

PRESS RELEASE

TERNA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SICILIAN IDENTITY: WORKS BEGIN TO SAFEGUARD CORNELIUS AQUEDUCT IN TERMINI IMERESE, PROVINCE OF PALERMO

A section of the Cornelius Aqueduct has been discovered near the site of a future conversion station for the Tyrrhenian Link, the Terna submarine power line that will connect Sicily, Campania and Sardinia

The find will be relocated to another site in the municipality of Termini Imerese, adopting all appropriate security and prevention measures

Rome, 12 October 2023 – Terna and the Regional Department of Cultural Heritage and Sicilian Identity, together with the Superintendency of Palermo, have initiated activities related to excavation and preservation of the Corelius Aqueduct in Termini Imerese, in the province of Palermo. The area in question will host the conversion station for the western branch of the Tyrrhenian Link, Terna's submarine electrical connection between Sicily, Campania and Sardinia.

During preventive archaeological assessments when planning the infrastructure, conducted by the company under the scientific direction of the Superintendency of Palermo, a section of the Roman Cornelius Aqueduct was discovered, largely buried. Based on evidence gathered during the initial works, Italian electricity grid operator, Terna - headed by Giuseppina Di Foggia - launched extensive archaeological excavations to ascertain the size and state of conservation of the find.

Activity at Termini Imerese will offer new opportunities for study and research into the construction methods of water infrastructure from the past, furthering our understanding of ancient settlement practices, shining a new light on the period.

To uncover the aqueduct, discovered deep below the modern-day ground level, a huge, coordinated effort is required involving many personnel and various professionals, with detailed planning of the archaeological site conducted under the scientific direction of the Superintendency.

"Terna's aim is to work closely with the Superintendency of Palermo and the municipality of Termini Imerese to safeguard the cultural heritage discovered during archaeological excavations, preserving the remains of the Cornelius Aqueduct and restoring it to the local area with appropriate museum facilities, also redeveloping certain local areas for the benefit of citizens", explained Roberto Cirrincione, Terna's Head of Project Development.

With the support of professional experts and the Superintendency's lead, Terna will first perform a survey and mapping of the state of conservation of the aqueduct. Following this, it will carry out operations for its removal in accordance with all applicable protection standards, before transporting it in sections to a temporary location.

Subsequently, in agreement with the municipality and the Superintendency, part of the Cornelius Aqueduct will be rebuilt in an area within the municipality of Termini Imerese, identified through agreement of all parties involved. This is a unique opportunity for citizens, who can enjoy the results of the archaeological excavations with finds on display at the new location.

"Preserving the Cornelius Aqueduct during creation of the Tyrrhenian Link is an excellent example of how it is possible to reconcile technological advancement and history. This initiative will enable us



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to meet the demands of the present, in terms of infrastructure and connectivity, whilst safeguarding and promoting the region's cultural heritage. This skilful balance represents a milestone for the sustainable growth of communities and for the protection of our cultural inheritance, which future generations will be able to enjoy", commented Francesco Paolo Scarpinato, Commissioner for Sicilian Cultural Heritage and Identity.

"Cultural heritage represents an extraordinary asset for our local area, promoting the identity and sense of belonging of the community. Since the start of this process, we have placed the utmost attention on ensuring that the archaeological heritage of our town receives appropriate recognition through important and innovative initiatives to safeguard it. I would like to thank Terna and the Superintendency of Palermo for their outstanding work and the Regional Authority of Sicily for having believed in our shared vision. The aim is to preserve the find, returning it to the community with museum facilities that will also enable us to redevelop and regenerate areas of our town", declared the mayoress of Termini Imerese, Maria Terranova.

In order to reconcile the need to safeguard archaeological heritage with the creation of electrical infrastructure that is essential for the Italy's development, Terna has established a specific structure rooted in preventive archaeology. This Archaeological Unit supports the entire company, aiming to employ preventive archaeology as a tool for project planning and to identify the best solutions in agreement with Superintendencies. Integration of preventive archaeology into the various planning stages therefore begins with detailed study of the local area right from the initial feasibility stages and all the way through to execution and the delivery of the finds, information, documents, and knowledge that belong to us all.