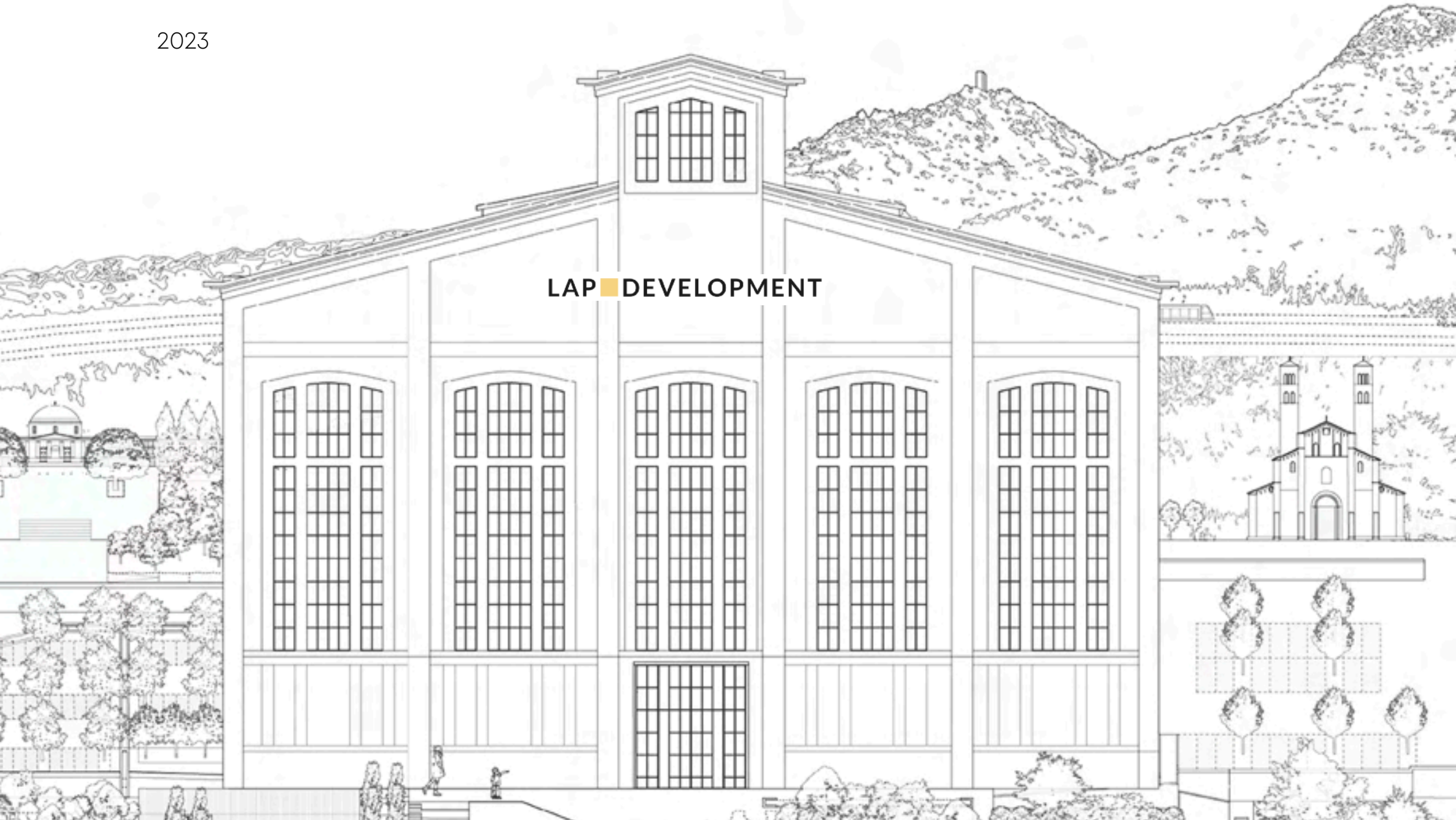


REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Como, Italy

2023

LAP  DEVELOPMENT



Territorial Context

The analysis of the territorial context on a large scale highlights the location of the project area within the "Convalle", the valley of alluvial fluvio-glacial origin in which the city of Como has historically developed.

The Spina Verde Park, in particular, is the one that most closely relates to the post-industrial area, both from a visual point of view, constituting a mountainous and wooded backdrop facing west, and from an ecological point of view, as it represents an area of high biodiversity with strong contributions on the ecological evolution of the area, especially in terms of plant species.

An aerial photograph of a mountainous region, likely in the Himalayas. The terrain is rugged and mountainous, with a small red dot marking a location in the central part of the image. The surrounding area shows a mix of forested slopes and some cleared land. The image is in black and white, with the red dot providing a point of reference.



Urban green infrastructure Convalle area

By analyzing the Convalle area, the main urbanized district of Como, where the historic walled city is located, a critical mapping of all the public green areas of the city was performed. In particular, it is visible their limited extension and their lack in the neighborhoods furthest from the lake.

The project site, highlighted in red, could represent the basis for the creation of a large public “core park”, starting from which it would be possible to plan the design and the strengthening of the urban public green system.

In particular, starting from the existing condition, a potential urban green infrastructure has been highlighted, made up of interconnected tree-lined boulevards, useful also for strengthening the ecological connections within the urban area and for establishing minor ecological corridors within the highly urbanised district.

The project area, in addition to the proximity to the Spina Verde Regional Park, is historically located along a linear axis of main roads, which run in a south-north direction along the western historic "industrial belt" of Como, represented by Via Napoleonea - Via Achille Grandi - Viale Franklin Delano Roosevelt - Viale Innocenzo XI, which lead towards the lake. The ecological redevelopment of these roads and in particular of that of Viale Innocenzo, the main connection axis between the project area and the lake, would allow the creation of a tree-lined linear system outside the historic city which, connecting it from a pedestrian mobility point of view to the Lino Gelpi Promenade, overlooking the lake, would make it possible to create a continuous system, connected northwards to the different historic villas of the Lake of Como, starting from Villa Olmo.



Chapter 02

Historical Framework

Timeline and Diachronic Analysis Ticosa Industry

The following analysis, based on bibliographic, iconographic sources and historical maps, has the aim of reconstructing the memory of a history which, starting from the construction of the historical monumental pre-existences in the area, has gone through periods of profound changes, both in architectural-infrastructural terms, and in ecological terms.

Through summary maps, the evolution of the area is represented starting from the condition prior to the foundation of the factory, up to the present day, proposing a final diachronic comparison of the current condition of the area with the past one. Among the different chapters, in-depth studies related to historical buildings, such as the Santarella, and the different design projects that have taken place over the years are also proposed.

The pre-existing condition

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Como was far from an industrial development. If the weaving sector had the possibility of coexisting with the backwardness of the local production context, with a widespread diffusion of weaving looms in urban and rural houses, other sectors radically suffered from the absence of centralized systems of significant dimensions. Among these, the dyeing industry is identified as one of the main weaknesses of the Como textile supply chain.

The area in which the Saba Frontini dyeing industry will be built, later taken over by the Tintoria Comense company, is located in the area called "Prato Pisano", beyond the Sant'Abbondio Bridge, where there was the "Pantaleone Regazzoni Foundry".

This area, physically separated by the presence of the Cosia stream, is characterized by three main historical architectures, the complex of St. Abbondio, the convent of St. Chiara and the Monumental Cemetery, still under construction and expansion. From a mobility point of view, the main roads are Via Regina, which runs north towards the lake, Via Milano, the main access road to the city coming from Milan, and Via Sant'abbondio, which connects the historic Romanesque Abbey.

The project area is made up of meadows and agricultural areas, crossed by minor watercourses, coming from the mountains of the current Spina Verde Park.

1050-1095 | St. Abbondio Complex

Construction of the Basilica of St. Abbondio, a Romanesque church built on the site of a pre-existing Early Christian basilica, and of the Monastery of Sant'Abbondio, the current head office of the Department of Law, Economy and Culture of the University of Insubria.

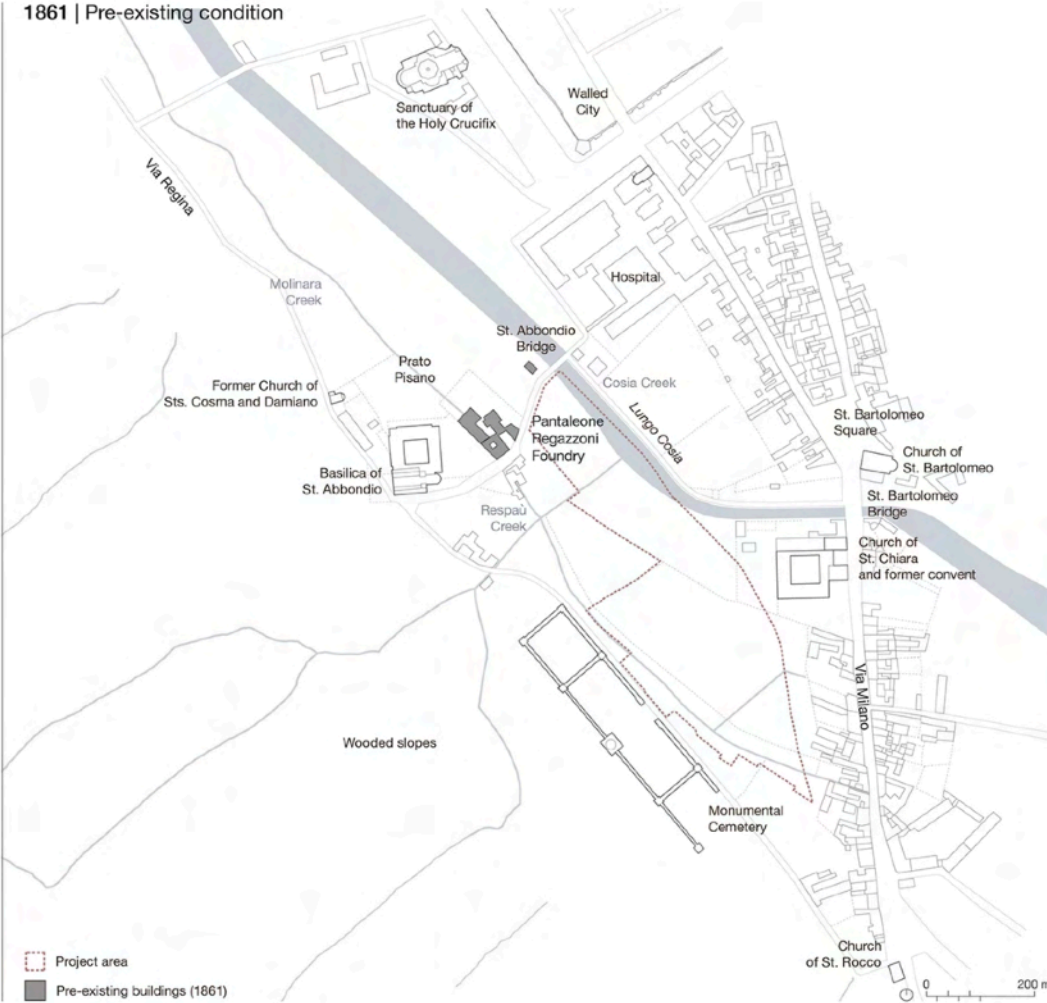
13th century | Convent of St. Chiara

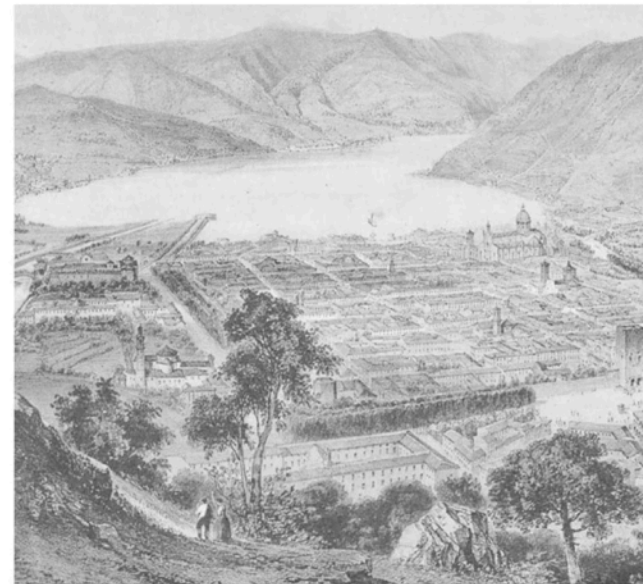
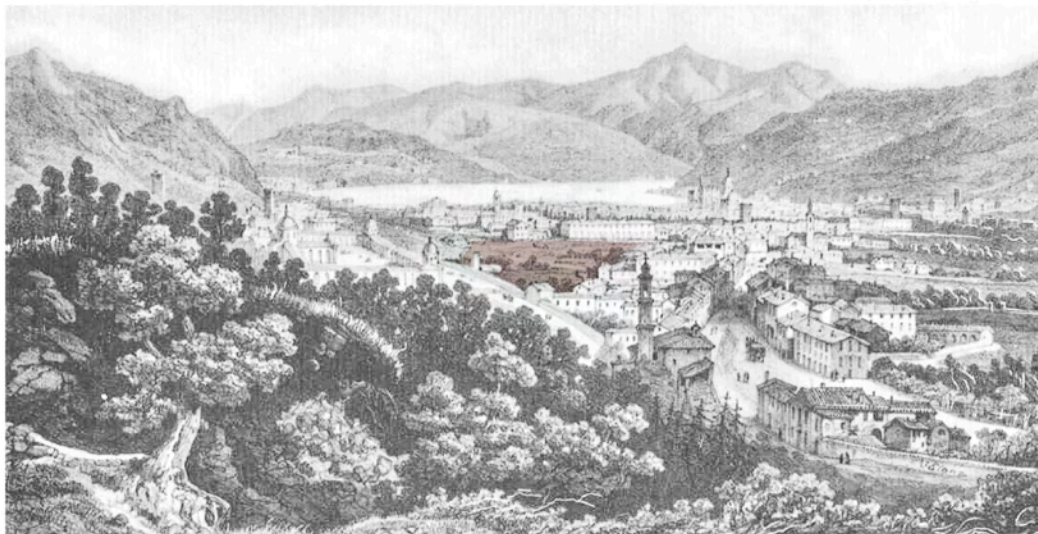
Construction of the Convent of Santa Chiara, current head office of the Pessina Commercial Institute.

1811 | Monumental Cemetery

Construction of the Monumental Cemetery of Como, in the context of a series of reforms which provided for the moving of burial places outside of city centers.

1861 | Pre-existing condition





01	02
03	

04

01 | 1689
View of the city of Como
[Coronelli, V., View of the city of
Como, Venezia, 1689]

02 | 1840
Map of Como
[Bettali, A., Como, 1840]

03 | 1850
View of the cemetery area
from the slopes of Mt. Baradello
[Elena, G., Como, 1850]

04 | 1851
View of the city from the slopes of
Mount Croce
[Alfred Guesdon, L'Italie a vol
d'oiseau, 1851]

The foundation of the company

At the beginning of the 1860s, the Milanese entrepreneur Saba Frontini decided to set up a modern dyeing plant in Como, one of the first industrial plants that was built in the strip of territory not yet urbanized, located between the historic walled city and the circle of hills surrounding the Convalle area.

The factory, called "Tintoria Sant'Abbondio" constituted the first and fundamental cornerstone of that "industrial belt" which will be built between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The chosen location, immediately beyond the bridge on the Cosia stream, is determined not only by the availability of large space, but also and above all by the ease of using large quantities of water for processing and drainage.

At the beginning of the 1970s, when the textile industry was starting to take on ever greater importance in the international market, a group of about 30 textile industrialists from Como, worried about the insufficient production capacity of the seven local factories present at the time, had the idea to join a consortium to create a "service" dyeing industry for the silk industry of Como and Milan, which could reach French quality standards.

The establishment of Tintoria San'Abbondio, already equipped with the best machineries from Lyon, but characterized by mortgage loans stipulated by the entrepreneur, was thus taken over and in 1872 the "Società Anonima di Tintoria e Apparecchiatura Comense" was born.

As visible from the map, the first phases of expansion were characterized by the construction of new industrial buildings towards the north, maintaining a close spatial and functional relationship with the Cosia Creek, the primary source of water and waste disposal watercourse.

In the same years, the construction phase began on the Como-Milan railway, a fundamental infrastructural axis for the industrial development of the area, which still clearly divides the wooded area of the current Spina Verde Park and the lower industrial areas. Therefore, in addition to the presence of the large Monumental Cemetery, the railway also began to divide the actual project site from the mountainous wooded areas.

1863 | Tintoria Sant'Abbondio

In the "Prato Pisano" area, on the west bank of the Cosia stream, the Milanese entrepreneur Saba Frontini opens the "Tintoria Sant'Abbondio", renovating the premises of the Pantaleone Regazzoni foundry.

1871 | First ideas of a dyeing company

The idea of a "service" dyeing plant for the Como and Milanese silk industries was born among silk industrialists.

1872 | Foundation

February 11th: Deed of incorporation of the "Società Anonima di Tintoria e Apparecchiatura Comense".

In the same year it took over the plants of the Saba Frontini's factory, which had already become the largest Italian dyeing company.

1873-75 | First expansion

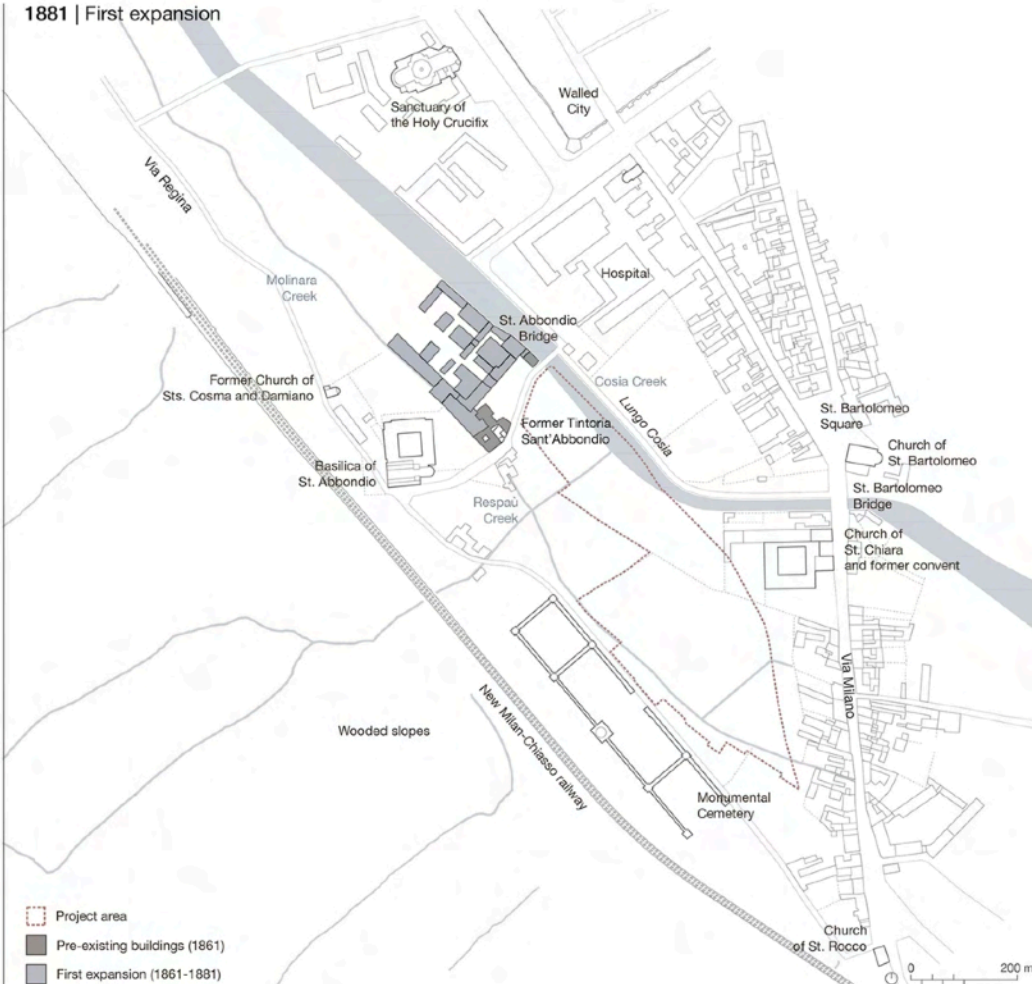
Period of first expansion of the industrial buildings, with the construction of the first buildings with sawtooth roofs.

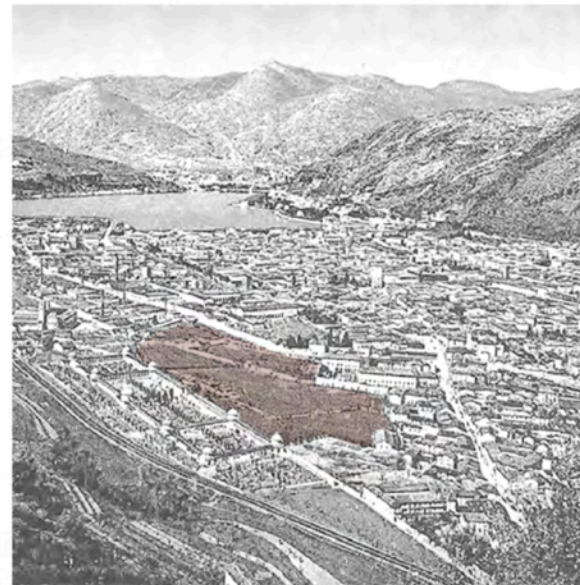
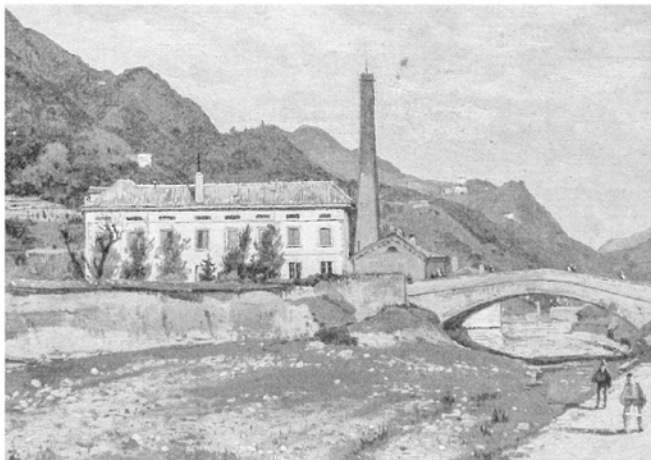
One year after its foundation, the number of workers doubled, reaching 185. The first international recognitions were obtained at the World's Fair in Vienna.

1875 | Railway Como-Milan

Construction of the Como-Milan railway connection.

1881 | First expansion





05 | 1863
The "Tintoria Sant'Abbondio",
located in Prato Pisano area
[Fasanotti, G., private collection]

06 | 1881
Front page portraying the Tintoria
Comense after the first years of
development.
[Giussani, B., Esposizione
Industriale Italiana di Milano, 1881]

07 | 1900s
South west postcard of the area
[Bottega della Cornice Collection,
beginning of 20th century]

The industrial growth and the first crisis

The Tintoria Comense quickly became the largest industry in the city and one of the largest Italian dyeing plants, with subsequent expansions between 1889 and 1896, designed by the engineer Emilio Clerici.

Because of its size, the plant contributed to create an important concentration of the working class in the city and on several occasions the workers went into battle to demand improvements in wages and working conditions.

The Volta Exposition of 1899 was the opportunity to expand the hydraulic system of the factory, as the Cosia Stream became insufficient for the company's water needs. An aqueduct was therefore built near the lake that pumped water directly from it.

The factory reached an area of 30,000 m² and was divided into different departments, all equipped with technologically advanced systems: color dyeing, black dyeing, fabric dyeing, silk fabric apparatus, printing and soap making factory and a chemical laboratory. At the end of the century the number of employees reached 600.

In 1902, coinciding with a serious crisis in the sector, the company witnessed the first takeover attempts by one of the most important European textile industries the Gillet & Fills company from Lyon, initially rejected by the majority of shareholders. After further years of heavy economic losses, however, the sale took place.

At that time the area occupied by the factory was between Via Sant'Abbondio, Via Regina and the Cosia Creek, with a significant expansion towards the north compared to the original nucleus. Its presence was already a permanent part of the urban landscape of Como and it also stood out in the foreground in tourist views of the city.

1885 | Industrial growth

The industrial growth of the sector attracts new manpower: 250 workers are employed in the factory.

1893 | Doubling of workers

New doubling of the number of workers over the course of 6 years: 500 workers work in the rapidly expanding industry.

1899 | New aqueduct

On the occasion of the Volta exhibition, a new aqueduct was inaugurated, which pumped 6 million litres of water a day directly from the lake.

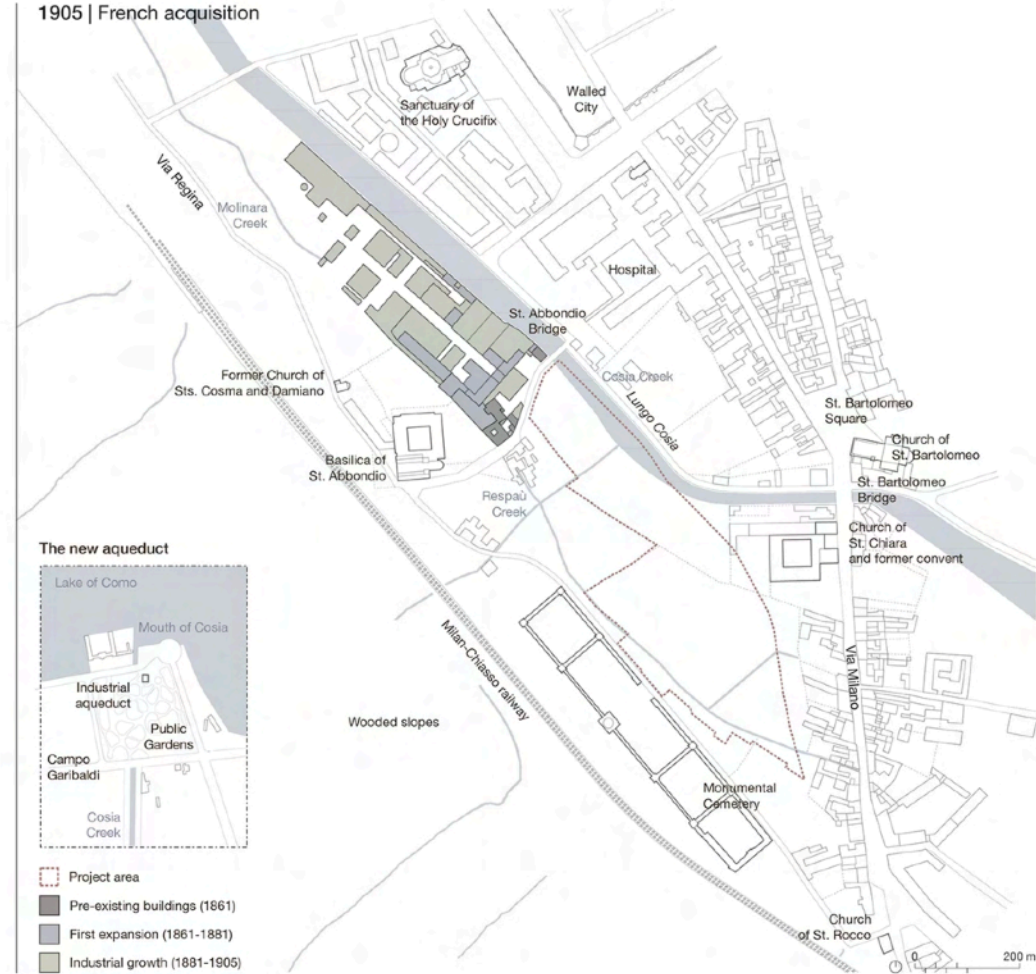
The new dyes department opens. The factory has reached an extension of 30,000 m².

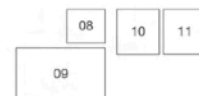
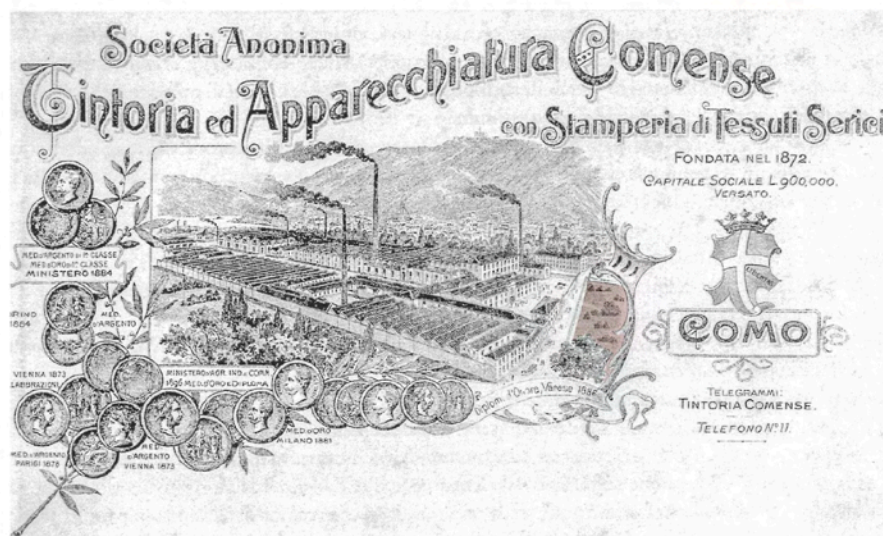
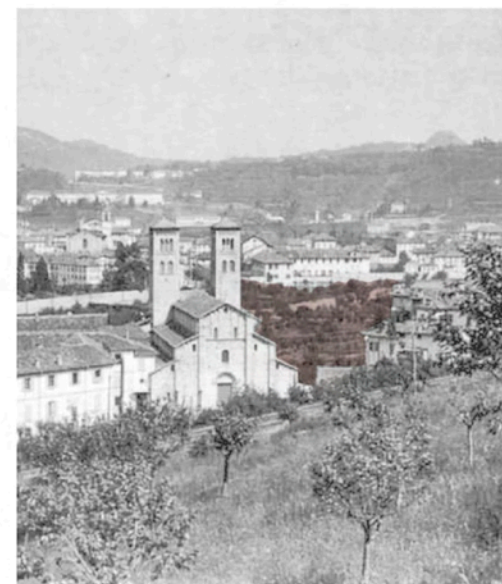
1905-06 | French acquisition

Serious crisis in the dyeing sector due to the increase in silk exports abroad.

The company is sold to Gillet & Fils (Lyon). The new company that continues the activity of Tintoria Comense takes the name of "Tintoria Gillet & Fils Como".

1905 | French acquisition





08 | 1884
Depiction of the industrial plant of Tintoria Comense in 1884
[Rumi, G., Storia di Como: dall'età di Volta all'Epoca Contemporanea, 2002]

09 | 1900s
Letterhead of the "Società Anonima Tintoria ed Apparecchiatura Comense", at the beginning of the 20th century.
[Archivio Nodolibri]

10 | 1904
View of the Basilica of St. Abbondio; in the background, the industrial area.
[Como e la sua storia. I borghi e le frazioni, Banco Lariano, 1993]

11 | 1900s
Northern view of the industrial buildings, in the early 20th century.
[Museo didattico della seta, Como]

Southern expansion in the project area

During the period before the First World War, the industry reached the 70% of the dyeing of Italian fabric production and the 30% of the dyeing of Italian yarn production.

Despite a first strong post-war crisis due to the removal of imports of raw materials from producing countries, from 1919 to 1929 the industry, in a new phase of notable expansion, gradually purchased the land south of Via Sant'Abbondio (Lots A, B, C, D), reaching the current southern limit of the project area. Here, in the following years, various production plants were built, including the large C-shaped body, demolished in 2007, and, in the following years, the large reinforced concrete thermal power plant called "Santarella".

With the expansion towards south, the coverage of some minor watercourses also occurred and the relationship of exploitation of the neighboring waterbodies intensified, including above all that of the Cosia Creek, which discharged its waters into the lake.

1912 | Pre-war growth

The factory extends over about 38.000 m²; it was equipped with 18 boilers and the energy was provided by the A. Volta Company, which produced it by extracting water from the lake.

The company is divided into 4 departments: yarn dyeing, fabric dyeing, equipment and printing.

1919 | Southern expansion

Expansion towards the south, with the purchase of the area between the current Via Sant'Abbondio and Viale F.D. Roosevelt.

The first examples of reinforced concrete buildings applied to industrial factories were built on these lots.

1923 | Southernmost expansion

Acquisition of the area between Via Regina Teodolinda and Via Achille Grandi, where a single-level rectangular building with a sawtooth roof will be built in the following years.

1924-25 | Environmental issues

Growth of the silk sector in the area of Como.

The expansions, not followed by the modernization of the systems, produced heavy pollution of the city's watercourses, with the spread of pestilential odours. Preliminary ideas for the coverage of the Cosia stream.

1926-29 | C-shaped building

Construction of the historical "Corpo a C": 2 foreparts of 4 floors and one central body of 5 floors. In the internal courtyard, there was a one-story high sawtooth roof building.

The printing operations were carried out on the lower floors, while on the upper floors there were spaces for designers and photoengravers.

1928 | New productions

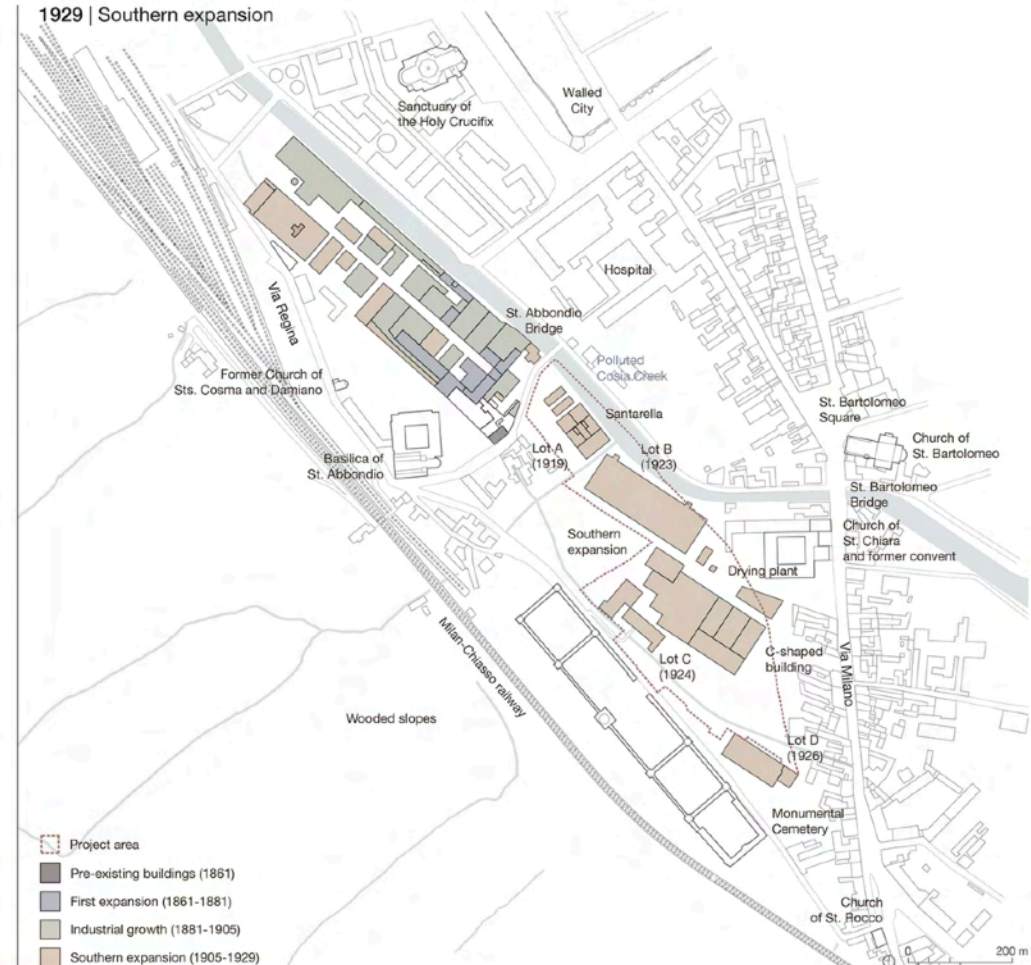
The Comense Dyeing company has 1200 employees, employed in the different stages of production, to which had been added the dyeing activities of artificial yarns and the printing of fibers other than silk.

1929 | Pre-crisis expansion

Construction of a shed building with an almost triangular shape, used for printing activities.

International economic crisis period.

1929 | Southern expansion



Last buildings and coverage of the creeks

This last historical period which ends with the closure of the company, saw the construction of the historic industrial building "Santarella" and the coverage of the minor streams and the Cosia creek, also due to their excessive exploitation and the strong environmental pollution.

1929-30 | Santarella building

Construction of the reinforced concrete thermal power plant by the the Barosi Company. It is famously called "Santarella" (in reference to the name of the professional who is mistakenly believed to have designed it).

The building was intended to house 4 boilers and was directly connected to the plant that pulverizes the coal.

1930s | Cosia coverage

Covering works on a large part of the urban course of the Cosia creek, which was transformed into a canal serving the textile industries.

1931 | Nylon production

Inauguration of the chemical laboratory that introduced nylon textile production in Como.

1940s | Ticosa brand

Creation of the Ti.Co.S.A. brand (Tintoria Comense Società Anonima), which from the 1960s would become the name of the company.

1944 | Strikes and deportation

Deportation of 6 workers to nazi concentration camps, due to their joining the anti-fascist strike against the war.

The Comense Dyeing company became one of the symbols of civil and armed anti-fascist resistance.

1950s | Post-war growth

Expansion of the company under the new name of "Ticosa": 2500 employees are reached and new buildings were built following a really messy growth.

1957 | Further expansion

The Ticosa company expands its buidligns, occupying an area of about 85,000 m².

1970s | Layoffs period

First layoffs following a period of reduction in production, also due to an urban planning decision to drastically reduce the industrial presence in the "Convalle" area.

1980 | The closure

October 3rd: Pricel, the company that owns the majority shareholding of the Ticosa industry, announces with a telex the immediate closure of the entire factory.

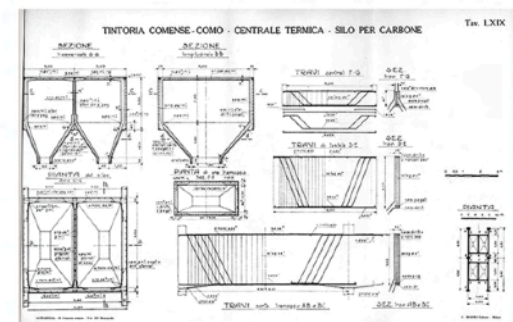
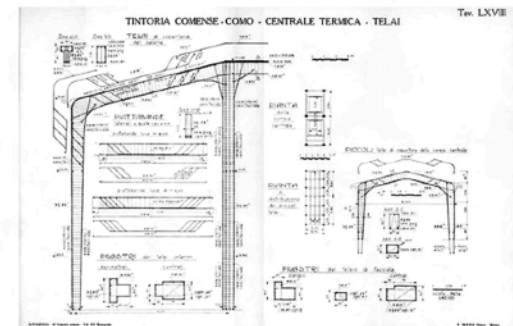
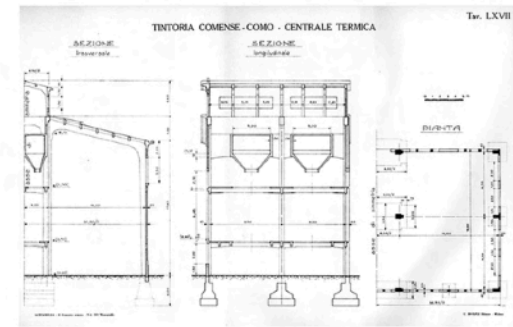
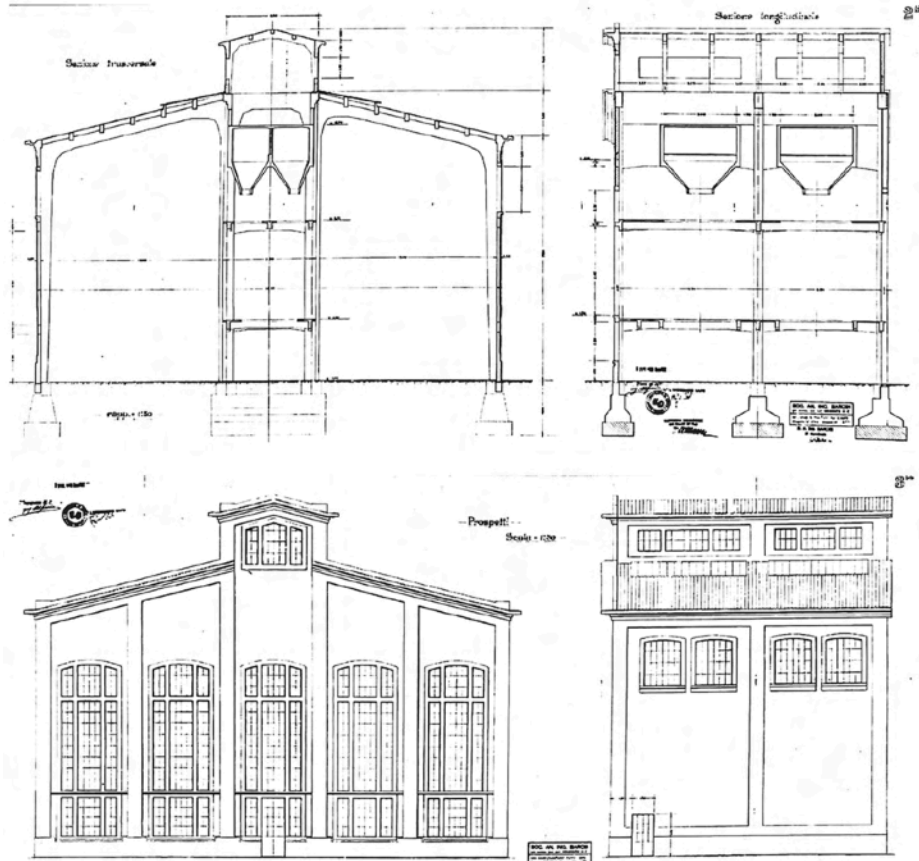
1980 | Closure of the company



1929-30 | Santarella building Historical drawings

The "Santarella" was built in order to enrich the factory's automation system and had the function of a thermal power plant. Intended to house four Tosi-type boilers, it was directly connected to the plant that pulverized the coal. The execution of the construction works was entrusted to engineer Barosi, from Milan, whose technical office designed and verified the support structures.

As can be seen in the project tables submitted to the Municipality of Como (A, B), the building had a rectangular floor plan, with a reinforced concrete frame structure and a sloping roof that reaches a maximum height of 25 m at the skylight.



A	C	F
B	D	G
	E	

A, B | 1929
Construction documents of the Tintoria Comense thermal power plant, built with a reinforced concrete structure by the technical office of the engineer Barosi in 1929.
[Comune di Como, Ufficio Urbanistica]

C, D, E | 1943
Construction drawings, contained in the monograph by L. Santarella.
[Santarella, L., Il cemento armato. Monografie di costruzioni italiane civili ed industriali]

F, G | 2010s
Facade and internal view of the Santarella building during the remediation period.
[Comozero.it]

1982 | Municipality purchase

Closure of the last extension of the redundancy fund.

The Municipality of Como decides to purchase the area, approving the taking out of a loan of 7 billion with the national insurance institute.

In the following years there was a period of abandonment of the area and following periods of occupation by immigrants.

1993 | Design competition

Clearance of the area and organization of a competition.

4 project groups were invited: Guido Canella (Milan), Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola (Turin), Enrico Mantero (Como), Luigi Snozzi (Locarno).

The administration indicated its preference for Snozzi's project.

However, no proposal enters the executive phase.

1999 | Spazio shed

Partial renovation of the sawtooth roof buildings in the southernmost portion as an exhibition area. Exhibitions, meetings and concerts take place in the new "Spazio Shed".

2006 | Multi Development project

Privatization of the area: the Dutch company Multi Development wins the auction organized by the municipality.

The Ticosa lower area temporarily becomes a parking lot for cars.

2007 | Demolition

Demolition of the remaining Ticosa buildings. The only portion that was preserved is the one nearby the Santarella building.

2008 | Soil reclamation

After a period of seizure of the area due to the presence of asbestos, investigations into the subsoil reveal the need for major reclamation. The groundwater is also polluted.

2014 | Ticosa Lake

A new artificial lake formed after the soil excavations and remediation activities.

2015 | Plot #03

The remediation is almost completed: 1 plot out of 13 remains to be reclaimed. It's the "Plot 3", behind the Santarella building, and it contains asbestos.

2018 | Multi Development dispute

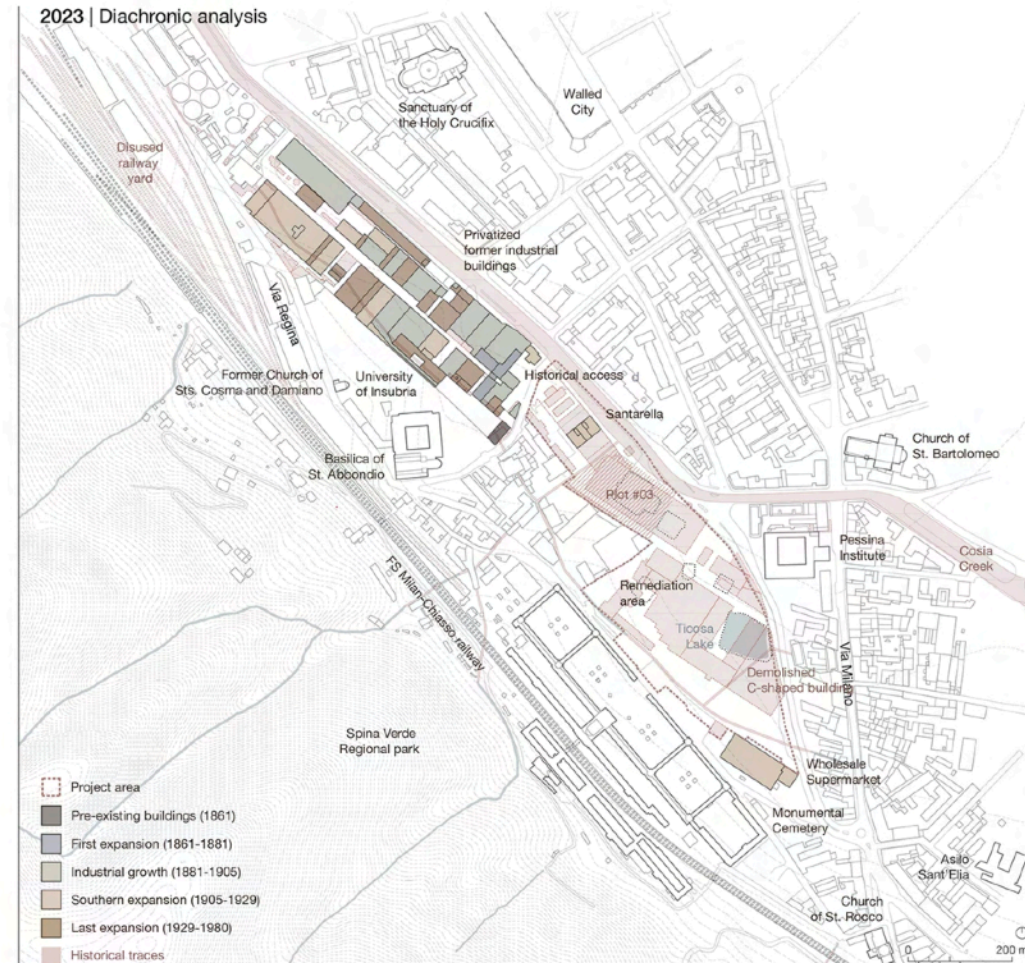
Termination of the contract with Multi Development, after a long dispute.

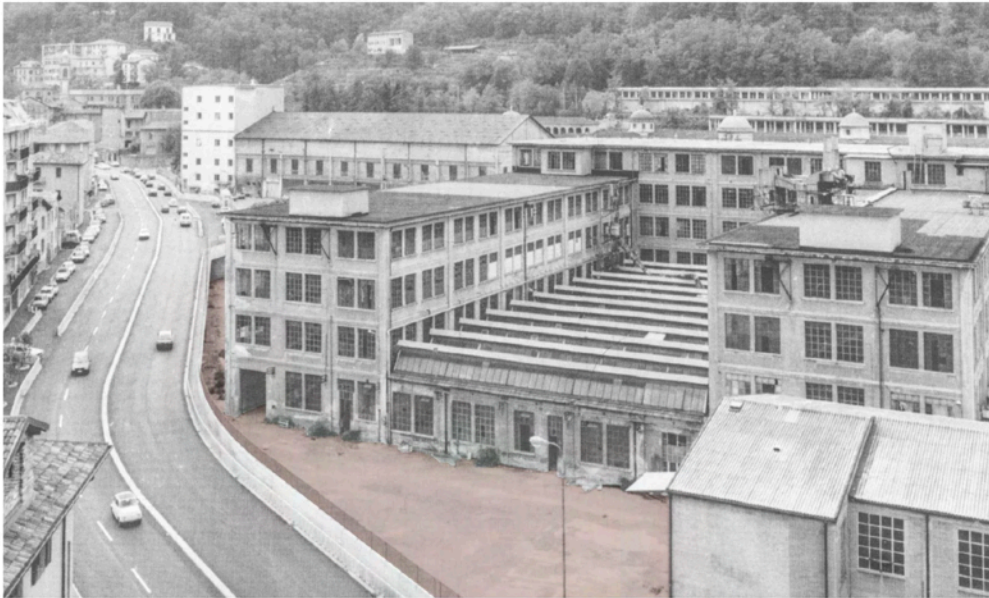
The issue of the future of the area returns to square one.

2023 | Parking proposal

Proposal by the municipality for the construction of a car park with over 600 ground-level parking lots.

2023 | Diachronic analysis





17	18	20	21
19			

17, 18 | 1980-81
View of the Santarella building
and Spina Verde Park
Internal view of a building, with
printing tables
[Angri, G., Nodolibrì Archive]

19 | 1990
The southern Ticosa area 10
years after the closure
[Sergio Masciadri Archive]

20 | 1995
Winning project by arch. Snozzi:
"empty, public space arranged as
a park, which connects the
elements of the area"
[Patrignani, M., 2019]

21 | 2007
Demolition of the last remaining
buildings
[Angri, G., Nodolibrì Archive]

1990 | Municipality project
First design proposal for the southern sector owned by the municipality

The reasons for purchasing the area and the first project

The "Ticosa problem" became complex during the last months of the company's survival: reabsorbing the unemployed workforce and developing an adequate reuse plan for the area were only the most obvious aspects of the issue; in fact, a political crisis also emerged caused by the loss of trust in the municipal administration. In this framework, the Ticosa Commission and the municipal administration, having discarded the first hypotheses of reuse of the area and reemployment of the workers, developed a public proposal for the reuse of the factory. A project immediately followed, put forward by the liquidating company itself, which envisaged changing the intended use to a tertiary one; it would have almost guaranteed the doubling of revenues from the sale of the area, but it was rejected by the Municipality due to formal irregularities.

A request for financing was thus put forward, voted unanimously and which sanctioned as a necessary condition "to proceed with the purchase of the area, in order to guarantee the feasibility of the project". Thus, in 1982, between March and July it was decided to purchase the area, by taking out a loan of 7 billion with the National Insurance Institute. At stake was the "urban planning future of the city". It was a demonstration of the administration's attention to the fate of the Como economy and had the aim of rationally reusing the area, looking towards the future.

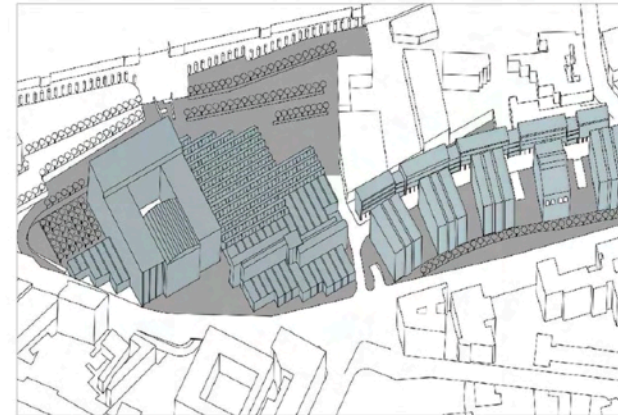
Despite the huge resources allocated to the operation and the importance of the area in the urban context, the publicly owned former Ticosa sector remained abandoned for many years.

Only in 1990 a recovery program for the abandoned area was actually proposed.

The project envisaged the reuse of the "C-shaped building" with the construction of a new glazed core inside the courtyard; the already present shed structures were maintained and renovated, but part of them was demolished in order to create a direct connection with the main entrance of the monumental cemetery; finally, new single-level and multi-storey buildings were located on the site of certain previously existing buildings and directly connected to an underground car park.

Next to the former "Santarella" thermal power plant, the construction of four blocks was envisaged having the same proportions as the industrial infrastructure and positioned orthogonally to Viale F.d. Roosevelt.

Finally, from a mobility point of view, the creation of an underground underpass under the new buildings was envisaged, while other accesses to this infrastructure were created on Viale Roosevelt and on the new internal road.



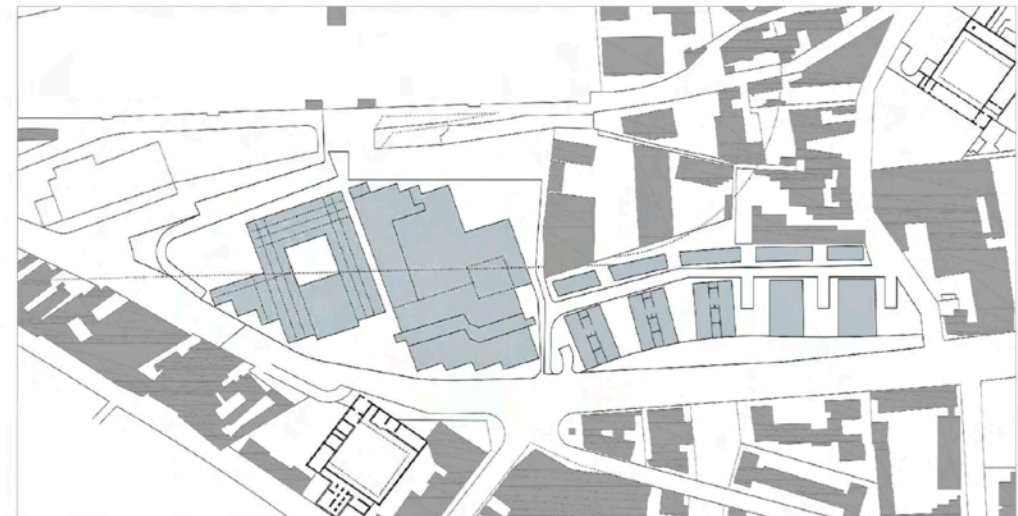
The functions envisaged within the new buildings were of a residential type, while the buildings with sawtooth roofs and the "C-shaped building" envisaged a mixed use of a productive and tertiary type.

In the new building built inside the courtyard of the C-shaped body, conferences and tertiary sector activities were envisaged.

For the realization of this project proposal, restructuring interventions were envisaged without increasing the usable surface area within the cemetery buffer zone placed under restrictions.

The proposed project, however, was not implemented: it remained among the uncompleted proposals for the area. The only intervention that actually occurred in the early 1990s was the demolition of some industrial buildings outside the cemetery buffer zone to allow the construction of a public car park.

1990 | Axonometric and plan view of the project proposal
[Como Headquarters Archive]



1993 | Design competition Competition by invitation

The organization of the competition

Since previous attempts to reuse the former Ticosia area had failed, the municipal administration decided to turn to internationally renowned architects who could give a new vision to the area and consequently also to the entire city of Como.

Initially, the Municipality decided to entrust the task of carrying out the urban planning study to the architect Renzo Piano, who however declined the offer.

The municipal administration then chose to assign the task to Studio Gregotti Associati, who previously had already been contacted by the Unione Industriale di Como. The program required the drafting of an urban plan for the area not only occupied by the former factory, but also including the customs area currently located next to the Como San Giovanni railway station. The study arranged a period of 4 months in which to develop the study phase and the drafting of the final version of the urban planning project; the preliminary architectural design phases would then follow and the eventual transition to the concession phase. In fact, however, nothing was deposited with the Municipality.

It was therefore decided to organize a competition by invitation, with the aim of comparing 4 design proposals: four design groups were invited, directed by Guido Canella from Milan, Roberto Gabetti and Ajmaro Isola from Turin; Enrico Mantero from Como and Luigi Snozzi from Locarno.

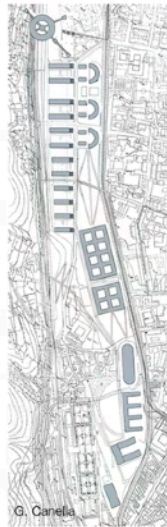
The tender called for: "the drafting of an overall implementation plan for the area relating to the following points: general objectives; urban planning framework premises; historical reading; hypothesis of functional destinations; mobility and various organization; abandoned factories and technological infrastructures; services".

The four design proposals presented in the invitational competition: from left to right: Canella, Gabetti and Isola, Mantero, Snozzi.

The final ranking was drawn up by a commission composed of: eng. Clemente Tajana, arch. Michele Rossi, prof. Bernardo Secchi, arch. Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, arch. Alberto Artoli, mayor Renzo Pigni, Roberto Cairoli, Arturo Arcellaschi, Mario Fraticelli, Luigi Barattieri, arch. Vincenzo Colardo, arch. Claudio Contini. The merit ranking was drawn up as follows: 1st place: Snozzi (780 points), 2nd place: Gabetti and Isola (720 points), 3rd place: Canella (565.5 points); 4th place: Mantero (534.5 points).

Subsequently, Canella appealed because Snozzi planned a square to be built inside the cemetery buffer area; furthermore, he had planned constructions within the goods yard and had moved this volume to the northern area, handing it over to private property. Despite the architect's defenses, the judicial document concluded in favor of arch. Canella. The competition was cancelled, causing the project to fail.

[Como Headquarters Archive]



G. Canella



R. Gabetti, A. Isola



E. Mantero



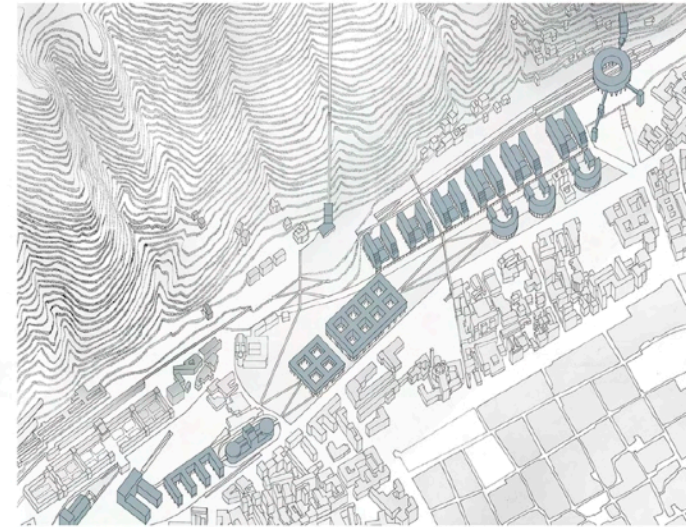
L. Snozzi

Guido Canella

"The general layout of the project has taken as a viaticum the poleogenetic dualism that the historian Henri Pirenne attributed to the origin of the modern city in the take-off of the capitalist economy: the historic core and the village where the trading force of long-time merchants settled. In our case, the historic Como and the new city on the Ticosia area".

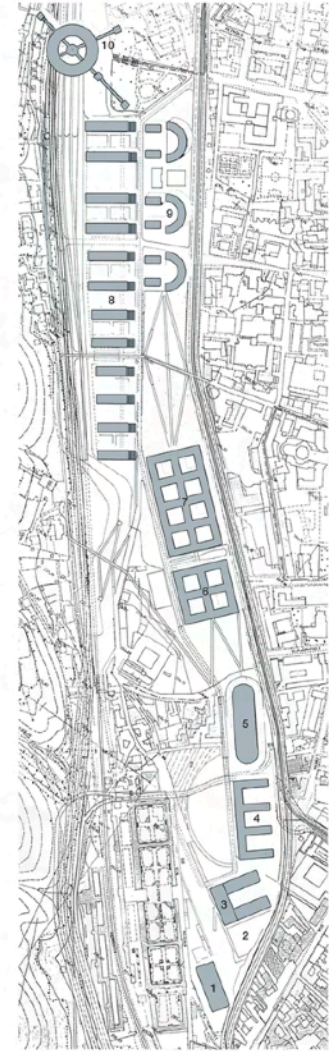
The project placed a strong focus on the viability problem, an approach criticized by the jury, as it created an "urban highway" with a strong environmental impact. It was planned to build an underpass between Viale G. Cesare and Viale Innocenzo, with ramps located near the intersection with Via Grandi and Via Sant'Abbondio. Furthermore, a new road layout branched off to the south of Via Napoleona and was connected with a new road in the southern Ticosia area.

In the southern area, the project followed the characteristics of a composition for single buildings, while, on the contrary, in the area near the goods yard the characteristics of the urban addition for homogeneous parts would have been followed. The C-shaped building, preserved in its integrity, as a "testamentary presence of the Larian industrialization", was used for craftsmanship on the ground floor and as a scientific center on the upper floors.



- 1 - Auditorium
- 2 - Car park
- 3 - Scientific center, craftsmanship
- 4 - Crafts, residential
- 5 - Covered market, restaurants
- 6 - Residential, craftsmanship
- 7 - Craftsmanship, offices
- 8 - Residential, offices
- 9 - Commercial, residential
- 10 - Train station

1993 | Axonometric view and plan of the project proposed by G. Canella
[Como Headquarters Archive]



Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola

"The ordering criterion of the project is to act as a meeting point between "nature" and "history". Nature is present along the slopes of the hill that separates the oldest part of Como from the plain where a new part of the city is being built; it is an abandoned nature, not very accessible from the city, eroded at its feet by a sparse building settlement, little and badly connected with the urban built fabric. History is present here in the layout of the Roman city, for that orderly weaving of blocks and streets that follow a trend and in the walls that can be summarized in a square grid of ten meters on each side, with a north-west/south-east course."

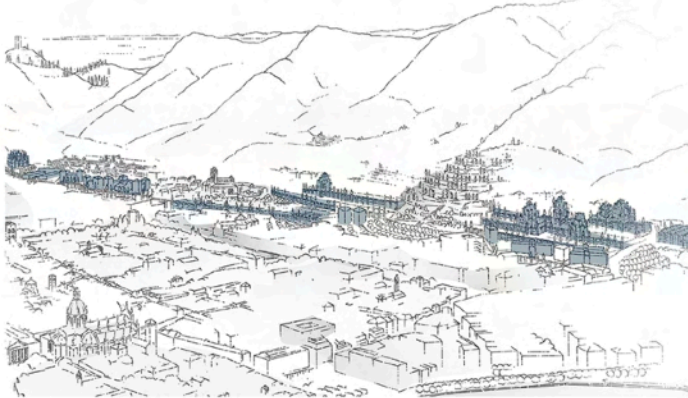
The design idea consisted in making nature descend as far as Viale Innocenzo XI and beyond, not bending it to urban utilities, but rearranging it according to the scheme of the Roman city, then making the Roman city rise up to meet the less man-made part of the hill that was welding between the two systems.

The project envisioned that Viale Innocenzo would gradually lose its function as the main urban roadway axis, as this role would be fulfilled by a new road that would be built on the existing railroad, above the railway line, which, having become regional in character, would be buried.

The urbanization conformed flexibly on the 10 m square grid as an extension of the Roman city towards the slopes of the hill. In the southern area, the construction of a circular bus station was planned, directly connected to the new road built on the railway site. The C-shaped building was reused as a covered market on the first 2 levels and in the internal courtyard, while the 3 upper levels would become spaces for craftmanships and offices. The Santarella would be used as a space for services and as a center of common interest.

- 1 - Regional bus station
- 2 - Covered market, crafts, offices
- 3 - Commerce, offices, residential
- 4 - Services and center of common interest
- 5 - Public park
- 6 - Crafts, offices
- 7 - Residential
- 8 - Services and center of common interest
- 9 - Offices
- 10 - Public park
- 11 - Crafts
- 12 - Crafts, trade, residential
- 13 - Offices
- 14 - Railway station
- 15 - Station square
- 16 - Shopping center, offices, residential

1993 | View and plan of the project proposed by R. Gabetti, A. Isola
[Como Headquarters Archive]



Enrico Mantero

"The three "Compartments" or "Sites", object of the project, testify the urban continuity present between Via Regina, the railway line and Viale Innocenzo, created by covering the Cosia creek. It was therefore the objective of the designed dynamic and pedestrian structure to create an east-west "osmosis" with respect to the current dynamic system which runs almost with total continuity from South to North. In fact, the project creates a series of east-west accessibility from the city towards the monumental spaces and towards the great hilly bulwark and this above all to obtain close relationships between the Sites that today have different characteristics of layout and urban function."

In the southern Ticosa area, where the almost identical alignments of the architecture of St. Abbondio, St. Chiara and the Gothic lot of S. Rocco dominate, it was proposed to build twin rectangular towers, built on five naves, similar to the system of the Basilica of St. Abbondio, creating dynamic scenic and visual backdrops with the Basilica itself. Inside the towers there were spaces for craftmanships on the lower levels, while tertiary and residential activities were on the upper floors.

Furthermore, the reuse of the C-shaped building was planned, converting it into a covered market, according to the Central European model, carrying out partial demolition interventions in order to obtain the necessary setback from Viale Innocenzo XI. Vehicular access to the area took place at ground level from the same road, through a road junction that was planned to be built while the parking lots were positioned.

Finally, two pedestrian bridges, one at the intersection between Viale Innocenzo XI and Via F. Benzi and the other one at Viale F. D. Roosevelt were connecting the area.

- 1 - Commercial, offices
- 2 - Covered market
- 3 - Craftmanship, offices, residential
- 4 - Crafts, offices, residential
- 5 - public park
- 6 - Craftmanship, offices, municipal services, residential
- 7 - Craftmanship
- 8 - Connection ramps
- 9 - Craftmanship
- 10 - Hotel, residential
- 11 - Railway station
- 12 - Tram station
- 13 - Craftmanship, supra-municipal services, residential

1993 | View and plan of the project proposed by E. Mantero
[Como Headquarters Archive]



Luigi Snozzi

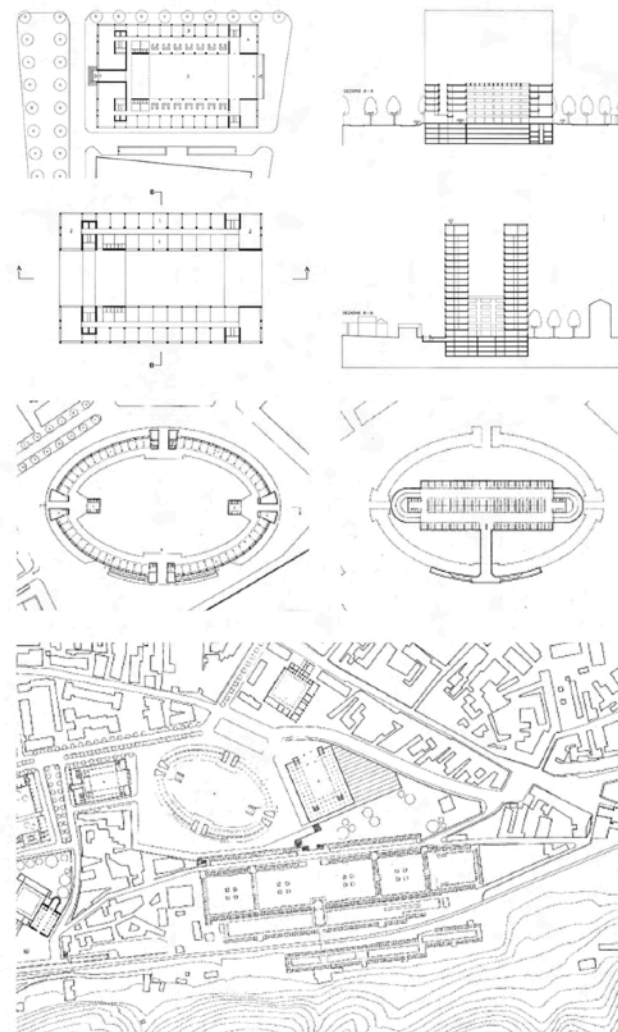
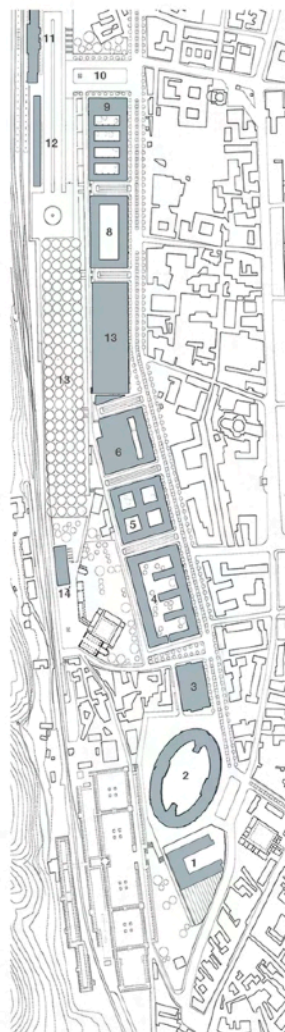
"For the southern Ticosa area we propose the construction of an empty, public space arranged as a park, which brings into relation and discussion the quality elements that area present in the area: the C-shaped building, reused as a covered market and artisanal production, the Cemetery, Sant'Abbondio, the small convent and a new building that we propose as a municipal administrative centre. The proposed elliptical element, which is inspired by the Prato della Valle in Padua, houses an underground car park and an external structure for the street market".

The project proposal was based on some urban redesign operations and on the definition of essential rules for the correct development of the urban fabric. Morphologically the project involved two parts: the industrial strip delimited to the north by the San Giovanni Railway Station and to the south by the Monumental Cemetery in which there was a building of a certain architectural value, the so-called "C-shaped building", and the embankment of the railway that defined the foot of the hill, where the railway station was located in an elevated position with respect to the city, in analogy with the church of Sant'Abbondio and the Cemetery. For the St. Abbondio Complex it was proposed to eliminate the Regina Teodolinda road as a transit road in front of the church, in order to create a square defined by existing elements and a new building used as a concert hall. Via Regina was preserved only in the Sant'Abbondio-cemetery section, while two new roads were built at the foot of the embankment and on the edge of the railway.

The project was awarded for the "pragmatic" and simple approach which proposed interventions to adjust the area together with minimalist road works. The proposal to create a churchyard in front of the Basilica of St. Abbondio was also considered interesting.

- 1 - Covered market, craftsmanship
- 2 - Market square, car park
- 3 - Municipal administrative center
- 4 - Residential, commercial, restaurant
- 5 - Commercial center
- 6 - Shopping center
- 7 - Technocity
- 8 - Residential, commercial
- 9 - Hotels, offices
- 10 - Station square
- 11 - Train station
- 12 - Regional bus station
- 13 - Green embankment, parking garage
- 14 - Concert hall

1993 | View and plan of the project proposed by L. Snozzi
[Como Headquarters Archive]



A	B
C	D
E	F
G	

A, B, C, D | 1993
Pianta e sezioni del Municipal Administrative Center previsto nell'area dell'edificio Santarella.
[Como Headquarters Archive]

E, F | 1993
Pianta del market square, ispirato al Prato della Valle in Padua.
[periferiecoinformazioni.com]

G | 1993
Pianta del progetto dell'area Ticosa sud: viene proposta la realizzazione di uno spazio "vuoto", organizzato a parco.
[periferiecoinformazioni.com]

2006 | MultiDevelopment Project

Tender notice for the sale of the area

Following the cancellation of the 1993 competition, further years of abandonment and political controversies followed, leading up to 2005, when the "Documento di Inquadramento" (Framework Document) was approved, a more flexible and dynamic urban planning instrument than the "Piano Regolatore" (Town Plan), as it is more capable of adaptation to the urban transformations and the different socio-economic needs of the community. The administration thus hoped to concretely resolve the problems of the area which remained, more than twenty years after purchase, unused and partially demolished.

The intervention of the Archaeological, Fine Arts and Landscape Superintendency was also requested to carry out checks on the buildings in the southern area. The "Santarella" was declared as certainly worth mentioning for its qualified architectural composition and interesting structural layout. It therefore represented an important historical memory, as it is evidence of a production hub closely linked to the socio-economic development of the city. The building was thus subjected to all the legal provisions in force regarding the protection of an asset of historical-artistic interest.

After the approval of the Framework Document, the Municipality of Como arranged for the drafting of a tender for the sale of the area and the related urban redevelopment. The sale would have been based on the most economically advantageous offer in relation to both the sale price and the planning hypothesis of urban revaluation of the area.

On 10th of July 2006, the winning bidder of the auction was identified, namely the Italian-Dutch company Multi Development, which won the area for 15 million euros.

The project, developed by T+T Concept Design studio with the consultancy of Favero & Milan Engineering, Studio Archea, Systematica, Studio Novati and Studio Cattaneo, envisaged the creation of a multifunctional center (residential, office, commercial and tertiary), the total pedestrianization of the area and the burial of a section of the ring road. The proposal would have entailed the total demolition and replacement of the volumes of the former factory, not subject to restrictions, with new buildings. It involved the creation of a 2.2 hectares urban park, connections with the former St. Chiara Convent and the conversion of the Santarella building as the seat of the Museum of the Modern Movement dedicated to arch. Terragni.

Plan and three-dimensional view of the project proposal developed by the Multi Development company. The planned demolition of the buildings began in 2007, under the administration of the mayor Stefano Bruni. During this intervention, the historic C-shaped building was also demolished.

In the following months, after disputes with the demolition company, the soil analysis revealed the presence of asbestos and pollutants and this led to the seizure of the area and the need for remediation. In 2018, the dispute with MultiDevelopment Company ended and the project was abandoned.

[Municipality of Como, Urban Planning Office]



1990-Today | Project proposals

A critical comparative analysis

The different analyzed projects have been supported over time by many other more or less detailed ideas and proposals which have contributed to outline some fundamental key points for the project design presented in this thesis. In particular, it is important to highlight:

- in the municipal office project (1990): the rethinking of the road system for the access to the project area; the valorisation and the recovery of the abandoned industrial buildings, with particular attention to the historic C-shaped building (demolished, however, in 2007) and the Santarella, seen as monumental evidences of the dyeing past, which strongly shaped the area's identity; the implementation of green areas in the overall design;
- in the project by G. Canella (1993): the conversion of the C-shaped building, as it is considered "the testamentary presence of a particular phase of the Como industrialisation"; the management of urban roads, especially regarding the road junction between Viale F. D. Roosevelt and Via A. Grandi;
- in the project by R. Gabetti and A. Isola (1993): the idea of continuity between the Spina Verde Park and the city, in which the project area becomes a meeting interface between nature and the urban context; the exploitation of the morphology of the land, aimed at developing the project on different levels; the reuse of the C-shaped building and the Santarella: the destiny for the latter is that of a central place of municipal interest and for services;
- in the project by E. Mantero (1993): the idea of "osmosis" in an east-west direction, which strengthens the connection with Via Milano and interrupts the strong North-South direction given by the road system of the area; the importance of alignments in the design of the space, in relation to the historical architectures;
- in the project by L. Snozzi (1993): the concept of "emptiness" in the area, that is the importance of a public space arranged as a park, capable of relating and bringing together the historical elements present in the area: the C-shaped building, the Santarella former thermal power plant, the complex of St. Abbondio, the Monumental Cemetery, the former Convent of St. Chiara; the creation of a square in front of the Romanesque Basilica.
- in the MultiDevelopment project (2006): the proposal for a direct pedestrian connection between the former Convent of St. Chiara and the Monumental Cemetery; the proposal for a large urban park aimed at uniting this area of the city with the nearby neighborhoods; the recovery of the former Santarella thermal power plant for purposes of cultural interest.

In all the projects, even in the most recent ones, a vision of ecological continuity and preservation of the ongoing dynamic evolutionary processes, closely related to the logic of abandonment and spontaneous natural reclamation of space, is however lacking. Furthermore, the infrastructural system of water bodies that distinguishes the area and which historically has always been closely related to the identity and work processes of the former factory is not considered. Attention to the history of the place focuses mainly on the relevant architectural pre-existences: the concept of the historical traces of this kind of landscape could also be expanded by considering demolished and no longer present historical buildings, traces of buried historical waterways and valuable botanical pre-existences, both in terms of years and in terms of cultural importance for the specificity of the place.





The concept of palimpsest that is adopted for the analysis of the post-industrial project area results slightly different from the conventional analytical approach of the same, based on the concept introduced by the scholar André Corboz in 1983.

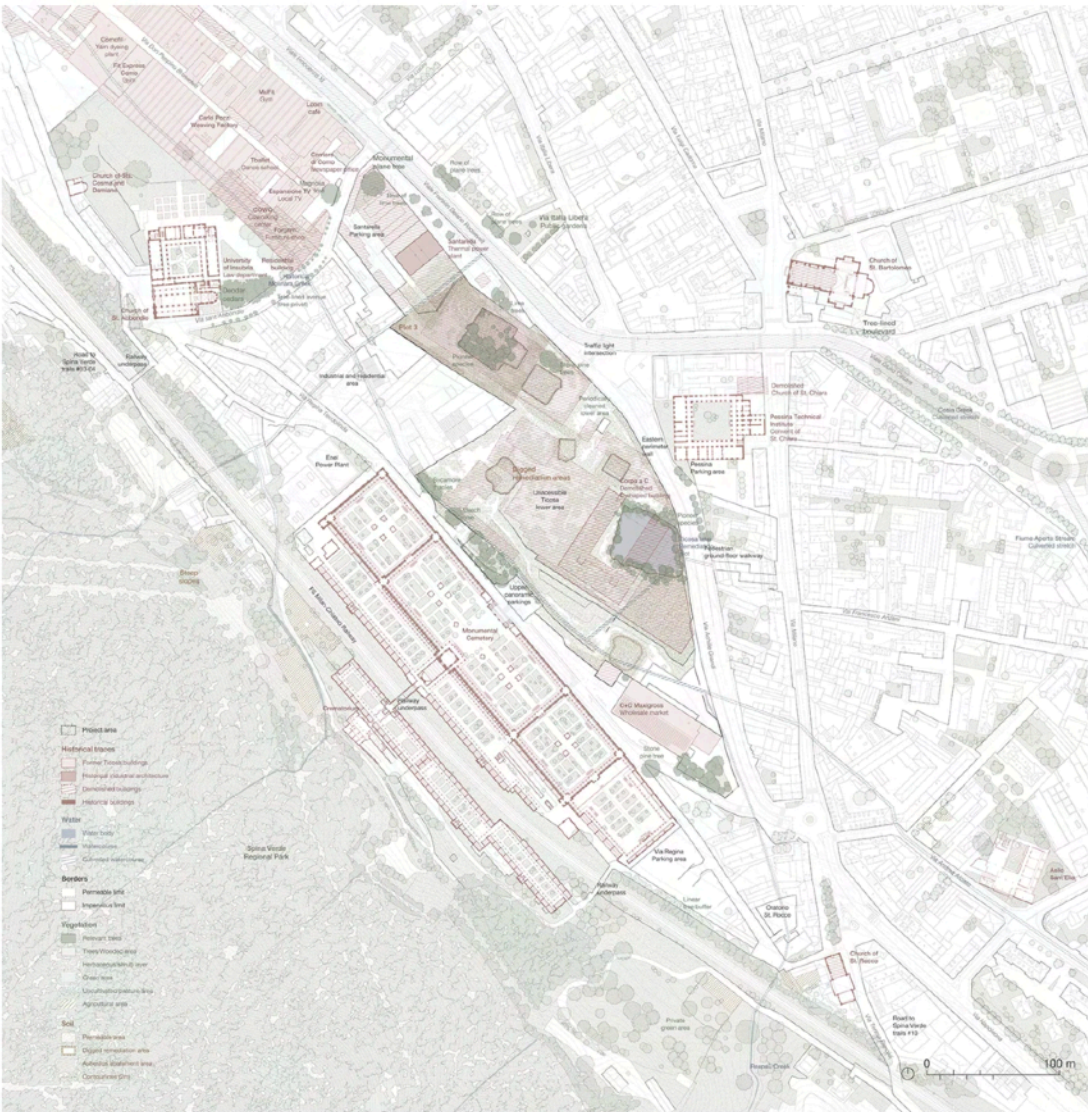
The proposed method, in fact, is not distinguished by a static reading of the analyzed elements present within the local landscape: contrarily, the reading is a dynamic act that analyzed the different layers.

In particular, a careful research and reading of the layers of ecological systems are highlighted: they are considered as processes in continuous evolution over time: the ongoing secondary ecological succession, particularly linked to the layers represented by the remediation excavations and the current vegetation, is a continuously ongoing process in the area: despite the repeated cleaning and elimination of the majority of the trees species, it represents the key driving force that reacts to external disturbances, outlining a new basic ecological identity for the entire area.

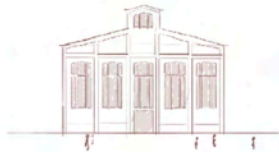
Also from the point of view of the analysis of the historical traces, the research process that is followed not only delves into the actual historical-monumental pre-existences and into the cultural values present at the time of mapping the landscape, but it also tries to represent the entire historical evolution of the architectural and ecological elements that characterized the area in the past: the dimension of memory is strongly influenced by the consideration of the imprint of historic demolished buildings which were present in the past and have disappeared today: they, however, remain an integral part of the testimonies of the industrial past of the factory; furthermore, the traces of historical waterways that have been buried since a long time ago are recovered through a mapping based on historical plans of the area and iconographic research.

The overall picture that emerges from this analysis, therefore, is that of a dynamically stratified local palimpsest that looks both to the past and, in terms of ecological dynamics, also towards the future.

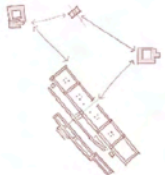
In particular, there are 5 layers that have been analysed: the historical traces, which consider the present and past architectural elements within the area; the water, considered as a fundamental element with recreational and ecological potential for the area: it is also analyzed considering the traces of historic waterways of the past; the project borders, which analyze the physical limits to deal with during the design phase; the vegetation, dynamically evolving over time; the soil, protagonist of recent years linked to reclamation activities which have left evident physical scars on it.



Historical Traces



Industrial identity of the area
Central role of the former dyeing industry



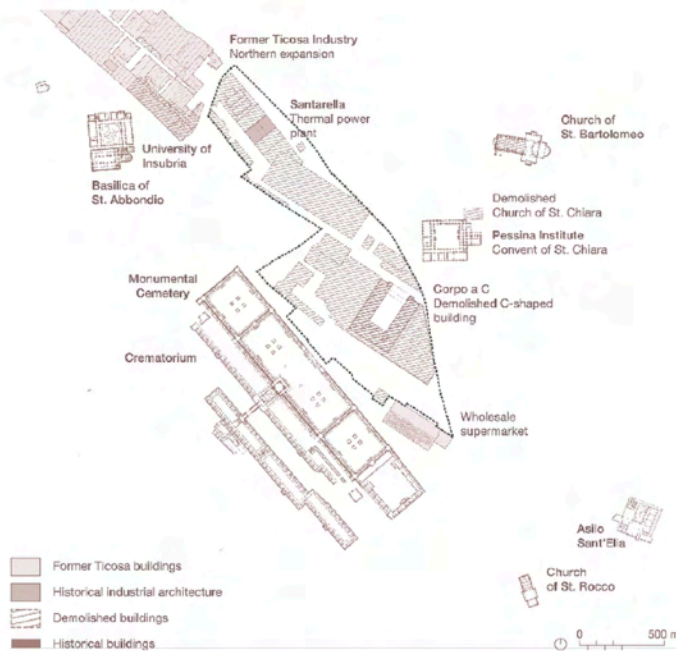
Relationship among the historical architecture
Cemetery - St. Chiara - Santarella - St. Abbondio



Historical traces
Imprint of the historical C-shaped building



Bridge between past and future
Post-industrial ecological role of the area



The mapping of the historical traces that characterize the local palimpsest is based on the process of reconstruction of the industrial past which for a long time marked the identity of the area.

In particular, the mapping process not only highlights the 4 local monumental architectural pre-existences (St. Abbondio Complex, Santarella, Former Convent of St. Chiara, Monumental Cemetery), but also delves into the historical traces that characterized the Ticosa industrial plant in the past. From the latter, for example, emerges the plan of the historic C-shaped building, currently demolished, the footprint of which can be considered useful for the future design of the area, as it is reminiscent of a testimony closely linked to the industrial past of the dyeing plant.

Furthermore, from this drawing, the condition that also emerges is that related to the demolition interventions: they contributed to delete most of the history of the place and the only intact fragment within the project area is that related to the Santarella building; this architectural testimony and its surrounding area it must be enhanced due to its central role in representing the history.

This layer is also linked to the historical botanical pre-existences of the area, to the water traces and to the remediation plots, which are stratified in a close relationship between one and the other.

Borders



Improve the east-west pedestrian mobility
Connections from Via Milano to the new park



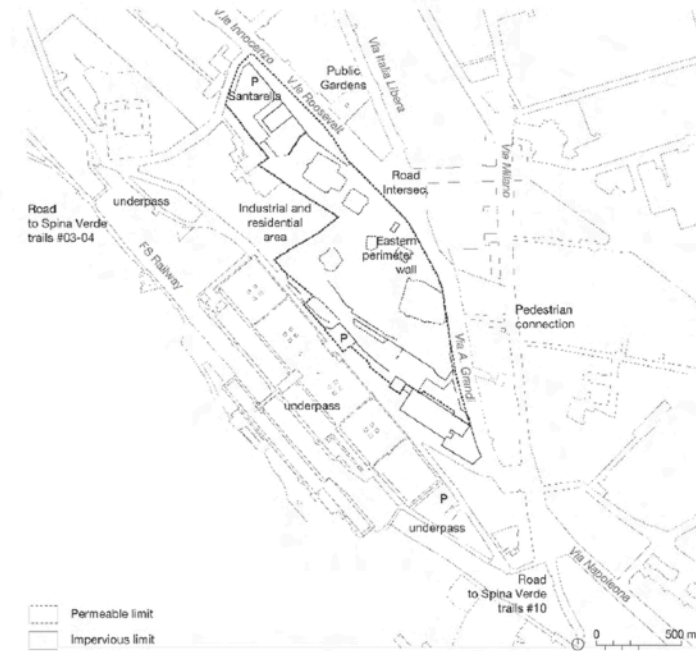
Accessibility to the upper areas
Connection to the Cemetery and Spina Verde



Consider the existing barriers and boundaries
Existing retaining walls and site topography



Didactic/ecological role of inaccessible areas
Preserve the ongoing ecological processes



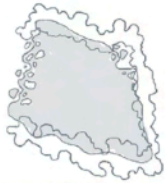
This layer analyzes the physical, architectural and infrastructural limits that characterize the project area. In particular, the aim is to identify potential connections between the Ticosa area and the neighboring context and to evaluate in design terms the accessibility to the different areas.

In particular, the need to integrate interventions aimed at improving east-west permeability between the Via Milano neighborhood and the area itself is highlighted: connections from a pedestrian point of view are currently absent: the idea is to exploit ground-floor walkways already present and provide new connections that counteract the strong north-south mobility of the axis represented by the main road (Via Napoleone - Via Grandi - Viale Roosevelt - Viale Innocenzo).

Also from the point of view of the connection towards the upper area of the project and the Spina Verde Park, 2 existing underpasses have been identified, which should be enhanced for optimal integration and connection of the trails of the protected area.

Furthermore, the drawing shows the presence of walls and embankments into the project area. A final consideration is that linked to accessibility into the project site: in areas without anthropic disturbance, there are in fact important ecological processes underway that need to be preserved.

Water



Ecological role of the water element
Ticosa lake: from land scar to ecological patch



Enhance the historical water traces
Respa -Molinara Creek



Didactic role of the water
Water and the former dyeing industry



Water-related habitats
Support wild areas and wetlands



The role of water in the design of public space in the Ticosa area must be central: the ecological, educational, cultural and historical role is fundamental and related to the environmental dimension and to the memory of the place.

The presence of a small water basin, the "Ticosa Lake", formed in 2014" following the excavation interventions for the soil reclamation, is now fundamental, as it represents a wet area, a hot-spot of biodiversity and at the same time an evident "scar" which testifies the recent problems related to soil pollution that distinguished the industry in the past.

The watercourses, mostly culverted, should be enhanced and integrated into the final design of the area, also by planning for their uncovering and the valorisation of the trace of the culverted stretches on the ground surface. In the recovery of the historical values of the place, they could also have a recreational role, in order to provide direct mutual interactions between the users of the park and the water element itself.

A final crucial role is the ecological one: providing and preserving wet areas in the new park would allow to preserve and create peculiar and important habitats within the local ecological system.

Vegetation



Digging scars as source of biodiversity
Support and preserve the ecological hot-spots



Natural post-industrial reclamation
New environmental identity of the area



Relationship with Spina Verde Regional Park
Park as an urban stepping stone



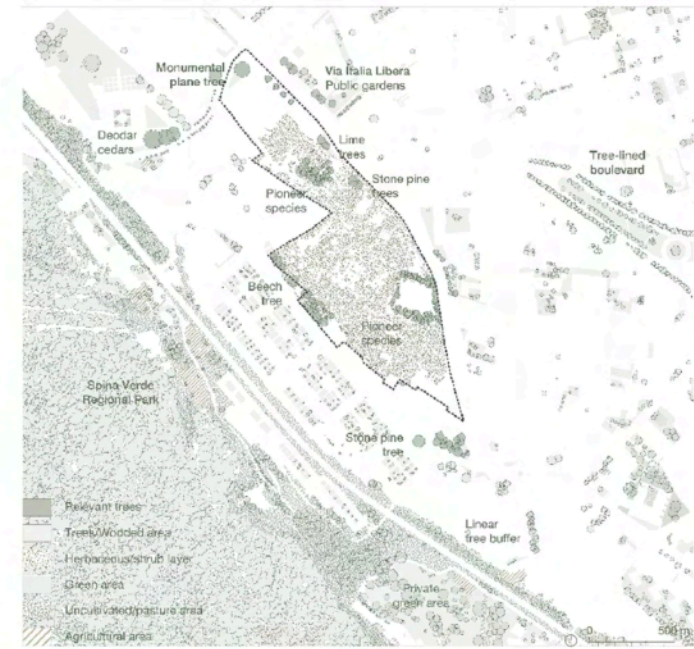
Phytoremediation processes
Human-nature symbiosis to work with residual pollutants



Reconnect the past
Species related to the former industrial activities



Urban role of tree-lined boulevards
Linear green infrastructure towards the lake



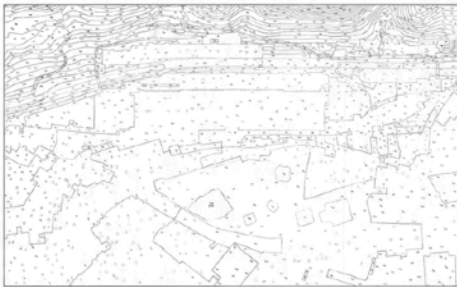
Vegetation is one of the main dynamic components present in the local palimpsest. The abandonment of the area, the recent reclamation activities and the inaccessibility have contributed to establish processes of secondary ecological succession in which many pioneer species have reclaimed their space, concentrating, especially near the permeable depaved areas and in the digged plots.

The ecological role of the project area has strongly related especially to the excavation areas, which have become important stocks of biodiversity.

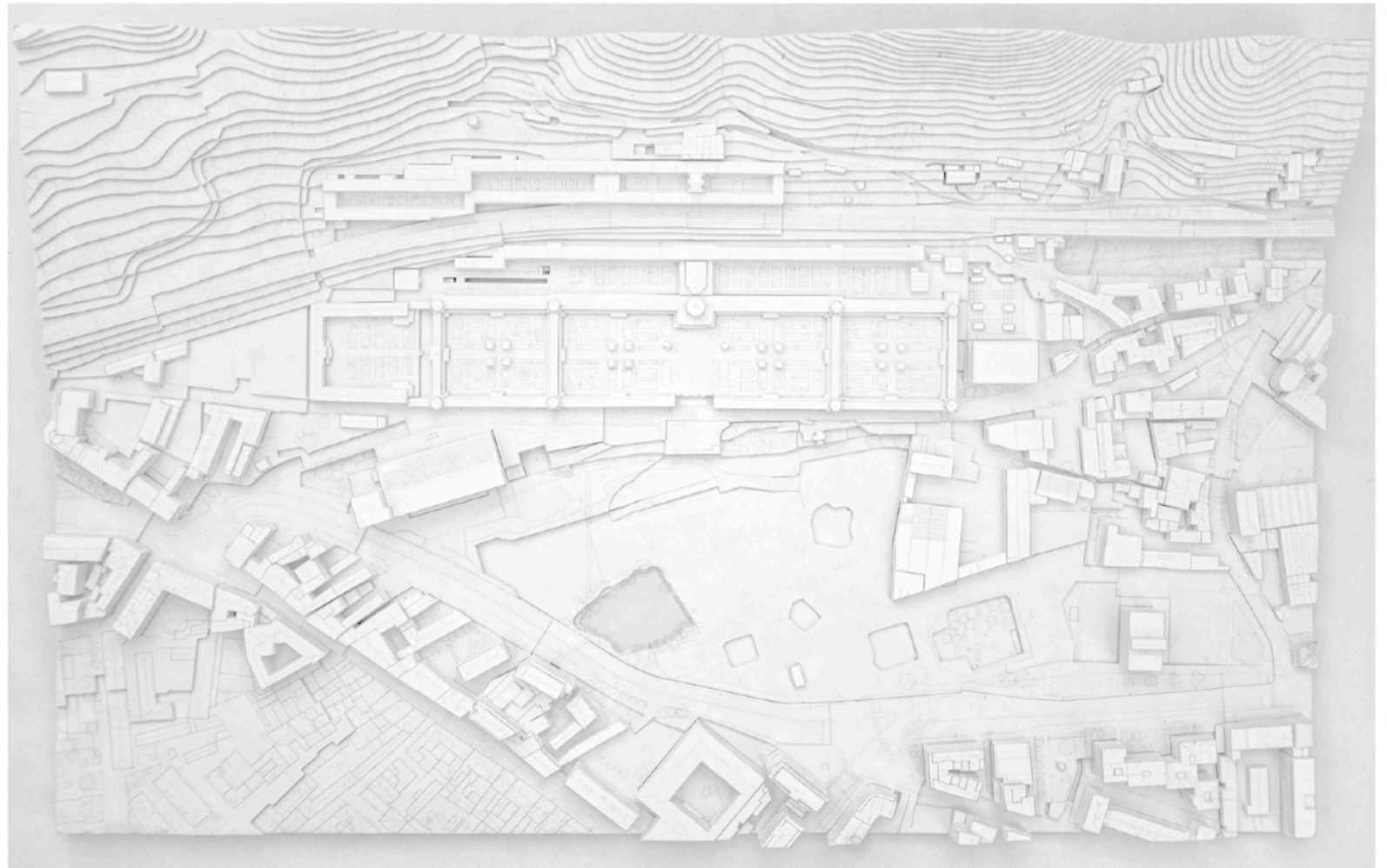
Different pioneer species area also playing a central role for phytoremediation processes, as they are characterized by phytoextraction and phytodegradation activities towards soil pollutant residues.

The choice of species to integrate into the project design will also need to take into account the relationships that the site has with the nearby Spina Verde Regional Park: the new park in the Ex Ticosa area can be seen as a patch in the local ecological landscape mosaic, with the role of a stepping stone for the mobility of species: it will therefore be fundamental to also include also "wild" areas in the design of the project. Furthermore, the choice of species could also play a role in recalling the dyeing past of the area, enhancing the memory and history of the place.

Study model
Topography of the project area



Draft drawing of the topographic layers, used to create the physical model. The model has been realized at the scale of 1:1000, using Poliplat slabs, on a plexiglass base.

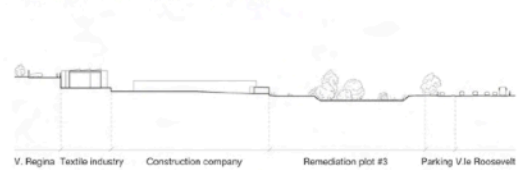


Sections and photos Current condition

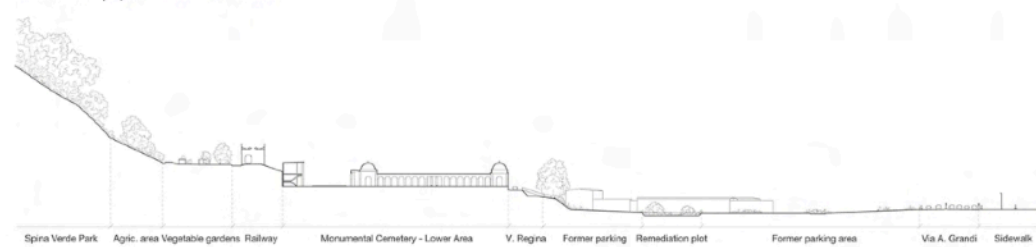
Section AA' | Via Regina - Santarella area



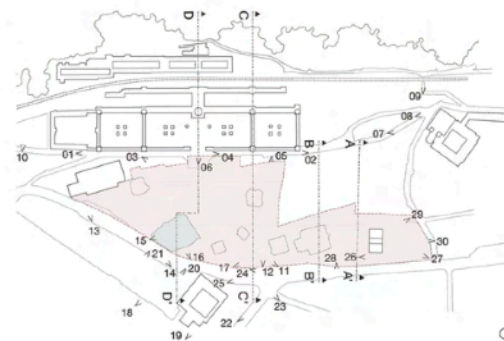
Section BB' | Via Regina - Remediation plot #3



Section CC' | Spina Verde - Lower area



Section DD' | Monumental Cemetery - Ticosa Lake



The sections deepen the spatial relationship between the project site and the surrounding areas, with particular attention placed on the remediation plots and on the relationship between the Spina Verde Park, the Monumental Cemetery, the railway and the former Ticosa area.



Upper area Via Regina Teodolinda

01 | Cemetery walls

Historical upper street alongside the cemetery walls.

02 | Via Regina Teodolinda

View of the mixed-use pedestrian and vehicular road coming from the Basilica of Sant'abbondio.





Monumental Cemetery Entrance gate and parkings

03 | Panoramic terrace
View of the supermarket's parking lot, located at about 10 meters above the lower area.

04 | Beato Jose Maria Escriva Square
Square in front of the entrance of the Monumental Cemetery.

05 | View from Via Regina
Current condition of the lower area, a few months after the clearing intervention.

06 | Cemetery gate
Entrance gate to the lower area of the cemetery.



Basilica of Sant'Abbondio
Historical architectural complex

07 | The Romanesque Basilica
View of the church from the stretch of Via Regina that connects the upper project area.

08 | Road intersection
Intersection between Via Regina and Via Sant'Abbondio.



Connections Pedestrian underpasses

09 | Sant'Abbondio underpass
Railway underpass that allows the access to the trails #03-04 of the Spina Verde Regional Park.

10 | Cemetery parking
Parking lot located in the area south of the cemetery, beyond which an existing underpass could be potentially used as a pedestrian connection to the park's trails.



Spina Verde Regional Park
Ecological and visual relationship with the park

11 | Baradello Castle
View of Mount Baradello from the lower project area.

12 | View from the lower area
Colonization of the project area by pioneer shrubs and herbaceous species. In the background, silhouette of the mounts of Spina Verde Regional Park.



Former industrial building
Wholesale supermarket building

13 | Building facade
Facade of the building seen from Via Achille Grandi.

14 | Via Achille Grandi
View of the former industrial building from the area nearby the Former Convent of St. Chiara.



Wilderness
Spread of plants near the excavation areas

15 | Artificial lake
Partial view of the waterbody, surrounded by pioneer species.

16 | Biodiversity hot-spot
Several trees, including willows, poplars and birches, along the banks of the lake were not removed during the last cleaning intervention.

17 | Remediation "scars"
The lower area has several scars on the ground caused by reclamation interventions, which contribute to establish a new ecological identity of the landscape.





Via Milano connection
East-west urban permeability

18 | Pedestrian connection
Potential pedestrian access path to the Ticosa area, alongside the square of the Pessina Institute

19 | Pessina Institute
Historic building of the Former Convent of St. Chiara, seen from Via Milano.

20 | School gate
Entrance gate of the school square, facing Via Achille Grandi.

21 | Pedestrian path
Existing pedestrian ground-floor walkway connecting Via Milano.





Santarella building
Former industrial thermal power plant

26, 27 | Lateral parking lot
Eastern parking lot nearby the historical building. A row of lime trees is located at the center of the area.

28 | Public gardens of Via Italia Libera
View of the small public green area located beyond Viale F. D. Roosevelt.

29,30 | Frontal area
View of the facade and the area in front of the building. The parking lot, inaugurated in 2022, was built at the end of the area's reclamation activities. A specimen of plane tree stands in front of the area, next to the first stretch of Via Sant'Abbondio.

Urban framework | Ticosa Park

The territorial strategy of the area sees the new Ticosa Park as a core park that is central to an urban linear system, identified outside the historic walled city, which runs at the foot of the Spina Verde Park and extends from the Como Camerlata station up to reach the villas overlooking the lake.

Starting from a large-scale analysis, the role of proximity of the project area to the nearby protected area of Spina Verde has been highlighted: it is a regional park with the greatest influence from the point of view of ecological exchanges with the new park. The main connections to this area are lateral to the Monumental Cemetery and exploit 2 existing underpasses, one close to the Basilica of St. Abbondio and the other one is close to the car park south of the cemetery: these areas guarantee the access to paths 03-04 and 10. Furthermore, a new connection is planned between paths 04 and 10 which would connect the 2 path systems in the area behind the cemetery.

The water infrastructure present in the new park is also directly related to the protected area of the Spina Verde Park, as it is the area of origin of the main waterways that intersect the project site, including the Respaù Creek.

From a mobility point of view, the project strategy is to encourage soft mobility and the use of public transport. In particular, the role of the new railway interchange built in 2021 at the Camerlata station is enhanced: the presence of a large car park for the access to the structure and the possibility of changing the railway route between the Como-Saronno-Milan line (direct to Como Nord Lago station) and the Chiasso-Como-Milan line (direct to Como San Giovanni station), allows an efficient use of public transport to reach the Como San Giovanni station, from which it is possible to reach the project area.

Regarding the vehicular mobility, a system is proposed, including existing car parks located along the western area of the Convalle, which is also integrated by new parking areas both within the project site and in abandoned areas not far from it: among these, the large area of the former railway freight yard has been highlighted, for which a recent redevelopment project is already planned. A further parking area included in the road strategy is that of the Val Mulini car park, a structure equipped with 630 parking lots that is currently underused due to the moving of the services of the old Sant'Anna Hospital to the new structure in San Fermo della Battaglia. This car park is considered in the strategy as an interchange area for the slow mobility, from which the public transport can be organised, allowing users to reach the city area without the need to park directly in the Convalle.

Starting from the new park, the redevelopment of the north-south road axis represented by Via A. Grandi - Viale F.D. Roosevelt - Viale Innocenzo is also planned. The idea relates to the redevelopment of the road axis into a tree-lined boulevard, integrating the trees that are currently present in some sections, in order to guarantee a linear continuity of the green infrastructure that would start from the lake area up to the Ticosa Park and which then subsequently branches towards the already tree-lined Viale Giulio Cesare and towards Via Napoleona.

The new park, with a cultural-ecological and multifunctional identity, would represent the largest public green area in the Convalle, easily accessible from the walled city and also serving the local neighborhood and the nearby public buildings, including the University of Insubria and the different schools that are present in the area. The park develops laterally to the main road axis of the city and would represent the gateway to Como, the first area to be encountered at the end of the descent of Via Napoleona.





The analysis of the relationships of the Ticososa Park with the surrounding context carried out on a closer scale highlights its relationship with the different neighboring architectures.

In particular, in the north-west area, there are the remaining buildings of the former Ticososa industry (Northern expansion), currently privatized and used for craftsmanship and activities related to the tertiary sector. The historic access to the northern section of the factory is visually linked to the area in front of the Santarella building, the related square and the thematic dyeing garden planned in that area.

Near the same spot, it is possible to identify a small "cultural district", made up of the University of Insubria, located in the Monastery of Sant'Abbondio, and the different schools present beyond Viale Roosevelt ("Giuseppe Parini" Secondary School, "Fantasia" Nursery School, "Caio Plinio Secondo" Technical Institute, "Giuseppe Verdi" Music Conservatory), to which it is possible to add the historical architecture of the Former Convent of St. Chiara, currently "Pessina" Professional Institute. Together with the multifunctional cultural center of Santarella, these services are strongly linked to the proximity of the new Ticososa Park.

Furthermore, in the southern area, the presence of the Church of San Rocco and its oratory is mentioned, directly connected to the project area through the pedestrian redevelopment of Via Regina Teodolinda.

In this same area, the redesign of the entrance square to the monumental cemetery is also envisaged, consisting in the creation of a related pedestrian space arranged in a square, which overlooks directly towards the project area, taking advantage of the panoramic view that distinguishes its higher elevation.

A further historical architecture and landmark present near the project area is the Sant'Elia nursery school, a rationalist building that was designed by the arch. Giuseppe Terragni.

The neighborhood that most closely relates to the park is that of Via Milano Alta, which is connected to the project area via pedestrian crossings and an overpass near the former convent. The main pedestrian connections coming from the walled city are those related to Via Antonio Gramsci, near the Santarella building, Via Italia Libera, whose public garden of the same name is integrated into the project, and Via Milano Bassa.

From a vehicular traffic point of view, the node that is being redefined is the one between Via A. Grandi and Viale Roosevelt, currently regulated by traffic lights: the design of a roundabout and the lateral expansion of Viale Roosevelt towards the south-west are proposed, which also allows to create a median shallow swale separating the two lanes.

Design references

Projects

Design references

The references used for the design phase of the project were useful in the preliminary phase in order to implement the approach of valorising the ongoing ecological processes in the post-industrial area and to enhance the memory and the strong industrial identity of the former Ticosia dyeing industry.

For this purpose it is possible to mention the two German parks of Duisburg Nord and Zollverein, especially for the approach of integrating existing industrial architectures into the design of a public park. Similarly, the Dutch example represented by the Cultuurpark Westergasfabriek is also a particularly effective case study that has managed to integrate the design of new public spaces inside into a strategy for the reclamation of an industrial brownfield. Similarly, the most recent Parco Dora project in Turin, for the redevelopment of the former industrial plants present in the Spina 3 area, is also an example of post-industrial redevelopment capable of integrating and converting structures into recreational spaces for the public use.

From the point of view of the preservation and the enhancement of the ecological processes taking place within the area, a mention should be made about the conversion project of the Bonames Airfield, in Frankfurt am Main, and the Henri Matisse Park, focused on theme of the design of inaccessible areas and the spontaneous evolution of plant communities towards the climax ecological condition. Also the theme of the Third Landscape, theorized by Gilles Clement in 2005, can be seen as a basic theme of the project, linked to the "wilder" areas present within the design of the park.

Subsequently, with the detailed definition of the design at closer scales, some other references were useful for the design of more specific areas. Among these, there are: the Kalkriese Park, linked to the theme of the spatial design of the containment structures of the remediation plots; the "Between Cathedrals" and "MFO Park" projects for the design of the area related to the historical C-shaped building, currently demolished, but in relation to which the construction of a pavilion and of 2 lateral platforms was conceived, in relation to the Ticosia Lake area; the redevelopment project of the old town of Banyoles, which inspired the reopening of the canals and the valorisation of the traces of the underground waterways within the project; the Leça Swimming Pool project by Álvaro Siza Vieira, useful for the design of the succession of different panoramic platforms located at different heights to allow a connection capable of overcoming the difference in height present between the park the the upper access to the cemetery area; the André Citroën park, useful for the design of different spaces linked to open green areas; the Tossols Basil Athletics Stadium, which inspired the integration of sport areas within a context characterized by an urban reforestation intervention in the central area of the project.



Landschaftspark Duisburg Nord

Latz + Partner, 2002 | Duisburg, Germany

#post-industrial #ecology #environment #park #water
[latzundpartner.de]



Conversion Airfield Bonames

GTL Landschaftsarchitektur, 2004 | Frankfurt am Main, Germany

#wilderness #ecological succession #pioneer
[gtl-landschaftsarchitektur.de]



Cultuurpark Westergasfabriek

Gustafson Porter + Bowman, 2006 | Amsterdam, Netherlands

#former factory #pollution #ecology #park
[gp-b.com]



Parco Dora

Latz + Partner, 2012 | Turin, Italy

#post-industrial #memory #sport #urban #park
[photo by the autor]



Zollverein Park

Planergruppe Oberhausen, 2014 | Essen, Germany

#post-industrial #forest #reclamation #history
[landezine.com]



Parc Henri Matisse

Gilles Clement, 1995 | Lille, France

#Third Landscape #inaccessibility #ecology #island
[landezine.com]



Archaeological Museum and Park Kalkriese
Gigon/Guyer Architekten, 2002 | Osnabrück, Germany
#history #memory #frame #sheet piles
[ndr.de]



Between Cathedrals
Alberto Campo Baeza, 2009 | Cadiz, Spain
#pavilion #platform #framed view #history
[campobaeza.com]



Leça Swimming Pools
Álvaro Siza Vieira, 1966 | Matosinhos, Portugal
#topography #panoramic #platforms #ramps
[quattroterzlab.com]



Tossols Basil Athletics Stadium
RCR Arquitectes, 2000 | Olot, Spain
#sport facility #woodland #ecology #park
[madaphotoservice.com]



MFO Park
Raderschall Partners, 2002 | Zürich, Switzerland
#demolished building #former factory #memory #park
[landezine.com]



Banyoles Old Town Refurbishment
Miàs Architects, 2008 | Girona, Spain
#square #memory #water #history #urban
[miasarquitectes.com]

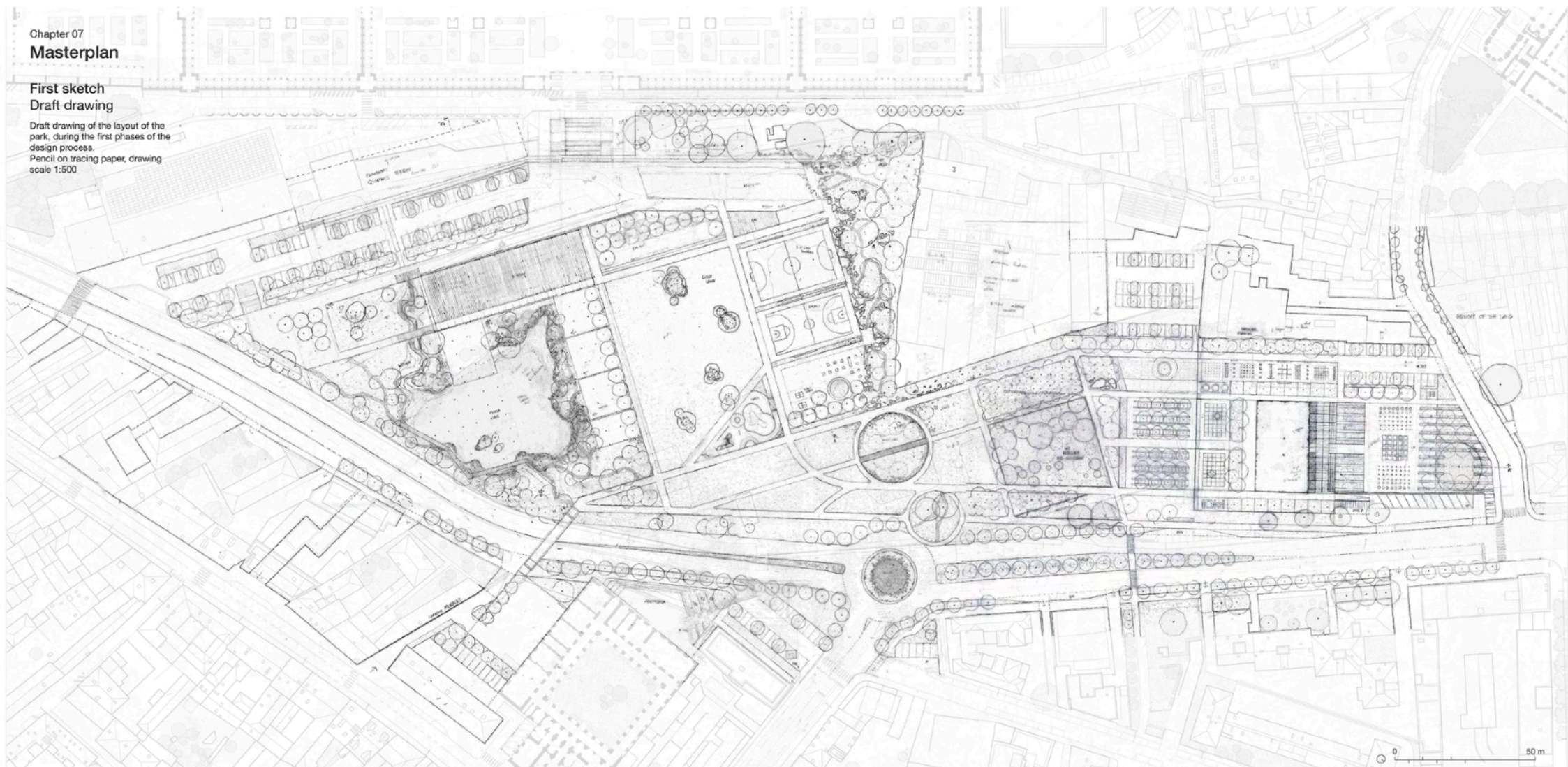


Parc André-Citroën
Patrick Berger, Gilles Clément, 1992 | Paris, France
#urban #park #reclamation #water
[landezine.com]

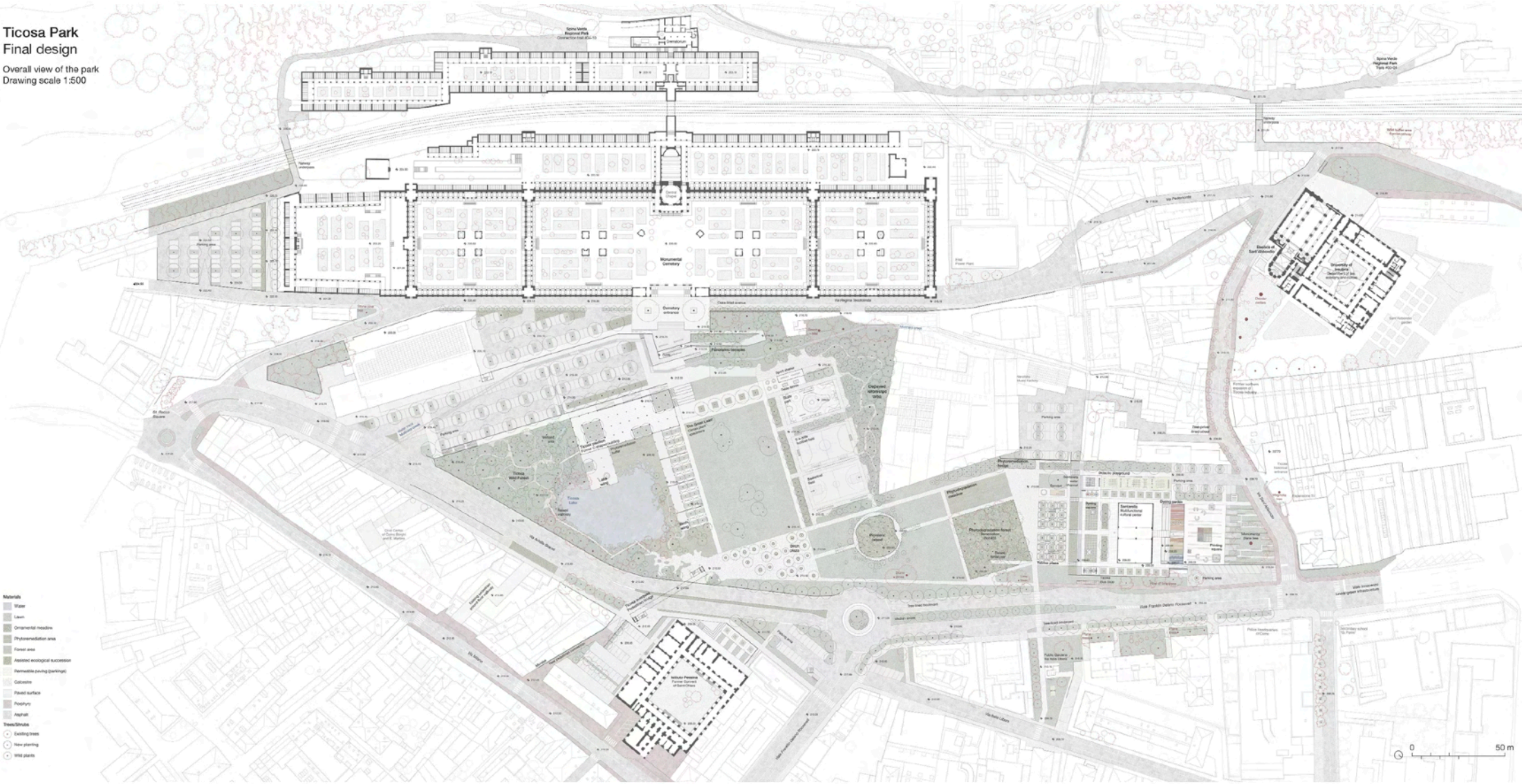
Chapter 07
Masterplan

First sketch
Draft drawing

Draft drawing of the layout of the park, during the first phases of the design process.
Pencil on tracing paper, drawing scale 1:500

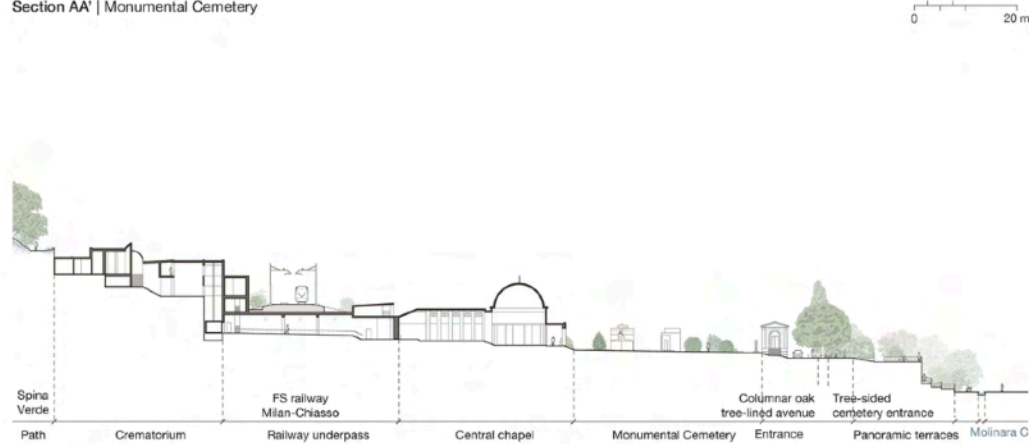


Ticosa Park
Final design
Overall view of the park
Drawing scale 1:500

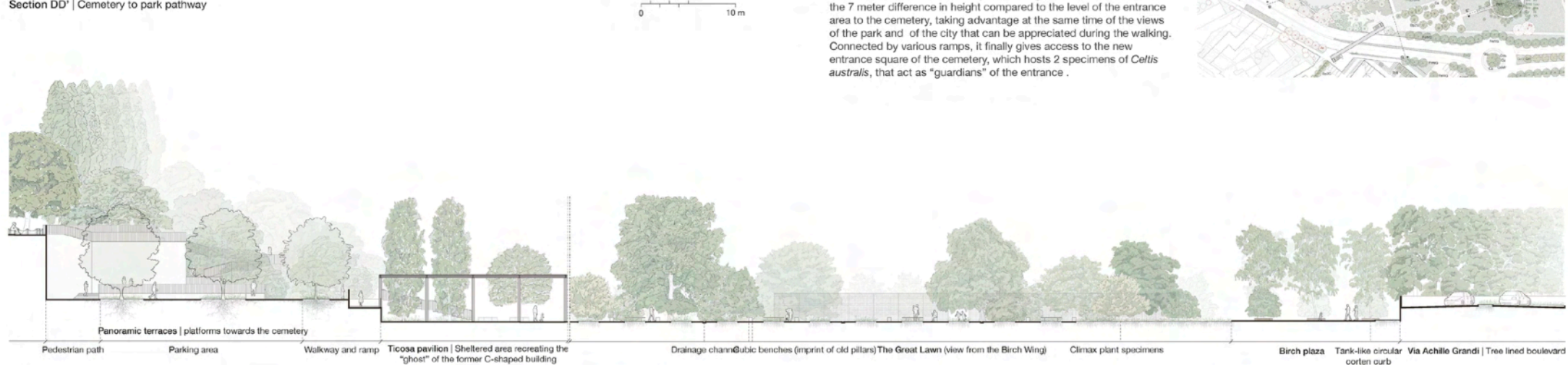


[illegible]

Section AA' | Monumental Cemetery



Section DD' | Cemetery to park pathway



The project plans to establish a new pedestrian connection in an east-west direction, which, starting from Via Milano and in general from the city, allows the access to the cemetery area through the new park.

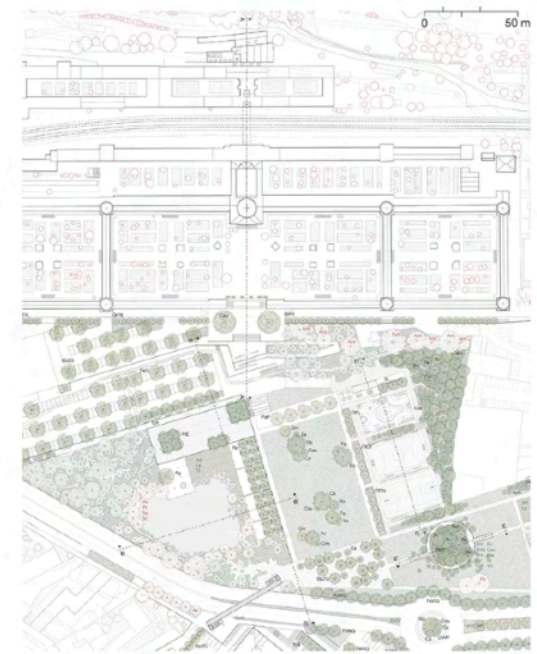
From the section, it is also possible to note the conformation of the different species chosen in the project: once passed the pedestrian overpass, starting from the eastern limit of the area, there is the perimeter row of ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior* 'Westhof's Glorie'), which extends next to the last stretch of Via A. Grandi.

Subsequently, there is the Birch Plaza, which hosts birch trees and hazelnuts planted inside circular flowerbeds delimited by corten curbs, which recall industrial dyeing tanks.

Towards the west, then, the users cross the paved path flanked by the Birch Wing on the left and the Great Lawn on the right. Located at the same level of the pedestrian path, the Great Lawn hosts, scattered across a large open green space, various communities of native species typical of local areas that reached an ecological balance (climax condition) with the surrounding environment.

Before the staircase that gives access to the intermediate elevation area of the park, the user is flanked by the Ticosa Pavilion: inspired by the Between Cathedrals project located in Cadiz, this structure is made up of a horizontal roof and cruciform pillars placed in the footprint of the old pillars of the building. The preferred view is the one facing Ticosa Lake and the structure is interrupted by specimens of *Populus tremula* 'Erecta', characterized by its upright shape.

The last stretch that separates the park users from the cemetery, once crossed the new uncovered Molinara watercourse, is the one related to the Panoramic terraces. They were designed in order to overcome the 7 meter difference in height compared to the level of the entrance area to the cemetery, taking advantage at the same time of the views of the park and of the city that can be appreciated during the walking. Connected by various ramps, it finally gives access to the new entrance square of the cemetery, which hosts 2 specimens of *Celtis australis*, that act as "guardians" of the entrance.



Section BB' | Former C-shaped building area

The area designed on the footprint of the historical C-shaped building is aimed at recreating, through a design of the ground, seats and a central pavilion, the shape of the industrial building and its plan structure.

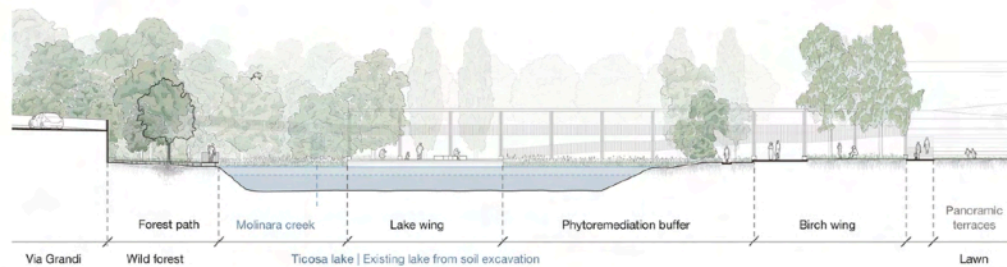
Built between 1926 and 1929 and demolished in 2007, the building represented a monumental evidence of the industrial history of the place; it consisted of 2 lateral wings of 4 floors and a central body of 5 floors; the internal courtyard a one-story high sawtooth roof building was present.

The related operations were those related to printing operations regarding the lower floors, while on the upper floors there were spaces for designers and photoengravers.

The new design of the area recreates the "impression" of the building, through two paved lateral platforms and a central body made up of a pavilion which proposes the repetition of square shapes measuring 5 m on each side in a modular layout. The roofing structure is supported by cruciform pillars placed on the same points where the old pillars of the building once stood. This structure creates a sheltered area characterized by a framed view facing west, where Tioosa Lake is now located.

Overlooking the latter, the left platform, called "Lake wing", extends towards the water as if it were a pier, creating a space surrounded by an amphitheater of forested spaces, formal rows of birch trees and wetland with a wild character.

The opposite wing, however, is the one represented by the Birch wing: here, following a rigid and formal layout, rows of birch trees, pioneer species that often reclaim post-industrial areas, are planted interposed with cubic seats that arise on the footprint of the old pillars.



Section CC' | Sport fields

The sports fields area represents one of the main recreational spots of the park. This public space, freely accessible by park users, is made up of three fields dedicated to different sports, separated by vertical nets and equipped with long seats for watching games.

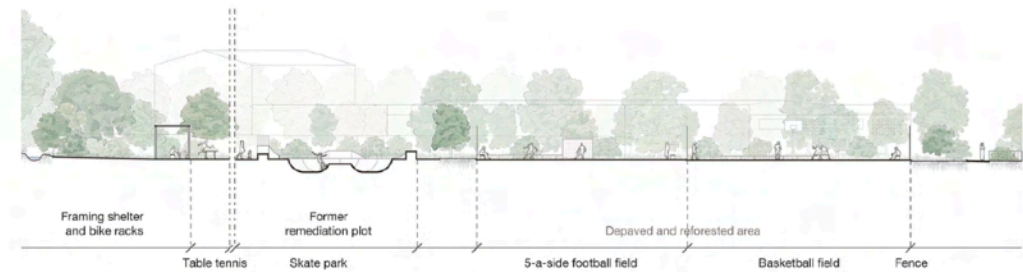
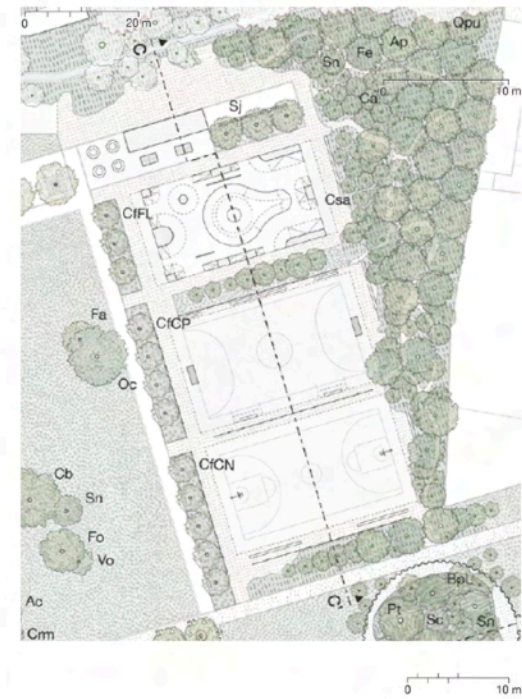
In the background, interposed with the structures of the neighboring construction industry, an urban forest is created, made up of native trees and shrub species, which can be visited following internal paths. The design idea that inspired this area is that related to the Tossols Basil Athletics Stadium, designed by RCR Architectes, which effectively integrates a sports structure into a natural context.

Starting from the east, the structure of the sports area offers a basketball court, a 5-a-side football field and a skate park, which is located within a former reclamation excavation area.

In the western part, a small sheltered space offers further seating. In the same area, there are circular seats, 2 table-tennis tables and a small area where there is a bike rack, useful for leaving the bikes of park users, placed in the shade of 3 specimens of *Styrax japonicus*, an ornamental flowering species.

The area of the sport fields is visually separated from the Great Lawn behind it, by vertical mesh structures, functional for the proposed sports and by a long row of trees, made up of different cultivars of *Cornus florida*, a flowering small tree, planted along the entire southern limit of this area.

Accessibility to it is easy both coming from the direction of Via Milano, and arriving from the cemetery or from the wholesale supermarket area, which is connected by a large ramp placed between the Great Lawn and the Panoramic Terraces that area giving access to the entrance level to the cemetery.



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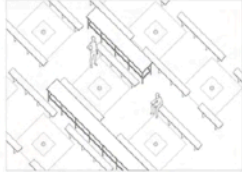
Design references

The industrial past of the area

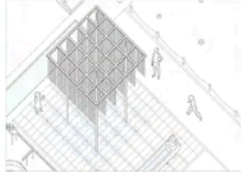
A specific iconographic research was carried out during the design phase, aimed at investigating the tools, shapes, and functions that characterized the different production processes that were performed into the former dyeing and printing industry.

The aim is to re-propose these features within the area, in order also to preserve and transmit the specific industrial identity of the place to the users of the park and to the future generations. This will also enhance the cultural awareness of this Heritage and of the related history and thus it will establish new relationships between the past, the present and future of the area.

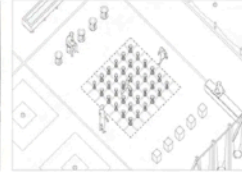
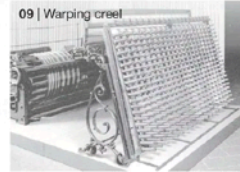
01 | Hand-screen printing tables



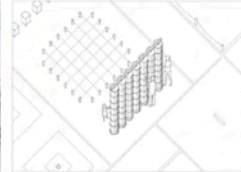
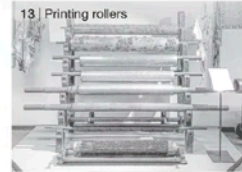
05 | Drying rack



09 | Warping creel



13 | Printing rollers



02 | Double-bottom dye vat



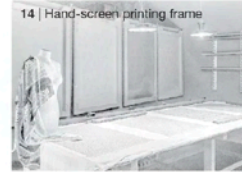
06 | Circular dyeing vat



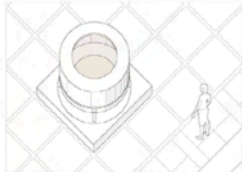
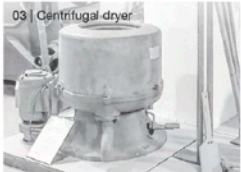
10 | Vat dyeing sticks



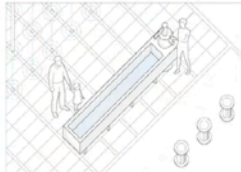
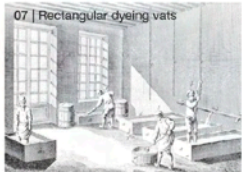
14 | Hand-screen printing frame



03 | Centrifugal dryer



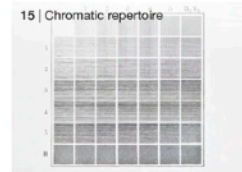
07 | Rectangular dyeing vats



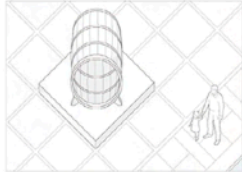
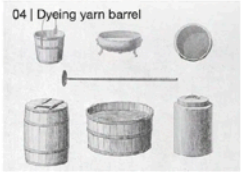
11 | Weaving loom



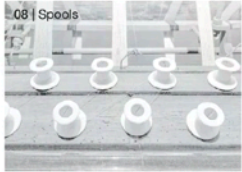
15 | Chromatic repertoire



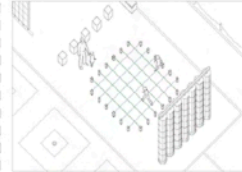
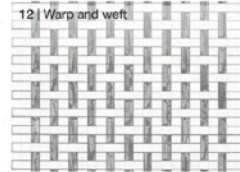
04 | Dyeing yarn barrel



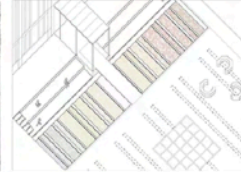
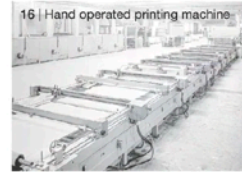
08 | Spools



12 | Warp and weft

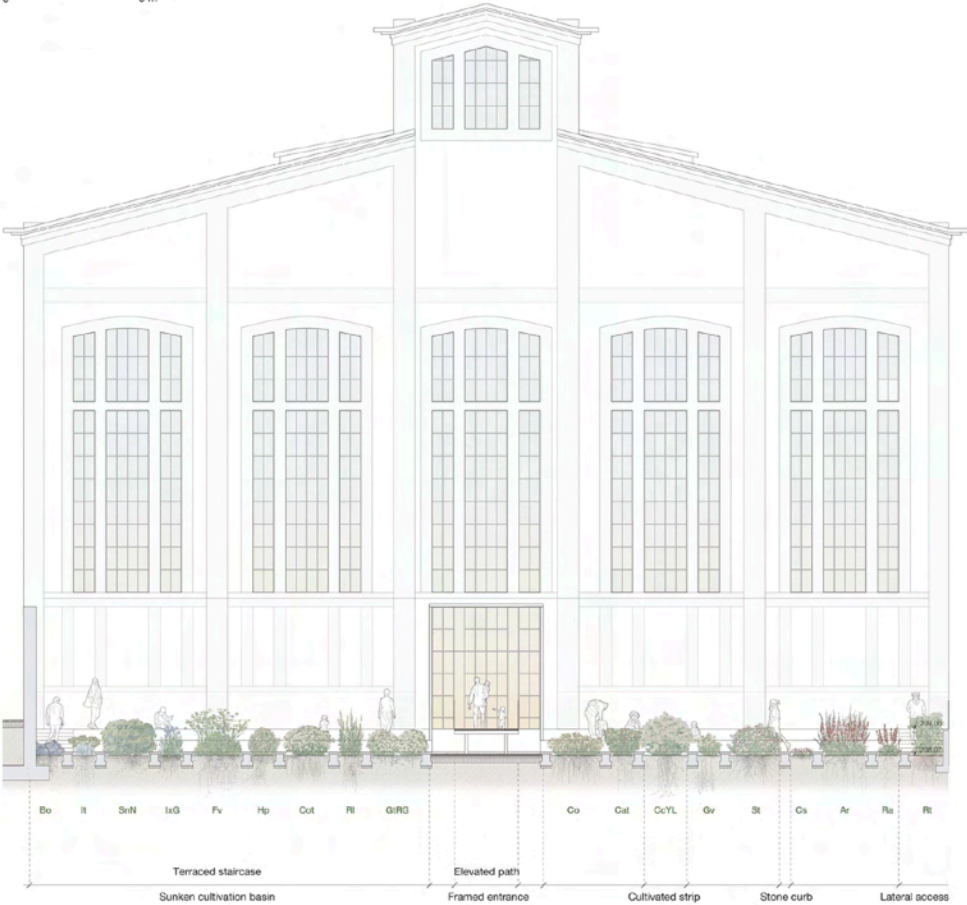


16 | Hand operated printing machine



Section AA'
Santarella dyeing garden

0 5 m



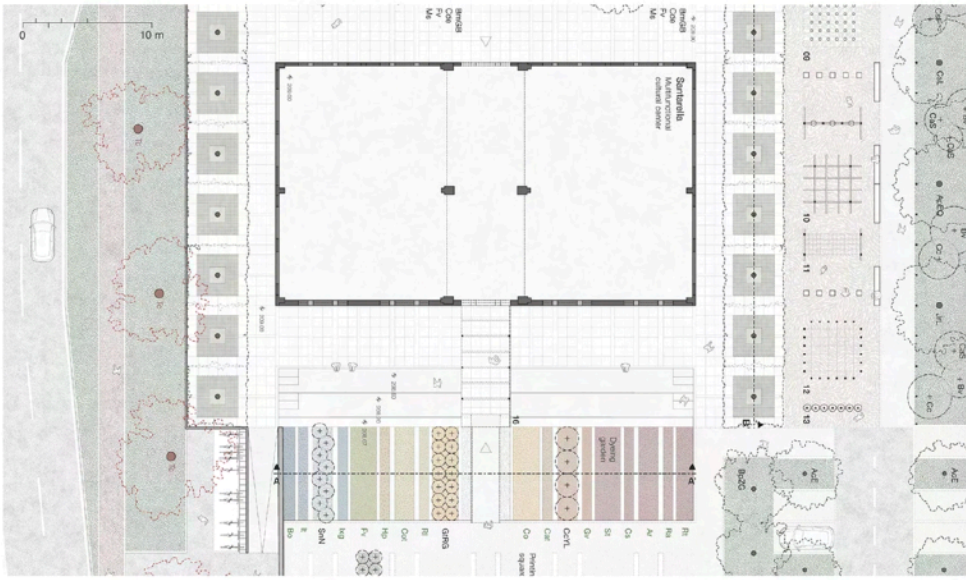
Abbrev. name	Ar	Bo	Cat
dyeing parts			
Scientific name	<i>Alcea rosea</i> L.	<i>Brassica oleracea</i> L. var. capitata f. rubra	<i>Carthamus tinctorius</i> L.
Co	Cot	Cs	Fv
<i>Calendula officinalis</i> L.	<i>Cota tinctoria</i> (L.) J. Gay	<i>Crocus sativus</i> L.	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.
Gv	Hp	It	IzG
<i>Galium verum</i> L.	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i> L.	<i>Iris tinctoria</i> L.	<i>Iris x germanica</i> L.
Ra	Ri	Rt	St
<i>Rumex acetosa</i> L.	<i>Rosella luteola</i> L.	<i>Rubia tinctorum</i> L.	<i>Serratula tinctoria</i> L.

Between the "Printing square" and the entrance of the building, a thematic garden is proposed, designed following an overall structure inspired by the industrial fabric printing machineries. It will host a botanical collection of dyeing species, aimed at recalling the identity of the former industry and re-establishing a positive relationship with the soil.

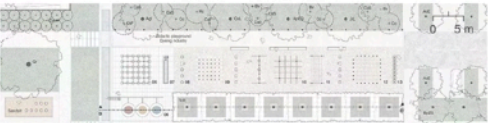
Between the cultivation beds and the building, a stepped staircase helps to create a meeting place where people can stop in front of the facade. This structure is interrupted centrally by a raised pedestrian bridge which leads directly towards the framed entrance of the building and allows at the same time a top view of the garden.

The intended use of the building is that of a multifunctional cultural center, where exhibitions, shows, debates and recreational-educational activities can be organized.

The idea is to make it both a crossing and stopping place, integrated into the everyday reality of the park's users.



Section BB'
Didactic playground - Dyeing industry



The structure of the didactic playground is based on a sequence of equipments with shapes that recall specific machineries, equipments and objects from the area's industrial past.

In this area the themes of industrial memory and the historical role of water for the Tícosa industry meet the dimension of playing, creating an interaction increases the awareness of the history of the place.



Playground area Axonometric view

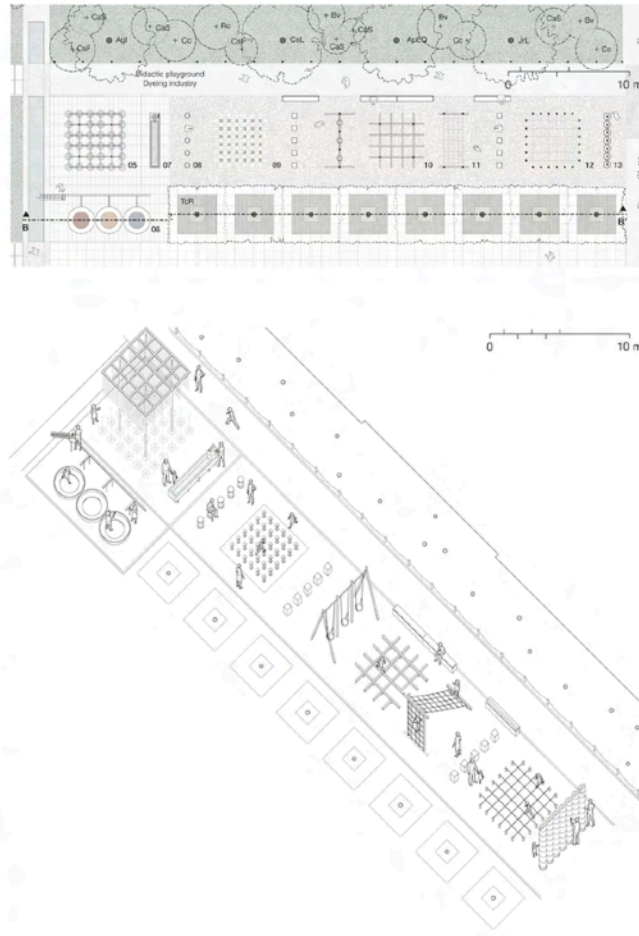
The playground area, represented in the section BB' and in the axonometric view, is based on the composition of a series of recreational structures inspired by objects and shapes linked to the former dyeing and printing industry.

The sequence begins in the northern area, where there are the "Printing rollers", made up of cylinders placed vertically, with horizontal subdivisions and bearing fabric print motifs on the surface. Continuing in a southerly direction, there is the "Warp and Weft" area, made up of a net of intertwined ropes raised from the ground and passable playing a balance game. The structure of a "Weaving Loom" is recreated in the nearby space and consists of an equipment composed of a climbable net placed vertically and another one placed obliquely. The following structure is that related to the "Vat dyeing sticks", horizontal beams raised from the ground and which can be walked linearly along their length. Once passed the nest swing, there is the "Warping creel", an area made up of a square drawn on the ground, which has numerous spools, geometrically arranged, which can be walked. Next to this last area, a row of seats in the shape of spools is proposed, recreating objects typically linked to the textile and dyeing industry.

The sequence ends towards south with the historical culverted minor watercourse that is derived from the diversion of the former Molinara water channel. It will re-establish the area's close relationship with the water, allowing a direct interaction with the users of the park.

Here there are 3 structures closely linked to water: the "Drying rack", a metal structure with suspended vertical sticks that recall the suspension of the yarns following the dyeing phase; a long "Rectangular dyeing vat", consisting of a rectangular tank at the beginning of which there is a manual pump that takes the water from the canal; the three "Circular dyeing vats" based on primary colors and connected by a raised channel inside which it is possible to make the water flow by activating an Archimede screw.

Alongside the perimeter walls located in the western side of the area, the planting of different tree and shrub species characterized by dyeing properties is planned. This choice is also aimed at enriching the cultural, ecological and educational value of the post-industrial site.



Section CC' Remediation plot #03

The ecological role of the excavations, as biodiversity hot spots, is enhanced and preserved, playing also with the topic of the human accessibility to these areas.

As already seen in the previous chapter, in the area related to the remediation plot #03, the construction of a raised walkway is envisaged; like a pier, the structure extends into the remediation area and suddenly interrupts itself. This establishes a relationship between man and nature in which the latter is free to develop following the dynamics of ecological succession, without particular disturbances. Man witnesses its evolution and takes care of this place, which in the past was characterized by a controversial relationship with the soil.

The frame of the area, created with Corten sheet piles, delimits this "urban forest" that is constantly evolving over time.

