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## Residences of the Royal House of Savoy (Italy)

### No 823

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#### 1. BASIC DATA

*State Party:* Italy

*Name of property:*

Residences of the Royal House of Savoy

*Location:*

Piedmont Region: Turin, Province of Turin, Province of Cuneo

*Inscription:* 1997

*Brief Description:*

When Emmanuel-Philibert, Duke of Savoy, moved his capital to Turin in 1562, he began a vast series of building projects (continued by his successors) to demonstrate the power of the ruling house. This outstanding complex of buildings, designed and embellished by the leading architects and artists of the time, radiates out into the surrounding countryside from the Royal Palace in the 'Command Area' of Turin to include many country residences and hunting lodges.

*Date of ICOMOS' approval of this report:* 17 March 2010

#### 2. ISSUES RAISED

*Background:*

The Residences of the Royal House of Savoy comprise a large serial inscription of estates including 22 palaces and villas developed for administrative and recreational purposes in and around Turin by the dukes of Savoy from 1562.

At the time of inscription, ICOMOS evaluation recommended that the gardens and parks of the estates should be associated more decisively with the conservation projects for the Residences, showing similar respect for their historic, aesthetic and landscape value. Subsequent periodic reporting in 2004 identified the lack of buffer zones.

The minor modification proposal for the Royal Residences of Savoy is for an extension to the boundary of the property by means of extension of the nominated

area of one of the Residences (Castello di Pollenzo); the creation of buffer zones for five individual Residences (Castello di Pollenzo, Castello del Valentino, Villa della Regina, Castello di Moncalieri and Castello di Govone) and the extension of the buffer zone for four other individual Residences (Castello di Rivoli, Reggia di Venaria Reale, Castello di Agliè and Castello di Racconigi).

*Modification:*

Minor modification to the boundary of the property:

Castello di Pollenzo

The request for modification of the boundary of the inscribed property at Castello di Pollenzo is aimed at incorporating a key component of the adjacent town that was redeveloped as part of the overall remodeling of the Residence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The palace comprises a remodeling of the fortress originally founded in the 14<sup>th</sup> century to control a crossing over the River Tanaro. This created a Royal holiday residence for King Charles Albert of Savoy, characterized by an eclectic neo-gothic architectural style. Simultaneously an English-style park was created to replace the existing baroque park, and an administrative building (the *Agenzia*) was constructed together with associated farmhouses intended to make the estate economically productive. The rebuilding at this time included the construction of the so-called "forum" (today's Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II), overlooked by the *Agenzia*, the Church of St Victor Martyr and the tower, all in similar eclectic neo-gothic style. The proposal is to expand the inscribed property (core zone) to include the *Agenzia* and the piazza overlooked by the Church of St Victor Martyr, the tower and the arcades, as they are a vital part of the Charles Albert project for the remodeling of Pollenzo. This will extend the area of the inscribed property at Pollenzo from 6.02ha to 25.36ha. The overall core zone of all the Residences together, that is the overall property inscribed, is 351.48ha. Thus the proposed overall increase is about 5%.

The Residence is protected by Ministerial decrees and town planning provisions, and in particular by the Regional Territorial Plan (2009) covering the protection and enhancement of the Residences of the Royal House of Savoy inscribed in the World Heritage List.

The creation of buffer zones is proposed for the following:

Castello di Pollenzo

The castle and estate stand on an archaeological area: the ancient Roman *Pollentia*, with remains and ruins such as the amphitheatre providing remarkable evidence of its foundation at the end of the 2nd century BC. The remains of the Roman town did not influence the layout created in the 19th century, which is characterized by an independent urban design with respect to the pre-existing axes and organization of the buildings.

The proposed buffer zone will surround the inscribed property, which includes the palace and gardens, and cover the entire area of the town, most of which is already protected by an archaeological decree as well as town planning provisions, with the River Tanaro as the south-eastern boundary. The proposed buffer zone measures 517.80 hectares.

#### Castello Valentino

The proposed buffer zone will cover the area of the 19<sup>th</sup> century park associated with the Residence. It surrounds the inscribed property and extends to the Po River along the eastern side. The park perimeter is identified by the General Town Planning Scheme of the Comune di Torino (2003) and sets the boundaries as Corso Sclopis, Via Petrarca, Corso Massimo D'Azeglio, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II and the River Po between the Umberto I and Principessa Isabella bridges. The proposed area measures 38.89 hectares.

#### Villa della Regina

The proposed buffer zone will cover the gardens, woodlands and vineyards of the original 17<sup>th</sup> century Residence of the Royal House of Savoy, including the area currently occupied by Villa Genero and its park. The proposed buffer zone does not completely surround the inscribed property, which includes the villa and its gardens, but comprises two areas – one to the west and one to the south-east. It does not extend along the road axis to the north-west. The axis from the Piazza Castello to the Villa della Regina was identified in ICOMOS evaluation as an important element of Charles Emmanuel II's expansion of Turin to the east. The areas identified measure 19.33 hectares.

#### Castello di Moncalieri

The proposed buffer zone will cover the adjacent settlement including remains of the medieval town associated with the original fortress on the site as identified by the General Town Planning Scheme of the Comune di Moncalieri (2000) currently in force, as well as the portion of the land which once belonged to the Royal House of Savoy and is now protected by virtue of its landscape value. The buffer zone boundaries are marked by: Viale della Rimembranza, Strada Rebaudengo, Viale Castello, Viale Palestro, Strada Torino, Via Bogino, Corso Trieste, Via Cavour, Via Tanivelli, Via Galileo Galilei, Via Cernaia and Via Francesco Petrarca. The proposed buffer zone covers the general area of the medieval town on the promontory bounded by the Po River to the south-east and extends to the north-west and south-east including 17<sup>th</sup> century mansions contemporary with the Residence. It is not contiguous with the inscribed property, which includes the palace and its gardens, along its north-eastern boundary. The area identified measures 56.64 hectares.

#### Castello di Gavone

The proposal states that the proposed buffer zone will include the whole of the historical area as identified by the early 19th century map and also recognized by the

General Town Planning Scheme of the Comune di Gavone (1994) currently in force. However it does not in fact include the area along the approach from the west which is included on the 1812 map. The proposal states that the main roads within the development of the town are to be an integral part of the buffer zone: the road that runs along the old boundary of the garden, as well as the roads leading into the town, which is on high ground and prominent in the landscape. However the road from the west is not included. The buffer zone will surround the inscribed property, which includes the villa and its gardens. The proposed buffer zone boundaries are marked by: Corso Alfieri, Via Umberto I, Via Venti Settembre and the area measures 11.36 hectares.

The expansion of buffer zones is proposed for the following:

#### Castello di Rivoli

The buffer zone currently covers the gardens and historical park of the Residence. The proposed extension will encompass the whole historical area of Rivoli, as identified by the Municipal Town Planning Scheme currently in force, to include the town as developed up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including architectural developments attributable to the 17th and 18th centuries. It will cover houses and mansions constructed for the nobility with allegiance to the Royal House of Savoy such as Villa Cavalli d'Olivola, Villa d'Ussol and Villa Fiorito, as well as new and remodeled religious buildings, such as the parish church of San Martino, the confraternity of San Rocco and the new monastery of the Cappuccini order at Villa Melano. These buildings demonstrate through their architectural influences and craftsmanship, the links between the Residence and the surrounding settlement. The additional area measures 21.3 hectares, an extension of around 4.6%.

#### Reggia di Venaria Reale

The buffer zone currently covers the gardens and historical park of the Residence. The adjacent town was designed as a set piece with the palace in the 17<sup>th</sup> century to create an urban context for the administration of royal power. The grand palace scheme was never completed, but the central axis, the Via Mensa, lined with uniformly designed buildings leading from the hall of Diana at what was to be the centre of the palace to the oval Piazza dell'Annunziata and beyond, is complete. The piazza is adjoined by the church of the Nativity of the Virgin.

The proposed extension of the buffer zone will cover the urban centre of Venaria Reale, including this set piece, as outlined by the Municipal General Town Planning Scheme currently in force. The proposed buffer zone extension is contiguous with the inscribed property on the east and surrounds the south wing of the palace buildings.

The buffer zone boundaries are marked by: Via Vittorio Scodeggio, Via Giuseppe Cavallo, Via Goito, Via Trento,

Via Nazario Sauro, Via Don Giovanni Sapino, Via Savonera Druento and Strada della Barra. The additional area measures 16.66 hectares, an extension of around 4.2%.

#### Castello di Agliè

The buffer zone currently covers the gardens and historical park of the Residence. The 11<sup>th</sup> century fortress on the site was remodeled in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as a country palace set in formal gardens for members of the House of Savoy. Parts of the adjacent medieval town were redeveloped by associated members of the aristocracy and contiguous with remodeling of the palace in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the baroque square at the entrance to the Residence on the north-east was designed to create a unifying link between the Residence and the main axis of the town which was on a different alignment.

The town contains remodeled and new buildings of the 18<sup>th</sup> century including the Town Hall, the parish church of St Mary of the Annunciation and the church of St Martha. The proposed extension to the buffer zone will cover the entire historical part of Agliè, as outlined by the Municipal General Town Planning Scheme currently in force. The buffer zone will then surround the property except along the north-west boundary of the park.

The buffer zone boundaries are marked by: Via per Cuceglio, Strada della Luisetta, Strada Santa Giorgina, Strada per San Giorgio, Viale Frua, Vicolo Campodaneo, Via Rivalto. The additional area measures 58.95 hectares, an extension of around 78.7%.

#### Castello di Racconigi

The buffer zone currently covers the gardens and historical park of the Residence.

The Savoy-Carignano family was responsible in the 17<sup>th</sup> century for the remodeling of the 12<sup>th</sup> century fortress protecting the road from Turin to Cuneo as a country palace. The medieval settlement began to be redeveloped at the same time by families using architects from Turin for both public and private buildings including the churches of St Mary Major, the Confraternity of the Holy Name of Jesus, the Holy Trinity, St John the Baptist and the Franciscan monastery. The Residence is approached from the south by a long straight avenue, which terminates in a piazza at the palace entrance.

The proposed extension to the buffer zone will encompass the whole of the historical area of Racconigi, as identified by the Municipal General Town Planning Scheme in force. Thus the buffer zone will completely surround the World Heritage inscribed property. Part of the Corso Principe di Piemonte (aligned with the Residence), is already subject to restriction by Ministerial Decree of 26.05.1959, in the buffer zone. The buffer zone boundaries are marked by: Via Principe Amedeo, Via Santa Chiara, Via Ormesano and Corso Principe di

Piemonte. The additional area measures 12.81 hectares, an extension of around 0.9%.

The total additional area of the buffer zone will be 709.75 hectares, an expansion of around 11.4%.

#### *General comments:*

The State Party's justification for the creation of buffer zones and its extension is threefold:

- To cover additional areas of garden / parkland / woodlands / vineyards belonging to the Residences not included by the boundary of the inscribed property or existing buffer zone;
- To cover areas of the adjacent settlements that have remnant urban design schemes associated with the Residence, and/or mansions built by the nobility associated with the House of Savoy, and/or farmhouses and agricultural buildings associated with the estate and/or other buildings whose history and architecture connect them to the Residence;
- To recognise earlier layers of settlement where the palace/villa was a remodeling of a medieval fortress with its associated settlement, or where it overlays a Roman town.

However there has been no recognition of the urban design links between the Residences and the "command centre", in Turin. The ICOMOS evaluation at the time of inscription referred to the relationship between the complex of buildings in Turin where central power was executed in its different political, administrative and cultural forms, and the outlying Residences, which were "rapidly accessible from the capital through a network of straight, tree-lined roads", ensuring the cohesive and functional aspects of the ensemble. In order for the inscribed property to be properly understood, these connections need to be maintained and made apparent. The Residences are usually located on high ground and prominent in the landscape. The protection of views and vistas needs to be considered.

In fact the concept of the buffer zone demonstrated by the State Party relates only to the land and buildings directly associated with the Residences and already protected under the various Ministerial decrees and town planning provisions, without taking account of historical connections between them, axial relationships, and intended views and vistas.

### **3. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### ***Recommendation with respect to inscription***

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of Castello di Pollenzo,

Residences of the Royal House of Savoy, Italy be ***approved.***

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Castello di Pollenzo, Castello del Valentino, Villa della Regina, Castello di Moncalieri and Castello di Govone, Residences of the Royal House of Savoy, Italy be ***approved.***

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed extension to the buffer zone for Castello di Rivoli, Reggia di Venaria Reale, Castello di Agliè and Castello di Racconigi, Residences of the Royal House of Savoy, Italy be ***approved.***

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party consider, when possible, future extensions to the buffer zones of the Residences of the Royal House of Savoy, in terms of the historical connections between the Residences and the “command centre” in Turin, their axial relationships, views and vistas.

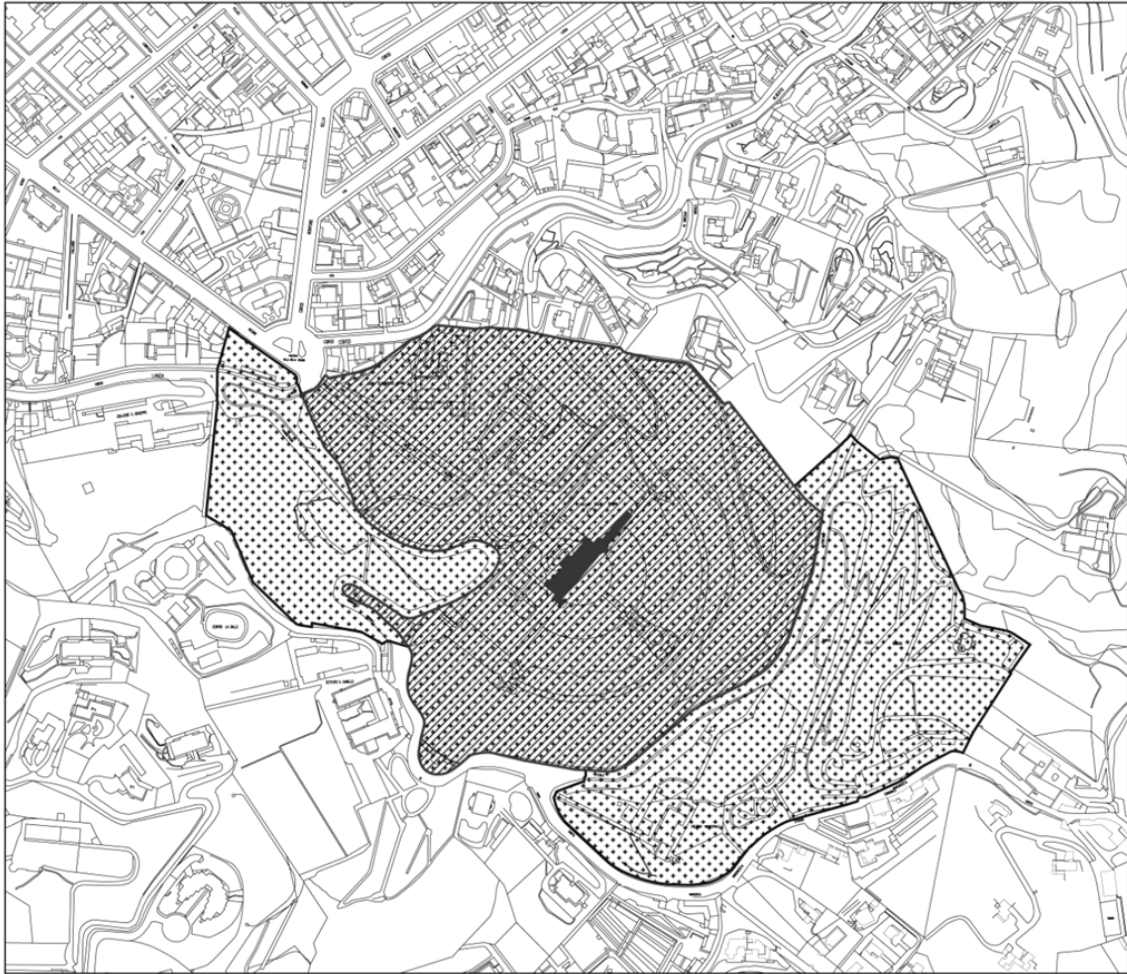


Castello di Pollenzo - map showing the revised boundaries  
of the property and the proposed buffer zone



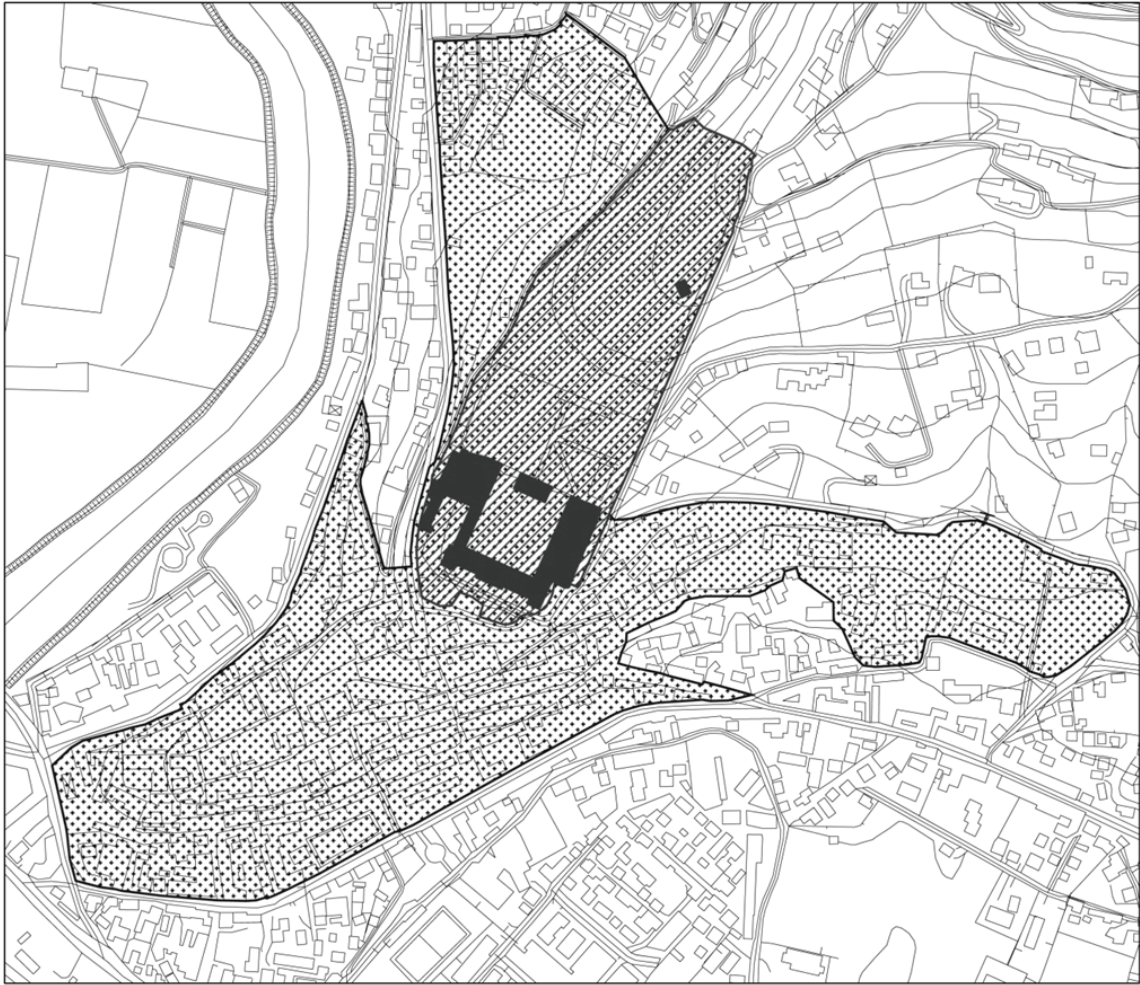


Castello del Valentino - map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone



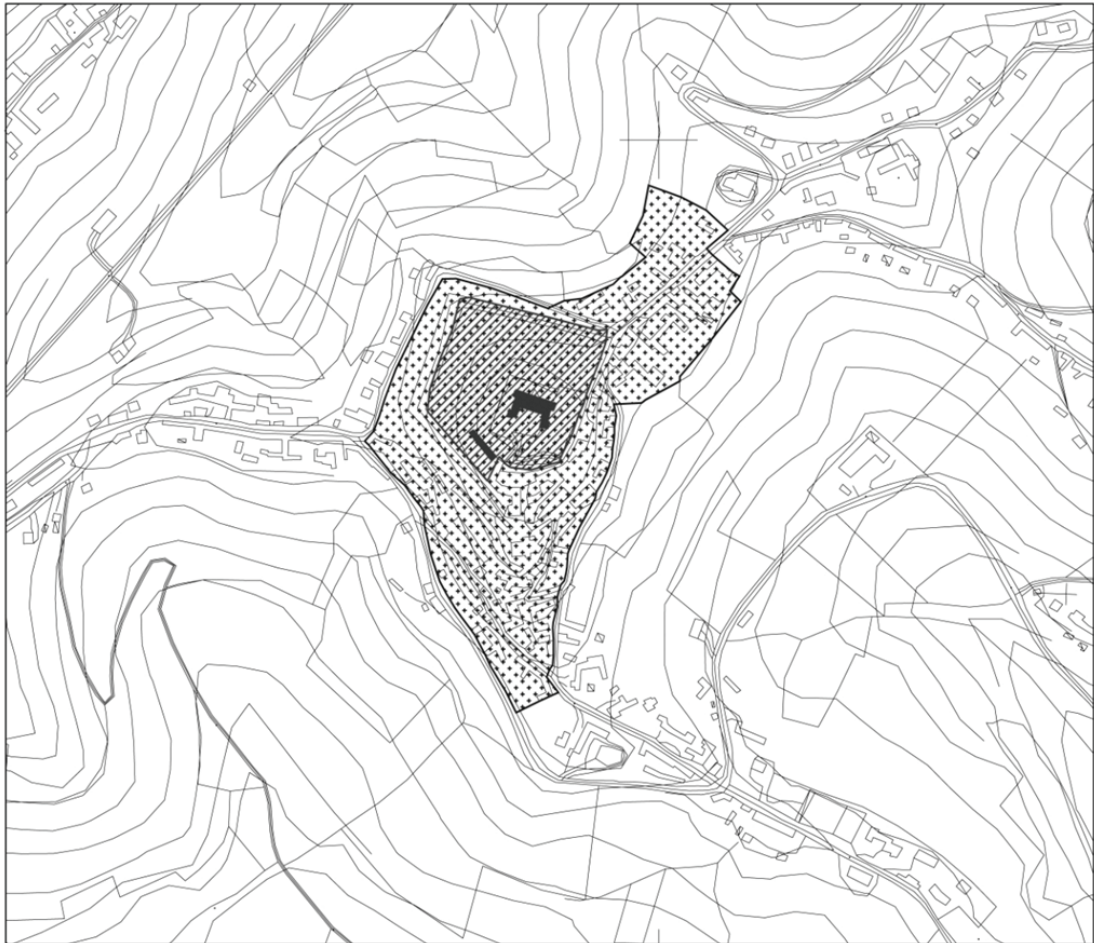
Villa della Regina - map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone



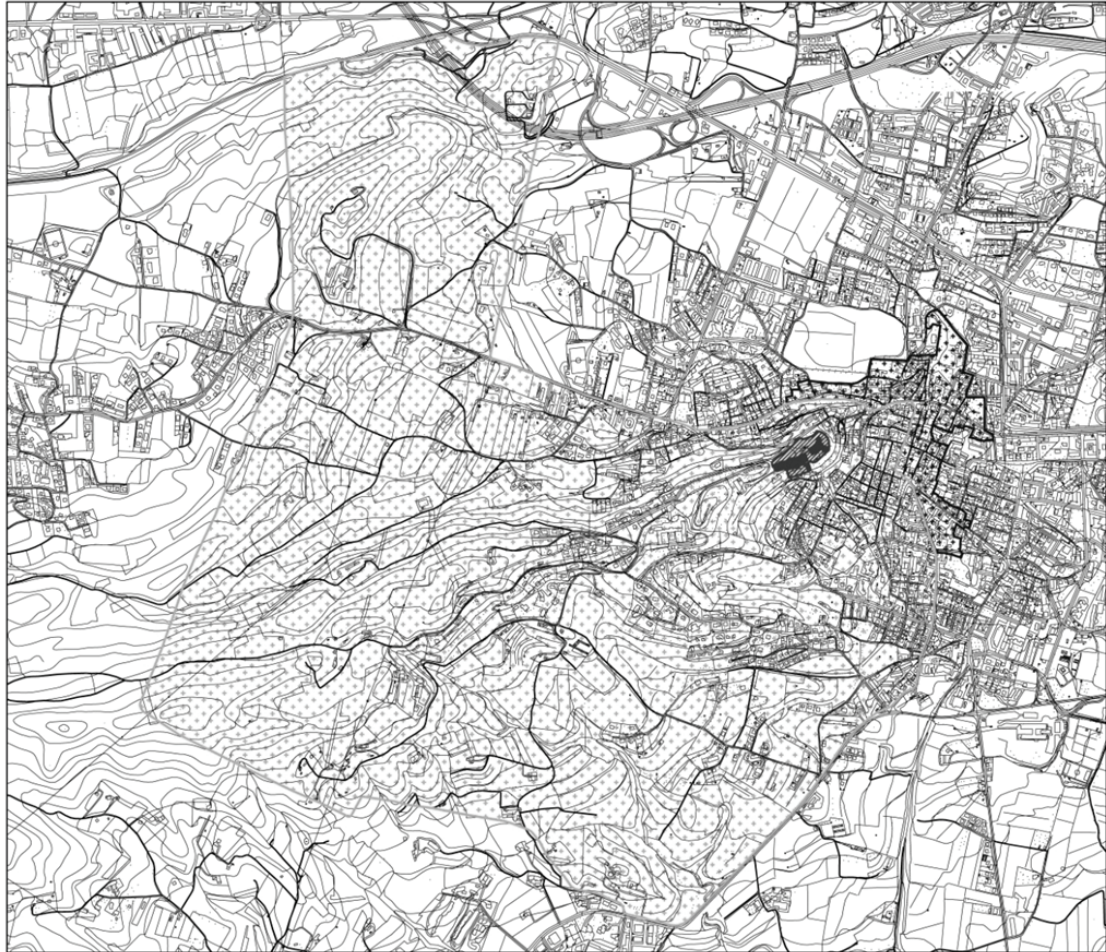


Castello di Moncalieri - map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone



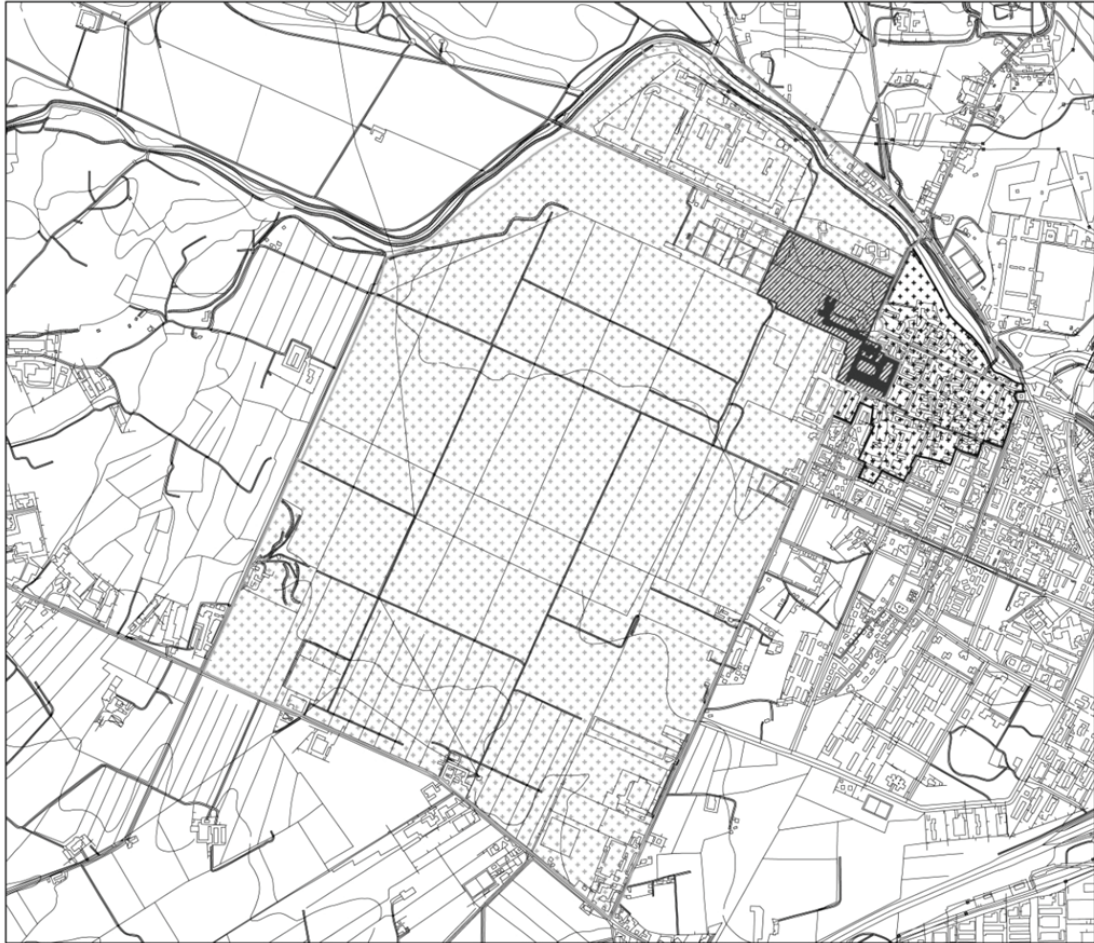


Castello di Govone - map showing the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone

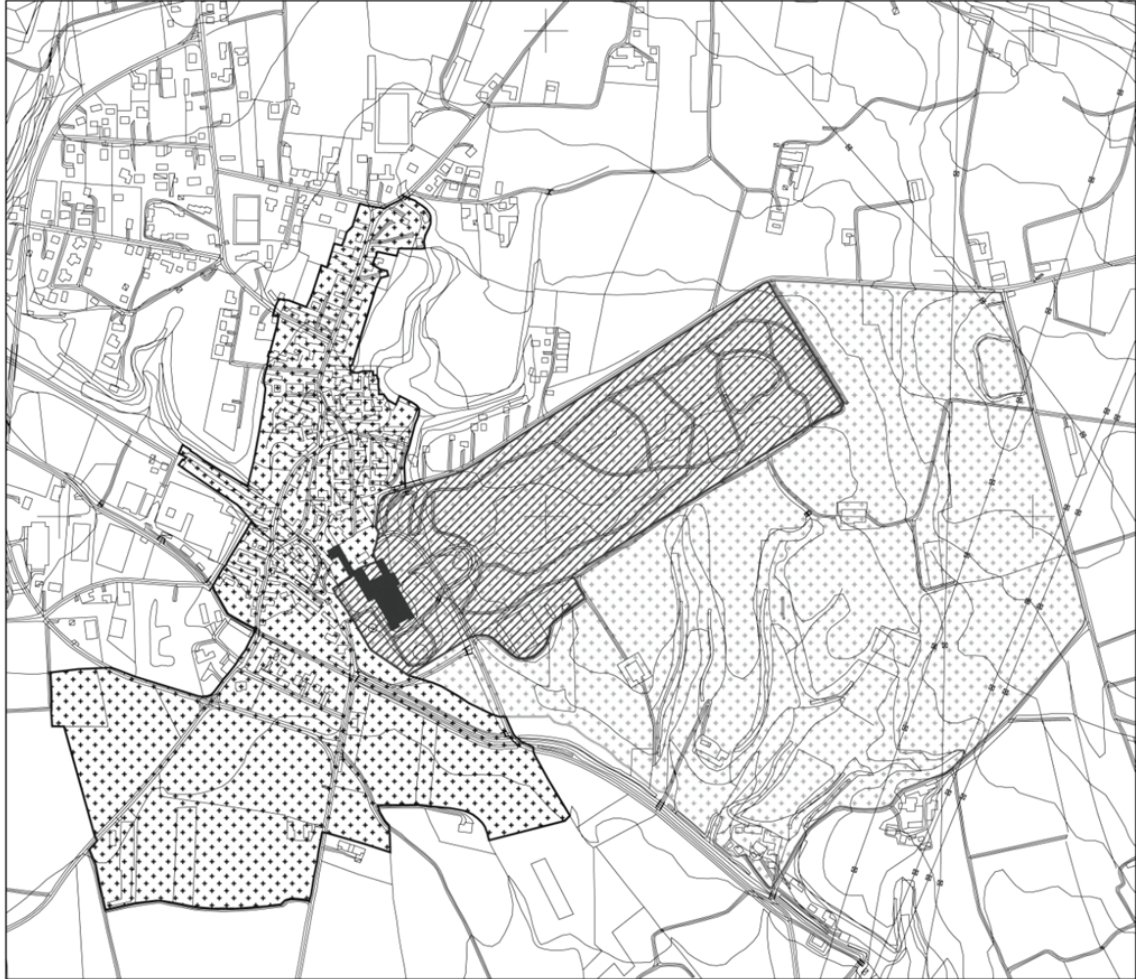


Castello di Rivoli - map showing the revised buffer zone





Reggia di Venaria Reale - map showing the revised buffer zone



Castello di Agliè - map showing the revised buffer zone





Castello di Racconigi - map showing the revised buffer zone