

Research Article

# Innovative perspectives on urban heritage. Towards the integrated regeneration of mass housing neighbourhoods

## Perspectivas innovadoras sobre el patrimonio urbano. Hacia la regeneración integral de los barrios de vivienda colectiva

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Many 20<sup>th</sup> century residential neighbourhoods exhibit a high degree of obsolescence both in terms of new technical demands and social and environmental requirements. However, current regeneration processes often lack cohesive vision, revealing sectorial biases and inconsistencies in quality interpretation. **Methodology:** This research proposes a comprehensive review on two levels: (1) integrated studies on urban rehabilitation and regeneration, and (2) a focus on Andalusian neighborhoods as a case study. **Results:** Drawing from a wide range of literature references, the research highlights the diverse approaches. Detailed case studies, particularly from Andalusia, illustrate the large

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applications of urban regeneration strategies and studies. **Discussions:** The research highlights that while residential neighbourhood regeneration has been extensively studied, there's a notable gap in recognising them as heritage assets. The study emphasises the necessity of integrating heritage considerations into urban regeneration processes. **Conclusions:** The research underscores the complex interplay between heritage conservation and urban regeneration, advocating for a holistic approach that respects historical contexts while meeting contemporary needs.

**Keywords:** 20<sup>th</sup> century; literature review; new perspectives; public housing; residential neighbourhoods; urban heritage; urban regeneration; urban studies.

## Resumen

**Introducción:** Muchas barriadas residenciales del siglo XX presentan un alto grado de obsolescencia tanto en términos de nuevas exigencias técnicas como de requerimientos sociales y ambientales. Sin embargo, los actuales procesos de regeneración carecen a menudo de una visión cohesionada, revelando sesgos sectoriales e incoherencias en la interpretación de la calidad. **Metodología:** Esta investigación propone una revisión exhaustiva en dos niveles: (1) estudios integrados sobre rehabilitación y regeneración urbana, y (2) un enfoque en barrios andaluces como caso de estudio. **Resultados:** A partir de un amplio número de referencias, la investigación pone de relieve diversos enfoques. Estudios de caso detallados, especialmente de Andalucía, ilustran las amplias aplicaciones de las estrategias y estudios de regeneración urbana. **Discusión:** La investigación pone de relieve que, si bien la regeneración de barrios residenciales ha sido ampliamente estudiada, existe una laguna notable en su reconocimiento como bienes patrimoniales, subrayando la necesidad de integrar las consideraciones patrimoniales en los procesos de regeneración urbana. **Conclusiones:** La investigación señala la compleja interacción entre la conservación del patrimonio y la regeneración urbana, abogando por un enfoque holístico que respete los contextos históricos al tiempo que satisfaga las necesidades contemporáneas.

**Palabras clave:** barriadas; estudios urbanos; nuevas perspectivas; patrimonio urbano; regeneración urbana; revisión bibliográfica; siglo xx; vivienda pública.

## 1. Introduction

Mass housing neighbourhoods from the 20th century have been extensively analysed from various disciplinary perspectives, often with a sector-specific focus (Oyón et al., 2021). The neighbourhoods were constructed to meet critical housing needs following mid-century wars and rural-to-urban migration. They are characterised by unplanned growth, described as urbanised zones lacking cohesive city-building, adhering to the principles of the modern city and the Fordist specialization of space, which resulted in residential cities (Pie i Ninot, 2009). It is noteworthy that neighbourhoods in Spain share many morphological and typological features with those in other European countries. However, Spain's post-Civil War housing policies have given its cities distinctive developmental characteristics (Navas-Carrillo et al., 2024a). Over four decades, numerous housing laws were enacted, each with differing approaches but unified in their goal to address ongoing housing crises. Initially focused on national reconstruction, they later aimed to alleviate urban overcrowding.

This study strongly advocates for revitalising existing urban areas as an alternative to the late 20th century's model of urban expansion. This model, marked by indefinite, fragmented, and sprawling growth, encroaches upon and erodes rural spaces (López de Lucio, 1993). In contrast, early support for preserving urban areas emerged in 1980s Italy. Bernardo Secchi (1989), dissenting from prevailing trends, argued that future cities are already constructed,

challenging the logic of boundless expansion typical of modern urban models. Rather than unchecked growth, urban development should enhance residents' quality of life by recognising the heritage value of existing urban spaces. Secchi emphasised history's importance as a foundation for identifying signs, clues, and patterns that, while embracing diversity, help restore disrupted connections and reveal meaning in diverse urban segments (García-Vázquez, 2004). In recent decades, efforts have focused on revitalising historic centres, but the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenge lies in regenerating residential neighbourhoods built on the outskirts of European cities during the latter half of the 20th century (Rosa-Jiménez et al., 2017).

The importance of addressing the recovery of these neighbourhoods lies in their significant population within urban areas. According to the latest Population and Housing Censuses (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2011), approximately 40% of homes in Spain were built between 1951 and 1980, accommodating about 80% of the urban population. Moreover, these areas suffer from obsolescence in current functional and comfort standards, making them unattractive for private investment. Contemporary urban planning, driven primarily by economic considerations, exacerbates social fragmentation. Consequently, these neighbourhoods have become concentrations of disadvantaged and economically constrained social groups. The National Plan for the Conservation of 20th Century Cultural Heritage (Carrión, 2015) recognises their vulnerability due to technical and functional characteristics and modes of production. They were built to alleviate severe housing shortages during a period when industrialization in the construction sector was minimal in less developed southern European economies like Spain. However, their challenges extend beyond material and functional issues to encompass multidimensional problems (García-Vázquez, 2015).

In terms of urban morphology and open spaces, these neighbourhoods tend to have relatively low density and compactness, not conducive to proximity between urban uses and functions as recommended by current compact city ideals. Many are configured as isolated units detached from the rest of the city, with disconnected and inward-facing urban spaces that contribute to security and isolation concerns. They feature large, undeveloped open spaces and undefined inter-block public spaces, hindering their use as community gathering places. Constructed under the functional city principles of modernism, they are often mono-functional areas lacking urban complexity, dominated by residential use and low commercial activity. Their lack of diverse activities inhibits social interaction. Moreover, indiscriminate surface parking detracts from urban environment quality. Additionally, facilities and infrastructure exhibit significant obsolescence, with deficiencies in certain facilities and underutilization of existing ones.

In terms of housing, units generally fall below current size standards and adhere to rigid typological schemes unsuited to contemporary social needs, particularly those of the elderly or individuals with disabilities. Accessibility issues compound functional challenges, requiring adaptation to current energy efficiency and hygrothermal comfort standards and compliance with various sectoral regulations. Construction and installation systems are outdated, often degraded due to lack of maintenance and inefficient use of renewable energy and energy-efficient systems. Facades exhibit varying degrees of deterioration, impacting urban landscape quality and compromising their architectural and urban design distinctiveness, potentially diminishing their value as modern residential heritage. Sociodemographic and economic factors must also be considered, with these neighbourhoods typically housing socially disadvantaged groups, a low active workforce percentage, high unemployment, and job insecurity rates. A significant portion of residents are elderly individuals living alone, alongside a growing foreign population, which can strain community cohesion and participation (Navas-Carrillo, 2018).

Consequently, these complexes are highly vulnerable, facing widespread negative perceptions that hinder recognition of their value. Their association with the Franco regime continues to affect their perception in Spain. Unlike other residential heritage areas such as historic centres, these neighbourhoods do not attract private investment and are excluded from the economic rationale driving contemporary urban planning.

## 2. Methodology

Many 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential neighbourhoods exhibit a high degree of obsolescence (physical, functional, economic, and/or social), both in terms of new technical demands and social and environmental requirements. These areas are undergoing complex transformation processes, driven by new ways of living in the contemporary city, which put them at risk.

Despite advances made in the field, the genesis of these processes still reveals overly sectorial visions, and even controversies and contradictions in the interpretation of the quality of regeneration processes. Among other issues, there is the fact that the complexity of these urban fabrics is not being addressed with the same intensity as has been applied to historic centres for decades. These actions are marked by a wide disciplinary dispersion and the predominance of the architectural dimension over the urbanistic one. Rather than stimulating their rehabilitation, the complexity associated with these processes ends up resulting in inaction, leading to a loss of urban and environmental quality, and consequently, their progressive deterioration and degradation.

Considering this situation, this research proposes a comprehensive review of the state of the art, with the aim of assessing the current situation of urban regeneration processes in these neighbourhoods, focusing on the necessary actions to overcome certain degrees of obsolescence while also addressing the consequences of climate change. To this end, a gradual approach is proposed, which includes (1) studies on integrated urban rehabilitation and regeneration, and (2) the specific case of Andalusian neighbourhoods.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. *From Rehabilitation to Integrated Urban Regeneration*

Many of the residential neighbourhoods constructed in Spain during the 20th century exhibit significant levels of physical, functional, economic, and/or social obsolescence relative to contemporary societal demands (Navas-Carrillo & Joya Roldán, 2019). However, unlike in other European countries (De Gregorio Hurtado, 2012; Castrillo Romón, 2014), the rehabilitation of these neighbourhoods has been relatively limited (Hernández Aja y García Madruga, 2014).

To address this issue, public administrations have initiated efforts to analyse and diagnose the underlying causes, as well as enact laws and initiatives aimed at fostering their revitalization. One of the earliest examples of public policy in Spain aimed at revitalising these neighbourhoods is Catalonia's Generalitat Law 2/2004 (Nel.lo, 2008; Peremiquel & Serra, 2012). Additionally, notable efforts include rehabilitation programs by the Municipal Housing Institute of Zaragoza, now known as the Zaragoza Municipal Housing Society (Rubio del Val, 2013), which led to the establishment of the Zaragoza Housing Chair in collaboration with the University of Zaragoza for research and training in urban regeneration (López-Mesa & Tejedor, 2015).

Spain has established an Urban Vulnerability Observatory under the Ministry of Public Works, which has identified neighbourhoods with high vulnerability indices through an inventory. This initiative originated from the "Urban Vulnerability Classroom" developed by the Research Group in Architecture, Urbanism, and Sustainability (giאו+s) at the Polytechnic University of Madrid. This group has developed a specific focus on strategies for revitalising obsolete residential neighbourhoods and exploring alternative urban models to the uncontrolled urban expansion. The "rehab" web platform documents their extensive work in this area. Their research has encompassed European and national urban regeneration policies (Hernández Aja et al., 2014), strategies for designing and evaluating intervention plans in 20th-century housing estates (Hernández & Sanz, 2016), and management and financing options for urban regeneration (Hernández et al., 2018). They have also studied neighbourhood regeneration plans and programs developed in Spain between 2010 and 2020 under the EDUSI framework (Hernández et al., 2021).

This research aligns with efforts by public administrations such as the Basque Government (Udalsarea 21, 2014) and the Andalusian Regional Government (Moya et al., 2015), which from health and urban planning departments have jointly promoted guides analysing the health impact of urban plans, projects, and actions. Additionally, the Urban Planning, Environment, and Health Initiative of the Barcelona Institute for Global Health aims to promote healthy urban development through evidence-based tools and indicators, resulting in the creation of the ISGlobal Cities Ranking, a study of urban health applied to over 1000 European cities. They have also launched a specialised postgraduate program in collaboration with the University of VIC and the Central University of Catalonia, focusing particularly on mental health (González et al., 2022).

Another pioneering institution in the study of neighbourhood regeneration in Spain has been the Urban Studies Institute of the University of Valladolid, with extensive research on urban renewal, rehabilitation, and regeneration policies from an urban planning perspective. They have conducted studies on the diagnosis and prospects of specific cases in Castilla y León (De las Rivas, 2015), and critically analysed urban renewal and rehabilitation practices in Spain (Castrillo-Romón et al., 2013), in other European (Matesanz & Castrillo-Romón, 2015) or Latin American countries (Bustos-Peñafiel & Castrillo-Romón, 2020).

In 2010, the Urban Studies Institute of the University of Valladolid prepared the synthesis document on Integrated Urban Regeneration (Álvarez Mora & Roch Peña, 2010) for the XVIII Informal Meeting of Ministers of Housing of the European Union during the Spanish EU Presidency. The meeting focused on rehabilitating existing residential stocks and resulted in the Toledo Declaration on Integrated Urban Regeneration, a significant advancement in European urban policy. This declaration advocates regeneration models that optimise, preserve, or enhance all existing urban assets, as opposed to interventions that prioritise and conserve land value alone. It also promotes an integrative approach to urban issues across five dimensions: economic, social, environmental, cultural, and governance (Council of Ministers on Urban Development, 2010). Various studies have also examined policies, regulations, and actions undertaken by member countries for rehabilitating their residential stocks, along with notable management experiences and models (Velázquez & Vedarguer, 2011; Aparicio & Di Nanni, 2011).

The Toledo Declaration marked a milestone in European urban policies, committing signatory countries to promoting research, exchanging best practices in urban issues, and disseminating knowledge generated across all sectors of society. Since then, neighbourhood regeneration has become a central topic in major urban planning conferences in the Latin American context,

such as the International Urban Research Seminar (Grup de Recerca en Urbanisme, 2021) or the Hispanic International Seminar on Urban Form (Durán et al., 2021). Leading Spanish journals with international impact, such as *Ciudades* (Castrillo-Romón, 2010; Pérez, 2017), *Informes de la Construcción* (Cuchí, 2011; López-Mesa et al., 2015), *Ciudad y Territorio* (Menéndez Rexach & Mata Olmo, 2014), or *ZARCH* (Díez Medina, 2016), have published monographic issues on the subject.

In this context, studies characterising urban regeneration instruments within the Spanish legal framework (Alonso, 2021) developed within the Legal-Social Studies Group on Sustainable Territory and Urban Development at the University of Oviedo are noteworthy. Similarly, analyses conducted by the Department of Urban Planning and Spatial Planning at the Polytechnic University of Madrid on the influence of European urban policies in Spain are notable. Of particular importance is Sonia De Gregorio's doctoral thesis (2012) on URBAN community initiatives, which has led to subsequent research on the URBANA program (De Gregorio Hurtado, 2017) and the EDUSI (De Gregorio Hurtado, 2021). These researchers are affiliated with URBAN RED, a thematic research network on Sustainable Urban Development.

Before the 2008 financial crisis, urban regeneration in Spain was largely funded by public administrations. However, significant budget cuts post-crisis resulted in the end of this management model (González, 2022). The Urban Rehabilitation, Regeneration, and Renewal Law (Ley 8/2013) aimed to address this situation by allowing the privatization of regenerative actions if residents could not afford to rehabilitate their homes independently (Gaja, 2015). While this law had a profound impact on the field, aiming to stimulate rehabilitation and urban regeneration at regional and local levels (Rubio, 2015), it also revealed significant limitations in practice.

The new law followed the European trend of soft financing, which meant that the administration had a secondary role as an intermediary between banks and/or the private sector and the resident population in neighbourhoods requiring regeneration (Rosa-Jiménez et al., 2023). Typically, these residents, primarily middle to low income, faced exacerbated difficulties due to the financial crisis. Consequently, various studies have sought to establish rehabilitation models capable of overcoming this investment paralysis, promoting management systems that are cooperative, equitable, and sustainable, drawing on the collaborative potential and resilience of the human collective residing in these neighbourhoods.

This includes the ELAN group, Local Strategies, Architecture, and Nature, which promotes the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Chair at the European University of Madrid. Their work focuses on cooperativism as a management tool for regeneration (González et al., 2019), addressing environmental (González et al., 2022), social (Bosqued et al., 2017), and economic (Moreno et al., 2014) challenges in urban regeneration. Additionally, the Quality of Life in Architecture group at the University of the Basque Country has analysed the potential of rehabilitation urban societies in economic crisis contexts (Grijalba & Hernández, 2017), deviations in Basque Government programs (Grijalba, 2017), and urban regeneration management through rehabilitation companies (Grijalba et al., 2020).

Other perspectives on the urban environment include its potential impact on public health. For instance, the Bioclimatic Architecture in Sustainable Environments (ABIO) group at the Polytechnic University of Madrid has developed a specific line of research promoting neighbourhood-level health (Fariña Tojo et al., 2022) through urban design, public space

quality, and active aging (García-González et al., 2022). Leveraging their extensive experience in bioclimatic urbanism, their Urbanism and Health team has researched "*healthy neighbourhoods*" (Higueras, 2015).

### 3.2. *The study of Andalusian neighbourhoods*

The Neighbourhoods Forum, organised by the Regional Ministry of Public Works and Transport through the Directorate General of Architecture and Housing, stands as the primary initiative for studying Andalusia (Ortega, 2013). The III Andalusian Housing and Land Plan 1999-2002 initially included provisions for neighbourhood rehabilitation, but it was the IV Andalusian Housing and Land Plan 2003-2007 that developed mechanisms to enhance housing conditions and address social, economic, and environmental aspects, resulting in significant regeneration efforts in highly vulnerable neighbourhoods (Morón & Rodríguez, 2015).

Despite these programs being integrated into successive housing plans, their impact has been constrained by fiscal limitations during economic downturns. Efforts to reverse this situation culminated in the approval of the Plan Vive for Housing, Rehabilitation, and Urban Regeneration of Andalusia 2020-2030 (Junta de Andalucía, 2020) and the Eco Housing Plan (Junta de Andalucía, 2022), which elaborates on residential rehabilitation and social housing directives under the Recovery, Transformation, and Resilience Plan for Andalusia. During this period, the Ministry of Development, Territorial Articulation, and Housing of the Junta de Andalucía has driven research and studies on outdated neighbourhood rehabilitation through various research project calls since 2006.

Significant contributions include the efforts of the Urban Recycling and Efficient Housing (BIO 909) and Contemporary City, Architecture, and Heritage (HUM 666) groups, based at the Universities of Granada and Seville. Together, they developed a compendium of best practices focusing on comprehensive neighbourhood regeneration (García-Vázquez & Valero-Ramos, 2016) and supervised doctoral dissertations on residential refurbishment (Chacón Linares, 2012), revitalization of public spaces (Sendra Fernández, 2014), typological studies (Guajardo-Fajardo Cruz, 2018), and the implementation of participatory methodologies (Ledesma de la Rosa, 2017).

Additionally, collaboration between the Urban Planning and Land Management Laboratory (RNM 957) and the Research in Territories Generation (HUM 958) groups within the EOUs research project is noteworthy. The former focuses on developing sustainability and quality of life assessment tools for Andalusian neighbourhoods, employing DSS tools (Osuna-Pérez et al., 2017). The latter group works on constructing an atlas of urban therapies for revitalising neighbourhoods in Andalusia (Rodríguez-Estévez, 2015; Ureta, 2017), drawing on extensive experience in international cooperation and education (Fernández-Valderrama et al., 2015).

Moreover, the Investigation Factory group (TEP 954) has conducted research on urban regeneration from perspectives of active aging, gender, and habitability (Barrios et al., 2015), including methodologies for selecting viable and sustainable strategies for residential rehabilitation (Serrano-Jiménez et al., 2020). The Digital City Classroom group (HUM 810) has focused on social habitat management (De Manuel & López, 2017; Donadei, 2021). The Architecture, Heritage, and Sustainability group (TEP 130) has contributed to energy refurbishment (Domínguez et al., 2016).

A particular highlight is the extensive work of the Institute of Habitat, Territory, and Digitalization (formerly the Interuniversity Institute UMA-UPC Habitat, Tourism, and

Territory) on analysing, diagnosing, and acting upon peripheral neighbourhoods in Malaga. Their efforts began with the project "The Neighbourhoods of the Carretera de Cádiz in Malaga: Towards a Sustainable Model of Comprehensive Urban and Architectural Rehabilitation" (Rosa-Jiménez et al., 2009), establishing a solid methodological foundation for analysing, diagnosing, and intervening in the urban regeneration of outdated residential neighbourhoods. This initiative focused on transforming these areas by implementing the concept of environmental unity or eco-neighbourhood, proposing improvements to urban layout, mobility, and amenities. Measures were also suggested to enhance residential comfort and landscape quality, alongside a typological study aimed at adapting housing to new technical and social demands. The necessity of defining specific action strategies for listed neighbourhoods in municipal planning was emphasised to update these complexes functionally, technologically, and environmentally while preserving their heritage value.

These efforts culminated in the "RECOBA. Neighbourhood Cooperatives. Collaborative Management Model in Neighbourhood Regeneration and Conservation" project, introducing a cooperative model for urban regeneration. Acknowledging the social reconstruction of cities, it underscores the importance of identity and community as fundamental values requiring protection in these urban areas (Rosa-Jiménez et al., 2017). This approach also influenced the "CO-AGING. Neighbourhood cooperatives of elderly people for active aging in large cities" project, which proposes using the neighbourhood cooperative model to foster active aging through social networks of mutual support among older adults, combating unwanted loneliness (Rosa-Jiménez et al., 2023).

Concurrently, research has spanned disciplines such as sociology, economics, and law. The Centre for Sociology and Local Policies at Pablo de Olavide University has scrutinised the socioeconomic impact of urban regeneration and its potential to foster innovation in urban environments (Navarro, 2018). In line with the national framework, Andalusia has addressed regeneration through European urban policies (Huete-García et al., 2016) and governance (Busetti et al., 2018) within the SEJ606 group on Urban and Metropolitan Governance at the same university.

In Andalusia, the Andalusian Register of 20th Century Architectural Heritage (Fernández-Baca Casares & Pérez Escolano, 2012) analyses contemporary examples, not exclusively focusing on residential urban production, extracting significant values from these achievements in the Andalusian context. Simultaneously, progress has been made in protecting residential neighbourhoods through urban planning. Of the 8 provincial capitals, 5 have protected some 20th-century residential complexes: 4 in Cádiz, 3 in Córdoba, 1 in Granada, 13 in Málaga, and 10 in Seville (Pérez-Cano et al., 2022). The Andalusian Institute of Historical Heritage has also advanced criteria for intervening in 20th-century residential heritage to safeguard their material and immaterial values. In collaboration with various research groups from the University of Seville, they have addressed specific cases like the Nuestra Señora del Carmen neighbourhood in Seville through the reHABITAR Project (Gómez, 2019).

Similarly, the doctoral thesis "Heritage and City. Residential neighbourhoods in medium-sized coastal cities: A comparative analysis between Andalusia, Portugal, and the Netherlands" (Navas-Carrillo, 2020) identifies keys to articulate the heritage process of 20th-century residential neighbourhoods, evaluating their current degree of recognition and legal protection. This research has laid the groundwork for defining criteria and strategic guidelines to assess these complexes and establish a specific urban planning protection instrument. Looking ahead, the thesis emphasises the need to develop contemporary intervention criteria after advancing in the heritage characterization of these areas. These criteria should aim to



recognise and preserve their heritage values while addressing obsolescence through a comprehensive and updated approach to urban regeneration.

## 4. Discussion

The research highlights that while residential neighbourhood regeneration has been extensively studied, there's a notable gap in recognising them as heritage assets. Despite being among the largest housing developments historically, excluding recent ones from the late 20th and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, they are generally under-protected in terms of heritage status. Addressing this involves integrating various stakeholders over time and complexity levels to reconsider existing criteria for their preservation. This research is deeply interested in heritage issues, shaping the proposed project to be detailed in subsequent sections.

Efforts have been made to recognise these complexes by compiling registers of Modern Movement architecture, leading to their inclusion in protection catalogues within urban planning frameworks (Navas-Carrillo et al., 2024b). Municipal planning faces challenges in overcoming obligations and burdens imposed by state or regional legislation, despite progress in valuing and conserving these complexes. However, these registers primarily highlight 20th-century architectural masterpieces, complicating the inclusion of mass-produced public housing, especially in medium-sized municipalities. Current heritage recognition primarily focuses on object-based criteria rooted in formal characteristics, reminiscent of outdated approaches from the last century (Pérez & Mosquera, 2011).

Moreover, the intrinsic characteristics of social housing neighbourhoods pose challenges in applying conventional heritage protection criteria. Their uniqueness within 20th-century urban and architectural contexts necessitates defining specific heritage values from a contemporary perspective. Thus, this research aims to advance the heritage designation process for these urban ensembles by advocating for comprehensive knowledge generation as a prerequisite for their evaluation. Despite weaknesses in their recognition and protection, these neighbourhoods represent pivotal elements in understanding the evolution of European urbanism and align with UNESCO's considerations on historic urban landscapes (2011).

Additionally, these neighbourhoods lack exceptionalism and struggle with authenticity due to significant alterations over time (Moya et al., 2017). Yet, they remain crucial in urban heritage due to their historical, political, economic, and social contexts. They not only symbolise advancements in housing accessibility but also embody social and cultural identities essential for community cohesion. Their significance is further underscored by their role as arenas for social movements, which contribute to their preservation and the resilience of societies (Oyón et al., 2020).

In conclusion, recognising these neighbourhoods as heritage involves transcending traditional approaches, embracing their social, cultural, and historical dimensions. This comprehensive approach is essential for preserving their intrinsic values and ensuring their enduring contribution to urban landscapes and societal well-being.

## 5. Conclusions

The study emphasises the necessity of integrating heritage considerations into urban regeneration processes. This integration is crucial for maintaining the cultural and historical value of mass housing neighbourhoods while upgrading their functionality and liveability. Drawing from a wide range of literature examples, the research highlights the diverse approaches to social housing and urban regeneration. Detailed case studies, particularly from

Andalusia, illustrate the large application of urban regeneration strategies and studies. These examples demonstrate the importance of tailored approaches that consider local conditions and the specific needs of different neighbourhoods.

The study provides actionable recommendations for urban planners and policymakers. It advocates for the development of specific urban planning protection instruments, such as Special Plans, to safeguard the heritage values of 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential complexes while addressing their obsolescence and improving sustainability standards. Emphasising the role of community involvement in the heritage process, the research suggests that both top-down political initiatives and bottom-up social movements are essential. Symbolic revaluation, alongside material requalification, is necessary to change the collective perception of social housing and legitimise its protection.

The conclusions call for further research to define contemporary intervention criteria that balance heritage conservation with the need for modernization. This includes addressing issues of energy efficiency, comfort, and safety while preserving the cultural significance of residential buildings. The findings highlight the educational benefits of morphological studies and urban regeneration projects. These initiatives not only improve urban environments but also raise awareness about the importance of preserving urban heritage.

Overall, the research underscores the complex interplay between heritage conservation and urban regeneration, advocating for a holistic approach that respects historical contexts while meeting contemporary needs.

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