**Le Havre, the City Rebuilt by Auguste Perret**

Located on the English Channel in Normandy, the city of Le Havre was severely bombed during the Second World War. The destroyed area was rebuilt between 1945 and 1964 according to the plan of a team of architects and town planners headed by Auguste Perret. The site forms the administrative, commercial and cultural centre of Le Havre. Among the many reconstructed cities, Le Havre is exceptional for its unity and integrity, associating a reflection of the earlier pattern of the city and its extant historic structures with the new ideas of town planning and construction technology. It is an outstanding post-war example of urban planning and architecture, based on the unity of methodology and the use of prefabrication, the systematic utilization of a modular grid and the innovative exploitation of the potential of concrete.

The inscribed property, an urban area of 133 ha, represents a homogenous architectural and urban ensemble. It comprises large areas (principal axes, squares, buildings and significant groups of buildings of the *École du Classicisme Structurel*), but also the ordinary residential fabric (streets, passages, inner city blocks) created from 1945 to 1964 within the reconstruction framework. It integrates the île Saint-François (rebuilt at the same time by regional architects, not part of the Perret team), fragments of ancient urban fabric and isolated buildings spared from destruction (around which the grid of the city is reconstructed) and buildings constructed after 1964, the presence of which appears indissociable to the rebuilt fabric (notably the *Maison de la Culture*, the *Résidence de France*, the extension of the Town Hall).

The new urban plan follows two axes: the principal public axe is formed by the broad *Avenue Foch*, which runs in west-east direction through the northern part of the city, taking the alignment of the earlier *Boulevard de Strasbourg*. It starts from the *Porte Océane* on the sea front and continues to *Saint-Roch square* and the *place de* *Hôtel de Ville*, providing the general direction for the basic grid. At the *Porte Océane*, the avenue is crossed at the angle of 45° by the *Boulevard François Ier*, which forms the second axis. The *Quartier du Perrey* is on the seaside part of the boulevard. The *Porte Océane* is a monumental entrance to *Avenue Foch* and an entrance to the city from the sea, taking the idea of the ancient gate destroyed in the war. This building also became an experimental “laboratory” for the development of the structural system and methods of construction for the project. The *Saint-Roch square* is located in the place of an earlier public park and cemetery, which has given some of its orientations. The *Hôtel de Ville* (Town Hall) is the most monumental structure in the whole scheme: it measures 143 m in length, and its central part is marked by a tower of 18 stories and is 70 m in height.

Perret’s project reflects his ideal: to create a homogenous ensemble where all the details are designed to the same pattern, thus creating a kind of *Gesamtkunstwerk* on the urban scale. The architect reserved some of the principal public buildings for his personal design projects.

**Criterion (ii):** The post-war reconstruction plan of Le Havre is an outstanding example and a landmark of the integration of urban planning traditions and a pioneer implementation of modern development in architecture, technology and town planning.

**Criterion (iv):** Le Havre is an outstanding post-war example of urban planning and architecture, based on the unity of methodology and system of prefabrication, the systematic use of a modular grid and the innovative exploitation of the potential of concrete.

**Integrity**

The essence of Perret’s project resides in its structural design based on a utilization of avant-garde reinforced concrete elements, with the system known as “*poteau dale*”. His idea was to create a completely transparent modular structure so that no structural element remains hidden, giving its domineering character and a certain uniformity to all the architecture of the city. Nevertheless, the elements are used with skill in such a way as to avoid boredom. The design of the buildings and open spaces was based on a square module of 6.24 m each side, to facilitate production, but also to introduce “musical harmony” into the city. In comparison to prer-war density, the average density of the population was reduced from 2,000 to 800 inhabitants par hectare. The spirit of the city was conceived as “neoclassical”, with closed construction blocks and where the streets remain functional. These principles of integration of urban traditions and a pioneer implementation of modern developments in architecture, technology and town planning, have been fully respected and today remain perfectly visible.

**Authenticity**

Le Havre, the City Rebuilt by Auguste Perret, is a recent work of historical importance. The plan and the location of the buildings have remained unchanged since their construction. If modernisations and current maintenance have replaced here and there some components, the authenticity of the ensemble remains intact.

**Protection and management requirements**

The modern city constructed by Perret is protected through an Outstanding Heritage Site (SPR) listing, approved in July 2016, that defines intervention modes in buildings or undeveloped land. (….)