

Initial go-ahead from the Region for Bricoman at the Vedano Bridge

Pubblicato: Giovedì 20 Novembre 2014

Lombardy Region are close to agreeing on the redevelopment of the former Sottricci paper mill, in Vedano Olona, the abandoned area near the Vedano Bridge, where rave parties have also been held in the past. The disused site **covers an area of 20,000 m²**, and contains a large amount of asbestos which needs to be disposed of. The area falls within **both Vedano Olona and Lozza**, and two large firms, **Decathlon** and **Bricoman**, have come forward to redevelop it. The proposal has caused some protests, especially by traders in and around Varese, and **a petition has also begun to stop the project**.

Meanwhile, the two councils have carried on the necessary procedures, **including environmental mitigation measures**, to draw up a proposal that could be approved **by the regional planning conference**. However, only two applications have been made: one by **Bricoman**, which focuses primarily on the area of the former Sottricci paper mill, and the other by **Decathlon**.

On Monday 17 November, the first planning conference in Lombardy Region took place, **with discussion of the material presented by Bricoman**. The Mayor of Vedano, **Cristiano Citterio**, who was also present, explained, "The planning conference for Bricoman has given a positive opinion on the admissibility of the application and on the full compliance of the planning instruments of both Lozza and Vedano. However, Lombardy Region's general infrastructure department **has not recognised all of the elements, in order to accept compatibility with the road structure**, despite the positive opinion of the Province, and has made further requests. This is despite the operators' proposal of **a new, four-lane roundabout**, a constant right turn, a double declaration, an additional lane to the existing ones, **a new bridge over the Quadronna River**, as well as the well-known cycle paths, environmental restoration of the former Sottricci paper mill, compensation for local business and **120 jobs throughout the vast area**, at no cost to the public purse."

On 24 November, **another planning conference has been called to investigate and complete the authorisation procedure** for Bricoman. "We hope this opportunity for the area, with the consent of most of the councils concerned and of all of the people, **is not missed**," Citterio concluded.

For the **Decathlon** project, another planning conference should be held, although the projects and compensations are linked to Bricoman. **This should all be done by the end of the year**, as the documentation was presented about 20 days after that of Bricoman.

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