
**Dead woods. The railway line between Airasca and Saluzzo. Getting to know,
understanding and refunctioning**

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The planning idea we followed was a cycle track with the aim of refunctioning the
abandoned railway area between Airasca and Saluzzo.



Railway line between Airasca and Saluzzo, localization

We can affirm that our research had a primary objective: projecting a connecting instrument. In its operating definition, first it lets people moving to get in touch with other places and people; secondly, it creates or makes stronger the link between inhabitants and local area; thirdly, it's a way to (re) discover the historical and cultural heritage; in the end, it connects natural parks and green areas. So the general aim is improving life quality of local people vitalizing his relationship with the surrounding area.

To reach such ambitious goals, we had to plan a methodology which could pay attention from one side to the natural context, from the other to tracks that in people's opinion, were useful, safe and pleasant.

Useful means able to answer to moving needs and, at the same time to propose new ones. Safe means tracks that also weak people could walk with no danger. Pleasant means that moving has to be an agreeable experience, not just time and space between the starting point and the arrival.

We started deeply analysing historical documents, coming from the local archive, through which it was possible the anamnesis of facts and infrastructure evolution (birth, growness, decline and rebirth).

Then we compared our abandoned railway area case with a wide range of situations in Italy, Europe and U.S.A., to prove the existence of a "covered business" about it. After we collected empirically data about the area at issue and mostly about the local context surrounding it, on a medium and large scale, (Torino, Pinerolo, Saluzzo and Cuneo), to know and to analyse the "cycle net", its infrastructures, its resources, its services given and used.



The local context surrounding railway is rich of resources: the Cavour's rock

We are firmly convinced of the importance of the net, referring not just to a single track, to make a more complex and detailed analysis. We believe that considering the local area in which the intervention is set, is fundamental, in the aim not to waste resources and economical funds, and not to realize tracks unusable because unsafe or unpleasant. There's no sense in projecting and realising a track from A to B, without considering users, aims, elements of connection, and potential external elements (other tracks and other means of communication) with which the track at issue could get in touch.

Furthermore, we found in lots of analysed cases the presence of a previous net, made by lanes and country roads well functioning; so the new system definition has to turn to account and to exploit what by now exists.

Then we focused on the single municipality of Vigone, because of its position, its viability and fruition conditions, more favourable than the other municipalities ones to go on with our project targets.



Vigone, the present cycle track

At last, the cartography scale we used to collect data, observations and proposals was 1:75.000 for a wide territorial analysis, 1:25.000 to analyse the specific characters of the abandoned railway area and 1:100 to examine the architectural elements and the emergency cases surrounding it.

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