



CONFRARIA DO BOM JESUS DO MONTE

STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT

SANCTUARY OF BOM JESUS DO MONTE IN BRAGA

(2019, REF 1590/43 COM 8B.31; criteria iv)

1. Executive Summary of the report

The Confraternity of Bom Jesus do Monte has experienced four years of management of a World Heritage Site, two of which under COVID and a period of limited access to public funds for cultural works. After the rewarding experience of the programmes REQUALIFICAR I and II and the preparation of the application of the Sanctuary to the World Heritage List, we consider this period as a positive learning experience, in spite of these hardships. After a significant decrease in number of visitors during 2020-2022, 2023 has witnessed a significant increase that has exceeded the number of visitors in 2019.

A significant outcome has been achieved in terms of the inventory of the heritage attributes of the Sanctuary that has supported a variety of outputs to support a qualified visit. The inventory now requires a georeferenced data base.

The park and the wood have had significant investment to keep it at an adequate state of conservation and a safe and enjoyable visit. In 2022, the Confraternity acquired a plot of land at its own expenses, known as "Bouça do Souto" and relevant to an effective fire defence strategy to the property. The revision of Braga Master Plan is expected to be announced early next year (2024). Within the buffer zone of the Sanctuary, the progress of the approval of building permits as of 2019 is being taken care by the Municipality of Braga and Regional-Directorate of Cultural Heritage. The municipalities of Braga and Guimarães have joined efforts to create the Association 'Sacromontes de Braga e Guimarães' the constitution of which was approved last year to draw up and implement the "Intermunicipal Programme for the Sacromontes". It is a slow-moving process and, meanwhile, the Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plans of the municipalities of Braga and Guimaraes are operational and take the place of the intermunicipal programme. The update of the management plan and of the action plan imply a proposal of a different timescale that is presented below and includes the immediate demolition of the terrace-bar at the own expenses of the Confraternity.



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2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

Decision: 44 COM7B. 158

a) Completing an inventory of the heritage attributes of the property

The Bom Jesus do Monte Memory Centre is the cultural structure that aims to foster research, conservation, interpretation, dissemination and enhancement of the tangible or intangible heritage linked to the Sanctuary's history, memory and identity. It includes a Library, Archive, Reservations and Exhibition Room.

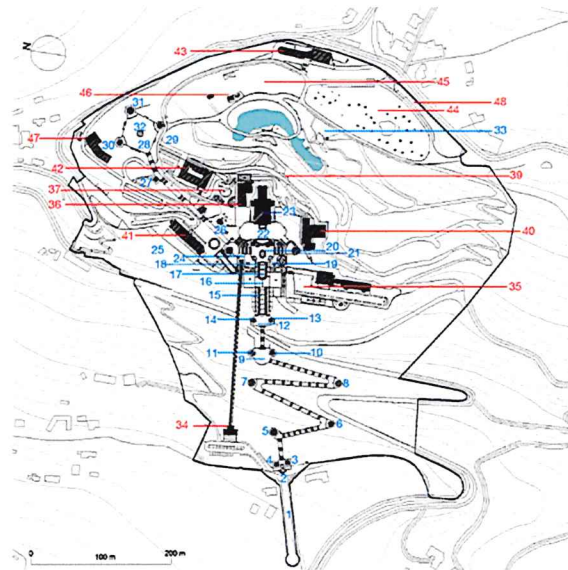
The collection is organised into the following sections - Bibliographic Archive, Historical Archive and Collections. Access can be achieved *on site*, within the Centre itself, subject to specific regulations, or *online* via the platform <https://centrodememorias.bomjesus.pt/en/home/> (PT/EN). Inventory and archival work is in progress at the Memory Centre.

The site has undergone a process of conservation under Program REQUALIFICAR II (2017-2019) where the interior of the church and all its belongings were inventoried and restored as well as the stairways, chapels and fountains. The Memory Center has now the ambition to promote a georeferenced database IPCN.BJ — Inventory of Cultural and Natural Heritage of Bom Jesus — for immovable cultural elements; movable cultural elements and natural elements (FIGURE 1).



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1.e MAPS AND PLANS, SHOWING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY AND BUFFER ZONE



Distribution of constructed elements (chapels, stairways, patios and terreiro, fountains and statues), main buildings and recreation areas
Topographical survey (2016), Confraria do Bom Jesus do Monte

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Avenue | <i>Animathea, Annaz, Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphaz</i> |
| 2. Portico | 23. Church |
| 3. Chapel of the Last Supper | 24. Statue of Longinus |
| 4. Chapel of Agony or the Garden | 25. Chapel of the Raising of the Cross |
| 5. Chapel of Betrayal and Fountain of Apollo or Diana | 26. Chapel of the Anointing |
| 6. Chapel of Darkness and Fountain of Mars | 27. Chapel of the Resurrection |
| 7. Chapel of the Flagellation and Fountain of Mercury | 28. Yard of the Evangelists |
| 8. Chapel of the Coronation and Fountain of Saturn | 29. Chapel of the Encounter at Emmaus |
| 9. Circular Patio | 30. Chapel of the Ascension |
| 10. Chapel of Pilate's Praetorium | 31. Chapel of the Apparition of Christ to the Saint Mary Magdalene |
| 11. Chapel of the Ascent to Calvary | 32. Fountain of Tears |
| 12. Patio of the Five Senses | Statues and Fountains: <i>St. Matthew, St. John, St. Luke and St. Mark</i> |
| 13. Chapel of the Falls | 33. Statue of Moses |
| 14. Chapel of the Crucifixion | 34. Funicular |
| 15. Stairway of the Five Senses | 35. Colunata de Eventos (Conference Center) |
| Fountains: <i>Five Wounds, Vision, Hearing, Smell, Taste and Touch</i> | 36. Casa das Estampas (Shop) |
| Statues: <i>Jeremiah, Moses, Spouse of the Songs, King David, the Shunammite, Noah, Ezra, Jonathan, Isaac, and Isaiah</i> | 37. Entrance to the Park: grotto and belvedere |
| 16. Patio of the Virtues | 38. Café |
| 17. Stairway of the Virtues | 39. Fountain of D. José de Bragança (Fountain of Hercules) or Shell Grotto |
| Fountains: <i>Faith, Hope and Charity</i> | 40. Hotel do Templo |
| Statues: <i>Confession, Meekness, Faith, Glory, Confidence, Hope, Peace, Kindness and Charity</i> | 41. Hotel do Elevador |
| 18. Chapel of Mary Magdalene | 42. Hotel do Parque |
| 19. Chapel of Peter | 43. Hotel do Lago |
| 20. Patio and Fountain of the Pelloan | 44. Picnic area |
| 21. Chapel of the Descent of the Cross | 45. Children's playground |
| 22. Churchyard | 46. Lakeside café |
| Statues: <i>Pilate, the Centurion, Nicodemus, Joseph of</i> | 47. Locker rooms and warehouses |
| | 48. Horse boxes |

FIGURE 1 – Cultural elements: built structures (2018)



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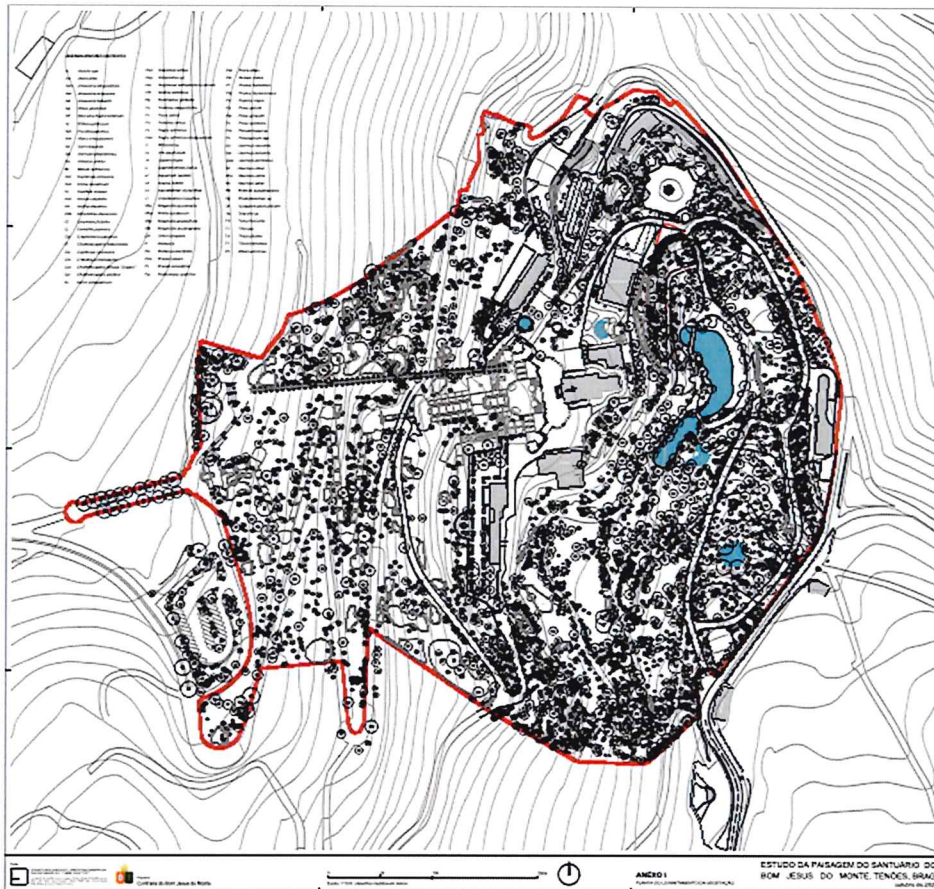


FIGURE 2 – Tree inventory (2020)

The completion of the inventory has the following objectives: a) to allow constant monitoring of the elements; state of conservation, historical value and a register of interventions and b) to increase collective and individual awareness of the quality and quantity of the cultural and natural environment, and the importance of safeguarding this heritage in view of its potential functional, economic-financial, artistic and cultural, scientific and technological, historical and documentary, and/or symbolic and identity value; and c) to provide information that stimulates scientific and technical research into the assets present in the sanctuary.

- b) **Defining additional monitoring indicators to address the state of conservation of the park and the wood.**

The park and the wood have had significant investment to keep it at an adequate state of conservation and a safe and enjoyable visit. Between 2021 and 2023, 2500 trees were planted after the previous clearing of dead and



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decaying trees. These plantations involved significant volunteer work and favored autochthonous species. Also, some major arboriculture work was done in 43 trees removing dead or damaged parts and sometimes reducing the volume of trees to allow a healthier and safer co-habitation among them.

In 2022, the Confraternity of Bom Jesus acquired a plot of land at its own expenses, known as "Bouça do Souto". It covers around two hectares and borders the Bom Jesus wood on its southern edge, precisely the boundary that represents a significant risk of fire to the property. The Confraternity considered that the acquisition was an opportunity and a priority. It is also part of a commitment as a member of the "Laudato si Action Platform" (<https://laudatosiactionplatform.org>), an initiative by Pope Francis, about the urgent need to "care for our common home", challenging us to adopt Integral Ecology. The Confraternity will go on working at "Bouça do Souto" with the collaboration of local institutions and citizens to manage the invasive species, clearings and plantings.

- c) **Monitoring urban expansion and development which could impact on the property, including within and beyond the buffer zone, as a specific action in the revision of the Braga Master Plan.**

The revision of Braga Master Plan is expected to be announced early next year (2024), after which there will be a period of public consultation before the submission to authorities for final approval. Within the buffer zone of the Sanctuary, figures 3 and 4 show the progress of the approval processes as existing at the time of the application of the Sanctuary to the World Heritage List (2018).



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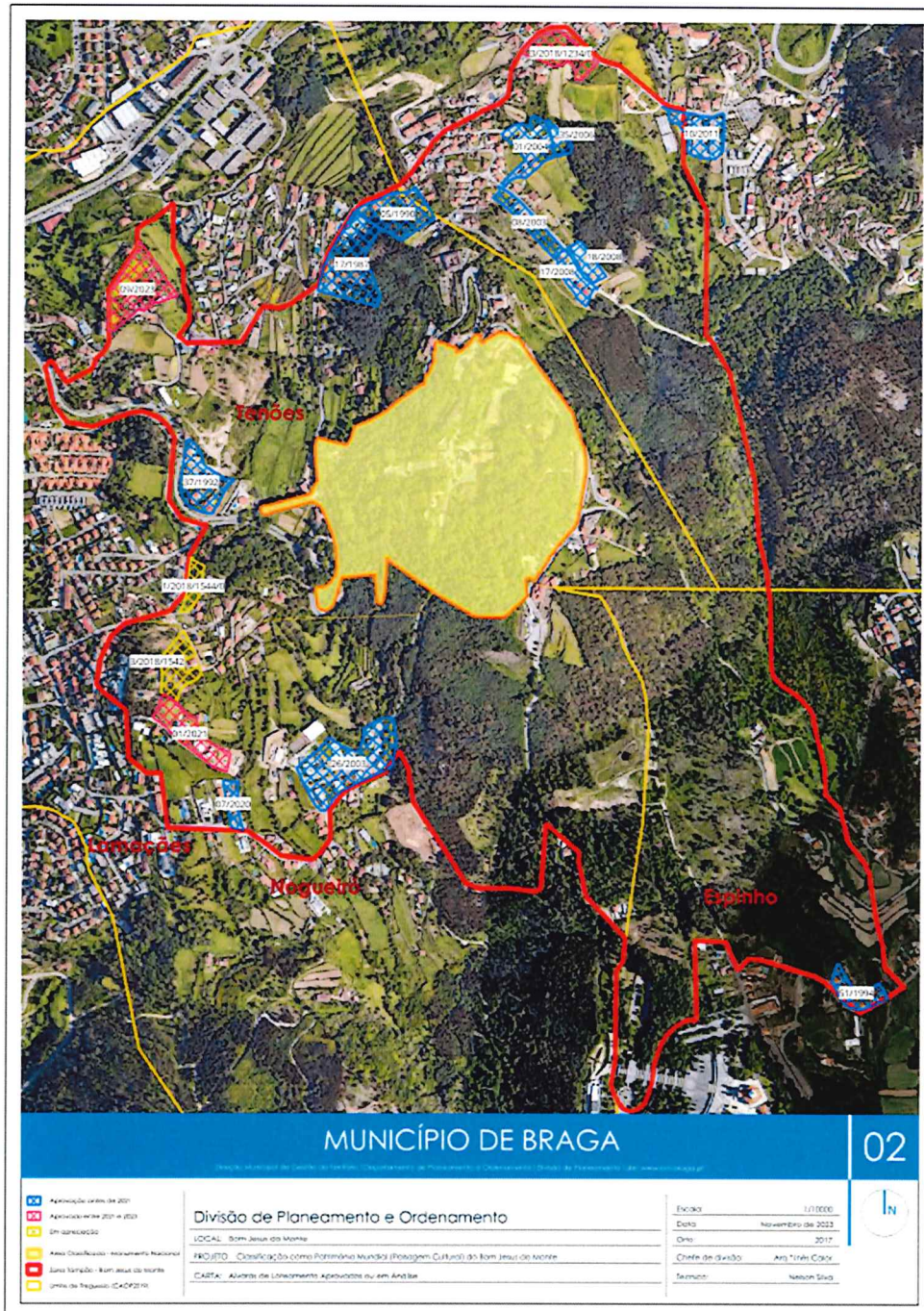


FIGURE 3 - Allotment permits approved or being analysed



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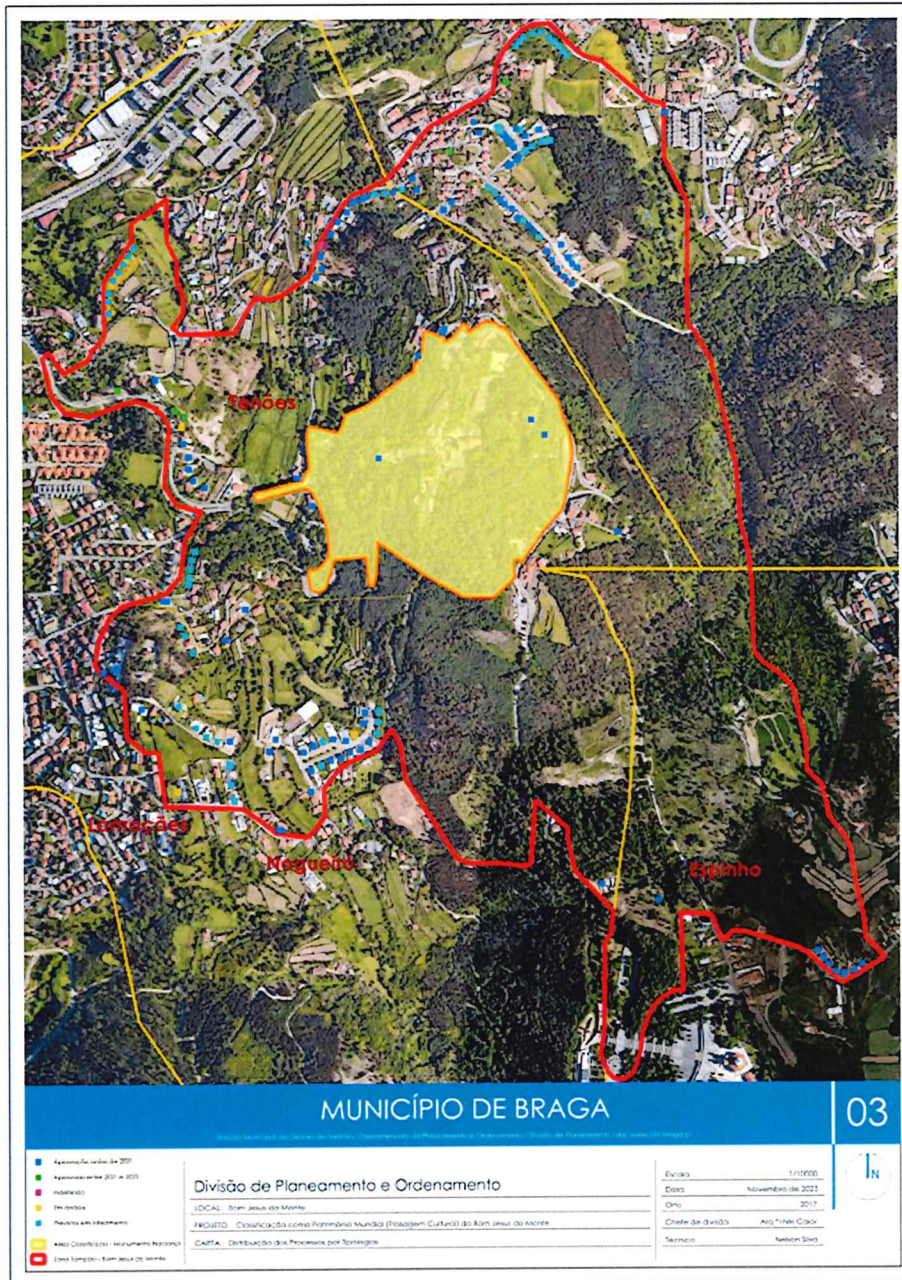


FIGURE 4 - Approvals and rejections (prior to 2021; 2021-2023; under appreciation)



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d) **Monitoring the threat posed by fires by continuing with the "Sacromontes Inter-Municipal Programme" or similar programmes.**

The municipalities of Braga and Guimarães have joined efforts to create the Association 'Sacromontes de Braga e Guimarães' the constitution of which was approved last year, to support the management of an area of around 2,500 hectares privately owned. Among other shrines and archaeological sites, it encompasses the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte.

The Association's main aim is to draw up and implement the "Intermunicipal Programme for the Sacromontes", as well as to promote the enhancement, rehabilitation, restoration and promotion of the built heritage; the protection of the forest area surrounding the sanctuaries and archaeological sites; the definition of actions for the active management and enhancement of the forest landscape; and the integrated promotion of the whole area and its resources as a complex of high heritage and touristic value.

Meanwhile, the Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plans (PMDFCI) of the municipalities of Braga and Guimaraes are operational. The Intermunicipal Programme will take into consideration the articulation of the two PMDFCI with regard to the 2,500 ha.

BRAGA Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plan (2021-2030):

https://www.cm-braga.pt/archive/doc/CADERNO_I.pdf

https://www.cm-braga.pt/archive/doc/CADERNO_II.pdf

GUIMARÃES Municipal Forest Fire Defence Plan (2019-2028):

[https://www.cm-](https://www.cm-guimaraes.pt/cmguimaraes/uploads/writer_file/document/7184/caderno_i___diagnostico.pdf)

[guimaraes.pt/cmguimaraes/uploads/writer_file/document/7184/caderno_i___diagnostico.pdf](https://www.cm-guimaraes.pt/cmguimaraes/uploads/writer_file/document/7184/caderno_i___diagnostico.pdf)

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However, an integrated and adaptive intermunicipal strategy for this specific landscape continues to be much desired. The Confraternity of Bom Jesus understands the complexity of a political process that calls for significant innovation and will go on lobbying for this cause and conciliating efforts for the management of the park and the wood of the sanctuary.

e) **Carrying out heritage impact assessments for proposed developments within the property, including their potential cumulative impact, in particular for**



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developments related to the "Programme to improve visitor numbers to the Sanctuary of the Good Jesus of the Mount", in accordance with paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, to be submitted to the World Heritage

No heritage impact assessments have been produced. Only preventive maintenance is being carried out and no major building works are currently taking place. The much-desired demolition of the terrace bar foreseen for 2021 has not happened. It was closed to the public in 2021 however its removal was part of the Programme "Bom Jesus: REQUALIFICAR III" that has not yet received the necessary funds but has had the approval of the Regional-Directorate of Cultural Heritage.

f) Updating the management plan to include:

(i) a revised action plan detailing all proposed actions within the property, with associated timescales

The December 2020 report of Portugal on the implementation of the 2019 recommendations (43 COM Baku) for the Sanctuary has indicated the following actions and timescales:

1. Signposting (June to October 2021)
2. Clearing and planting of new trees in the wood (October 2021 to February 2022)
3. Creation and signposting of the nature walk (October to December 2021)
4. Rehabilitation of the funicular stop (June 2021 to March 2022)
5. Rehabilitation of the Casa dos Correios and creation of the Interpretation Centre (October 2021 to June 2022)
6. Conservation and restoration of the exterior of the three chapels in the Terreiro dos Evangelistas (Yard of the Evangelists) (October 2022 to January 2023).
7. Rehabilitation of the Portico area (June 2023 to June 2025)

The major investments through COVID pandemic times (2020-2022) were concentrated in the wood and the park from funds of the Confraternity. Funding of programme "Bom Jesus: REQUALIFICAR III" is on hold and thus all the other actions have not taken place. The demolition of the terrace bar is included under action 5. Rehabilitation of the Casa dos Correios and creation of the Interpretation Centre. However, the Confraternity is going forward with this demolition. We foresee the following timescale:

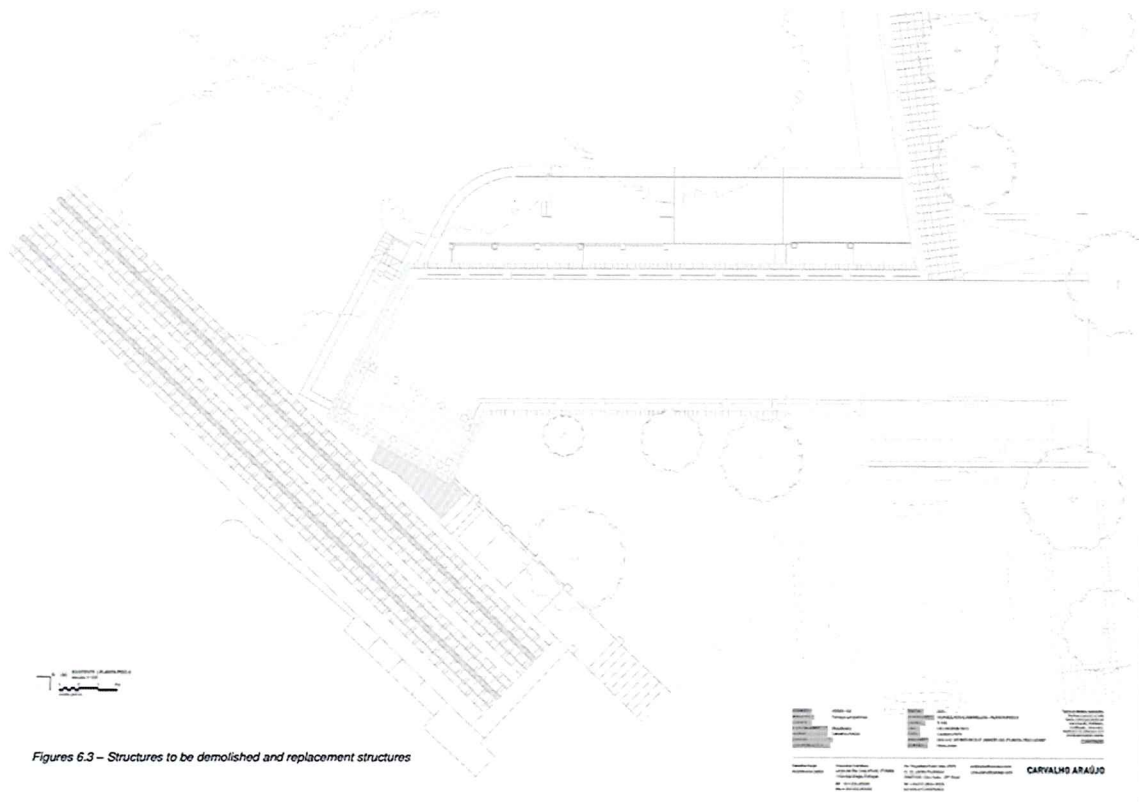
1. Terrace bar demolition (December 2023)
2. Signposting (2024-2025)
3. Creation and signposting of the nature walk (2024-2025)
4. Rehabilitation of the funicular stop/ "Elevador square" (2024-2025)



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5. Rehabilitation of the Casa dos Correios and creation of the Interpretation Centre (2024-2025)
6. Conservation and restoration of the exterior of the three chapels in the Yard of the Evangelists (2024-2025)
7. Rehabilitation of the Portico area (2024-2025)

It was expected to obtain funding through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). At this stage, we have no indication of new calls or have not been able to find alternative funds. However, the Confraternity plans to go on with the demolition of the terrace bar, removing it and creating a new circulation scheme (FIGURE 5).



Figures 6.3 – Structures to be demolished and replacement structures



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FIGURE 5 - Removal of the terrace bar and the new circulation scheme

(ii) a detailed conservation plan as the basis for a well-planned, long-term conservation approach,

The Confraternity has experienced four years of management of a World Heritage site, two of which under COVID and limited access to public funds, after the good experience of the programmes REQUALIFICAR I and II.

We manage the only Portuguese private property of the Portuguese World Heritage List and it has been of significance the learning experience as a member of the Permanent Commission of the World Heritage Network of Portugal. A detailed long-term conservation plan requires a technical capacity that needs to be internalized in the working team of the Confraternity.

The working team, from administrative personnel to gardeners, has a high age and the renewal of the team is a key decision for the next 3 to 5 years. A conservation plan requires to know to whom it is addressed to assure its implementation. The preparation of a conservation plan will have to be developed with the evolution of the working team, soon to happen and to be planned.

(iii) bearing in mind the emphasis on visitor experience, a tourism management plan with specific actions, timescales and resources allocated,

After a significant decrease in number of visitors during 2020-2022, 2023 has witnessed a significant increase that has exceeded the number of visitors in 2019.



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The Action Plan includes Measure C – Cultural and tourist program with a set of actions: 1) Visitor guides (*Guia do Bom Jesus* (2021) ISBN: 9789899895133, PT/EN; *APP Bom Jesus do Monte* (2022) PT/EN; *Guided tours* (5 tours) <https://bomjesus.pt/percursos-de-visitas-guiadas-no-santuاريو-do-bom-jesus-do-monte-en/?lang=en>; *Virtual visit to the temple*: <https://bomjesus.pt/visita-virtual-basilica/>); 2) training actions for guided tours 2022 and 2023; 3) Interpretation center (REQUALIFICAR III); 4) Signage (REQUALIFICAR III). The two first actions have been implemented while 3) and 4) are dependent on funding, as mentioned earlier.

Besides these actions, the December 2020 report of Portugal on the implementation of the 2019 recommendations (43 COM/Baku) for the Sanctuary has presented a “Programme to improve the visitor experience of the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte” (pp. 11-12) that includes a qualification of the access to the Sanctuary and of the Visit (Annex 2 – Management Plan. Nomination File, 2019, p. 203-254) which foresees two actions: E.1 Pedestrian and car traffic plan and parking and E.2 Qualification of the sanctuary visit. The Action Plan defines three rehabilitation areas: *Portico, Church and Mãe-de-Água* in order to adapt to new needs in terms of welcoming visitors. In line with the Action Plan, in 2020 the Confraternity developed a rehabilitation study of the Portico area, that includes the Largo do Elevador square, of the public toilets and parking and of the Alameda and the connection with the Portico (presented in the December 2020 report of Portugal pp. 13-23). The Programme has seen no further development having been presented to the authorities.

(iv) the results of the vegetation survey to present, manage and sustain the vegetation, in particular the tree heritage as an important element of the property which complements its landscape attributes,

Please, see above 2a) and 2b).

(v) a revised and more effective monitoring system, ensuring regular reporting on conservation work, the state of the park and woods, the impact of visitor numbers and the threats of urban expansion and development and forest fires;

The preparation of the conservation plan shall include the monitoring system.



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3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value

No other conservation issues which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value were identified.

4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

No major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) are intended within the property.

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

The State Party authorises the public access to the state of conservation report.

6. Signature of the Authority

Varico Pereira

World Heritage site manager