Pena Farm Greenhouses restoration project completed

- Main greenhouse and working greenhouses
- Investment: €325,000
- Duration: 8 months
- Following phase: aviary, cafeteria, store and sanitary installations

Sintra, April 14 2015 – Parques de Sintra recently completed the Pena Farm Greenhouses restoration project, located in the Park of Pena, following investment of around €325,000 over an eight month period. This included the restoration of the two working greenhouses along with the main greenhouse, the restructuring of the terraces on which these buildings rest and the installation of tool storage and potting facilities. At a subsequent stage, this same area will see the restoration of the aviary, the gardener’s house converted into a cafeteria and semi-buried buildings will provide the infrastructures for a store, public sanitary installations and a technical support area for the heating boiler and storing rubbish.

The restoration of the three greenhouses took place in accordance with their original construction plans with their original functions maintained. The roofing, with its wooden structure and individual glass sheets, in a very advanced state of disrepair, was restored in both the same materials and scales. The same happened with the masonry and the gravel and limestone pavements. The nurseries were cleaned and cared for and their original source of water restored to a functioning state and thus fed by water drawn from mines located in the Park of Pena. In the main greenhouse, the existing boiler was restored and protected. The old iron central heating pipes, overly corroded, were replaced by a new system in the same material and diameter. The guttering, in ceramic masonry with a smooth surface finish, was also restored. Inside the greenhouse, work also included replacing the masonry shelving system for displaying the vases. On the terrace to the main greenhouse, the walls received attention with the paths equipped and adapted to ensure access for persons with physical mobility restrictions.

The wooden pergolas were rebuilt alongside the forestry work which also took place in the immediate surroundings with the cleaning of the existing trees. The project also
included the requalification of the immediate outdoor environment, specifically the azalea garden.

Inside the exhibition greenhouse, the vases now contain a collection of orchids, begonias, bromeliads, carnivorous plants, succulent plants and ferns and placing a particular emphasis on indigenous species with priority conservation status such as the ivy-leaved fern (*Asplenium hemionitis*), the chain fern (*Woodwardia radicans*) and the carnivorous *Pinguicula lusitanica*. The small nurseries now also nurture both Portuguese horticultural varieties for growing out in the Pena Farm gardens along with species for replanting the flower beds in the interior of the park, especially the geraniums, which were so very popular in the 19th century.

This project is currently undertaking study of the second phase of the restoration of this area and that foresees the restoration of the upper terrace and the installation of visitor support facilities.

The aviary will be restored to serve its original function: the cylindrical existing body will be fitted with three areas of cages each with different species of bird. Of these cages, there remains only the initial 19th century plans and the original foundation stones. Given its overly close proximity to the aviary and its poor integration into the surroundings and of more recent origin, the adjoining construction will be demolished. The gardener’s house, in worked stone, will be converted into a cafeteria. The roofing will be in ceramic tiles in order to respect the solution now found only in photographic records. The cafeteria and the other installations planned for this site shall serve the Pena Farm area, from the Stables over to the Chalet of the Countess.

The area between the aviary and the cafeteria, where there is a large land bank, represents the site for a part-buried building with an architectural language in keeping with the stables. This structure will house the sanitary installations, a store for selling products interrelating with the Farm’s activities along with technical support rooms for suppliers, members of staff and the boiler for heating both the cafeteria and greenhouse.
About Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua

Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, S.A. (PSML) is a state-owned limited company with exclusively public capital that was created in 2000 following the recognition by UNESCO of the Cultural Landscape of Sintra as a World Heritage Site. The company was created to assemble the public institutions responsible for preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage in Sintra. PSML has been entrusted with the management of the State’s main properties in the area. Because it does not resort to the State Budget, PSML depends entirely on proceeds from the tickets sale, shops, cafeterias and hiring of venues for events, in order to restore, maintain and promote the heritage it manages.

In 2013, the natural and cultural heritage managed by PSML (the Park and 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 1,700,000 visitors, over 90% of whom were from outside of Portugal.

The shareholders of PSML are the Directorate General of Treasury and Finance (Direção Geral do Tesouro e Finanças - representing the State), the Institute for the Conservation of Nature and Biodiversity (Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e Biodiversidade - ICNB), the Portuguese Tourism Board (Turismo de Portugal) and the Municipality of Sintra (Câmara Municipal de Sintra - CMS).

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