

## New “World heritage” candidacy

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✘ The candidacy for UNESCO recognition as a World Heritage Site has been renewed for Castelseprio, which is included in the “Italia Langobardorum. Centres of power and worship” network site.

The candidacy was renewed a few days ago in Paris, in the offices of ICOMOS, the inspection organisation of UNESCO, which, after expressly acknowledging the value and prestige of the “Lombard” application and the validity of the attached compulsory management plan, primarily suggested including in the documentation a number of analyses, such as, an examination of the European historiography connected with the Lombards in the comparison between cultures of the time; the selection criteria for the candidates; extension of the Brescia site, of the buffer-zones in Spoleto and Campello sul Clitunno, and revision of the buffer-zones in Benevento (exclusion of the modern part of the “del Sannio” Museum); improvement of the conservation and protection measures for the archaeological and decorative elements of Castelseprio, of the Clitunno Temple, and of the “Monte Sant’Angelo” Sanctuary.

The suggestions were agreed upon and the documents were revised.

The updated management plan (which is unchanged in terms of its continuity and effectiveness) also includes the intense amount of activity produced from the beginning of 2008 to the end of 2009 by all parts of the “serial site”, which have improved objectives and actions, and have promoted them again, in accordance with the attached summary table. This is additional evidence of the strength of the application, and of the desire shared by the institutions to transform the region’s cultural sites into scientific, but also social and economic development.

The renewed candidacy for the archaeological site of Castelseprio, which is characterised particularly by the presence of the Church of “Santa Maria Foris Portas”, which is owned by the Province of Varese, provides an additional incentive to support, with even greater conviction, the projects to increase value and to relaunch the complex. Among these, we should remember the upgrading of the whole area, and the creation of a new reception point, which will also become the centre of the cultural relaunch of the site, and the venue for meetings and conferences.

“Let’s acknowledge this important step for one of the most valued architectural sites in this area,” said the Heritage Councillor Gianfranco Bottini. “The procedure of the UNESCO candidacy fits well with the program decided by Villa Recalcati, which, for some time, has been studying a series of projects aimed at bringing value to the area,

projects, I should emphasise, that are not strictly connected with the candidacy, but are part of the broader program of the organisation regarding bringing value to the important cultural, artistic heritage to be found in our province.”

The inclusion of Castelseprio in the List of UNESCO sites adds value to the intense work done by the Province of Varese, the Cultural Heritage Ministry and the Italian National Trust.

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