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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP) RAILWAY LINE

BELGRADE – NIŠ, SECTION III PARAĆIN – TRUPALE (NIŠ)

Appendix 1: MEETING MINUTES FROM STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR SIA AND SEP





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Key Contacts

EUD	Anthony Robert	Programme Manager	Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia Vladimira Popovica 40/V, 11070 New Belgrade, Republic of Serbia Phone: +381 11 3083200 Anthony.ROBERT@eeas.europa.eu
	Aleksandra Todorović	MEI's Representative	Ministry of European Integration Nemanjina 34, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia atodorovic@mei.gov.rs
MEI	Branko Budimir	Advisor to the Minister of European Integration	Ministry of European Integration Nemanjina 34, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia branko.budimir@mei.gov.rs
	Željko Tmušić	Project Director	Ul. Beogradska 27, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia Phone: +381 11 32 34 730 zeljko.tmusic@suez.com
SUEZ Consulting (SAFEGE) Office in Serbia	Dušan Rakić	Project Manager	Ul. Beogradska 27, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia Phone: +381 11 32 34 730 dusan.rakic@suez.com
	Darko Jakšić	Team Leader	Ul. Beogradska 27, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia Phone: +381 11 32 34 730 jaksic@zeelandnet.nl
	Miodrag Uljarević	Deputy Team Leader	Ul. Beogradska 27, 11000 Belgrade, Republic of Serbia Phone: +381 11 32 34 730 miodrag.uljarevic@suez.com



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: LSG Aleksinac

Topic: Modernization of the Belgrade–Niš Railway – Section 3, Subsection 3.3 **Purpose of the Meeting:** Collection of information for the preparation of the *Stakeholder Engagement Plan* and *Social Impact Assessment*, within Phase 1 of the Consultant's work

Date: 07.05.2025

The Mayor of Aleksinac shared the following comments and observations regarding the Project:

- **Communication with the Designer:**

Concerns were expressed regarding the planned railway route, along with the need for the LSG team to meet with technical experts to thoroughly review the route, with all planned changes, and discuss the road connections after the closure of existing railway crossings.

- **Potential Problems Related to the Planned Railway Route**

The planned railway route passes directly through the center of all settlements in the municipality (from Vitkovac to Drenovac). With the exception of settlements Nozren and Lužane, the installation of protective fences and sound barriers will divide all settlements into two parts. In practice, this means that, for example, a store or a school will remain on one side of the railway, while the other part of the settlement will be cut off. Additionally, the number of planned crossings has been significantly reduced, meaning that in each of the mentioned cases, part of the population will be directly affected.

- **Concerns Regarding the Impact on Existing Infrastructure:**

Concerns that the construction of the railway will jeopardize the road connection to Niš and Kruševac have been raised. Local roads will be cut off, raising the question of how they will be reconnected.

Attention was drawn to the limited number of additional underpasses and overpasses for pedestrians and light machinery. According to the currently planned solution, in some cases, farmers will need to travel 4–5 kilometers to access their fields. The same issue applies to pedestrians and schoolchildren, particularly given that there is no organized local transportation in the area.

Also, the Municipality of Aleksinac is included in the 'Clean Serbia' program for the construction of a sewage network. The Ministry of Construction Transport and Infrastructure has issued a construction permit for the construction of 52 km of sewage network and collectors, on the territory of three settlements located on the left side of the South Morava River (Prčilovac, Žitkovac and Moravac). In addition to the construction permit, conditions have also been obtained from Serbian Railways for the existing railway route. This includes two crossings (Moravac and Žitkovac) and several kilometers of parallel alignment along the existing railway route. Given this, the question arises whether it is necessary to update the existing documentation to avoid a situation where, after the start of work based on the issued



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permit, there would be a need to halt the work and remove any parts of the infrastructure that could have been constructed up to that point.

Alongside the existing railway route runs a water supply network. The new railway route, which involves shifting the alignment to straighten a curve, will also require the relocation of the water supply network. This will lead to a disruption in the water supply, which, if it lasts longer than a few days, could compromise the functioning of the local community. In addition to the technical and logistical challenges, they believe that the issue of additional costs arising from the relocation of existing infrastructure should also be considered.

- **Local community specifics:**

They also emphasized that the municipality of Aleksinac has the highest number of facilities planned for demolition, including both residential and commercial properties, which has raised concern and numerous questions among the local population.

- **General assessment of the Project's impact:**

Their overall attitude towards the project is not negative; they recognize its broader significance. However, there is concern that the local population will not benefit directly from the transit, only indirectly—at the national level. With the closure of stations, the number of passengers will be drastically reduced. Furthermore, they feel that they still lack sufficient information to adequately inform citizens who have specific questions about the project.



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MEETING MINUTES

- **Topic:** Modernization of the Belgrade–Niš Railway – Section 3, Subsection 3.3 **Purpose of the Meeting:** Collection of information for the preparation of the *Stakeholder Engagement Plan* and *Social Impact Assessment*, within Phase 1 of the Consultant's work
Date: 08.05.2025
Location: Municipality of Cicevac(LSG)
Participants:
-

The representative of the LSG Čičevac shared the following comments and observations regarding the Project:

- **Communication with the Designer:**
Dissatisfaction was expressed with the communication with the Designer. Apart from the team dealing with hydrology, no other members of the Designer's team contacted the relevant municipal departments. It was particularly emphasized that the urban planning department should be involved and visit the site with the Designer to gain an accurate understanding of the conditions on the ground.
- **Spatial Plan:**
The LSG has never received the Adopted Spatial Plan from the competent state authorities. According to available information(*unofficial*), most of the LSG's comments on the Spatial Plan have been accepted.
- **Communication during the construction phase:**
It is expected that the LSG will be included in daily communication with the Contractors during the construction phase, to avoid significant disruptions to the daily life of the residents of the Municipality of Čičevac.
- **Local community specifics:**
The Municipality of Čičevac has a strong presence of **hunting tourism**, and it is recommended to contact the local hunting association *Hajduk Veljko* to identify any potential impacts on this activity.
- **General assessment of the Project's impact:**
Provided that the comments on the Spatial Plan have indeed been adopted, the LSG generally does not expect any significant negative impacts of the Project on the local government or the citizens.



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MEETING MINUTES

- **Topic:** Modernization of the Belgrade–Niš Railway – Section 3, Subsection 3.3 **Purpose of the Meeting:** Collection of information for the preparation of the *Stakeholder Engagement Plan* and *Social Impact Assessment*, within Phase 1 of the Consultant's work
Date: 08.05.2025
Location: Municipality of Paraćin
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The representative of the LSG Paraćin and PUC Crnica shared the following comments and observations regarding the Project:

- **Communication with the Designer:**
Dissatisfaction was expressed with the communication with the Designer. Apart from the team dealing with hydrology, no other members of the Designer's team contacted the relevant municipal departments. It was particularly emphasized that the urban planning department should be involved and visit the site with the Designer to gain an accurate understanding of the conditions on the ground. They had insisted several times that when designing new level crossings (underpasses and overpasses), the urban planning department should go on-site together with the Designer. The urban planning department has prepared technical solutions, but the Designer did not contact them when going on-site.
- **Spatial Plan:**
The LSG has never received the Adopted Spatial Plan from the competent state authorities.
- **Communication during the construction phase:**
It is expected that the LSG will be included in daily communication with the Contractors during the construction phase, to avoid significant disruptions to the daily life of the residents of the Municipality of Paraćin.
- **Local community specifics:**
The biggest concern for the local population is for the residents of the Zabari settlement, considering the technical solution proposed by the Designer, which foresees the closure of the current level crossing. The residents of this settlement are currently only 5 minutes away from the town center, but the proposed relocation and construction of a new crossing would increase their travel time to approximately 20-30 minutes to the center of Paraćin. It was highlighted that the emergency services currently take 5 minutes to reach the Zabari settlement, but with the new crossing, it would take over 20 minutes. Furthermore, this part of the Municipality of Paraćin is home to a landfill, which could lead to an increase in service costs if the proposed technical solution is implemented. They believe that if this technical solution remains, it may lead to the displacement of residents from the Zabari settlement.



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A lesser issue is anticipated in the Drenovo settlement. Although a comment was submitted regarding the closure of the existing level crossing, it was not accepted. They pointed out that despite the Municipality's repeated requests, no follow-up discussions have taken place. They believe this could result in more difficult access to agricultural plots, meaning residents would require more time to reach them than they currently do.



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MEETING MINUTES

- **Topic:** Modernization of the Belgrade–Niš Railway – Section 3, Subsection 3.3 **Purpose of the Meeting:** Collection of information for the preparation of the *Stakeholder Engagement Plan* and *Social Impact Assessment*, within Phase 1 of the Consultant's work
Date: 09.05.2025
Location: City of Niš
-

The representative of the City of Niš shared the following comments and observations regarding the Project:

- The representatives stated that they have no objections to the Project and that they maintain good cooperation with SRI. They also pointed out that there is another railway project being implemented on the territory of the City of Niš.
- They emphasized that they believe the citizens of Niš are not well informed about the Project, including residents of settlements directly affected by it. So far, the only community that has shown interest is Trupale, where residents have mostly raised property-related questions regarding future expropriation, such as when the process will start, which land parcels will be affected, what the property values will be, and the expected timeline.
- The representatives recommended that the PPF Consultant, together with SRI and City officials, visit the affected settlements and organize a presentation of the conceptual or main design of the Project.
- They do not anticipate major problems or any significant impact on the daily lives of citizens of Niš, including those living in settlements along the future corridor during the construction phase. However, they stressed the need for daily communication with the Contractor to ensure that impacts on local traffic are minimized as much as possible.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Settlement Local Community Office Trupale

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 28th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main general concerns and comments from the local community**

The local community is not properly informed about the project. They are requesting a presentation of the design and communication with SRI, since they want to know the expected timeline for expropriation, construction and all other relevant matters (location of underpasses, connection with the existing roads, location of new access roads, etc.), as they want to organise themselves and their organisation of regular activities of the local community. The local community also emphasized that they do not have information about the layout of the railway as the social consultant is the first team who visited them, and they need information about the layout in order to be able to provide comments.

- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns**

The local community emphasizes that the technical solution is going to cause loss of access to more than 500ha of land, which is specifically related to the construction phase. Thereby, they are requesting that this issue be resolved prior to commencement of construction, as they primarily live off agricultural activities.

People who live next to the existing main station in Trupale are using a dirt road (along the railway) to access other parts of the settlement. They are concerned about the planned solution, as they believe that the technical solution is going to lead to loss of access to other parts of the settlement, since they believe that they are not going to be provided with an alternative road.



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Railway crossing in Trupale is used very frequently, and it necessary to ensure that this crossing is not cut off. This crossing is not only used by the local community, but also by the ambulance, police, firefighters and other emergency services, thus it must be operational during construction and operation of the railway, so as to avoid disturbance of regular operation of all services (an underpass is planned to be built at this location).

In case of construction of an underpass or an overpass, they are not going to have regular access to their properties and they are not going to be able to carry out their regular activities. The only solution is to relocate the road to Dejana Mitića Street.

They have been experiencing safety issues in relation to level crossing barrier in Trupale, as it is often out of function. The local community states that SRI stated that they do not have the technical means for fixing the pertaining infrastructure, as this is 40-year old equipment, so safety of vehicles and passengers is often jeopardized in this section.

Local spatial documentation must be aligned with the spatial documentation related to the railway, so as to ensure that the local population would be informed about their rights in relation to use of the land in proximity to the railway. This issue is caused by the future buffer zone, as they are currently not aware of the width of the buffer zone, and this is leading to issues in relation to the local spatial planning, construction permit and use of land which is located close to the railway. In general, it is not possible for the local population to implement and/or plan any activities in the project area, especially since the railway project has been announced for years, and people have been living in uncertainty, since they do not know the extent of expropriation and the future infrastructure.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby the City of Nis shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality Crveni Krst shall share information with the Local Community Office, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Settlement Mezgraja, Local Community Office Crveni Krst

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 28th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main general concerns and comments from the local community**

The local community is not properly informed about the project. They are requesting a presentation of the design and communication with SRI, since they want to know the expected timeline for expropriation, construction and all other relevant matters (location of underpasses, connection with the existing roads, location of new access roads, etc.), as they want to organise themselves and their organisation of regular activities of the local community. The local community also emphasized that they do not have information about the layout of the railway as the social consultant is the first team who visited them, and they need information about the layout in order to be able to provide comments.

- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution**

Representatives of settlement Mezgraja provided a comment during the phase of public consultations related to the spatial plan (official comment was sent on 17th April 2024), whereby they requested a passage for vehicles at the location of the existing railway crossing. This request was made due to the fact that the spatial plan provides a technical solution which includes a pedestrian underpass at the location of the existing railway crossing, while a vehicle underpass is planned to be constructed at a distance of around 700m from the existing railway crossing. If this technical solution is not altered, the village is going to be divided into 2 parts, and thereby it is not going to be functional in the sense that it is going to cause people to leave the village and it is completely going to disrupt regular lives of people in the village and it is thereby going to prevent regular lives of the local community in Mezgraja.



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Additionally, such solution causes disturbance to the regular operation of busses, movement of pupils, agricultural producers, as they would lose the regular access to the other side of the settlement and they would have to use longer routes to reach the school, their land. Additionally, they emphasized that there are going to be issues in relation to regular operation of emergency services, including ambulance, police, firefighters, and other relevant services, since vehicles are not going to be able to pass through this area. Moreover, the local community emphasized that they have issues with flooding in this section, and that a pedestrian underpass would be jeopardized by flooding (they referred to the 2010 and 2016 floods as representative examples). The designer provided a response in this relation and stated that construction of a vehicle underpass would lead to demolition of high number of houses, so such solution would not be viable.

The local community is requesting to receive information and timeline of the expected activities as they have been waiting for years to receive information, and all their activities related to any potential rehabilitation and maintenance of their properties are pending due to the expected construction works on the railway, since they cannot obtain any local permits since the railway is going to be built in the area. Additionally, they know that some houses are going to be demolished for the purpose of the project, but as they do not know the exact extent of demolition of houses, people do not know whether they should commence some activities related to moving to some other locations, or they should just wait until the project commences. In this context, as they do not know the expected timeline for expropriation, they cannot know when they would be expected to move and find solutions for their households.

- **Main locations and aspects of concern in the local community**

The underpass is planned to be built at a distance of 700m from the existing railway crossing, but the local community insists that the planned area is often subject to flooding, and this would not be viable and it would lead to extensive issues.

The local community requests that the underpass is secured by embankment, so as to prevent flooding, and they believe that Srbijavode must be involved in resolution of this matter. Generally, there is high presence of groundwater in the project area, and this aspect needs to be taken into account for the purpose of protection of the future infrastructure and local communities. It is impossible to implement the project without resolving the issues related to flooding and groundwater, so these issues need to be taken into consideration during project planning and implementation.

The local community is requesting information about the type of access which is going to be provided near the Stadium, i.e. they want to know whether it is going to be possible to access this area by car.

School in local community Mezgraja is protected, and it shall be considered during project planning and implementation, as it should be preserved as an object of cultural significance.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby the City of Nis shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality Crveni Krst shall share information with the Local Community Office, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be



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organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Settlement Žabare Local Community Office Branko Krsmanović, Paraćin

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 28th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main general concerns and comments from the local community**

The local community is not properly informed about the project. They are requesting a presentation of the design and communication with SRI, since they want to know the expected timeline for expropriation, construction and all other relevant matters (location of underpasses, connection with the existing roads, location of new access roads, etc.), as they want to organise themselves and their organisation of regular activities of the local community. The local community also emphasized that they do not have information about the layout of the railway as the social consultant is the first team who visited them, and they need information about the layout in order to be able to provide comments.

- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns**

They submitted a petition against removal of railway crossing at Šumadijska street, since removal of this crossing would only lead the local community to experience losses, they would not have any benefits. According to their petition, they only requested a solution which is going to allow for passage to be wide enough for 1 vehicle to pass at a time, with traffic controlled by a traffic light. Proposed solution was rejected. One of the arguments against the closure of the existing crossing is that it is highly frequented, with approximately 2,000 people using it on a daily basis. Such technical solution would lead them to lose their only point of access to the other part of the town, as their current access road to the other part of the town has the length of around 700m, while the alternative road (as proposed by the spatial planning documentation) has the length of around 6km. This is an issue from the point of communication and movement of pupils, workers, and the general local community, as it would cause many issues in their regular daily activities. Namely, such technical solution would cause disruptions to around 300 households and 14 big companies, as they would lose proper



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access and this would lead to economic displacement.

Representatives of some companies who were present at the meeting stated that this would probably lead to closure of their companies, as no one would want to drive for 6km only to reach them on the other side of the railway. Additionally, this technical solution would cause many issues in provision of emergency services (ambulance, firefighters, etc.), as their response time would be much longer than it currently is, which would lead to issues in provision of emergency services. Moreover, the company owner stated that implementation of this project is also going to lead to loss of land value, so the replacement value is not going to be sufficient to buy replacement land at another location and re-establish the company. Finally, this road also leads to the main town landfill, which would also lead to issues in operation of the local communal services and increase of their operational costs and organisation of traffic.

General comment from the local community is that the proposed technical solution is going to divide the settlement into 2 parts, whereby one part of the settlement is only going to have industrial objects, while school, kindergarten, outpatient unit, store, park and all other community contents are going to be on the other side. This is the main reason why they are going to be secluded and why they need an alternative connection and passage.

Old textile factory is one of the local symbols, and it shall be taken into account during project planning and implementation, so as to ensure that it is protected and preserved as the symbol of Paraćin.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby Municipality Paraćin shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality shall share information with the Local Community Office, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication. The also proposed that the communication shall be organised through the municipal newspaper, official Municipality website, Facebook page and Viber group (all of which are going to be made available to the consultant). Additionally, the Municipality is willing to distribute fliers and other types of informative material to the local population.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Local Community Office Drenovac, Paraćin

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 28th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main general concerns and comments from the local community**

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- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns**

Drenovac is the largest village in the municipality, with a population of approximately 2,600 residents. Local elementary school has 120 pupils. Railway is going to divide the village into 2 parts, whereby the local community is going to lose everything, and the only thing they are going to gain is safety, as safety is currently on low level since the existing level railway crossings are not always and fully operational. All community facilities and objects are going to be located in one part of the settlement, while the other part of the settlement is not going to have any community facilities, which is going to cause issues in regular functioning of the local community. Such division of the settlement could lead to 'shutting down' of Drenovac settlement, as it would be very difficult for them to keep living there. They submitted a request for keeping the station, but this was not accepted. They also support the proposal made by the residents of Jagodina, suggesting that the entire railway line should be relocated alongside the highway. Additionally, they propose that the overpass shall be built closer to the village.



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Torrential floods, i.e. stormwater runoff represents a significant issue in the area. This requires a technical solution which is going to include proper culverts along the entire railway route in order to ensure that the people and properties are protected from flooding. SRI must pay attention to the wider area in this regard, i.e. they should not only protect the railway infrastructure, but they should take into account the wider area and protect the settlements. Additionally, the underpass shall also be designed and constructed in the manner which is going to ensure that it is fully operational and safe during the occurrence of flooding and torrential rain.

Since the existing station will be closed, they suggest moving the planned station in Sikirica closer to Drenovac. They pointed out that the current station was busy, with many passengers, especially students. Currently, there are two railway crossing. One will be closed, and at the site of the other—located at the edge of the settlement—an overpass is planned to be constructed.

The local community has not been able to implement any activities related to construction on their land due to the planned project. Specifically, they have not been able to change the purpose of their land from agricultural to construction land, as this project is pending, and this is causing issues and uncertainty for them, particularly because the expropriation price is far different for agricultural and construction land, so in addition to all other concerns, they will also suffer a financial loss.

The local community is concerned about the aspect of community health and safety due to proximity of the railway and the pertaining noise, dust and vibrations. They are expecting to receive inputs about the safe distance from the railway in this regard.

There are several protected monuments and locations of community significance in the area, as follows: Cultural Centre; monument from World War I (not under official protection, but has been proposed for protection) dedicated to 108 deceased people; archeological site from the Neolithic age which has been actively used for explorations for the past 20 years. Additionally, there are archeological trainings at the location during summer, each year. Finally, there is a museum under construction in the area, which should also be protected.

For the purpose of proper presentation, the locations of the archeological site and the museum are presented in the figure below, whereby the archeological site is presented on the left side (at cadastral land plots ranging from 90 to 110 in Cadastral Municipality (CM) Drenovac), and the museum is presented on the right side (land plots 675, 677, 678, 679/2 in CM Drenovac). Additionally, it is important to note that there is an Association for Protection of Cultural Heritage in Paraćin, and they shall be consulted for the purpose of protection of these monuments.



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- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby Municipality Paraćin shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality shall share information with the Local Community Office, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication. The also proposed that the communication shall be organised through the municipal newspaper, official Municipality website, Facebook page and Viber group (all of which are going to be made available to the consultant). Additionally, the Municipality is willing to distribute fliers and other types of informative material to the local population.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Local Community Office Čičevac

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 29th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Information about the meeting**

Representatives of the Local Community Offices were not present at the meeting, even though the Municipality was duly informed that they shall be invited to the meeting. The meeting was only attended by Vice President of the Municipality and Assistant to the President of the Municipality. They stated that it did not occur to them to invite presidents of the Local Community Offices, even though the invitation to the meeting clearly stated that the meeting is aimed at the Local Community Offices.

- **Main comments about the technical solution**

The Municipality had communication with the Designer, whereby they provided their requests for amendment of the design, which were aligned with the conditions on the site. Representatives of the Municipality stated that 98% of their suggestions were adopted by the Designer, and they are almost fully satisfied with the amendments.

However, they stated that they have still not had the chance to officially see the final alignment, whereby they have been able to gain some insight into the altered design through unofficial communication with other parties.

Their main concern is related to drainage, as there are no canals along the railway route. They still do not know whether their suggestions related to the need for proper drainage along the entire route have been accepted.



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This is important because the current drainage system along the railway route is not good, the canals are insufficient and are often not properly cleaned by SRI, whereby SRI is the only party who is authorised to clean the canals. Thereby, they asked the designer to include concrete culverts which are going to be easy to clean and maintain, and they would like to be authorised for cleaning the culverts/canals as the municipality, so as to prevent flooding.

They asked the Designer to extend the underpass at the location of the railway station by the additional 7-8m in order to make a pedestrian connection between the centre and the railway station. As far as they know, this proposal has not been accepted, and this would be very important for them as the pedestrian underpass would provide better connection and safety for pedestrians, and especially kids, in this area. This proposal was provided as part of the public consultation in relation to the spatial plan.

- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns**

The main pertaining issue in the the project area, in general in the entire local community, is related to flooding. This is due to the terrain and poor maintenance of the existing railway infrastructure, and the technical solution must ensure that any occurrence of flooding in the areas around the railway is prevented through implementation of proper technical solutions.

Underpass which was moved from settlement Lučine to Čičevac is located very close to Morava River, and they had a discussion with the Designer about the potential issues with flooding in this area. Municipality proposed that there should be a connection (not even an asphalt road, it can be a simple macadame road) between the underpass and the overpass, so as to ensure that there is a permanent connection between this road and the village on the other side of the railway in the event of flooding. This is due to the fact that flooding of the underpass would cause disturbance in movement of vehicles, thereba 20 houses on the other side of the railway would become inaccessible during the occurrence of flooding, due to which emergency services would not be able to reach this part of the settlement.

Hunting and hunting tourism are very important in Čičevac and it is important to ensure that the design provides points of passage for animals. They do not have information whether this has already been included in the design.

The Municipality is not aware of the solution which is going to be proposed in relation to service roads and the pertaining connections. They are also not certain about the way in which the existing farm roads are going to be connected and how agricultural producers are going to reach the other side of the railway and reach their fields. This should be clarified.

They have been waiting with construction of the sewage (64km long sewage network) in the town, because they have been asked to hold with these activities until they re-align the design with the design which shall be provided by SRI at some point. This is causing disturbance of their operation since they cannot complete this project until they obtain final approval from SRI, whereby they have not been informed about the expected timeline in this regard.

When it comes to the construction phase, they emphasise the need to maintain consistent communication between Čičevac and the highway, Kruševac and Paraćin. This is essential for normal functioning of the local community, whereby it is important to note that there are a lot of community members who require regular dialysis, and they need to be provided with medical care and assistance on a daily basis. It



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is important to take into account operation of Red Cross and Health Centre, as well as geriatric service which is going to be set up soon. Connection between both areas surrounding the railway is essential, since the agricultural fields and access road to the highway are located on one side of the railway, so this connection between both parts of the railway must not be interrupted at any point.

- **Positive project impacts**

Cargo traffic is going to be very active, especially in relation to Paraćin and Kruševac, whereby Čičevac is going to be the focal point. This is going to be economically positive for the municipality.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby Municipality Čičevac shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality shall share information with the Local Community Office, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication. They also have an official Facebook page (Čičevac Info) <https://www.facebook.com/p/%C4%86i%C4%87evac-Info-100068914412804/> which they are going to use for communication with the local communities.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Local Community Office Trnjane (settlements Trnjane and Korman), Municipality Aleksinac

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 30th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main comments about the technical solution**

All local communities in Aleksinac expressed a lot of concerns about the lack of presentation of the design and they are afraid of project implementation in the sense that a lot of houses are planned to be demolished for the purpose of the project, but they do not know the exact extent of expropriation and they want to be ready for project implementation. All local communities request that SRI organises meetings which are going to be dedicated to presentation of the design and information about expropriation. Without such meetings, they are not able to share all their concerns and they believe that this project requires more communication from SRI and transparency.

According to the adopted spatial plan, the curve that currently passes through the settlement will have to be straightened due to the planned speed, which will require the demolition of a large number of houses.

One of their biggest concerns (in general, in all local communities) is related to the manner in which the matters related to physical displacement is going to be resolved.

Specifically, there is large number of elderly in the project area, and they are going to require assistance during resettlement, as they are not going to be able to resolve these matters on their own as they do not have any other place to live.

In general, all local communities in Aleksinac are requesting presentation of the design and proper consultations and planning for physical resettlement, as the extent of resettlement is rather high and they have significant concerns in this regard.



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General division of the town into two parts is going to lead to issues with keeping people in Aleksinac, and this is also one of the major concerns. Specifically, settlement Trnjane stated that they are still requesting that the route is changed so that it does not go through the settlement, as they believe that 1400 inhabitants, i.e. 500 households in this area are going to experience extensive demographic, economic and relief damage, as well as that they are not going to have any benefits. They emphasized that the left part of the settlement is going to be completely secluded, as there are no community facilities in this part of the settlement, and they are going to lose the road level crossing, due to which they are going to have to travel 4km just to cross to the other side. This is going to be an issue for the general population, including kids and emergency services, as all the community facilities are now going to be separated by the railway.

There are two railway crossings in Korman, one of which is planned to be removed. Local residents believe that an underpass should be constructed at the same location.

• Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns

One of the main technical concerns is the matter of connection between the two sides of the railway. They need proper connections, which are going to be operational during construction, as well as during operation of the railway.

Buffer area is another big concern as they are not aware of the width of this area, and this is going to prevent them from any construction in the future, and they cannot plan their activities.

There are households in Tranjane who are going to lose all their objects and properties due to expropriation. These households are requesting proper consultation and assistance, as they need to be aware of the solutions they are going to have available at the time of project implementation.

There is an old water supply system (rural), which was built in accordance with permit issued by SRI in 1965. This water supply also has the pertaining water catchments, and it is essential to preserve this water supply system as it represents one of the main sources of water in Trnjane and the surrounding settlements. The route of the water supply system goes over the nearby hill, and it must be accounted for in the design.

The local community is concerned about demolition of a part of school in Korman settlement, as well as demolition of entire playgrounds in Trnjane and Korman (newly built playground). These facilities have to be either preserved, or new ones have to be built in case of demolition of the existing ones.

The local communities are also requesting construction of access and connecting roads, as well as relocation and connection of all the existing infrastructure, so as to avoid any disturbance to the local communities. They emphasise that the loss of stops in their settlement is going to cause disturbance to people who have to travel to the doctor's office, as they no longer have bus services on this route, and the lack of the railway stop is going to prevent those people who do not drive from reaching the doctor's office.

The local community is also concerned about the technical solution in relation to groundwater and flooding, whereby they are requesting information about the planned soak pits in the area around the railway and they emphasise the importance of protection of the underpasses against flooding, which is common in the area.



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It is important to note that a lot of people from Aleksinac work in Niš, whereby they use train to go to work. This aspect must also be taken into account, since the economic standing of the local population does not allow for significant additional expenses, so the local population must be provided with means for preserving their regular economic activities. The representatives of Municipality Aleksinac expressed their concern with keeping people in the individual settlements, as they believe that implementation of the project is going to deteriorate their economic conditions (due to poor accessibility of their arable land and access to other cities in the area), which could lead to people leaving their homes and moving out of Aleksinac. This is especially important in light of the railway route which is going to divide the town into two parts, whereby one part of the town is going to be secluded from any community facilities (stores, schools, medical facilities, etc.), which is going to make their lives more difficult. The local authorities believe that the youth is going to leave Aleksinac due to such layout of the project and factual division of the town into two distinct parts.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby Municipality Aleksinac shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality shall share information with the Local Community Offices, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Local Community Office Vitkovac (settlements Donji Ljubeš, Gornji Ljubeš, Srezovac, Vitkovac), Municipality Aleksinac

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 30th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main comments about the technical solution**

All local communities in Aleksinac expressed a lot of concerns about the lack of presentation of the design and they are afraid of project implementation in the sense that a lot of houses are planned to be demolished for the purpose of the project, but they do not know the exact extent of expropriation and they want to be ready for project implementation. All local communities request that SRI organises meetings which are going to be dedicated to presentation of the design and information about expropriation. Without such meetings, they are not able to share all their concerns and they believe that this project requires more communication from SRI and transparency.

One of their biggest concerns (in general, in all local communities) is related to the manner in which the matters related to physical displacement is going to be resolved. Specifically, there is large number of elderly in the project area, and they are going to require assistance during resettlement, as they are not going to be able to resolve these matters on their own as they do not have any other place to live.

In general, all local communities in Aleksinac are requesting presentation of the design and proper consultations and planning for physical resettlement, as the extent of resettlement is rather high and they have significant concerns in this regard.

General division of the town into two parts is going to lead to issues with keeping people in Aleksinac, and this is also one of the major concerns.



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- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns**

One of the main technical concerns is the matter of connection between the two sides of the railway. They need proper connections, which are going to be operational during construction, as well as during operation of the railway.

Buffer area is another big concern as they are not aware of the width of this area, and this is going to prevent them from any construction in the future, and they cannot plan their activities.

Another concern is related to the height of the protective barriers along the railway, as they are going to experience issues with shadowing of their properties, due to which the houses which are going to remain in the area are not going to be eligible for subsidies for installation of solar panels on their roofs, since the conditions after construction of the railway are not going to allow for installation of solar panels.

They have issues with high level of groundwater, and one of the main locations which is always critical in this regard is the underpass next to school in Donji Ljubeš, which is always flooded during winter. Additionally, Gornji Ljubeš also has issues with flooding, and this must be taken into account and resolved. The issue with flooding and high groundwater must be considered during design and construction, so as to avoid flooding of the infrastructure and surrounding settlements. It is also important to note that they have experienced a lot of issues in relation to maintenance of drainage canals and cooperation with SRI in this regard, so this issue must also be addressed.

The local communities are also requesting construction of access and connecting roads, as well as relocation and connection of all the existing infrastructure, so as to avoid any disturbance to the local communities.

It is important to note that a lot of people from Aleksinac work in Niš, whereby they use train to go to work. This aspect must also be taken into account, since the economic standing of the local population does not allow for significant additional expenses, so the local population must be provided with means for preserving their regular economic activities. The representatives of Municipality Aleksinac expressed their concern with keeping people in the individual settlements, as they believe that implementation of the project is going to deteriorate their economic conditions (due to poor accessibility of their arable land and access to other cities in the area), which could lead to people leaving their homes and moving out of Aleksinac. This is especially important in light of the railway route which is going to divide the town into two parts, whereby one part of the town is going to be secluded from any community facilities (stores, schools, medical facilities, etc.), which is going to make their lives more difficult. The local authorities believe that the youth is going to leave Aleksinac due to such layout of the project and factual division of the town into two distinct parts.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby Municipality Aleksinac shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality shall share information with the Local Community Offices, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be



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organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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MEETING MINUTES

Location: Local Community Office Prćilovica and Źitkovac, Municipality Aleksinac

Topic: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Purpose of the Meeting: Consultations with local communities for the purpose of development of Social Impact Assessment and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Date: 30th May 2025

ENVICO team provided an overview of the process of consultation, emphasizing the social and communication aspects of the discussion as the main purpose of the meeting. The Consultant explained the current and the upcoming phases of the project, with specific focus on the fact that the technical documentation is yet to be finalized and that the expropriation study is also going to be finalized in the upcoming period. These aspects were especially emphasized due to the fact that all representatives of the local communities expected that the consultation meetings are going to be aimed at discussing the technical details and expropriation matters. Additionally, it was explained that the environmental impact assessment is being carried out in parallel with the social impact assessment, as well as that these documents are going to be publicly available and subject to consultation.

- **Main comments about the technical solution**

All local communities in Aleksinac expressed a lot of concerns about the lack of presentation of the design and they are afraid of project implementation in the sense that a lot of houses are planned to be demolished for the purpose of the project, but they do not know the exact extent of expropriation and they want to be ready for project implementation. All local communities request that SRI organises meetings which are going to be dedicated to presentation of the design and information about expropriation. Without such meetings, they are not able to share all their concerns and they believe that this project requires more communication from SRI and transparency.

One of their biggest concerns (in general, in all local communities) is related to the manner in which the matters related to physical displacement is going to be resolved. Specifically, there is large number of elderly in the project area, and they are going to require assistance during resettlement, as they are not going to be able to resolve these matters on their own as they do not have any other place to live.

In general, all local communities in Aleksinac are requesting presentation of the design and proper consultations and planning for physical resettlement, as the extent of resettlement is rather high and they have significant concerns in this regard.

- **Main issues in the local community related to technical solution and main concerns**

The local community is requesting relocation of the route, outside of the settlement, both due to avoidance of expropriation and due to safety concerns.



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The local community is requesting additional locations at which they can cross the railway, whereby they specifically stressed the importance of provision of additional crossings in Prčilovica, since the current layout is going to cause disturbance to the local community, and especially kids who are going to have issues with accessing the school after construction of the railway.

They also stressed that construction of an underpass from Žitkovac is of vital importance for regular functioning of the local community, i.e. they want to keep the underpass at the current location. Additionally, the underpass in Žitkovac, as well as all other underpasses and accessibility-related infrastructure of the future railway, must be built in the way which is going to ensure functional and safe access and movement for persons with disabilities.

At the location of overpass in Moravac, there is a water supply system which needs to be kept in operation and maintained since it is vital for the local community.

The local community is concerned about safety of children after the new railway is put into operation, since all schools in these local communities are located close to the railway, and they insist that pedestrian safety must be fully taken into account and that all protection measures must be implemented, especially in school zones.

The local community is also concerned about safety on the railway itself, both during operation of the current system, as well as after the upgrade. They gave an example of potential collision between trains, and asked the question about any existing and/or planned procedures and chain of activity, responsibility and communication in such emergency situations. They believe that this needs to be properly developed and communicated with the local community, so that they can feel at ease and safe. This concern is additionally purported by the fact that the railway speed is going to be much higher than the current speed, so the local communities are concerned about any implications of such change of maximum speed and any emergency situations in such circumstances.

There are businesses in the local community, and they are going to find it difficult to operate once the entire town is separated into two parts. This, along with the general disturbance of community dynamics, has the potential to cause people to move out of the villages, settlements and Aleksinac as a whole. Thus, the local communities are expecting to receive proper and duly information, well in advance, regarding the railway layout, expropriation, and all other pertaining aspects that shall be presented by SRI. This needs to be done well in advance of any construction, considering the extent of physical and economic displacement in the settlements and Aleksinac as a whole, as people need to prepare themselves and adapt to the new conditions.

There is a number of people in the local community who have been trying to make investments and/or implement rehabilitation of their houses and properties, but who have not been able to do so, due to permitting conditions which are on hold in light of the railway project. The local community explicitly requested targeted consultations with the people who have been trying to make investments in their properties, but who have been made to wait due to the expected project. Additionally, when it comes to stakeholder engagement, the local community requested that information be shared in advance, per phases, so that they would be aware of the upcoming activities and the expected timelines, considering the fact that they want to be ready prior to project implementation and the fact that the project has been in preparation for 4-5 years, during which time they have all been waiting for communication and expecting the outcome of the process, but instead, they feel neglected due to lack of communication by SRI.



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Additionally, one member of the local community emphasized that the preliminary layout was developed based on outdated data (e.g. design was aligned in relation to their old house, i.e. it does not reflect the actual condition on the site) and that position of some objects has not been accounted for in the design.

Water Tower in Žitkovac is one of the landmarks of the local community and it must be preserved during construction, as this is one of the most notable features of the area and it holds significant social significance.

- **Means of communication with the local community**

The local community shall be informed by official means of communication, whereby Municipality Aleksinac shall be the first point of contact, after which the Municipality shall share information with the Local Community Offices, whereby the official community representatives are going to share information with the local people. Communication shall be organised through official means of communication, and the local authorities are going to provide the main contact points which shall be used for communication.

SRI shall share the relevant information with the local authorities, whereby the communication shall be organised in the manner that the expected timeline for each phase is shared so that the local community is aware of the upcoming phases, after which proper meetings shall be held for the purpose of presentation of the technical solution, matters related to expropriation and all other details of relevance for the local community.



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