

POLITECNICO DI TORINO
SECOND SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
Master of Science in Territorial, Urban, Environmental and Landscape
Planning
Honors theses

Beyond the wall. Guidelines for the enhancement of landscape values in productive areas

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It is a fact that landscape and industry have always entertained difficult neighborly relations: at least in the collective imagination, the mere combination of the two terms can even appear paradoxical. Undeniably, the common perception of the so-called “industrial area” is that of a place – or better, of a “non-place” – where the transformation forces in the name of technological progress constantly collide with the reasons for the protection and conservation of territorial resources.

In this regard, the period of economic crisis and the deep downsizing that several firms are undergoing should not lead to the wrong conclusion that the problem of rationally designing/reconverting this kind of areas has been overcome. On the contrary, the debate is current again just because the question comes up in different terms.

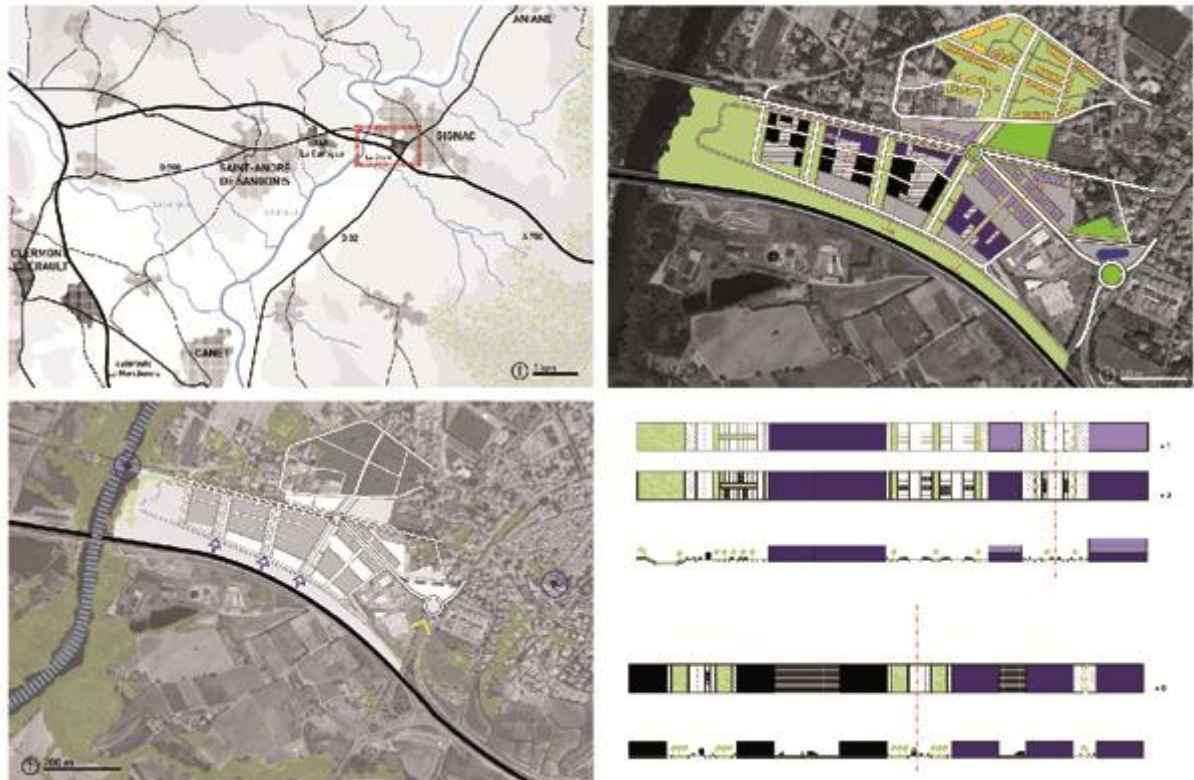
Emblematic figures of so many contemporary Italian landscapes, nowadays it is no longer possible to think about production plants as monofunctional suburban districts where specialized platforms locate themselves without any apparent connection with their surroundings. Actually, the recent legislative framework has been enriched by new instruments that go well beyond the sectorial vision that typically characterized the past legal measures, with the subsequent restatement of the values of a physical space that – in any case – represents one of the constants in the development of our country.

At the national level, the APEAs – acronym that stands for “Ecologically Equipped Productive Areas” – certainly constitute the most important innovation. Implemented and managed on the basis of eco-efficiency policies, they testify a concrete step towards the environmental and operational qualification of industrial sites.

Environmental and operational qualification of course, but that is all.

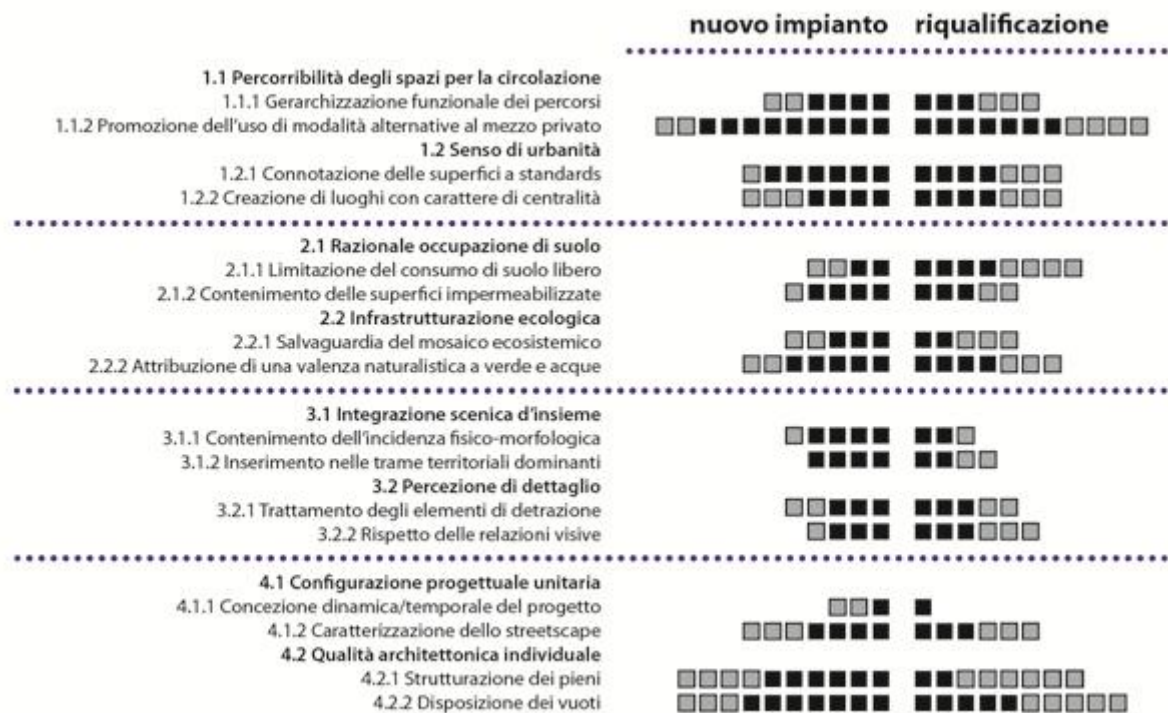
Conceived in compliance with regional regulations that require the observance of strict procedures to support the minimization of adverse impacts on the ecosystem (mainly through the implementation of actions in the sectors of energy, waste, water supply and disposal), apparently they have still not reached a degree of maturity such as to constitute a quality options from every point of view.

While a lot has been written – and sometimes even experienced – about the benefits that these sites would be able to provide in the perspective of environmental friendliness, also in the case of APEAs one cannot but point out that the theories concerning the new profiles that the “factory” is taking in practice clash with a very low sensitivity about the positive role that their landscape qualification might have. The accumulated delay has therefore suggested the need to proceed with the drafting of Guidelines, which at the same time integrate with the already existing documents and fall outside simple ecological components to encompass those functional, social and aesthetic too.



CASE STUDY - Research method. From top to bottom, and from left to right: territorial framework at the scale of wide context and close surroundings; project overview at the scale of area of intervention and urban sections

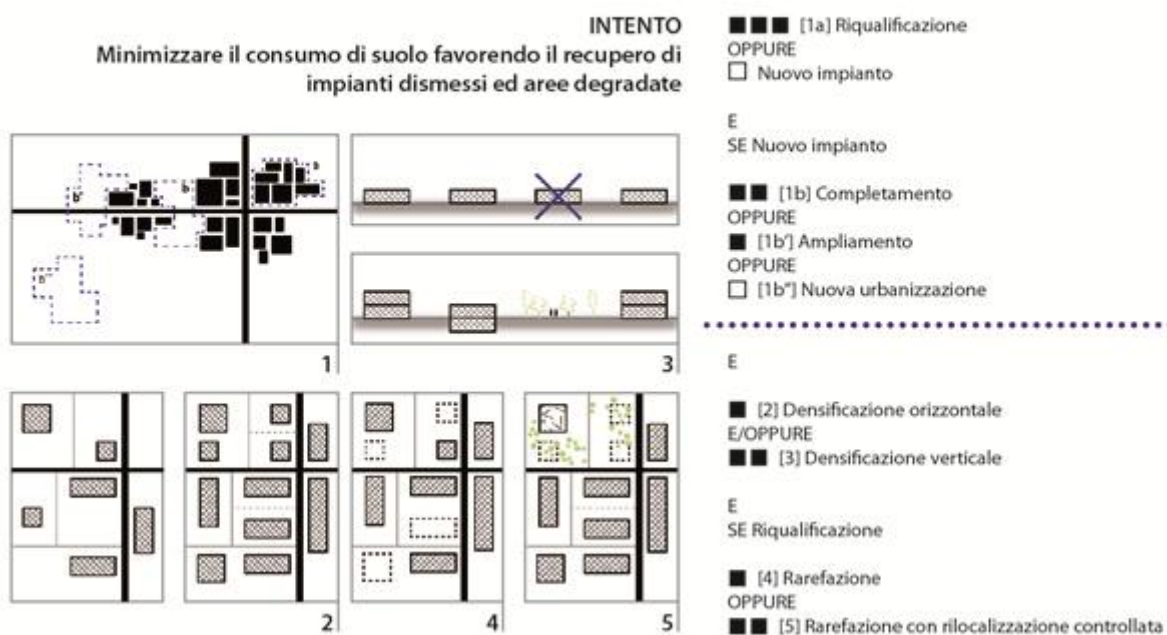
After a phase of literature review – both Italian and foreign – and the selection of specific case studies worthy of being analyzed as best practices, lessons learned have then been merged into a checklist proposal that follows the famous LEED for Neighborhood Development evaluation method.



GUIDELINES - Checklist proposal. Distinction between a minimum acceptable (black points) and a maximum obtainable (black + grey points) score in the two different usage scenarios and according to four “Landscape quality objectives”, that are 1. Urban usability and permeability; 2. Environmental sustainability and connectivity; 3. Visual continuity and sensitivity; 4. Formal identity and specificity

Through the progressive definition of “quality objectives”, “performance requirements” and “intervention criteria”, the final chapter of the thesis is structured in a series of thematic sheets, which should be used by a hypothetical operator in order to consciously and effectively choose among the “design options” available at the various scales of action. Devised as a real decision support tool, they are organized according to alternative scenarios – namely scenarios where it is possible to distinguish the recommended solutions, from those that may be only acceptable or totally unacceptable – offering a sort of illustrated catalogue where elementary sketches address the need to represent – depending on the single situation – phenomena catchable only with a close look or transformations that influence a whole territory.

Limitazione del consumo di suolo libero



GUIDELINES - Detailed sheet. Identification of recommended (2 or 3 points), acceptable (1 point) and unacceptable (0 points) design options

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