

Environmental Impact Assessment

Schedule III

(Screening according to S.L. 549.46)

ERA Reference no.: EA/00068/18
PA Reference no.: PA/04586/18
Project Title: Construction of Electrical and Gas powered vehicles charging station, retail outlet (class 4B), staff facilities, car wash, PV panels on roof and erection of signs.
Location: Site at, Triq I-Imdina, Qormi, Malta
Screening date: December 2018

1 Outline of Proposal

- 1.1 PA 04586/18 is a development application for the construction of an electric and gas powered vehicles charging station at Triq I-Imdina, Qormi. The proposal will include an electrical car charging station, an LPG fueling facility, a car wash, Class 4B retail shop, staff changing rooms, toilets, and showers, private stores, and public toilets.
- 1.2 Water, sewage and electrical services are readily available.

2 Site Context

- 2.1 The site for the proposed new service station is currently an abandoned agricultural field, which is currently used as a temporary parking site. It has a site area of approximately 3,500m². It is bounded on the south side by Mdina Road, Qormi, adjacent and accessible to this arterial road. The surrounding uses are mixed, with agricultural, commercial, and residential uses in the immediate vicinity.
- 2.2 The proposal also lies within a Groundwater Safeguard Zone.



Figure 1: Location of the site earmarked for the proposed fuel station (**Source:** PA Geoserver)



Figure 2: Close-up of the site and its immediate surroundings (**Source:** PA Geoserver)

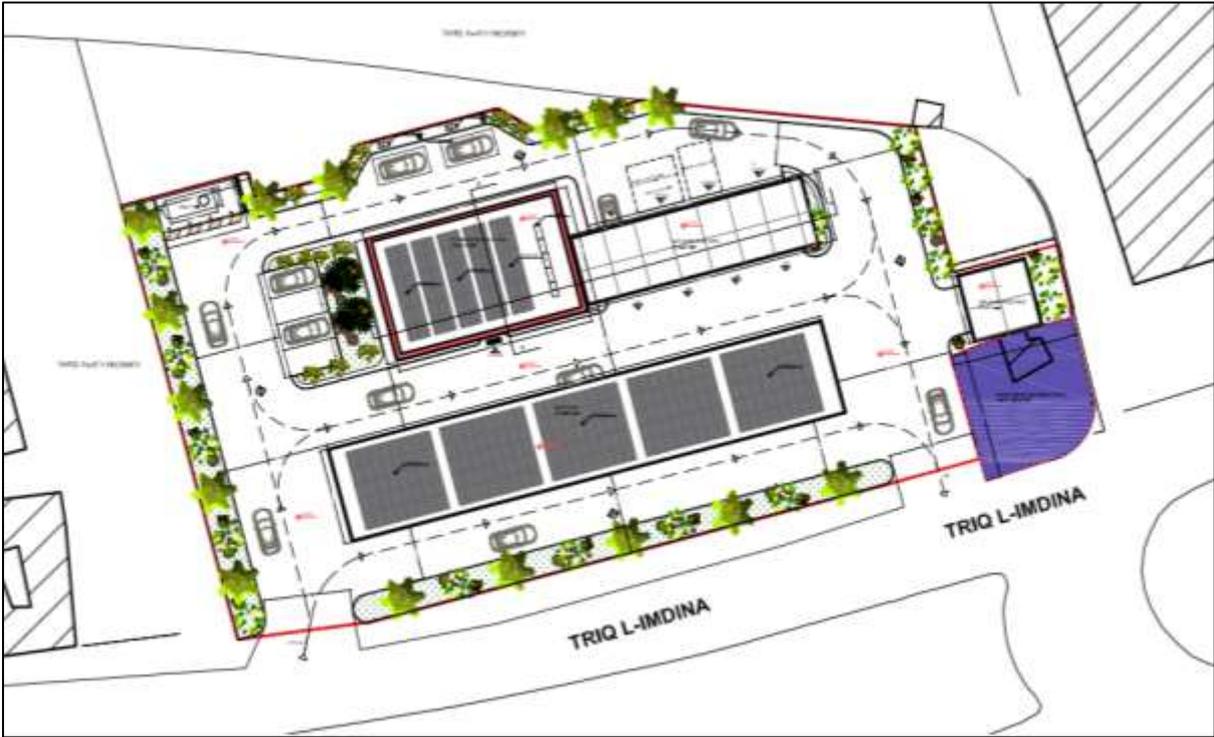


Figure 3: Block Plan (Source: PA/04586/18/Doc.91b)

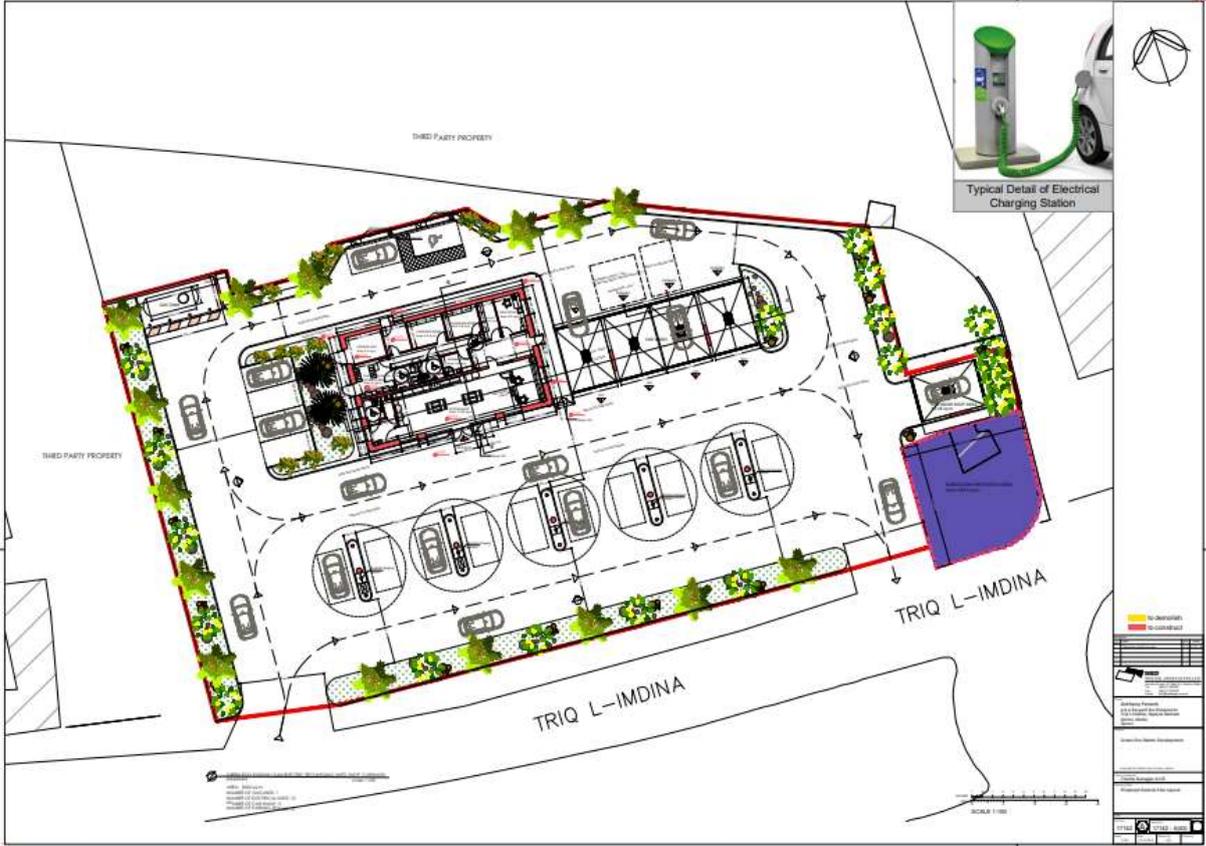


Figure 4: Block Plan Level 0 (Source: PA/04586/18/Doc.91c)

3 EIA Screening

- 3.1 The proposed development was deemed to fall under the scope of Schedule I, Category II, Section 10.0.2.4 (*Development or extension of fuel servicing stations, including petrol stations and gas distribution stations*) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2017 (S.L. 549.46).
- 3.2 Documents used for screening:
- ERA consultation reply PA/04586/18/Doc.54a; and
 - Project Description Statement (PDS), referred to ERA on 14th November 2018 (PA/04586/18/Doc. 66b).

3.3 The following are potential impacts envisaged on the surrounding environment:

- 3.3.1 The proposal seeks to construct an electric and gas powered vehicles charging station, taking up circa. 3,500m² of abandoned and disturbed agricultural land; no fossil fuel dispensers will be included on site. Such impacts are not likely to be significant given the low sensitivity urban site context, and its adjacency to a main arterial road (Mdina Road) as well as an Area of Containment according to the Central Malta Local Plan. However, it is also noted that the proposal is over the 3,000m² size limit set out in Section 3.0 of the 'Fuel Service Stations Policy'.
- 3.3.2 While the proposal is unlikely to have any significant impacts from an EIA-perspective, there are still significant concerns from an environmental point of view. The commitment of ODZ land for such uses is considered unacceptable, particularly since the primary use of the site (EV charging station) can reasonably be sited within already existing developments. It is also likely that such commitment will lead to a consolidation and the adjacent parcels of land (all ODZ) within the Area of Containment. Noise, vibration and dust will be generated during the construction phase, however given that scale of the proposal, these likely impacts are temporary and of short duration. About 4000 tons of soil and other excavation waste is expected, as well as 55 tons of waste from other construction activities. Any excavated soil will be reused, and inert material will be either recycled or disposed of in registered landfill sites. During the operation phase, the wastes shall consist of standard office and small retail outlet wastes. All operational wastes shall be separated on site with storage, packaging, transport and disposal being conducted according to local LN's based on guidance from the relevant authorities.
- 3.3.3 The development is unlikely to emit any hazardous gaseous material during the operation phase, apart from the inevitable impact due to traffic and electricity use. However, according to the Traffic Impact Statement, traffic is unlikely to increase significantly due to the proposal. Moreover, electricity use will largely be through the use of the EV charging stations. Thus, any impacts from such use will be mitigated through the subsequent reduction of fuel combustion gases and particulate matter resulting from the use of EVs as opposed to fuel burning vehicles.

4 ERA Conclusion

- 4.1 The proposed structures and their impacts are not of such scale as to warrant detailed EIA studies. However, the proposal is located outside development zone and adjacent to an area of containment, and will take up 3,500m² of open land (currently being used as an unpermitted car park). There is also significant concern regarding the consolidation of the site and the adjacent parcels of land within the Area of Containment. Furthermore, the primary use of the site (EV charging stations) can reasonably be sited within already existing developments and does not necessitate the commitment of fresh land outside already committed development zones.
- 4.2 These impacts cannot be adequately addressed through detailed EIA studies, but rather need to be addressed directly through the mainstream development consent mechanism.
- 4.3 In view of the above, ERA considers the proposal as being objectionable from an environmental point of view.

- 4.4 Without prejudice to the above, should the proposal be considered favourably by the Planning Authority against ERA's position, the applicant is to be informed that additional environmental-related conditions may be imposed.

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.