

Identification

<i>Nomination</i>	The city of Luxembourg: its old quarters and fortifications
<i>Location</i>	Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
<i>State Party</i>	Luxembourg
<i>Date</i>	1 October 1993

Justification by State Party

Its outline and character have been strongly influenced, even permeated, by the military past that has been imposed upon the City of Luxembourg. For this reason part of the city's architectural heritage illustrates a period that is significant for the city and the country, that of foreign rule. Spaniards, French, Austrians, and Prussians have each made a contribution to the creation of the appearance of the City of Luxembourg. Thus the physiognomy of the city can be considered to be an historical stratigraphy within which the military aspect has strongly influenced the general urban layout. The City of Luxembourg bears witness to a homogeneity resulting from the diversity of its builders who have, over three centuries, endeavoured to confer impregnability on a fortress town which was of major importance from a strategic point of view.

To this must be added the fact that the City of Luxembourg eloquently exemplifies the role and the weight resulting from being situated between two territorial powers which have many times over the centuries attempted to gain the upper hand over one another.

The fortifications and the old quarters of the City of Luxembourg constitute an historic ensemble of major importance. They are an outstanding example of a European fortified town which illustrates a long period of western history. For this reason the proposed site fully conforms with criterion iv of the World Heritage List.

Although it is more difficult to invoke other criteria without resort to exaggeration, the old quarters and fortress of Luxembourg certainly constitute a cultural landscape, and so the cultural property proposed basically satisfies criterion vi, since it has been admired by many artists and writers, including Adam Frans van der Meulen, J.M.W. Turner, J.W. von Goethe, and Victor Hugo.

History and Description*History*

The City of Luxembourg is located at the crossing point of two major Roman roads. In 963 Sigefroid, a count from the Moselle valley, built a castle on the Rocher du Bock, which he obtained by means of an exchange with the Abbey of St Maximin of Trier. His servants and soldiers settled around the castle and the modern town sprang from the market-place of this settlement, the Vieux Marché. Settlers were recorded as early as 926 in the Alzette valley, near the castle, and their houses formed the nuclei of the later lower towns of Grund and Pfaffenthal.

The town had grown to such an extent that a second defensive wall was built around the end of the 12th century, but this, too, was superseded in the 15th century when a third line of defences was built, enclosing the lower town of Grund as well.

By the 16th century, Luxembourg with its fortifications had become a strategic and military prize. The House of Burgundy, the Habsburgs, the French and Spanish kings, or the Holy Roman Emperors - all wanted Luxembourg. It was this reason that the city remained within the confines of its fortifications until 1867. Life there was harsh and the inhabitants resented having soldiers billeted upon them.

Throughout this period the defences of Luxembourg were continually extended and improved, making it into a fortress that earned the title of the "Gibraltar of the North". This was a dubious distinction, since it brought the city into most of Europe's wars from the 16th to the 18th centuries. Four main stages can be identified:

- 1 *17th century* (especially 1671-84): enlargement of the defences by the Spanish, who built several new redoubts (Peter, Marie, Berlaimont), and construction of the first barracks inside the city.
- 2 *1684-97*: large-scale rebuilding of the fortifications under the direction of Vauban following the successful siege of 1684 by the French. Pfaffenthal was included within the defences and large barracks were built on the Rham and Saint-Esprit plateaux. The Saint-Esprit monastery was transferred to Pfaffenthal.
- 3 *18th century*: continued development of the fortress by the Austrians (from 1715). The engineer de Beaufie prepared an ambitious plan designed to make Luxembourg a key element in the defence of the Austrian Netherlands. This work, which lasted over forty years, involved the construction of new forts around the city (eg those of Thüngen and Olisy) and systems of casemates linked by underground tunnels.
- 4 *19th century*: the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg joined the German Confederation after the Congress of Vienna and the federal fortress of Luxembourg was garrisoned by the Prussian Army from 1815 to 1867. The Prussians carried out major renovation work from 1826 onwards (eg at Fort Thüngen, where the surviving remains, known as Les Trois Glands, date from this period) and also added new elements, such as Fort Wedell, built to protect the railway station, which was built at around this time.

With the signature of the Treaty of London in 1867 the European powers confirmed the perpetual neutrality of the Grand Duchy and, in consequence, the evacuation of the fortress within three months and the demolition of the fortifications. This brought to an end a long evolution over nine centuries and turned a grim fortress of some 180 ha into an open city. Dismantlement of more than 24 km of underground defences and some 40,000 m² of casemates, batteries, barracks, and the like lasted sixteen years and cost over 1.5 million gold francs. Some elements survive, such as twelve of the 28 gates and a number of redoubts and forts.

Description

Three groups of structures are proposed for inclusion on the World Heritage List:

- 1 The old quarters of the City of Luxembourg

This is defined by the Rocher du Bock, the Rue de la Fossé, the Place de Clairefontaine, the Rue du Saint-Esprit, the Chemin de la Corniche, the Boulevard Victor Thorn, the Rue du Nord, and part of the Côte d'Eich. This was the cradle of the City of Luxembourg. It extends westwards from the rocky Bock promontory, where the first ducal family established itself, and includes the settlement of Lucilinburhuc, which was enclosed by a defensive wall towards the end of the 12th century.

On the Rocher du Bock the remains of the first castle were revealed by archaeological excavation in 1992. The rock itself is a honeycomb of 17th and 18th century casemates covering some 1,100 m², the largest surviving ensemble of underground fortifications. Also of importance is the two-storey bridge joining the Bock to the upper town, built by the Austrians in 1737.

The Church of Saint-Michel, originating from the 10th century when it was the chapel of Count Sigefroid's castle, has been rebuilt on several occasions. Its tower is a focal point of the old town.

The latter-day *Marché-aux-Poissons* (Fish Market) was the main market in the Middle Ages and the first open space in the town. Craftsmen and artisans formerly worked in the Ancien Régime period houses in the small streets that open out of it.

The present Grand Ducal Palace stands on the site of the first *maison communale* built by Countess Ermesinde in 1244 and of the Hôtel de Ville built by the Governor Pierre Ernst de Mansfeld and the *baumâtre* Adam Roberti in 1572-4. This was rebuilt after partial destruction in 1683. The oldest surviving part, between the two turrets, has a Renaissance facade dating from 1572. The centre portion in Baroque style dates from 1741-3. A third section was added in 1859, to serve as the *Chambre de Députés*. The whole building was converted for use as the Grand Ducal Palace in 1891-4.

The Rue Wiltheim, which leads down to Pfaffenthal, follows the route of the Roman road to Trier. It still retains two of the medieval town gates, the *Altpforte* and *Les Trois Tours*.

The Rue Large, leading to Grund, passes through an upper gate, the *Helleport*, which probably formed part of the original 10th century defences, and a lower one built by the Spanish in 1632.

The *Chemin de la Corniche* links the *Rocher du Bock* and the upper town. The houses that line it are from the 17th century. On the *Plateau du Saint-Esprit* stands the imposing military hospital (now the *Archives Nationales*) built by the Prussians in 1857-60. A little to the south is the *Citadelle du Saint-Esprit*, one of the key elements in the defensive system created by Vauban.

- 2 The governmental quarter and Notre-Dame Cathedral

This zone consists of the buildings within an area defined by the *Place Guillaume II*, part of the *Rue Notre-Dame*, the *Rue de l'Ancien Athénée*, part of the *Boulevard Roosevelt*, and the *Plateau du Saint-Esprit*.

The Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Luxembourg is the former church of the Jesuit College upon which work began in 1613; it was consecrated in 1621. It is an outstanding example of Netherlands Late Gothic architecture, with a Renaissance portal and rood-screen. The portal is considered to be the masterpiece of Daniel Muller of Freiberg (Saxony). It was raised to the status of cathedral in 1870 but retained its parish role. Work began on the enlargement of the cathedral in 1935; the pointed towers which are one of the most striking features of the Luxembourg skyline were completed in 1937.

Alongside the cathedral is the *Présidence du Gouvernement*, known today as the *Maison de Bourgogne*. It belonged until 1676 to the Berbourg family, traditional cup-bearers to the ducal house. Its brick staircase towers illustrate the transition from the Gothic to the Renaissance style.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the *Rue Notre-Dame* was originally the refuge of the Abbey of Saint-Maximin of Trier and was built in 1751 in characteristic Louis XV style. It housed the military government of the fortress after 1839 when it was purchased by the German Confederation, and in 1867 was taken over by the Government of Luxembourg.

- 3 The lower town of Grund and the Plateau du Rham

This zone is defined by the *Rocher du Bock* on the north, the so-called Wenceslas Wall on the east, the *Plateau du Saint-Esprit* on the south, and the upper town on the west. Archaeological excavations since 1990 have shown that the Grund and Rham areas were settled for some six centuries before Count Sigefroid took possession of the Bock promontory in 963.

The Wenceslas Wall formed part of the third defensive circuit, 875 m in length and built in the late 14th century. It takes its name, *Wenzelmauer*, from Wenceslas II, German Emperor and Duke of Luxembourg. It underwent a number of modifications and strengthen-ings as artillery improved.

The Grund sluice was built by the Austrians in 1731. It consists of a massive masonry dam with vaulted openings that could be closed to prevent water passing through them. This is a defensive construction that could be used to inundate both the *Pétrusse* and the *Alzette* valleys. Much of the lock was dismantled in 1878, but its remains are still impressive, and also provide a magnificent panorama of the city.

The Hôpital Saint-Jean was founded in 1308; in 1543 a Benedictine community was established there, to become known as the Neumünster. The buildings were destroyed by fire in 1684 during the French siege, and reconstruction work began in 1688 on the same site. The present church and cloister date from this period. The abbey was extended in the early 18th century. It was used as a Prussian military hospital between 1815 and 1867 and then became a state prison, a role it retained until 1984.

A series of military barracks was built on the Plateau du Rham. Vauban designed four after the French captured the fortress in 1684, and a fifth was added by the Prussians two centuries later. With the departure of the military the buildings became an orphanage, to be converted in 1893 into a retirement home for the poor and needy, the Hospice du Rham. The buildings, which are an outstanding testimony to the past military role of the city and excellent examples of this type of architecture, have been modified very little since their original construction.

Management and Protection

Legal status

Ownership of the properties included in the nomination is shared between the State, the City of Luxembourg, private owners, and the Church.

Protection is based essentially on the Law of 18 July 1983 concerning the conservation and protection of national sites and monuments, which imposes significant restrictions on owners and occupiers of protected sites and buildings.

Implementation of the legislation is the responsibility of, in descending order, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the National Sites and Monuments Service, the National Cultural Fund, and the Committee "Luxembourg, European City of Culture 1995".

Management

Overall urban planning in the City of Luxembourg is covered in the comprehensive *Projet Général d'Aménagement* (1st revision, 1993). This defines the protected zones within the City and imposes strict control over use, construction, building lines, and appearance within those zones. A *projet de loi* has been approved by the Chambre de Députés relating to the restoration and *mise en valeur* of those parts of the City that are the subject of the present nomination (No. 3801 of 24 June 1993); this allows the relevant services to proceed with the work and to utilize the funds allocated for the purpose.

The Luxembourg urban plan extends beyond the historic areas, and there is control over development over a considerable area of the city, which constitutes an adequate buffer zone for the proposed World Heritage site.

Various agencies are associated with different aspects of the conservation and management of the nominated area. These include the City of Luxembourg, which is carrying out research work for the National Sites and Monuments service, the Administration des Ponts et Chaussées, the Service Agricole, the Ministry of the Environment, and the Service de l'Énergie de l'État.

Conservation and Authenticity

Conservation history

The history of Luxembourg is one of successive destructions, rebuildings, and remodellings. After the Treaty of London in 1867 the fortress was divided between the state and the commune, and the latter sold a number of parts of it to individuals. Remains of many of the demolished military structures survive (for example, beneath the present municipal park) and others were covered with soil and became part of the domanian forest. The State Architect made an initial attempt to preserve something of what was disappearing, though some of his work was heavily influenced by the contemporary Romantic movement (eg the Heulen Zant,

formerly part of the Bock fortifications). Some of the bastions and forts survived in isolation from the demolished walls and were used for other purposes. The barracks and military hospital found alternative uses and were little altered. The period immediately after World War II saw the destruction of two large military structures.

Restoration work was carried out on a modest scale by the Administration des Ponts et Chaussées on the surviving walls, and in 1963, on the occasion of the millennial celebrations, the State Museum carried out excavations on the Bock and worked with other services for a proper presentation of part of this important site. Some work was carried out during the economic crisis of 1980-3 at Les Trois Glands (Fort Thüngen) and the Commune was responsible for work at the Stierchen site in Grund.

When the Council of Europe launched its campaign, "A future for our past", in 1981, followed by "Renaissance de la Cité" in 1983, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, working closely with the Commune de Luxembourg, financed the restoration of a number of public buildings. Many private owners also took part in this campaign and carried out restoration work.

It was not until the change of government in 1989 that the entire fortified site of the City of Luxembourg came under the control of the National Sites and Monuments Service. A two-year campaign of research and selected excavation was immediately begun, providing a basis for major restoration, consolidation, and reconstruction projects that began in 1991 when Luxembourg was nominated European City of Culture 1995 and substantial funds were made available for the work. The major rehabilitation project is that for the Abbey of Neumünster, which was decided as early as 1983 but which only got under way in 1993 and will last six years; it will be developed as a cultural meeting centre, with hostels, conference rooms, and halls for artistic performances and exhibitions. The nearby Hospice Saint-Jean is being restored and from 1995 will be the Museum of Natural History. Restoration and rehabilitation work is also in progress on the Rham barracks.

Two quinquennial plans have been drawn up by the Public Buildings Administration with the National Sites and Monuments Service and other state agencies which will have the effect of restoring the great majority of the buildings in the historic quarters of the city by the end of the century.

Authenticity

The buildings in the old quarters and the fortifications of Luxembourg are to a considerable extent authentic. Some buildings have changed their use, but without significant modifications to their external appearance or interior arrangements. The massive defensive structures by their very nature have defied substantial changes to their form or material, beyond the removal of certain elements when the defences were dismantled in the years following 1867. Much of the original town plan has survived, and demonstrates dramatically how the civilian settlement was forced into a plan determined by the needs of defence and warfare.

Evaluation

Action by ICOMOS

The dossier was studied by the ICOMOS International Committee on Historic Towns and Villages and by a distinguished French expert in the field of military structures. An ICOMOS expert mission visited the property in April 1994. The report of the mission comments very favourably on the effectiveness of the regulations now in force and on the total commitment of all those concerned with the improved protection and presentation of the city's cultural heritage.

Qualities

Because of its strategic position, Luxembourg was one of the greatest fortresses of modern Europe. As such its strong natural defensive site was repeatedly fortified and strengthened and it passed from one great European power to another. Its fortifications were an epitome of military architecture spanning several centuries. After the Treaty of London in 1867 much of these fortifications were demolished, but sufficient evidence survives to give a strong impression of their strength and importance, notably the surviving forts and bastions and the barracks.

The town itself preserves in its street pattern substantial testimony to its origins and growth from the 10th century onwards. A number of important public buildings also survive.

Comparative analysis

The following report was prepared by Dr Nicolas Faucherre, who is a member of ICOMOS and the author of the study *Monuments militaires occidentaux en Méditerranée orientale* prepared for ICOMOS and the World Heritage Committee:

This military site, on two rocky promontories, the Bock and the Rham, located head to tail so as to form two meanders of the river Alzette, was from the 16th to 19th centuries one of the most important strongpoints, first for Spain, then France, and finally Austria, and its celebrated sieges have influenced the formation of frontiers within Europe.

Unfortunately, the 1867 dismantling has left very little of this unique monumental complex: some rectangular medieval towers in the valley, the foundations of the Bock fortress, some Vauban bastions on the hills, and some barracks ... There is therefore no possibility of getting an overall panorama of the vanished fortifications, apart from through the relief plan of 1804 and the surviving (and well presented) site.

For this reason, Luxembourg does not bear comparison with urban fortified ensembles elsewhere in Europe, which have the same credentials of being built over a long period, from the Middle Ages to the present day, and having preserved all or the major part of their fortified perimeters.

ICOMOS comments

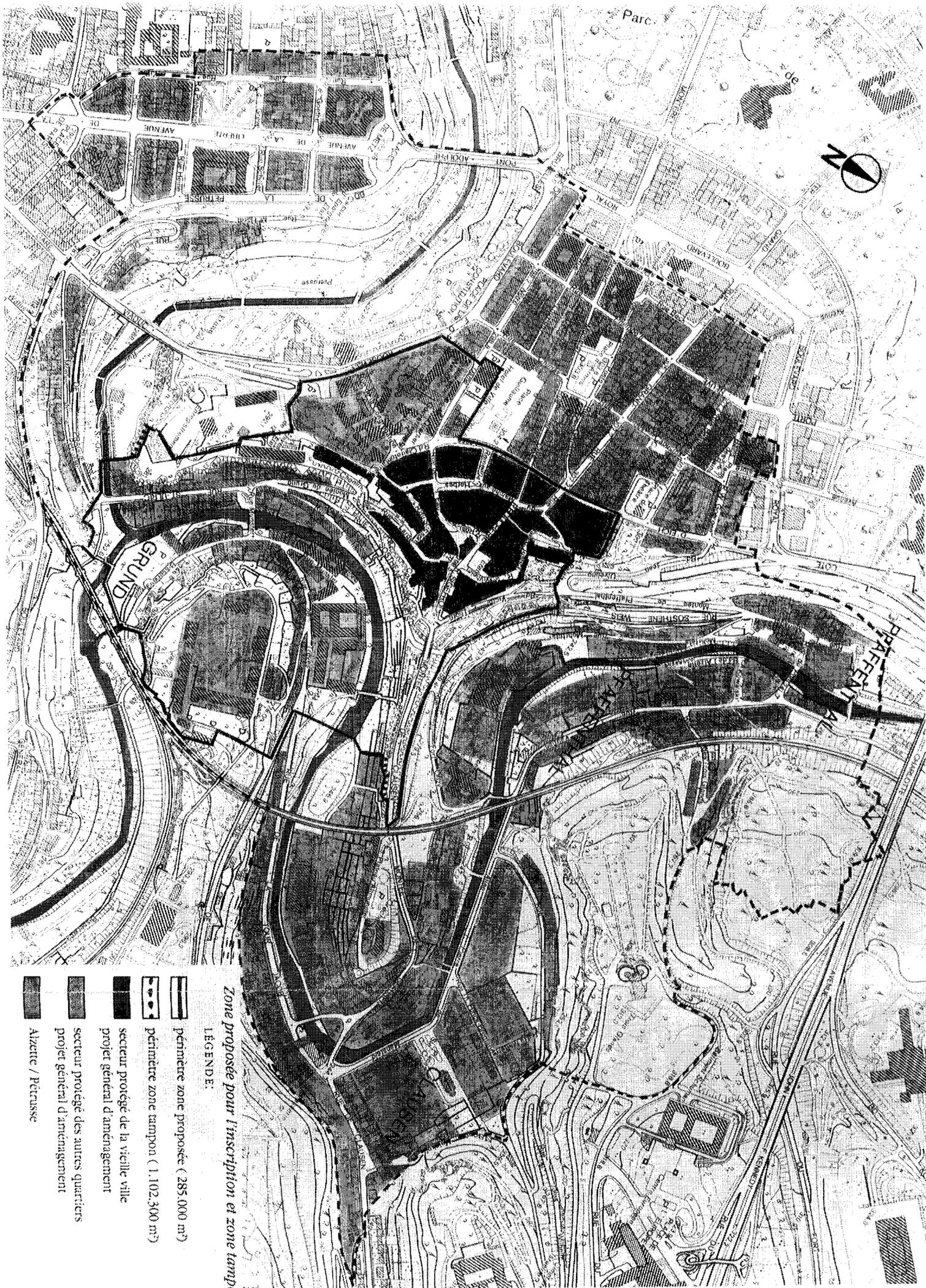
Whilst ICOMOS is heedful of the comments made by Dr Faucherre, it prefers in this case to follow the advice of its International Committee, confirmed by the expert mission report of Jan Tanghe, which is of the opinion that the historical significance of Luxembourg, both as a fortress and an historic town, combined with the remarkable harmony between the city and its landscape, justifies its insertion on the World Heritage List.

Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion iv:

- ***Criterion iv*** The fortress-city of Luxembourg played a significant role in European history for several centuries. It preserves major remains of its impressive fortifications and its old quarters, in an exceptional natural setting.

ICOMOS, October 1994

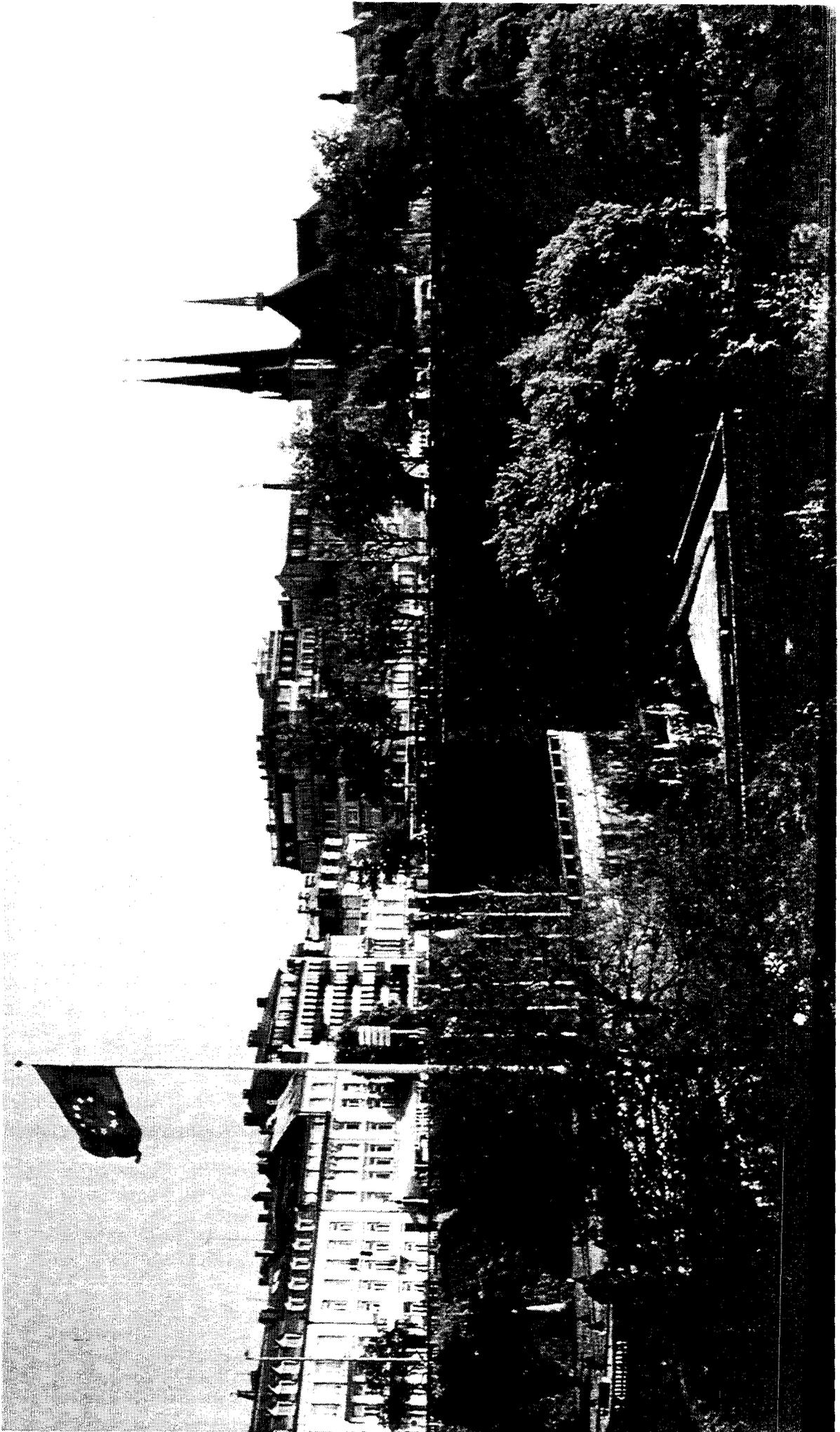


Zone proposée pour l'inscription et zone tampon

LÉGENDE:

-  périmètre zone proposée (285.000 m²)
-  périmètre zone tampon (1.102.300 m²)
-  secteur protégé de la vieille ville
-  secteur général d'aménagement
-  secteur protégé des autres quartiers
-  projet général d'aménagement
-  Alzette / Pétrusse

Ville de Luxembourg : délimitation du site et zone tampon /
 City of Luxembourg : delimitation of the site and buffer zone



Ville de Luxembourg : vue générale sur le bastion Sec.
City of Luxembourg : general view of the bastion of Sec.



Ville de Luxembourg : le plateau du Rham avec ses casernes /
City of Luxembourg : the Rham plateau with its barracks