

Liesa Schroeder
Julie De Weger
Fernando Navarro
Marija Beg

MORE TOURS IN TOURS

1 STUDY AREA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CITY

The City of Tours

Tours is the capital of the *Indre-et-Loire* department in central France. For tourists it is a stop-off during their visit to the Loire Valley. For locals it is the place they live with varying levels of permanency. For students who study there, it is a place of temporary (yet often strong) affiliation. Each of these groups contributes to the city as a living formative influence and each of them uses the city in a different way. Therefore, the city is partly characterized by its users.

Furthermore, Tours is a Roman city *Caesarodunum*; it is a pilgrimage route; it is a Medieval city; it is the birthplace of the Renaissance in France; it is the city for royal ceremonies with French axial symmetry; it is a bombarded city scarred by wars, especially the last one and finally, it is the city that has been rebuilt. Tours is all that, but also none of that. It is the city of today, yet still comprises all those layers that have been added down the centuries. Accordingly, the city is partly characterized by the contradictions of past and present.

At last, Tours is a part of the Loire Valley UNESCO Heritage Site. This institutionalized protective measure should help some areas to deal with inevitable changes in the modern world, but there is a risk of preventing further development by preserving and monumentalizing the existing situation. Ironically, what we try to protect now, we wouldn't have even had if we had preserved it in today's way centuries ago!

On the other hand, we have the worldwide, seemingly opposing concept of 'sustainability', the term that each one interprets differently and that mostly serves as a fashionable excuse for endless discussions with questionable results.

Tours is trying to apply those two principles to its further development. It has, like every



1.

Source : Google Maps



other city, its unique structure, approach and vision for the future. Thus, there is no ambiguous model, nor pattern that can be used and applied equally for each city in this process. In this sense, there is a dependence of the city on the stakeholders, the leaders and influential parties in the system. Therefore, it is obvious that the city is also partly characterized by the will and power to act within the given frameworks of time and space.

The River and the Street

In short, except its geographical characteristics, Tours is, like every other city, defined by, and dependant on, its users, its historical background mixed with contemporary circumstances and its leadership with their influence.

Having all these different dimensions of the city in mind, we could finally get to our study area (picture 1). It is at the location that forms a linkage between two dominant elements in this part of the city. One natural and one manmade: the river Loire and the street, *Rue Nationale*. The first one is the dominant East-West axis, and the second one is the dominant North-South axis. Those two elements took most of our attention in all discussions and analyses. Everybody agrees that the river is beautiful. And everybody agrees that the street is problematic. *Rue Nationale* is functional, it is completely pragmatic, but in essence it physically disintegrates the city and it symbolizes historical, no longer existing, values. There is no king that will come with his carriages anymore and there is no need for a grand entrance to the city in that sense. Luckily, the story of the city continues in a different direction, therefore planning should be orientated to the new dimensions of the city that follow those new directions.

Anyhow, all these elements are here, they are maybe juxtaposed, but they are inevitably present, they create the memory of the city

and its physical appearance. We could not just exclusively disregard them, on the contrary, we tried to be as inclusive as possible i.e. we have tried to respect the existing situation, but suggest some relevant shifts.

Taking this existing situation as a starting point, we tried to explore more deeply into the city and to find those new values and the hidden potentials that would form some generic solution. This exploration would then lead us to the proposal that should be applicable to this site but also to the city as a whole.

2 STUDY AREA IN THE CITY SCALE

Zooming out to City Scale

Whereas each area (including our study area) depends on the city as a whole and vice versa, it was necessary to take a broader look at the whole city of Tours (picture 2). Also, as all of us were complete strangers in Tours, it was difficult to understand the study area without knowing the city and all of its (historical) layers better. Only if we do so, we will be able to suggest and justify a concrete project and a possible solution as an integrated vision for Tours.

First we took a wider view to the city to understand the position of the study area in the city and its connections to the other parts. We could immediately see some major characteristics of the city, for example the two rivers (Loire and Cher) which shape the city and a dominant axis from North to South that seems to divide Tours. One could also clearly notice the boulevard (*Boulevard Béranger / Heurteloup*) from West to East where the historic city walls of Tours used to be. These characteristics are obvious and visible immediately, but after some research (sightseeing, information from locals, analysis, discussions etc.) we recognized characteristics which are less visible. Those were mainly demographic,

2.
Source : Google Maps



educational, touristic or cultural characteristics. They have shown us how deeper elements of the city function and how they are not necessarily in touch with the first impressions one gets after coming to Tours. This analysis shaped a framework for our further progress.

We also tried to focus our attention to the key problems and the needs of the city and its users.

Firstly, we recognized that the city has three dominant groups of people: locals in general, students in particular and tourists, and each of them is using it differently. Secondly, there is a lack of activities for students like affordable places for hobbies, discussions, sports, cultural or other activities. Student life (apart from mere studying) is mostly limited to the historical centre and is therefore quite isolated. Thirdly, Tours has many cultural heritage sites of which some are inadequately presented but not linked to the others.

Users of the City

Users are one of the key components of the city, they give life to the city and so their needs are very important, even crucial, in the process of analysis and goal setting.

As a starting point, to better understand users' needs, we analysed their habits and problems. We tried to find the answer to the following questions:

- What parts of the city do they use?
- In what period of the year do they stay in Tours?
- How do they 'occupy' the city?
- What are their favourite activities and where do they carry them out?
- What do they miss in the city that could improve their life and that could activate them?

However, as just stated, each of the three groups uses the city differently.

Locals mainly use the city centre because this is the place where there are bars, shops and restaurants. They like to spend their free time

there. But as the rents increase more and more and the area of heritage monument protection (*Le Secteur Sauvgarde*) is being expanded, the process of gentrification is observable, so that the locals are gradually moving outwards from the city centre into other housing (picture 3). Their daily life does not therefore take place in the city centre, but in the more out of town neighbourhoods.

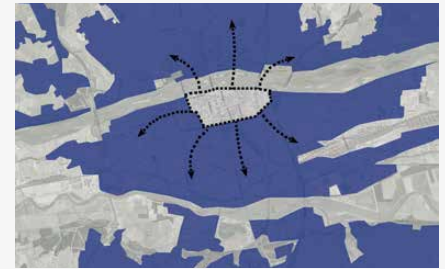
The students of Tours represent a special group with their special needs and way of living. The students are spread all over the city because there are several university locations both in the city centre as in the outer parts (picture 4). Still, they prefer to spend their free time in the city centre. The students live in Tours, but only for about nine months a year. In summer and winter, when they are on vacation, they leave for their hometowns

Tours is a popular tourist destination. The tourists are seasonal guests and arrive mainly in the late spring and summer. Most of them tend to pass through on the famous Loire Valley Tour and thus stay for a very short period, mostly no longer than one day. As all the tourists' attractions are located in the historical centre they concentrate there (picture 5).

Mixture of Social, Economic and Environmental Aspect

On the basis of this knowledge, we could define our goals. As we already mentioned, the aim of this project was not just to make some proposal for our study area to be rebuilt or redesigned, but to think of long-term actions which could improve life in the city and address the needs of the different users. To include all users, we set the following main goals (picture 6).

First of all, we want to bring locals and students back to the city centre (where they could have more activities) to make it the real core of city life and not just a place for tourists (social aspect).



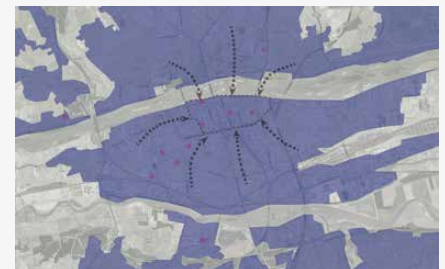
3.
Source : <http://www.geoportail.gouv.fr>



4.
Source : <http://www.geoportail.gouv.fr>



5.
Source : <http://www.geoportail.gouv.fr>



6.
Source : <http://www.geoportail.gouv.fr>



7.

Source : Google Maps



8.

Source : Bing Maps



9.

Source : Fernando Navarro



10.

Source : Wikipedia

Secondly, the different users should be mixed in a diverse city centre to keep a stable economy during the whole year and not only in summer when the tourists arrive (economic aspect).

Finally we want to use the existing public space in Tours appropriately to attract more people and all kinds of users, improve the environment and give the locals more space to meet and interact (environmental aspect).

Some of our sub-goals are to link students and tourists, for example by developing cooperation between the university and the congress centre, to connect not only the city and especially the city centre to the river Loire, but also to interconnect the different parts of the city between each other.

3 CITY CENTRE ANALYSIS

Areas in the City Centre

After general research, we set a limit to our study area at the former borders (and walls) of the city (today's *Boulevard Béranger / Heurteloup* and *Rue Léon Boyer*).

Inside those boundaries we recognize several sub-areas, each one with its own characteristics according to the location in the city, period of occurrence, traffic, users' habits, greenery, connection to the other areas etc. They tend to be 'cities in the city' and they are not coherent as a unified whole. We have highlighted seven areas: *Place Anatole France* site, *Rue Nationale*, Medieval historic area, Ancient heritage historic area, riverside, central train station and boulevard /old city walls (picture 7).

(1) *Place Anatole France* site (picture 8) can be characterized as monumental, out of scale, empty and cut with traffic. Also it has areas covered with grass and trees. This location served as an entrance for the ceremonies when the king was coming to visit the city. Today it is less a place for staying but more a place for passing through (quickly!), it has no connection to the

river except the view. It covers a large area which is mostly unused. Besides that, it is completely symmetrical and dominated by cars.

(2) *Rue Nationale* (picture 9) is completely straight in a North-South axis, it is monumental and strictly organized, it allows fast movement, divides and is divided in an East-West direction. It serves mostly for shopping, not with local products but with globally known brands and stores. Today it has a recently introduced tramway line and is otherwise used as a paved pedestrian zone. It is flanked by buildings of similar height and the same style.

(3) Medieval historic site (picture 10) occupies the western part of our study area. Contrary to the *Rue Nationale*, this site is very organic, constructed at a human scale, filled with restaurants and bars visited by locals and tourists. It gives an impression of a very lively, comfortable and active area. All visitors are spontaneously drawn here, where streets are small and narrow which makes it a slow movement area. Typical buildings with pitched roofs form charming facades on small and cosy squares.

(4) An ancient heritage historic site (picture 11) is located at the eastern part of our studied area. Also at a human scale, it is very organic, characterized by slow movement and occupied mostly with locals. Tourists visit this area to see the heritage site (*Cathédrale Saint-Gatien* or *Château de Tours*) but otherwise they rather spend evenings in the medieval part.



11.

Source : Panoramio - fjdiago

(5) The riverside (picture 12) is a huge area largely covered with parking lots. It is used for recreation and as a promenade but an appropriate design and a real connection to the river is still missing. Also it is very attractive for night life, especially at the *Guinguette*, an open air bar/restaurant with a rich cultural programme.



12.

Source : Panoramio – aaazerty

(6) The central train station area (picture 13), next to the central bus station, is characterized by traffic, the fast movement of people and an inappropriate design of squares. There is no urban furniture and people don't stay there for a longer period.

(7) Finally, the boulevard (picture 14) (at the place of the old city walls) is one large street that is filled with lines of trees in the middle. Probably because of these trees, that are protecting and isolating pedestrians from the cars, this area doesn't feel monumental and is adjusted to the human scale. Also it represents the memory of the old walls. The large pedestrian area in the middle is occasionally used for the sale of local products in the small kiosks that are placed there.

Uniform Element in Non-Uniform Areas

The point we wanted to make by showing this analysis is that all of these areas are diverse in their character and usage. Each of them

is functioning independently of the other areas, they are not really functionally interrelated and there is a huge polarisation in their development.

However, there is one common element that we have noticed and recognized as a link between all mentioned areas: **inappropriately furnished and inappropriately used public space**. They are spread around the city, they miss urban design in general and all of them, almost without exception, are full of cars. There is an impression that they are made exclusively for cars (pictures 15, 16, 17). We have realized that there is here a mixture of inadequate planning and an inertia of users that has resulted in this current state. For example, this image (picture 18) is an example of how people use their private chairs in the public park because they don't have a place to sit in the park in their own neighbourhood. Unfortunately, the majority of Tours citizens don't use public space at all.

Anyway, those spaces cover large unbuilt areas. Thus, they can be easily and inexpensively transformed and converted to some new use without demolishing buildings.

Therefore, we conclude that these public spaces do actually have a lot of potential for renovation. They represent the basis for the improvement of the functionality of the city.

4 NETWORK

Re-use of the existing fabric

Now the city centre analysis has revealed that public spaces are used for cars and not for people (picture 19), we have decided to take one step further in using their potential. We focused on the idea of redesigning all these spaces to get a **complete public space network** for the whole city centre which will interrelate all those different currently unrelated areas (the seven sites mentioned in the previous chapter) (picture 20).



13.

Source : <http://www.tours.toile-libre.org/histoire.php>

14.

Source : Fernando Navarro



15.

Source : Fernando Navarro



16.

Source : Liesa Schroeder



17.

Source : Panoramio - ktanaka



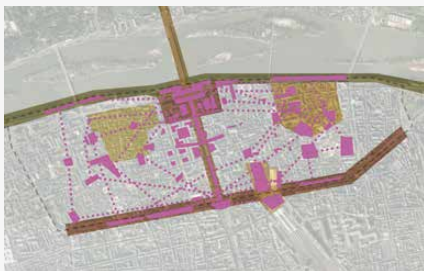
18.

Source : Marija Beg



19.

Source : Marija Beg



20.

Source : Google Maps

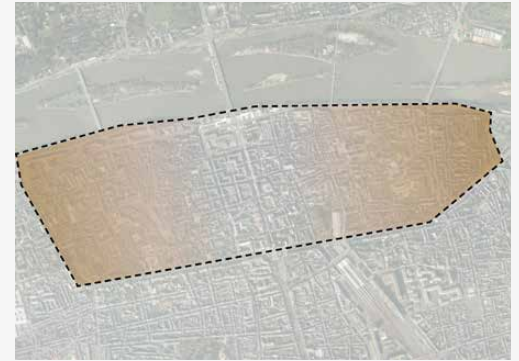
We wanted to point out that there are plenty of squares which are full of parking lots or with a couple of trees without benches that are not real public spaces for people. In their current condition, they represent a waste of one of the main resources of the city. We face the problem of inappropriate public space design but turn the problem into a potential to offer something else for urban 'reactivation.' Those small benefits for each part of the city centre will provide an extra value to solve or minimize their deficiencies and needs. With this redesign of existing urban spaces, we expect to show that the most appropriate solution is not always to build new constructions, buildings or equipment, but to properly re-use or re-design what we already have.

We propose a generic solution which can be applied equally to each one of the seven areas. We suggest the interrelation of all these areas in the city centre through the element of public space. They can be transformed into park, square, playground, sports field, stage, street or any other purpose. Also, if necessary they can easily be transformed again into some new function. Therefore, the public space becomes the *leitmotif* for improvement of life in the city.

Gradual Removal of the Cars

We want to decrease the number of cars, with the ultimate aim to take cars out of the middle axis of city centre, where the *Rue Nationale* is already connected to the rest of the city by the tram (picture 21). We think the best way to perform this idea is to push the cars gradually to the edges of the city centre, even, if possible, outside the city centre. This car removal should be done progressively, first one day per month, then one day per week, then two days per week etc. This way the people can get used to it without big and sudden changes. With this measure, public space in the city centre is automatically freed for bicycles or pedestrians

and at the same time the existing parking places are emptied for some preferable usage like parks or playgrounds.



21.

Source : Google Maps

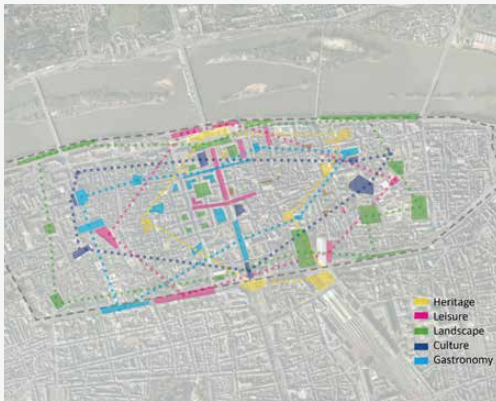
City Networks

In the city centre, we have already mentioned seven recognized areas, but there are many more outside of the centre, with less of a unique character than 'the seven.' Thus, with these public spaces, we do not suggest to make a unique network, but a series of connected networks in the entire city. There are many 'different Tours in Tours' and with networking principle they are all interrelated. They have one common element, i.e. uniting them and shaping a stable framework within which changes are possible and welcome.

We can offer different ways to experience the city for all the different categories of people and users. We base all these different networks in the already existing specific features of each recognized area of the city centre. With networks we want to enhance their cultural and heritage potentials.

This network of existing public spaces is formed by a series of sub-networks connecting different functions of the public spaces: heritage, leisure, landscape, culture and gastronomy (picture 22). These five functions appear most

frequently all around the city, especially in the city centre. Each of the existing public spaces can be somehow related to one of those five functions. We propose that all these different networks create a system that would connect all the public spaces related to the same function. For example, the square in front of the cathedral should have some relation to the square in front of the train station and other heritage areas, it should be obvious in their setup, arrangement, visual identity, urban furniture elements or similar according to integrated urbanistic, architectural or design decisions. Equally, the square in front of the new gastronomic centre could have something in common with the square in front of the restaurant in the medieval part of the city, etc.



22.

Source : Google Maps

An appropriate space arrangement would increase the activities in the city centre, attracting more people there and fostering the city life in general.

Low-Cost Temporary Solutions

Following the principle of a gradual urban space transformation and the temporary testing of possible solutions, the reaction of the

people and their level of acceptance needs to be checked. This way the opinion of the people can be taken into consideration, allowing them to participate in the design of the city they really want and need before any further renewal of the urban space is implemented.

The temporary urban space design can use many movable elements like small buildings or kiosks (pictures 23, 24, 25, 26). These constructions can be used as info points, bike rentals, cafes, exhibition centres, pavilions etc. Similarly, taking as a reference the canopy of the Marseille's Vieux Port Pavilion (designed by Foster and Partners, 2011-2013) (picture 27), a small reflecting canopy could be built by the side of the river that reflects the water to connect it to the city visually.

With the aim of bringing the students to the city centre, for other activities except shopping or partying, we propose to form some creative spaces, debating hubs, cultural and collaborative workshop buildings where they can meet, work, exchange ideas, discuss and stay as long as they want. Here they can develop and share their own work or ideas. Also, there should be places for rethinking and improving the city and urban development at a smaller scale.

Another possible way to test the public space design is to generate small low-cost interventions that can be quickly made. For example, we can place movable benches that people can move around wherever they want, so we can check every day the preferred positions. In the end it is possible to locate benches at their preferred position for the final design (if such a definitive design is needed). This way, before investing, one already knows for sure if it is going to be useful or not and what the people really want in the public space. This is an example of a very direct way to allow people to participate in the urban public space decisions without being aware they are doing so!



23.

Source : <http://designoffurniture.com/garden-and-landscape/street-furniture-design-samples/>

25.

Source : <http://popupcity.net/urban-hackivist-creates-tram-track-skateboard/>



24.

Source : streeeeet bench by vincent wittenberg + guy königstein



26.

Source : <http://popupcity.net/berlin-stadium-turns-into-the-worlds-biggest-living-room/>

27.

Nigel Young

Participation of the Users

There are many other urban design tools that can be related to the use of the public space through different kind of activities. They can be related to different functions like leisure, culture, sports etc.. There are many possibilities to use open public spaces: install public table tennis courts, gyms, temporary open air exhibitions, urban furniture or encourage civic participation, artistic critical reflections, public breakfasts, just to mention some of the possible examples. They can be used to encourage a specific identity to every urban space through its use.

It is possible to find innumerable organisations, associations and groups of people that act together to enrich and improve urban life, also some small urban gestures like leaving a note in a public space or other various forms of activism. Some examples are: 'Desayuno con Viandandes' in Valencia, 'I wish this was', 'Before I die', 'Te vi', 'Makea tu vida', 'Monubench', 'Urban parliaments', 'cuisine urbaine', 'potogreen and dadagreen', 'park(ing) day' and many more.

Such activities organized by groups or individuals share similar ideas on how to improve social life in the cities. They all aim to contribute to urban transformation for the better. They serve as a background for the exchange of ideas, for learning and contributing to society. They manifest themselves in the form of workshops, discussions, festivals, various events and parties. Their topics cover culture, art, architecture, urbanism, activism, fashion, ecology, circus, gastronomy, leisure etc. Often, they are funny and amusing. Most importantly, they are always welcome and accepted by the locals and visitors.

5 SITE PROPOSAL Back to the Working Site

After taking a full circle, from the working site, which was unknown at the beginning, to the entire city and then back to the site, it became

clear that the site itself includes all recognized problems and potentials. It is a reflection of the whole city and contains all of its elements. Its position is at the crossroads of all dominant areas in the city centre therefore it is a vital point for the liveability of the city.

Analysis of networks, described in the previous section, shows that all different uses are found on this site: historical (church *St Julien*), cultural (*Le Centre de Création Contemporaine*), gastronomic (future gastronomy centre), landscape (*Place Anatole France* and the riverbank) to leisure (restaurants and shopping along the *Rue Colbert/Rue de Commerce* and *Rue Nationale*). Thus, the study areas taken as a clear sample of how one area can be improved by a re-evaluation of public spaces but also how the same principle could be applied to other areas.

This study area is characterised by its monumentality, cut with traffic and strong North-South axis with the tramway line. It is the first point one sees when crossing the river, next to the *Place Anatole France*, a huge empty area, symmetrical, monumental and completely out of scale. Although, in history, this was a huge ceremonial entrance to the city which was continued with the long straight axis (therefore it has a powerful historical symbolism), its character is no longer an appropriate answer to needs, demands and circumstances of present day society. The idea was to adapt it to today's needs, at the same time respecting the past and its connotations and anticipating its further adaptation in the future.

The method chosen was to use the subtle changes that could give an improvement. We wanted to give maximum possible value to the site, by minimal intervention in the given frameworks and limitations. The entire method is based on the recognition of the inherent advantages of the site and their reinforcement, of its weaknesses and their reduction, and of the most important potentials (i.e. as yet

unused qualities) and their exploitation. The idea was also to find a balance between the demolition and construction of the buildings.

Concrete proposals for the Site

The proposal includes more or less realistic changes, smaller ideas for improvement instead of drastic interventions. The picture (picture 28) shows a simplified image of the position and shape of buildings, public spaces and traffic.

Buildings that are left untouched are the church *St Julien*, the museum *Le Centre de Création Contemporaine* (including the newly designed additional building that is going to be built dedicated to the painter Olivier Debré), the Renaissance palace (*Hôtel Gouÿn*) and the library building at the *Place Anatole France*.

The proposal is to remove buildings along the *Rue Nationale* to introduce some discontinuity into the axis, with the aim of making it less emphatic and to reclaim some importance for the square. Thus, we can free the space for one large square, the place for 'coming together' to counteract the 'mere passing' of the existing axis.

However, the idea is not to invest in the new buildings, but to use the existing ones and reuse those that don't fit in height or design into the surrounding area. The proposal is to reuse, in a different and more appropriate way, the buildings along the *Rue Colbert / Rue Commerce* and at the West and East edge of the study area.

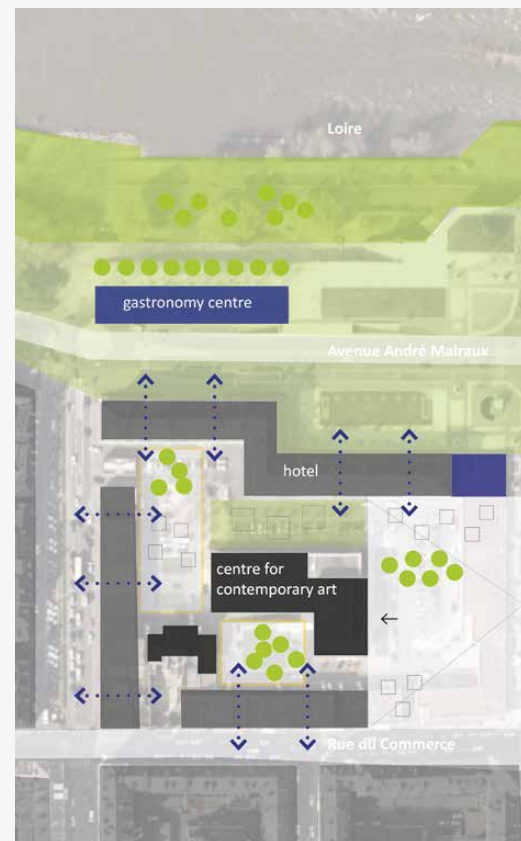
The city is planning to build hotels at the North, next to the river, which we took as an 'fait accompli'. Anyway, what we suggest is not to make two symmetrical towers that would emphasize the so called entrance to the city, as proposed by the municipality, but to convert the existing residential building block on the north to the future hotel. Instead of towers, it is possible to make additions at both edges of the existing residential blocks and at the same height. The residents would then be relocated

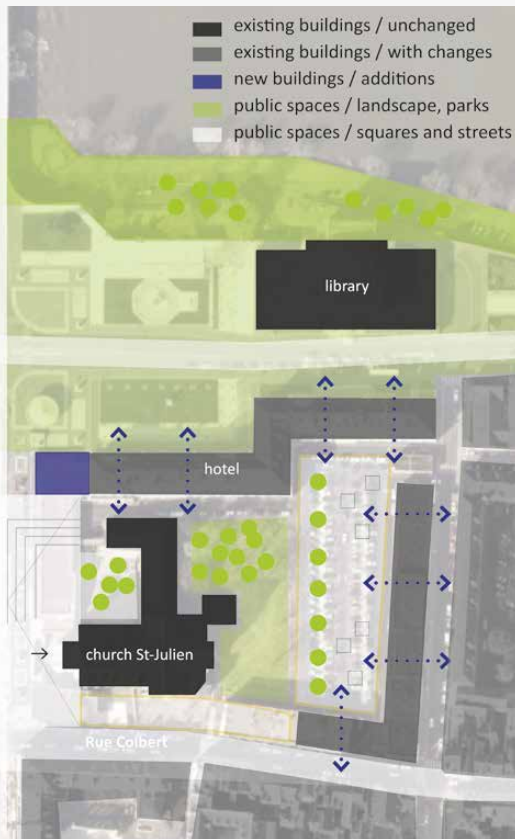
to the renovated buildings inside this area. Building at the eastern edge of the study area should be partly used as a student centre. Then, for the plot at the *Place Anatole France* where a new gastronomy centre is planned, we suggest to build it in the form of a pavilion or such-like, possibly transparent with materials that can reflect the river. Its height should be one floor at the most to allow the view to the river from the hotels. With this type of building, we deliberately introduce subtle discontinuity in symmetry, because, on this western side of *Rue Nationale*, historically, the same monumental building as the library was planned.

The motorised traffic, that surrounds this area and passes through it, interrupts the movement of pedestrians and cyclists, although it is well connected with other parts of the city by the tramway line. Our attitude towards traffic is not to make huge instant changes but to introduce gradual changes, one step at the time, to reduce the number of cars in the city centre. Eventually, the *Rue Colbert / Rue du Commerce* should have no parking lots and should be treated as a 30 kph zone (as is now the case with the eastern part of the *Rue Colbert*). The same would happen to *Avenue André Malraux*, when it could get an alternative route.

Also, we suggest that the city, with another pricing policy, should encourage the use of the existing underground public garages that are at the moment vacant because of high prices.

Finally, after these proposals for buildings and traffic, we get to the public spaces. Here we have one huge square at the centre of the site, it connects the church *St Julien* and the museum *Le Centre de Création Contemporaine*, but also weakens the dominant axis. There is a height difference on the square, so it can be redesigned at different levels. On the eastern part (next to the building with the student centre), we suggest the removal of the majority of parking lots and their





28.
Source : Google Maps

replacement with a square that would serve for student activities. The buildings could form a network chain with other public spaces, parks and squares, some of them large, some as small as private gardens, but all of them with different functions and characters, adjusted to the needs of the adjacent buildings to support different functions: heritage, culture, gastronomy, landscape and leisure. All of these public spaces are orientated towards both the inside of this area and outside towards the city. This can be done by opening passages in the ground floors of the buildings. *Place Anatole France* could be a huge green park-square for large events and manifestations, where cars would gradually become less and less welcome and therefore important, with the wide view to the river and the opposite shore. The riverbank should be arranged within a major landscape project that could be organized in the future. In this project the most important issue would be the connection to the river, when also the *Place Anatole France* and its function should be discussed.

This site proposal keeps all the dominant users in this area. The locals have their new residences, the students have their centre and vibrant cultural life in the new museum building and finally the tourists can benefit from the perfect view from the hotels, but also they can participate in the cultural, heritage and gastronomic life of the city.

The position of the site is at the important crossroads of the city and one of the most frequently visited city areas. Thus, this area becomes a focal point of the suggested networking principle. Here, all seven recognized areas are interrelated and all five dominant functions - heritage, leisure, landscape, culture and gastronomy - are included in the public spaces. By welcoming the three most significant groups of users, this area is automatically economically, socially and environmentally efficient.

6 SUMMARY

Like basically every city, Tours is characterized by its users, by the contradictions between past and present and by the actions and activities of its leaders and influential inhabitants.

We identified three dominant groups of people: locals, students and tourists. Their needs are different but they have to function interdependently in the same territory. Therefore, we consider that all of them have the right to the city centre. Our broad study area was the city centre of Tours, and our actual study area was part of that centre. This study area revealed various smaller and independent areas which are not integrated and which function as little 'cities in the city'.

However different they are, they still have one common element: inappropriately used public space. Tours is a city filled with cars, which occupy the majority of those public spaces. Currently it is a big problem, but there is an inherent potential in these spaces that can be exploited to find a solution. The suggestion is to take some cars out and free the open space for many other more appropriate functions for the improvement of the liveability of the city. They can become parks, playgrounds, squares and suchlike. They could be occupied permanently or temporarily, but most of them could be rearranged using minimal, rapid and inexpensive interventions. We could even have a series of networks of public spaces with the capacity to be reshaped and reused. Each network would connect public spaces with similar functions, like heritage, culture, gastronomy, landscape or leisure.

So applying the method of minimal intervention and the principle of networking, apparent problems in the existing urban structure can be solved with a minimum of large-scale renovation, demolition and reconstruction.