

Abstract

The region of *La Serrania (Valencia)* is formed by a total of nineteen municipalities. Their boundaries make up a territory rich in environmental diversity and in the presence of a plentiful built heritage. It is conceived as a space of opportunity to develop the idea of this work, a concept which was born undetermined but that has taken shape after the latest legislative reforms: "Traditional Historic Centres within the Category of Goods of Local Relevance".

The protection of the architectural heritage in rural areas allows us to safeguard the landscape, ensure environmental sustainability and contribute to the health of traditional architecture in its historical and current setting. Thus, it is proposed to achieve a commitment and cooperation attitude between all the stakeholders involved in this process of recognition.

This research starts with the goal of exploring the value of urban and architectural heritage in small towns around their original historic centre. Every housing unit might not constitute an element of protection by itself but, as a whole, they may acquire a character that deserves the interest of their global guardianship.

These are the main ideas driving this research process with the aim of transforming it into a working methodology. Its results are not intended as an end in themselves, but as a beginning, a new way of working in the interest of safeguarding the cultural heritage.