life that that will be a fertile source for the city of tomorrow.

- An open context:
While Ile Lacroix poses an accumulation of problems—difficult access because of its relative isolation, the persistence of urban wasteland, a housing stock of modest quality (in the process of renovation), public and natural spaces that demand improvement – it has potential qualities that can be elicited. The ideal strategic position of the Station, its association with multimodal hub connected with a city neighbourhood, offer an unprecedented opportunity to remodel this part of the left bank.

- A project conducted over time:
In order to give real substance to the ongoing metamorphosis, a long-term framework needs to be established for the public space, which is tuned to the long timeframes of change, can accept and adapt to alterations, the potential intermingling of programmes, mixed occupancies and alternative uses of space. Adapting to transformations means planning for transitional phases in the implementation process, associated with particular events, it means taking an experimental approach to specific timeframes in the deployment of public space and the construction

or refurbishment of buildings. Establishing stable prospects for the urban quality of places and the social ambience of inhabited spaces means accepting morphological variations, temporary activities, a degree of reversibility.

- The reality of an iconic district:
With regard to the sustainability of the river landscape, the task here is to specify the terms of an urban dialogue between city and nature, consonant with the existing context, in experimenting with the morphology of solids and voids, exploring densities and permeabilities, whilst weaving organic links between housing, amenities and activities. The location of the project site, its connection with "the Seine axis", the importance of the future left bank Station, the proximity of the island opposite, all demand an ambitious project. Candidates are asked to put forward proposals relating to two scales:
On the scale of the wider perimeter, the remit is to develop strategic proposals based on a master plan that takes account of possible short-term and long-term changes, for a layered project that brings together the themes developed and relates them to an analysis of the urban environment and the municipality's cultural policy.
On the scale of the project site, keeping in mind the future station, the remit is to propose potential urban and architectural forms that will generate a lasting quality of public space by modelling the urban landscape and the density of solids and voids around the Seine. The objective is to forge good community relations and comfortable exchanges and flows, in an equitable neighbourhood where living, working and learning will be possible. Scenarios for phased development should take account of the expected timeframes for the implementation of change.

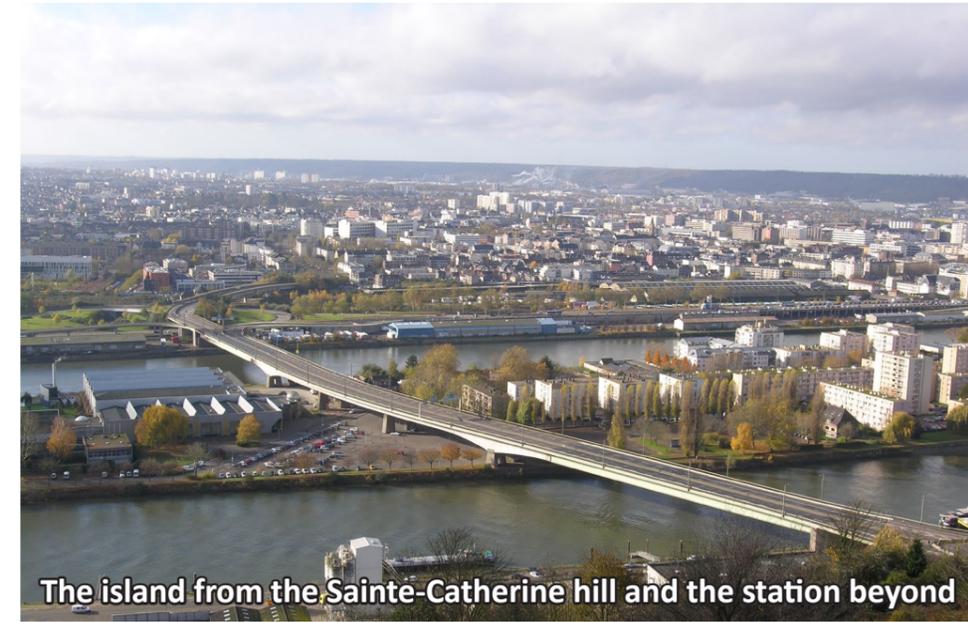
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Aerial view on the island and the left bank



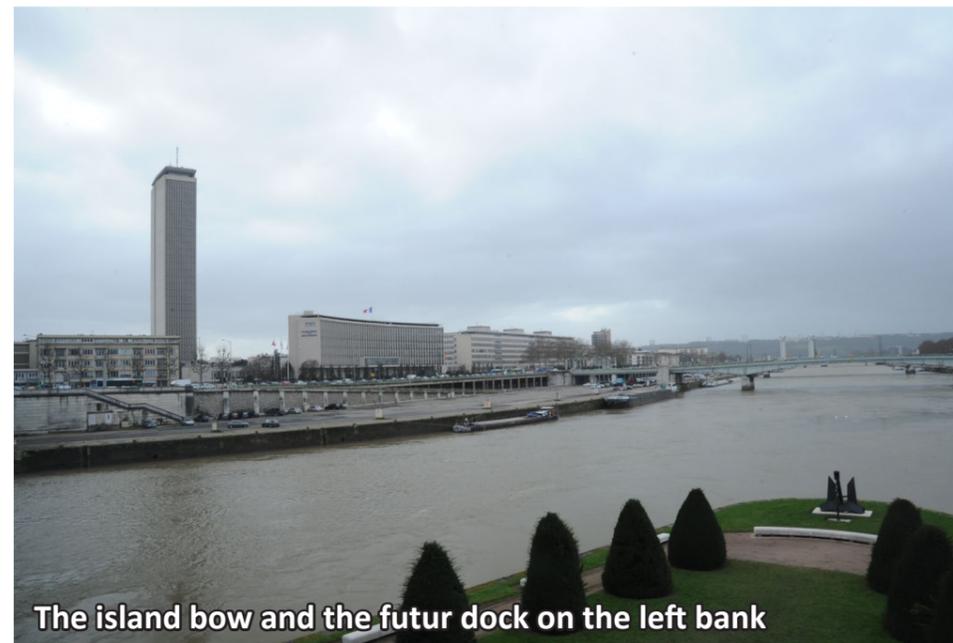
The island from the Sainte-Catherine hill and the station beyond



The two banks and the prefecture



Avenue Jacques Chastellain, the main road on the Island



The island bow and the futur dock on the left bank



View of the island from the Jacques Anquetil dock