

Environmental Impact Assessment

Schedule III

(Screening according to S.L. 549.46)

ERA Reference no.: EA/0008/18

PA Reference no.: PA/1029/18

Project Title: Excavation of site to sea level and construction of mixed use development consisting of the following elements: Underground car park on three levels, a commercial complex (including Class 4B, 4C , 4D) over two partially below ground levels and with a frontage onto the existing Laguna Walk, an elevated residents plaza with communal pool and landscaping, and an overlying residential complex on eleven floors

Location: Plots 3 & 4, Smart City, Ricasoli, Kalkara, Malta

Screening date: February 2018

1. Description of Proposal

1.1 Outline of project/development

PA/01029/18 is a planning application for the development of Plots 3 and 4 at Smart City Malta, Ricasoli, Kalkara, Malta into a mixed use development. The proposed development has a total site area of about 14,200m².

The proposed site (Plots 3 and 4 within Smart City Malta) is already approved for use as retail and residential by virtue of PA 01997/08 (Construction of an ICT City, including all related amenities). This proposal was subject to an EIA in 2008, which assessed a proposal for the construction of an ICT City which permit was approved in 2009.

Table 1: Schedule of Gross Floor Area (GFA) as approved in PA 01997/08 and as proposed in PA 01029/18. ^aIncluding non-GFA.

	Approved GFA by masterplan (m ²) PA 01997/08	Transfer of plots (GFA) within the current masterplan (m ²)	Total proposed GFA (m ²) PA 01029/18
Retail	6,000	6,700	13,968
			13,155 ^a
Residential	13,500	28,000	41,098
Parking	N/A	N/A	42,660
Total (m²)	19,500	34,700	110,881

Through PA 01997/08, Plots 3 and 4 were approved for retail (6,000m²) and residential (13,500m²) facilities. Through PA 3471/17, the gross floor area (GFA) will increase from 19,500m² to 110,881m². This will involve the transfer of 28,000m² (residential) and 6,700m² (commercial) of GFA from other plots within the current approved Master Plan. The proposal will also include 13,155m² of retail non-GFA and 42,660m² parking non-GFA. The total GFA (including non-GFA) for the proposed development is of 110,881m² (refer to Table 1). Figure 1 shows the block plan as proposed through PA 01029/18.

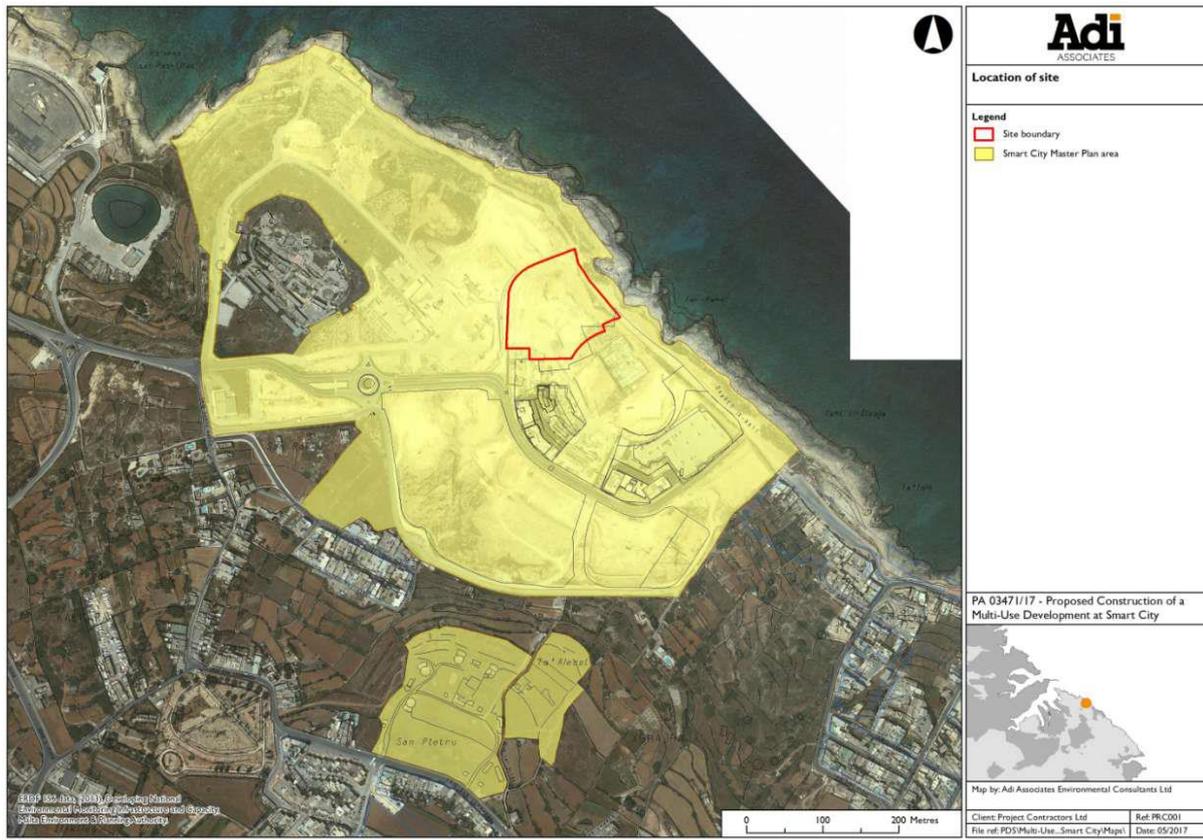


Figure 2: Location of Scheme

1.3 Site history

In 2008, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was carried out for the Master Plan for SmartCity Malta, submitted and assessed by the then MEPA. A permit for the development of SmartCity was issued in 2009 (PA 01997/08). Although planning permits for the development of SmartCity Malta have been issued, only part of the site has been developed to date.

The proposed development is for Plots 3 and Plot 4 for the construction of a mixed use development comprising residential and commercial (food and beverage and retail) development. Although not directly foreseen in the original Master Plan, the proposed development is to be built within the footprint of SmartCity Malta. SmartCity Malta covers an area of approximately 33.6 hectares.

2. EIA-relevant history

2.1 Relevant EIA/screening criteria: (citations refer to EIA Regulations, 2017 (S.L 549.46), except where otherwise specified):

The proposed development qualifies for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Schedule I Category II as per Sections 7.1.2.1 (Projects which have: (i) a site area of 3ha or more; or (ii) a gross floor area of 30,000m² or more; or (iii) a gross floor area of 10,000m² or more for commercial use, including shops, shopping centres, offices or other business) and 7.1.2.3 (Car-parks with a gross floor area of 15,000m² or more, or 600 parking spaces or more).

2.2 Documents used for screening:

1. Project Description Statement (PDS), referred to ERA on 30th January 2018 (PA/1029/18)
2. Construction Management Plan (CMP), dated 26th January 2018 (PA/1029/18/1aj)
3. Maximum Heights over Sea Level, dated 24th September 2008 (PA1997/08/35q)

3. Screening Matrix Checklist

The following screening checklist is based on information in the Project Description Statement provided by the developer in accordance with Schedule II of the EIA Regulations (S.L 549.46) and the European Commission Guidance on Screening (2017).

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
1	Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, landuse, changes in water bodies, etc)?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The entire site has already been cleared and partly excavated as part of the SmartCity Master Plan (PA 01997/08).</p> <p>Further to the approved gross floor in the current Masterplan (PA/01997/08), it is being proposed that a total of 34,700m² of GFA are to be transferred to Plots 3 and 4 from within the current Master Plan area. Moreover, an addition of a total of 55,815m² (which include underground parking and some offices) is also being proposed.</p> <p>Therefore, the actual gross floor for the proposed development amounts to 110,881m².</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Unclear. Although the site is already committed for similar development and the site area will remain unchanged, the proposal may result in further intensification of built development.</p> <p>As a result, land use, visual amenity and air quality impacts are unclear and further studies are required.</p>	PDS Pg. 2, 17
2	Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	<p>No.</p> <p>The proposal includes the use of concrete, concrete blocks, steel, aluminium and glazing during construction and of water and electricity during operations.</p> <p>With regards to land, the site is already committed to such development.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The use of such resources is not expected to have a significant impact on the environment.</p>	PDS Pg. 20
3	Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Dust, noise and vibration emissions will be generated during the construction phase.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The proposal involves an intensification of construction activity compared to what was originally approved in the Master Plan (PA 1997/08).</p>	CM P pg. 16; PDS Pg.

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	materials which could be harmful to human health to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	During operation, the proposal is expected to generate an increase of 1,350 vehicles (AADT). Such increase is expected to generate NO _x and PM ¹⁰ as well as operational noise.	As a result, dust, noise and vibration emissions during construction are expected to create a nuisance, albeit temporary on the nearby residential dwellings. The increase in the number of vehicles, during operation, is expected to have an impact on air quality and noise. In view of the proposed increase, from the original Master Plan, in terms of gross floor area, impacts on air quality may be significant. Impacts with respect to operational noise, especially from the increase in traffic are unclear.	2, 22-23
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Yes. The proposal will generate around 250,000 m ³ of excavated material that is being proposed to be dumped at sea. Primarily waste generated during construction consists of excavation waste from the excavation of the basements and the reservoirs. The operational phase is expected to generate municipal waste, including kitchen and packaging waste.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear. The PDS states that excavated waste will be dumped at sea. In this regard, the effects are unclear given the increase in excavation waste from that originally proposed in the Master Plan for the land parcels under assessment. In addition, the nature of the excavated material is unknown. It is requested that all past activities carried out in the area and its vicinities are highlighted. The information provided will determine the type of sampling method and chemical testing which needs to be carried out prior to disposal at sea. With respect to operational waste, no significant impacts are envisaged due to the nature of the development.	PDS Pg. 2, 20-21.
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in	Yes. Dust, noise and vibration emissions will be generated during the construction phase. During operation, the proposal is expected to generate an increase of 1,350 vehicles (AADT). Such	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal will result in the shifting/increase in GFA allocated for the area in question from the Master Plan and from the EIA carried out for PA 1997/08. As a result, dust, noise and vibration emissions during	PDS 21-22.

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	Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC?	increase is expected to generate NO _x and PM ¹⁰ as well as operational noise.	construction are expected to create a nuisance, albeit temporary on the nearby residential dwellings. In view of the proposed increase, from the original Master Plan, in terms of gross floor area, an increase in the number of vehicles, during operation, may have significant impacts on air quality. Impacts with respect to operational noise, especially from the increase in traffic is unclear.	
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes. The proposal will generate noise and vibrations emissions during excavation, construction and operation.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The construction phase will likely generate noise from excavators and additional Heavy Duty Vehicles (HDV) traffic in and out of the site. It is envisaged however that such an impact is short-term and temporary. However, in view of the proposed increase, from the original Master Plan, in terms of gross floor area, an increase in the number of vehicles, during operation, may have significant impacts on air quality. Impacts with respect to operational noise, especially from the increase in traffic is unclear.	
7	Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	As stated in previous permit (PA01997/08), no risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants are envisaged, however due to major changes in the approved Master Plan (PA 1997/08), impacts envisaged are unknown.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal itself does not envisage any environmental impacts with regards to contamination and pollution, however an updated Master Plan should be undertaken to consider any risks.	/
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or	No increase in the risk of accidents is envisaged, other than 'normal' occupational risks typically associated with proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged during both construction and operation.	/

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	the environment?			
9	Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	<p>Yes. The proposal is for a mixed use development – commercial and residential. This is expected to increase the number of visitors and residents to the area and its surroundings.</p> <p>The project is also expected to generate a number of employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged. The effects of the proposal on social changes has already been assessed in the EIA for the Master Plan for Smart City (PA1997/08), thus any scenarios have already been assessed.</p>	PDS Pg. 17, 21.
10	Are there any such factors which should be considered such as the consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The proposal is a departure from the Smart City Master Plan assessed through the EIA as part of PA01997/08.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Although the proposal forms part of the footprint of SmartCity Malta Master Plan, the shifting/increase in gross floor, cumulative impacts, in particular with regards to the increase in operational traffic may be significant.</p>	/
11	Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The proposal lies close to: (i) Wied Ta' Rinella, Level 4 Area of Ecological Importance (Gov Notice 930 of 2002); (ii) the Bird Sanctuary at Fort San Rokku (Legal Notice 41 of 2003); (iii) Fort San Rokku, Grade 1 Area of Architectural Importance (Gov. Notice 313 of 1998); and (iv) Kalkara Naval Cemetery, Grade 1 Area of Architectural Importance (Gov. Notice 930 of 2002).</p> <p>In addition, two marine SPA – MT0000108 (Il-Bahar tal-Lvant) Bird Directive Sites (SPA); and MT0000105 (Żona fil-Baħar fil-Grigal ta'</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any impacts regarding ecology and cultural heritage were already assessed as part of the larger SmartCity development (PA 01997/08), which was originally subject to an EIS.</p> <p>With regards to the marine SPAs, no significant impacts are envisaged due to the distance between the proposed development and the SPAs.</p>	PDS Pg. 12-13

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		Malta): Special Area of Conservation (SAC); lie on the east and west of the site, respectively.		
12	Are there any areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. marshlands, wetlands, watercourses or other water bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the Project?	Reply to Question 11 also refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 11 refers.	/
13	Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over wintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?	Reply to Question 11 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 11 refers.	/
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	The project is situated in close proximity to the coastline, however it forms part of an already approved larger project i.e. Smart City Malta.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The effluent outflows, such as those for reverse osmosis or thermal systems, and water runoff from precipitation are unknown and therefore unclear.	/

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
15	Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be effected by the Project?	No such areas are present within the area of influence of the proposed development, although the proposal seeks to increase the approved gross floor area, and may thus increase the visual impact on the overall coastal landscape.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Although the potential increase in height due to the increase in GFA, is still within the limits of the approved Master Plan, for Plots 3 and 4 (29-45m), the proposal may have an impact on visual amenity in view of the increase in gross floor.	PDS Pg. 12-13, 17 PA1 997/08/3 5q
16	Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The proposal is part of the larger SmartCity development, which includes a number of commercial activities. The site is primarily accessed through Triq San Rokku. The proposal is also expected to increase the number of visitors, tourists and employees travelling to the site.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Considering the already existing EIS, which covers the entire Smart City project, the increase in construction-related traffic during construction is not expected to be significant. However, during operations, the proposal will lead to an increase in commuters to and from the site, thus increasing operational traffic. Traffic congestion, especially when there are public activities is likely to be an issue. It is unclear whether this will result in a significant change from the impacts described in the original EIS.	PDS Pg. 21, 23.
17	Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	Reply to Question 16 refers. In addition, an increase of 1,350 vehicles (AADT) is envisaged.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 16 refers.	/
18	Is the Project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes, namely the residents in the vicinity.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 15 refers.	/

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Reply to Question 11 refers. There are also rural and vernacular features including rubble walls and farmhouses.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 11 refers.	/
20	Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield/ODZ land?	No. The site, which is currently cleared, is committed for development through an approved development permit.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The site is already committed for such development.	PDS Pg. 1-2.
21	Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site is close to a residential area with the closest located approximately 300m from the site – on Triq Dawret ix-Xatt, Xghajra. The site also lies adjacent to a number of agricultural fields.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 3 refers.	PDS Pg. 12
22	Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. The proposal is part of the larger SmartCity Malta approved through PA01997/08.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A Master Plan for the larger SmartCity Malta (PA 1997/08) is already in place, and was subject to an EIS. However, the proposal is expected to affect the future uses of the larger SmartCity Malta, given the increase in gross floor area of this plot from that assessed in the EIA for PA 1997/08, any changes should be assessed.	/

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
23	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the project?	Reply to Question 3 refer.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 3 refer.	/
24	Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site lies 600 metres from Kalkara Naval Cemetery, Grade 1 Area of Architectural Importance (Gov. Notice 930 of 2002).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are expected. Reply to Question 11 refers.	/
25	Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site is directly adjacent to a number of agricultural fields. There are also a number of abandoned fields in the area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> While the proposal may impact a number of agricultural activities, the proposed development forms part of the larger SmartCity development (PA 01997/08), which was originally subject to an EIS. Thus, any related impacts were already addressed in this respect.	/
26	Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded that	Historically, yes. The SmartCity site was originally an industrial estate that was cleared, however this situation has long been superseded by the subsequent Smart City development and the ancillary site clearing.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal is not expected to introduce any impact on this front.	

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	could be affected by the project?			
27	Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, or subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No impact envisaged.	/

4. Conclusion

4.1 Screening Conclusion and recommended way forward

The above EIA screening concludes that the proposed development qualifies for an EIA as per Schedule I ,Category II as per Sections 7.1.2.1 (Projects which have: (i) a site area of 3ha or more; or (ii) a gross floor area of 30,000m² or more; or (iii) a gross floor area of 10,000m² or more for commercial use, including shops, shopping centres, offices or other business) and 7.1.2.3 (Car-parks with a gross floor area of 15,000m² or more, or 600 parking spaces or more) of the EIA Regulations, 2017 (**S.L. 549.46**). The EIA Report would need to address the following aspects:

- (i) Emissions to air and noise with respect to traffic generation in and around the proposed site;
- (ii) Land use and visual amenity, due to intensive development including the increase in gross floor. ;
- (iii) Production of excavation waste and its disposal;
- (iv) Dust emissions during construction; and
- (v) Cumulative impacts, particularly those related to traffic flows;

4.2 Screening 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.