

Annex I

Environmental Impact Assessment

Schedule III

(Screening according to S.L. 549.46)

ERA Reference no.: EA/00008/19
PA Reference no.: PA//01030/18
Project Title: Proposed backfilling of existing quarry included in an IPPC permit, to revert it back to an open field.
Location: No. 49, Sqaq il-Fdal Tal-Hadid, Triq Valletta, Luqa, Malta
Screening date: February 2019

1. Outline of proposal

- 1.1 The proposed application consists of the backfilling of an existing quarry into a green agricultural area located at Triq Valletta, Luqa. This will be backfilled in a stepped manner to reduce the visual impact from industrial receptors located towards the east. The backfilling will consist in inert construction and demolition waste, covered by a layer of soil and supported by concrete walls with rubble cladding. The total site area of the quarry is of approx, 1,300 m² (Figure 1, 2 and 3).
- 1.2 An olive tree and three fig trees will be removed as part of the proposed works. Other trees will be planted on the east border of the site.

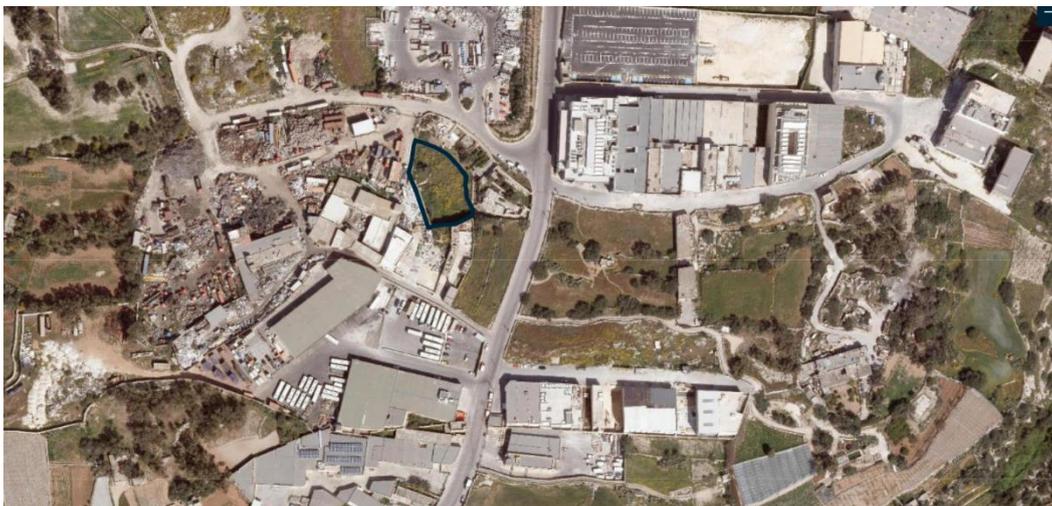


Figure 1: Aerial photo of site, 2016 (Source: PA Geoserver)

2. Site context

- 2.1 The proposed site is located at No. 49, Sqaq il-Fdal Tal-Hadid, Triq Valletta, Luqa, Malta, and lies Outside Development Zone (ODZ) on the outskirts of Luqa.
- 2.2 The site is currently a disused and dilapidated quarry.

3. Site history

- 3.1 PA/03146/13 – Demolition of existing building located within containment area to construct warehouse and offices to extend operations of Metalco. Application was approved.

4. EIA Screening (*citations refer to S.L. 549.46, except where otherwise specified*):

- 4.1 The proposed development falls under the scope of Schedule I Category II Section 9.0.2.3 (Restoration and after-use of existing or disused quarries or mines, other than for restoration of the site back to its pristine state) of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46).

4.2 Documents used for screening:

- Project Description Statement (PDS), which was referred to ERA on 18th January 2019 via email.

4.3 The following are potential impacts envisaged on the surrounding environment.

Type and characteristics of potential impact/s

Ecology

- 4.4 The site has three fig (*Ficus carica*) trees and one olive (*Olea europaea ssp.*) tree. The proposal proposes the uprooting of the existing trees and compensate with other 11 trees.
- 4.5 Since an olive tree (*Olea europea*) will be removed due to the proposed works, a nature permit is required given that the tree is protected as per the Trees and Woodlands Protection Regulations, 2018, S.L. 549.123. Hence the relevant condition refers (Appendix II).

Waste

- 4.6 The quarry will be backfilled with inert construction and demolition waste. Even though the impact on the environment is not considered to be significant, the proposed project should still adhere to the provisions in the Waste Management (Management of Waste from Extractive Industries and Backfilling) Regulations, 2010, S.L. 549.50 and the Waste Regulations, 2011, S.L. 549.63.

Air Quality

- 4.7 During the construction phase, any dust generated will be mitigated by reducing drop-heights and wetting of material. Hence, the proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on the environment in view of the location of the proposal. In addition, given the nature of the project, no dust is expected to be generated during the operational phase.

Noise and Vibrations

- 4.8 All works are expected to last a total of 12 months, including the site preparation, backfilling with inert materials and soil and finishing works. Given the fact that, works are said to be carried out during the day and the site is situated next to DDE Attard scrap yard which already generates a considerable high noise level, environmental impact is not considered to be significant during construction phase. Any noise generated would be temporary and of a short duration.
- 4.9 Nevertheless, ERA suggests good site practices as per the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations, 2007, S.L. 552.09 to mitigate the minor adverse impact
- 4.10 Given the nature of the project, the impact with respect to noise during the operational phase is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Visual Impact

- 4.11 Considering that the site is located on a slope, the proposal suggests backfilling the quarry in a stepped manner to reduce the visual impact from receptors located towards the east. Furthermore, soft landscaping will also be introduced around the border of the site so as to improve the visual appeal of the site. Hence, visual impact is considered to have a minimum effect on the environment.

5. ERA Conclusion

EIA screening conclusion and recommended way forward

- 5.1 The above detailed EIA screening concludes that impacts of the development are unlikely to be significant, as long as various mitigation measures are duly incorporated into the mainstream development consent mechanism, and the updated IPPC and mitigated by means of conditions and specifications (e.g. approved documents) in the respective permits. Thus, no EIA is required.

Further submissions

- 5.2 Applicant is required to provide further information as per requests below. Such requests would need to be addressed as part of the project design in order to ensure that activities meet particular environmental standards related to their operation.
- 5.3 Applicant is also to immediately contact the Environmental Permitting Unit (industrial.applications@era.org.mt) to discuss the requirements below.
- 5.4 With reference to land and groundwater testing, applicant is to submit a revised method statement so as to also cover the area of the proposed backfilling operations in addition to the current operational area. Depending on the results of such baseline survey, the applicant may be required to propose treatment and/or disposal options for the materials which show contamination exceeding industrial screening values. Such method statement is to be submitted prior to any backfilling operations being carried out on site.
- 5.5 Plan “CRC002-004 06-11-2018-(9) E Block Plan” at doc 9n is to be amended to reflect the actual site area of Metalco Ltd.

Conditions

ERA requests that the conditions annexed with this consultation reply (Annex II) are duly included as an approved document in the permit.

Disclaimer

The above screening results, the ensuing conclusions and recommendations are without prejudice to any required changes or updates should the development proposal be eventually modified or should the information/assumptions provided turn out to be incorrect. Any deviations of the proposal from this submission would need to be re-assessed and the merits of this screening would need to be re-opened.