

developers on behalf of the city to the city's requirements and designed by different architects. The Cultural Centre of Arata Isozaki lies on the left of the City Hall facing Lotus Hill. It consists of the Concert Hall and Library with an elevated deck between them. The fronts of the buildings will have pleated glass walls. Directly across the green area from them is the Children's Palace. A level of unity will be achieved through the massing and colour of the buildings that were subject to control. The

result is a complex of three buildings and a park (a strong contrast to Le Corbusier's concrete deck at Chandigarh) designed in accordance with a site plan within a larger master plan for the city.

Major references

- Chen Yuan (2000). The course of SZD planning and design. *World Architecture 2000* (Suppl.): 5–9.
- Kurokawa, Kisho (2000). Urban design of the public space system along the central axis. *World Architecture 2000* (Suppl.): 29–36.

CASE STUDY

La Défense, Haut-de-Seine, France: a new 'central' business district (1958–90 and to the present)

La Défense, Paris's new business district is located on a site of 750 hectares (2.9 square miles) west of the Seine just outside the city's jurisdiction. The name comes from the statue, 'La Défense de Paris', erected in the area in 1883 to commemorate the war of 1870. For prestige reasons the precinct does retain 'Paris' as its mailing address but as it is legally located outside Paris, it is not subject to the stringent planning controls within the *boulevard périphérique* developed under pressure from President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing after Paris's first 1960s towers (particularly the 56-storey Tour Montparnesse) shocked the citizens of Paris and tourists alike. The height of buildings within the city became restricted to 31 metres. This policy is now (2004) under review as pressures for higher densities of development are arising. It suffices to say that La Défense is an 'edge city' visually and

symbolically connected to the heart of Paris by the Champs Elysées, Paris's historic boulevard spine, the Métro system, the regional express line (RER) and the A-14 motorway. It was designed to be and is a different world to Paris.

The conception of La Défense can be traced back to the 1920s but it was a long pregnancy. Regional plans and a 1931 competition for the *Voie Triomphiale* [Triumphal Way] from the Etoile to La Défense gave impetus to the idea for the location of a new business district for Paris on its periphery. A 1956 *Regional Development and Organization Plan* proposed that the population density of the inner city be reduced and that nodes be established on its periphery – something that has subsequently happened to cities in many countries as a result of market forces not regional planning policies (Garreau, 1991). There was a felt need to maintain