

Environmental Impact Assessment

Schedule III

(Screening according to S.L. 549.46)

ERA Reference no.:	EA/00031/18
PA Reference no.:	PA/05491/16
Project Title:	To excavate site, construct 2 levels of underground parking, construct level of retail and DIY space with ancillary facilities and construct receded first floor of retail space and offices (class 4a & 4b). The proposal includes road widening works as instructed by Transport Malta as well as demolition of existing farmhouse affected by road widening works, conservation of archaeological remains and relocation of historic building as instructed by SCH.
Location:	Site at (fields), Triq Hal-Qormi c/w, Triq it-Tigrija, Qormi, Malta
Screening date:	May 2018

1. Description of Proposal

1.1 Outline of project/development

PA/05491/16 is a planning application for the excavation of the site, construction of two underground levels of parking, retail and DIY space at ground floor, and retail and offices (Class 4A and 4B) at receded first floor level. The proposal also includes the widening of roads as instructed by Transport Malta as well as the demolition of the existing farmhouse and the conservation of the archaeological remains and buildings. The proposed project lies at Triq Hal-Qormi c/w, Triq it-Tigrija, Qormi, Malta (**Figure 1 and 2**).

The project will take place in seven phases over a span of 18 months until completion:

- Phase 1 – Dismantling and re-construction of Farmhouse and Mill Room (on-going as approved by PA 05444/16);
- Phase 2 – Protection of cart ruts (on-going as approved by PA 05444/16);
- Phase 3 – Excavation Works (on-going as approved by PA 05444/16);
- Phase 4 – Construction of two floors below road level;
- Phase 5 – Construction of floors above street level;
- Phase 6 – Electrical and Mechanical installations;
- Phase 7 – Internal & external Finishes.

Site description and related considerations

The proposed development covers a site area of approximately 10,000m² and a gross floor area of approximately 34,000m² excluding landscaping areas. The site in question was characterised by derelict agricultural land prior to the soil clearance and excavation works in line with the on-going interventions approved through PA 5444/16 as well as PC 15/09 and PC 51/16. The site is triangular in shape, having the two longest sides located along Triq Hal Qormi and Triq it-Tigrija. In addition, the site is located immediately opposite the Marsa Park and Ride and large commercial establishments on the north-eastern side of Qormi, i.e. within the boundaries of Qormi Local Council administrative area.

Commercial, residential and industrial development flank the site on the eastern, northern and western sides, as well as a large area dedicated for sports and leisure activities is situated on the southern side. The site is partly government owned (area marked as 'B') while the rest is privately owned (area marked as 'A'). Refer to **Figure 3**.

The north-western side of the site lies within an archaeological area which includes archaeologically and historically important features with a Class E degree of protection. The surveys carried out have identified the following archaeological features within the site:

- Late Roman Rock-cut tomb;
- Cart-ruts;
- Ancient wall;
- Foundations of a mill room dating back to the Knights' Period; and,
- Farmhouse structure dating back to the Knights' Period.

1.2 Site history

This site has been the subject of the following development permit applications:

- PC 00015/09: Change of use to retirement complex, sports facilities, and parking area. Proposal changed from original submission (Approved).
- PC 00051/16: Amendments to PC 15/09 (Approved).
- PA 01898/09: Proposed warehousing development (withdrawn by applicant).
- PA 02900/16: To sanction removal of existing soil for archaeological investigation as per terms condition 12 of PCF 15/09 whilst retaining the farmhouse and deposit of soil at National Agricultural Research and Development Centre, Ghammieri, Marsa (withdrawn by applicant).
- PA 05444/16: To sanction removal of existing soil for archaeological investigation as per terms of conditions 12 of PC 15/09. Proposed demolition of existing rubble walls and accretions to farmhouse, excavation of site, dismantling and relocation of historical structure and construction of temporary boundary wall (Approved).



Figure 1: Location of site (in blue). *Source: PA Geoserver 2016.*



Figure 2: Location of site (in blue) – Close-up. *Source: PA Geoserver 2016.*

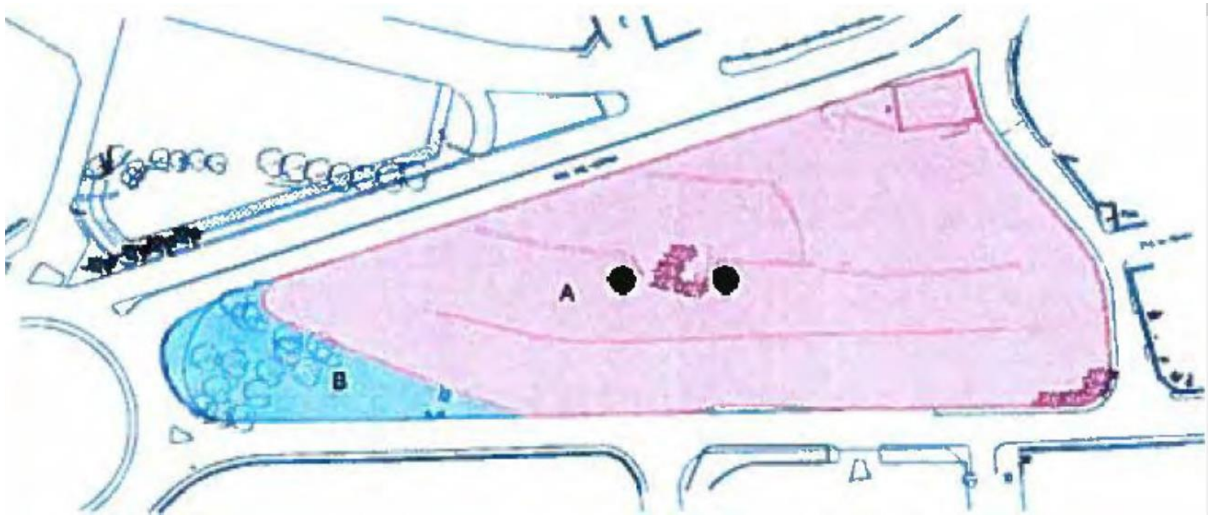


Figure 3: Ownership Map. Source: PDS (PA/05491/16/217a).



Figure 4: Visual Photomontage. Source: PA/05491/16/195k.

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 falls under Schedule I Category II as per Sections 7.1.2.1 (*Projects which have: (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 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (S.L. 549.46).

2.2 Documents used for screening:

1. Project Description Statement (PDS), referred to ERA on 4th May 2018 (PA/05491/16/217a, b, c, d), as well as Appendices (PA/05491/16/217e, f, g, h, i, j).
2. ERA consultation reply dated 19th February 2018 (PA/05491/16/172a).
3. Construction Management Plan, referred to ERA on 6th April 2018 (PA/05491/16/207a).
4. Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) report, referred to ERA on 24th May 2018 (PA/05491/16/224a).

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>The site in question was characterised by derelict agricultural land prior to the soil clearance and excavation works in line with the interventions approved through PA 5444/16 as well as PC 15/09 and PC 51/16.</p> <p>The site area is located within an area zoned for development, covering a footprint of approx. 10,000m² and a gross floor area of approximately 34,000m².</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged given that the proposal lies within a site designated for development. In this regard, any concerns with regards to land uptake and land-use are best addressed directly through the development permitting process.</p>	PDS pg. 7
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?	Yes. The project will in its construction and operation make use of natural resources such as <i>franka</i> stone blocks, land, cement, steel, fuel, electricity and water which are non-renewable.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>No. The use of such resources for this individual project <i>per se</i> is not likely to have a significant impact.</p> <p>The energy requirements of the proposal is expected to be minimal, thus no significant impact is envisaged.</p> <p>The PDS mentions the adoption of sustainable energy and water consumption.</p>	PDS pg. 37
3	Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	<p>Yes. Given its scale, the proposal will generate fugitive dust emissions during construction. If not properly managed, such emissions have the potential to impact adjoining residential neighbours.</p> <p>During operation, the proposal will generate municipal waste as well as hazardous waste including waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE).</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>Dust impacts during construction are short-term and temporary and can be mitigated through appropriate environmental measures and the provisions laid the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09).</p>	<p>PDS pgs. 26, 63 & 139;</p> <p>CMP pg. 14;</p> <p>AADT report</p>

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
		During operation, the proposal is expected to generate over 1000 AADT. As a result, NO _x and PM ₁₀ from operational traffic to and from the offices and commercial outlets is envisaged.	The impacts from the generated waste are not envisaged to be significant. The generation of hazardous waste is minimal and such waste streams are to be appropriately managed in accordance with waste related legislation. Given that the proposal will generate over 1000 AADT, during operation, the impact is unclear and therefore an air quality study is required.	
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Yes. Solid waste will be generated during both construction and operation. Waste arising during construction will consist of demolition, excavation and construction waste in the form of inert material and rock (90,500m ³). During operation, the proposal will generate municipal waste as well as hazardous waste including waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No. Given the nature of the development, the amount of waste to be generated during construction and operation is not considered to be significant. The impacts from the generated waste are not envisaged to be significant. The generation of hazardous waste is minimal and such waste streams are to be appropriately managed in accordance with waste related legislation.	PDS pgs. 58-63
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC?	Reply to question 3 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 3 refers.	/
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes. The construction phase is likely to give rise to noise and vibration affecting the nearby residential units. This impact is temporary and short term.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> During construction the applicant must: (i) Adopt mitigation measures that reduce noise emissions at source; and	PDS pg. 110-110, 132-133, 137-138, & 141-142;

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		During the operational phase, noise is envisaged to be generated mainly through the commercial outlets and the car park. The increase in traffic in the area may also contribute to an increase in noise.	(ii) Comply with the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09). Road traffic induced noise emissions during operation are not envisaged to be significant.	AADT report
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?	Yes. During excavation and construction, there is potential risk of oil, fuel and other chemical leaks as well as contaminated runoff from vehicle access routes on the site, or runoff from the proposed landscaped area. Potential contamination of surface water can take place if not properly mitigated. Furthermore dust emissions which might settle on land and subsequently form part of water run-off into the sea, may contribute to potential contamination of the coastal waters.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No. The proposal is not likely to lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, as long as the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L.552.09) are duly followed.	/
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	No increase in the risk of accidents is envisaged, other than 'normal' occupational risks typically associated with construction activity and commercial operation, such as accidental spillages.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmentally relevant impacts are envisaged.	PDS pg. 126-128
9	Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Yes. The project will develop retail space and offices and so will create new employment opportunities.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmentally relevant impacts are envisaged.	/

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
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?	The site and its surroundings area already extensively developed and the proposed development will not encroach beyond the delineated site boundaries. No factors are envisaged which could lead to consequential development, which could exacerbate environmental effects.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are being envisaged given that no potential consequential development is identified.	/
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?	The Marsa Sports Ground lies to the south-east of the site and is a designated Bird Sanctuary (Conservation of Wild Birds Regulations, S.L. 549.42). Other than that, there are no Annex I habitats or Annex II species (according to S.L. 549.44) in the area.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged. Since, in this case, the Bird Sanctuary is only a nominal environmental constraint and is not really related to environmental protection. Consequently, it is related to the establishment of a no-shooting zone for the purpose of public safety.	/
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?	No such designated areas are known of on or around the site of the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are being envisaged.	/
13	Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or	Reply to question 11 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 11 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
	flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?			
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?	There are no water bodies on or around the site of the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
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?	The project is located on the route of one of the busiest Qormi road network junctions. The nearby areas surrounding the site are occupied by a mixture of commercial, industrial and residential developments. In addition, the project lies very close to the Marsa Horse Racing Track and the Marsa Park and Ride.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged given the nature and scale of the project.	PDS Pg. 80
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?	Potentially yes since the project is located on the route of one of busiest Qormi road networks which includes the following roundabouts and junctions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roundabout at “Ta I-Erba’ Qaddisin”; • Roundabout below Marsa-Hamrun Bypass; • Junction between Triq Ħal Qormi (distributor road) and Triq Ħal Qormi (minor road); • Junction between Triq it-Tigrija and Triq I-Iljun; • Junction between Triq it-Tigrija and Triq Ħal Qormi (minor road); • Junction between Triq il-Belt Valletta j/w Triq Ħal Qormi (distributor road); 	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No. The proposed development is not envisaged to significantly impact the said routes, given that any potential impact during the demolition, excavation and construction phase can be sufficiently mitigated through the proper application of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09).	PDS pgs. 55-57 & 80; Appendix 1 pg. 13

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
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junction between Triq it-Tigrija j/w unnamed road, separating MPR and MHRT); • Junction between the Park and Ride entrance/exit. <p>In addition, the project location is very close to the Marsa Horse Racing Track and to the Marsa Park and Ride.</p>	<p>Moreover, the existing public transport provision is adequate for this specific location and does not interfere with the proposed development.</p>	
17	<p>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?</p>	<p>During operation, the proposal is expected to generate over 1000 AADT. As a result, NO_x and PM₁₀ from operational traffic to and from the offices and commercial outlets is envisaged.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>Given that the proposal will generate over 1000 AADT, during operation, the impact is unclear and therefore an air quality study is required.</p>	AADT report
18	<p>Is the Project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?</p>	<p>The project will be visible to the road users, residents of the urban areas and visitors of the commercial and industrial developments in the surrounding area.</p> <p>In addition, the project location is very close to the Marsa Horse Racing Track and to the Marsa Park and Ride.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged given the nature, location and scale of the project.</p> <p>The proposed development is for a two-storey complex with a receded first floor.</p>	PDS Pg. 80
19	<p>Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?</p>	<p>The north-western side of the site lies within an archaeological area which includes archaeologically and historically important features with a Class E degree of protection. The surveys carried out have identified the following archaeological features within the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late Roman Rock-cut tomb; • Cart-ruts; • Ancient wall; • Foundations of a mill room dating back to the Knights' Period; and, • Farmhouse structure dating back to the Knights' Period. 	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>As PC/00051/16 stated all archaeological and historical features on site are to be safeguarded on site.</p> <p>In this regard,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roman Rock-cut tomb is to be retained and integrated as a publicly accessible feature within the commercial complex. • The cart-ruts are to be entirely preserved under the proposed access ramps of the development. 	PDS pgs. 26-28

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
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ancient wall will fall beyond the limit of the proposed development as a result of the road realignments. This ancient feature is to be preserved under the road surface. The mill room foundations and the ancient parts of the farmhouse will be dismantled and relocated to a separate location within the site and integrated within the commercial complex according to a method statement approved by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. 	
20	Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield/ODZ land?	The site in question was characterised by derelict agricultural land prior to the soil clearance and excavation works in line with the interventions approved through PA 5444/16 as well as PC 15/09 and PC 51/16.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant impacts are envisaged given previous approved applications.	PDS pg. 80
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?	Reply to Question 15 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	PDS Pg. 80
22	Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	No such plans are known of for the area of influence of the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmental impacts are being envisaged given that the proposed development and the development projects in the surrounding area are of similar nature.	/

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 15 refers. The residential areas bordering the site are Qormi and Marsa, lying west and east of the site, respectively. Hamrun residential area lies approximately 250m north to the site.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is unclear whether the proposal is expected to affect the densely populated areas, since the project will generate over 1000 AADT, during operation. Therefore, an air quality study is required.	AADT report
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 project location lies close to the Marsa Horse Racing Track. San Bastjan Church lies 500m south-west to the site.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are being envisaged.	/
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?	Reply to question 7 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 7 refers.	/
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 could be affected by the project?	Yes. The proposal is located within an area which is already subject to heavy traffic flow, with consequent air quality implications.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The proposal may lead to further intensification of the area thus resulting in further exceedance of legal environmental standards in relation to air quality given that the proposal will generate over 1000 AADT, during operation. In this regard, an air quality impact study is required.	AADT report

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
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. The area is not particularly susceptible to such extreme events.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/

4. Conclusion

4.1 Screening Conclusion and recommended way forward

The proposed development falls within the scope of Schedule I ,Category II as per Sections 7.1.2.1 (*Projects which have: (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).

Following detailed screening in accordance with Schedule III of the aforementioned regulations and screening matrix above, it is concluded that impacts of the development are unlikely to be significant to the point of warranting an EIA, as long as further information is provided in relation to potential air quality impacts, for which terms of reference have been provided. In this regard, the proposal does not require the submission of an EIA.

4.2 Further Information

i. Air Quality Study – Terms of Reference

See Annex 1.

4.3 Other considerations

Quarry HM29, Torri Falka, Mġarr which is being mentioned to be used to deposit demolition material has an expired EP and is no longer accepting inert waste. Therefore, applicant is requested to make use of any other quarry with a valid Environmental Permit from the following link: <https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/Quarries%20permitted.aspx>

For any other non-inert waste, applicant shall dispose of this material at permitted waste management facilities found in the following link: <https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/Waste-Management-Applications.aspx>

4.4 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.