INTRODUCTION

Research in recent years, conducted by one of the greatest urban planners and architectural theorists of the last century, Rem Koolhaas, focusing on that enormous residual space not devoured by expanding cities. This has made it possible to take advantage of the opportunity and analyse in greater depth the theme of places linked to agricultural production. All over the world, thanks in part to the dizzying development of the latest technologies, firstly Internet, important phenomena of change are taking place, especially in the countryside. The analysis of these globally relevant aspects will try to be interspersed with a specific local case study of a farm in Central Italy, in the Marche’s region. The architectural project seeks, through its strength and interdisciplinarity, to represent an adequate response to the changes imposed by our time.

OBJECTIVES

This research and project work are located in an area that has yet to be explored in the social and architectural spheres. One of the main objectives of this work is the desire to give light and visibility to those realities apparently not worthy of note and taken for granted, such as those related to agricultural production. Another aspect is to undertake a path of awareness, through the study and analysis of a reality that is part of a territory with enormous potential, which through architectural design is able to generate new imagery and fertile ground for new fields of investigation.

METHODOLOGY / STRUCTURE

The work has been subdivided into three large macro areas, which follow a logical thread of observation in which the macro follows the micro: the first chapter is a global reportage, entitled “Countryside, the residual vastness”, in which three strategic and extreme examples scattered around the extra-urban areas of the globe are expressed, organised chronologically and presented at the exhibition “Countryside, the future?”, directed and curated by Rem Koolhaas at the Guggenheim, in New York (collected in “Countryside, a report”, Rem Roolf, 2020). The next chapter focuses attention and analysis on a specific region in central Italy, the Marche, which has always been characterised by a strong rural connotation and fierce settlement dispersion, but which in recent years has found itself playing an absolutely prominent role in the tourism industry’s panorama. The third and last chapter, represents the local response, namely a specific case study in which the family farm near the urban centre of Ancona, the capital of the Marche’s region, is analysed in detail. The complexity of this site, following a scrupulous survey especially dedicated to the buildings used for agricultural production, such as greenhouses and warehouses, led to a subdivision and selection into sub-themes. This indispensable phase then made it possible to realize a suitable programme for the architectural rehabilitation, conversion and upgrading of the spaces adjoining the manor house, which had already been converted into accommodation for almost ten years, as agritourism.

CONCLUSIONS

The resulting architectural project for the spatial and functional reorganisation seeks to be a valid synthesis capable of positively intercepting the current social and economic phenomena, especially in the post-pandemic forecast, which are defining a new rural contemporaneity. The new multi-functionality and accessibility to the public sphere of this reality that the architectural project attempts to express, represents a distinctive side to be able to relaunch the strong identity and the roles of these strategic places, which have often been marginalized with respect to territorial development choices.