

## Press Release

### **LAND presents Parco Unione, the green lung of the ex-Falck areas**

Milan, 01.04.2022 - **LAND presented Parco Unione to the city of Sesto S. Giovanni, the first step of the large park that will be realized as part of the transformation of the former Falck areas, now the most extensive urban redevelopment project in Italy and one of the largest in Europe as of today, covering 1.5 million square metres.**

Sustainable development, productivity, and historical memory: these are the themes underlying the masterplan for the former Falck areas, a project promoted by a partnership between Hines, which is the strategic advisor and development manager for the project, as well as investor, and Cale Street Partners for the development of the first private lot Unione 0, and the Prelios Group, which acts as manager of the Unione 0 fund and as asset and project manager for the entire initiative.

Parco Unione by LAND is the first step in this transformation from brownfield to Green Lung, making the landscape a vital element of this transition. It is a green system of about 13.5 hectares, stretching from the Station to Viale Italia, rich in new functions and, at the same time, linked to the industrial past.

The process of re-naturalising the area will be initiated through the application of innovative solutions - Nature Based Solutions - which today represent the most efficient and economical strategies to guarantee the correct use of resources and energy while ensuring the functioning of ecosystems.

In this innovative context, "Parco Unione," designed by the international landscape consultancy firm LAND, is the first step towards the wider regeneration of the area. *"The recovery of such a large industrial area is an unmissable opportunity to redevelop and rediscover the entire context. The green space project will involve the creation of one of the largest parks in the Milan metropolitan area, linked Parco Nord and Parco Media Valle del Lambro by cycle paths and trails. This is where Parco Unione fits in, whose project confronts the multiplicity of elements in the Sesto San Giovanni area: the matrix of the historic fabric, the most recent productive transformations, the great infrastructural signs of the railway line, and Viale Italia. The park's objective is, therefore, to act as a link between the various existing urban structures, bringing together all the existing realities in the area,"* explains Andreas Kipar, co-founder and CEO of LAND.

The functional programme within the park responds to the influences and stimuli coming from the broader context and the uses that will soon be activated, and follows some key points: attractiveness, naturalness, sustainability, accessibility, and safety.

The structure of the functions of Parco Unione is defined by a main loop intersected by thematic loops. Each loop has its own uniqueness linked to the theme it represents, referring to a well-defined and identifiable category of users. Alongside the definition of loops as circular routes, the park is also articulated through the theming of the

different areas with a specific vocation each: neighbourhood spaces that can guarantee services and recreation areas for future inhabitants, refreshment areas with the possibility of hosting kiosks, sports areas, diffused like the fitness trail in the woods and concentrated like the sports fields and the Street Sport area. This specific area includes the SkatePlaza, a new concept of multifunctional public space, also equipped for sports use and able to host international competitions related to the Street Skate discipline.

These activities and their specific targeting of users will make the Parco Unione a pole of aggregation and integration in the fabric of the city of Sesto San Giovanni, with the aim of extending its catchment area to the entire Metropolitan City of Milan.

Much emphasis is placed on increasing the quality and character of the environmental landscape: the project gives ample space to areas planted with woodland and rows of trees. The introduction of light earth movements articulates the surface of the woods and makes the user's experience always varied, characterising decisively the immersive paths that cross it. The free-use meadow areas are articulated into mowed and irrigated lawns, where there are areas of frequent use and rustic flower meadows with annual or biennial mowing and a high concentration of biodiversity.

The greenery of Parco Unione is structured in macro-areas that define the theme in terms of species selection: the lowland forest, typical of the Po Valley with reference to the species present in the nearby Parco Nord, the Lombard productive plain, with specimens arranged in rows specific of the separation between fields, the ornamental rows, with regular planting that implement the ornamental characteristics.

More than 1300 trees will be planted to provide ecosystem benefits such as improving the microclimate and air quality thanks to the absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> by the trees. 17,000 square metres of large clearing will provide wide-open spaces for various activities, and 37,000 square metres of trees of different ages and sizes will provide an important ecological and landscape function and consequently increase biodiversity.

Water is considered an essential element in the park, both as an attractor that gives quality to the public space and as a precious resource to manage sustainably.

The project is also attentive to issues of accessibility and inclusiveness, thanks to signs integrating tactile elements to aid orientation.

The transformation of the area from a brownfield to a green lung in Sesto S. Giovanni, will take the form of an inspiring landscape project, characterized by innovative solutions, choice of materials and functions, and a mindful language of the site's industrial history.

Parco Unione is a place returned to the community where redeveloped industrial archaeology blends with greenery to offer residents, city users, and visitors a flexible space for leisure time in complete harmony with nature.

## CREDITS

**Client:** Hines Italy RE S.r.l., Prelios SGR S.p.A., Milanosesto S.p.a.

**Partners:** ERRE.VI.A, Montana S.p.A., J+S S.r.l., Ctrl-Z Skatepark, Francesca Oggionni, Ghezzi Efrem & C.

**Team LAND Italy:** Andreas Kipar, Jens Hoffmann, Luisa Bellini, Andrea Bulloni, Valeria Pagliaro, Valerio Bozzoli, Francesca Villa, Maria Elena Galassi, Elena Aste, Ilaria Sangaletti, Alessia Giampaolino, Virginia Pozzi, Aurora Fleres, Mirco Santi

**Project data:** 144,608 m<sup>2</sup> public urban park, 37,000 m<sup>2</sup> woodland, 17,000 m<sup>2</sup> large clearing

17 autochthonous tree species, 1383 new trees, + 65.000 kg/C02 absorbed per year, +6500 ml of cycle-pedestrian paths, 1 main loop, 3 thematic loops, 4 urban access squares, +200ml of vegetated canal

1 skatepark for national competitions, 7,600 m<sup>2</sup> of activity areas (leisure, playground, sports fields)

**Images:** NUBE

**Project:** <https://www.landsrl.com/portfolio-land/2021/exfalckparcounione?rq=parco%20unione>

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#### **LAND**

LAND is an international landscape consultancy with offices in Italy, Switzerland and Germany and with high-profile projects throughout Europe, Canada, Middle East. Andreas Kipar and a team of more than 100 landscape architects, architects, urban planners, agronomists, engineers & researchers have been transforming regions, cities and places since 1990.

LAND's consulting and design practice aims to improve people's well-being through the implementation of climate-positive solutions and participative processes that lead to sustainable development.

We advise public and private clients on how to innovate with nature by applying international policies and promoting collaborative planning procedures. Together with our clients and our extensive network of partners, we unlock the potential of our societies' green transition.

Main projects include: Green Rays strategy, Porta Nuova and the re-development of the former EXPO site MIND in Milan; Urban Open Space Strategy and Krupp Park, comprising ThyssenKrupp HQ, and the Freiheit Emscher in Essen; Ruhr Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy; the renaturation of the Airolo valley and Cassarate River Park in Switzerland; Zuglo District Budapest; Saint-Laurent biodiversity Corridor in Montreal; Urubah Park in Riyad and the Dubai EXPO 2020 in the UAE; the German Pavilion at the EXPO Beijing 2019; the research and innovation projects UNaLab and T-Factor funded by the European Commission.

LAND's work has been recognized through over 17 prestigious international awards, amongst them Premio Mercurio, MIPIM, Wan Awards, Biennale Pisa, Passive and Low Energy Architecture Award (PLEA).

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