Construction project launch
2015 to see €2.8 million investment in
restoring the Palace of Queluz

- Palace
  - Restoration of the roofing structures
  - Restoration of the garden facing façades
  - Installation of the cafeteria, auditorium and event facilities
  - Upgrading the energy and communication infrastructures
  - Video-surveillance system
  - Interconnection to the public sewage network
  - Illuminating the gardens and façades

- Gardens
  - Recovery of the Malta Garden
  - Relaying of the Botanical Garden
  - Restoration of the Cascade
  - Recovery of the tree groves and pathways
  - Reviewing and improving the water system (fountains, lakes, irrigation channels)
  - Planting designed to protect the views

Sintra, 22nd January 2015 – In January, Parques de Sintra launched the interventions necessary to the restoration of the National Palace and Gardens of Queluz with total investment rising to around €2.8 million. The work planned for the Palace includes the full restoration of its façades, masonry, beams, roofing, upgrading the energy and communication infrastructures as well as the lightning protection system, installing a video-surveillance system, establishing a connection with the public sewage network and in addition to improvements to the flooring, left unfinished ever since the reconstruction following the 1934 fire, and the installation of a cafeteria, auditorium and the facilities necessary to hosting events at one of the most sought after of all Portugal's national
palaces. As regards the gardens, with the intervention still remaining subject to evaluation by the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage, the forecast projects include the recovery of the Malta Garden, the relaying of the Botanical Garden and in addition to restoration work on the cascade, tree groves and pathways and upgrading the water system (both in terms of the fountains, tanks and lakes and the means of irrigation) and new plantings to protect the views of those enjoying the interior ambiances of the Garden.

The National Palace of Queluz and its historical gardens together represent one of the finest examples of the harmonious interlinkage of landscape architecture and palace architecture in Portugal, reflecting the courtly tastes of the 18th and 19th centuries (an era influenced by the Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassical styles). In 1934, the palace was hit by a fire that caused its partial destruction with various reconstruction attempts undertaken since that date.

The diagnosis of the state of conservation of the Palace and Gardens carried out by Parques de Sintra immediately after having been awarded the management of the National Palace of Queluz (in late 2012), confirmed a general high state of degradation across the complex as a whole due to the almost total lack of investment.

The priority restoration needs were then subject to analysis and drawing upon specialist support (especially from the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Lisbon's Higher Technical Institute); developed/adapted to the projects detailed in this intervention and launching the tenders to select the restoration companies to work on the Palace project.

The restoration work on the palace is now under way with the objective of completion prior to the 2015 summer season (enabling the restored Palace to go on display in time for the peak season) with this year also seeing the beginning of the garden intervention project.

The work in question will at no time bring about any interruption to on-site visitors and, on the contrary, in accordance with the usual Parques de Sintra policy of “Open for Works”, visitors will gain the opportunity to accompany progress in the intervention work. This thereby enables, within the scope of full respect for the rules of safety, the viewing of the works as well as accessing information on the project and thus better evaluating and
recognising the efforts necessary to interventions in spaces with this type of historical profile and relevance.

**Areas of intervention:**

The **roofing areas over the Dining Room and the Robillion Pavilion / Ambassadors Room** (Don Quixote and Princess Carlota Joaquina Room, the Merendas Room, the Dressing Room, the Weaving and Mail Rooms and the Ambassadors Room) will be restored having received no attention ever since the fire. The roof support structure, consisting of loose, reinforced and concrete set tiled slabs, is in an advanced state of decay and will be completely replaced by master pillars and wooden beams. This also extends to the rainwater drainage system (dealing with current infiltration problems), replacing the gutters, introducing a new roof access window and improving the natural ventilation.

The wooden ceilings will be vacuum cleaned and subject to restorative and preventive intervention (against fungi and wood-boring insects) with the application of a flame-retardant varnish to boost its fire resistance.

This intervention is accompanied by the **surveying of the energy and communication infrastructures** existing in the attics, as well as the replacement of the **lightning protection system**, with this expanding to include two new conducting rods and hence providing complete protection rather than the hitherto partial protection.

For the **restoration of the façades**, which over the course of the years were painted in different colours and tones, the project carried out a thorough study and discussion of the findings of laboratory analysis, documentary research and historical drawings and photographs and reaching the conclusion that the National Palace of Queluz was blue. We therefore seek to restore the harmony to the colour of the garden facing sections, testing out materials, techniques and decorative compositions (frames and feigned pieces) on one of the façades that is then evaluated as the basis for a solution to the remainder.

As regards the **restoring of the masonry**, this includes the removal of fungi, treatment of the joints as well as the consolidation and repositioning of other features.
The windows and doors of the garden facing Palace façades are also included within the scope of this intervention (dealing with facets essential to the security and ambience conditions prevailing inside), obeying the specific rules in consideration of the historical nature of this building. This incorporated a general evaluation of the state of conservation, recording how the window frames displayed conservation problems with rotten wood with this degradation also extending to the iron fittings and the metal veranda fences.

This defined the technical solutions for application and taking into account criteria stipulated by the respect for the authenticity of the original objects and compatibility with the pre-existing materials and replacing only that not susceptible to restoration due to their loss of material mass or their otherwise very advanced state of degradation.

The intervention in **adapting the ground floors of the Robillion Pavilion and the Ambassador's Room** (closed to the public since the reconstruction following the fire of 1934) is designed to endow these spaces with the facilities necessary to serving as a **cafeteria, auditorium and the means of hosting events**. This involves the installation of a cafeteria open to the public and with its own terrace (including an elevator for the access of persons experiencing mobility restrictions) and refurbishing another section to host events and conferences, guaranteeing both the performance and safety stands while retaining the fundamental decorative and architectural features of the rooms through minimising the structural alterations. One of the rooms on this floor will thus be fitted out as a multi-purpose auditorium with another serving for the cafeteria's seating space and ensuring the Palace can host events whilst open to the public.

Replacing the **video-surveillance system**, which integrates into the general Parques de Sintra CCTV system, will include placing around fifty high resolution digital cameras on this site. They will span the entire perimeter of the Palace and Gardens, integrating movement and object removal detection sensors. This thus guarantees the security of both the works on display and the visitors both inside the Palace and its Gardens as well as providing a means of monitoring any incidents and guaranteeing assistance in case of any emergency.
Also taking place inside the Palace is the interconnection of the waste water system to the public sanitation system and eliminating the diverse current situations resulting in overflows spilling into the Jamor River.

The lighting of the façades and gardens seeks to foster the appreciation of the Palace and Gardens even outside of its normal opening hours. The installation of LED technology will be discreet at the pavement level and boosting the number of lighting sources while reducing their individual brightness in order to cast a more scenic effect on this environment.

The Botanical and Malta gardens also fall within the scope of intervention with a view to restoring the original structure and compositions as eighteenth century gardens. To this end, the project analysed the historical framework and the context of European gardens of that period (especially the layout) as well as the developments taking place through to contemporary times. This also incorporated the collection and analysis of various of the features dispersed around the gardens such as the remains of the balustrade, lakes, masonry and stone slabs. These studies were accompanied by archaeological soundings, which provided support for decision making. In conjunction with the bibliographic research, this work enabled the production of rebuilding plans corresponding to the eighteenth century originals. Parques de Sintra is setting about rebuilding these gardens restoring their pleasurable character and original interpretations and respecting both that composition and the relationship with the surrounding environment.

The Botanical Garden was destroyed in the flood of 1983, which swept away the majority of its structures and with the space then converted into a training and performance venue for the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art. The plans now include rebuilding the four original greenhouses, the Chinese House (originally for the growing of Oriental plants), repositioning the lake, the balustrades, the pavement surfaces and the flowerbeds. This also takes in the conservation and restoration of the tiles, stone features, the balustrades, benches and flowerbeds. Ornamental and botanical flowerbeds will be planted alongside the central greenhouse beds and the decorative flowering pots. The infrastructural
network will also be rescaled to meet the needs in terms of energy, water supply and drainage.

The Malta Garden, one of the most important in the set of gardens surrounding the Palace of Queluz, will also be subject to a recovery process. Over the course of time, it was altered whether in terms of the plants, the decorative layout, sculptures and lakes. The intervention in this space foresees the removal and transplanting of existing vegetation, integrating it whenever possible into other areas of the garden, repositioning the four groups of sculptures and shells around the lakes, replacing the current pavement and revising the drainage system; the consolidation and conservation of the sculptures, their pedestals, balustrades and masonry; reformulating the irrigation system and resolving pressure and blockage related problems; and illuminating the areas for circulation, the decorative features and the surroundings. As regards the plantations, this seeks to restore the original layout through the planting of new hedges (with the current growths transplanted and reused elsewhere in the gardens), introducing new hedge features and eliminating arboreal presences not included in the original structure. Beyond the interventions in these two gardens, Parques de Sintra also intends to advance with the restoration of the cascade, the tree groves and garden pathways; studying and improving the water system across its fountain, lake and irrigation facets as well as proceeding with plantings designed to protect and enhance the views from garden.

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About Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua
Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A. (PSML) is an entirely state owned company founded in 2000 in order to meet the challenges arising out of the UNESCO classification of the Sintra Cultural Landscape as a World Heritage site. The company was created to assemble the public institutions responsible for safeguarding and enhancing the Sintra Cultural Landscape with the Portuguese state correspondingly awarding the company the management of its key properties and estates in this geographic region. The entity does not resort to the State Budget and the restoration and maintenance of the heritage in its care are ensured by the revenues resulting from sales at its ticket offices, stores, cafeterias and the rental of facilities for the hosting of events. In 2014, the natural and cultural values that PSML manages (the Park and National Palace of Pena, the National Palaces of Sintra and Queluz, the Chalet of the Countess of Edla, the Moorish Castle, the Palace and Gardens of Monserrate, the Convent of the Capuchos and the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art) welcomed approximately 1,928,000 visits, around 86% of whom were international in origin.
The following are the PSML shareholders: the General Directorate of the Treasury and Finance (representing the Portuguese state), the Portuguese Institute of Nature and Forestry Conservation, the Portuguese Tourism Board and Sintra Municipal Council. 

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**Information for the Press:**

Communication office Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua
comunicacao@parquesdesintra.pt
+351 21 923 73 00