

The Executive Chairperson
Planning Authority
St. Francis Ravelin,
Floriana

Date: 20 December 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Ref.: PA 08969/19

Description Proposal: Demolition of existing structures, ramp, gates, rubble and boundary walls. Uprooting and planting trees. Proposed rehabilitation of disused soft stone quarry, including filling of same and landscaping works. Proposed construction of old peoples home (class 2A) that comprises of basement (level -1), three floors (levels 0,1,2) above ground and roof structures at level 3. The basement level consists of a car park having 137 parking spaces, 6 accessible parking spaces and 1 accessible van space, an unloading/loading area, kitchen, dining areas and ancillary facilities. Level 0 consists of a reception area, lounge, multi purpose hall, accommodation (42-2-bedded guest rooms) and ancillary facilities. It also includes a wandering garden, other gardens and a parking space, a space for a fire truck and minibuses, ramps leading to the basement level and a security room. Level 1 consists of a staff area, lounge, accommodation (42-2- bedded guestrooms) chapel and ancillary facilities. The roof level is an area for services.

Location: SM61, Triq il-Belt Valletta, Mqabba

Reference is made to your consultation on the above application which the ERA received on 11/11/2019.

ERA's recommendation and representation on the said development proposal are being lodged in its capacity as an external consultee and an interested party in accordance with the Development Planning Act and the Development Planning (Procedure for Applications and their Determination) Regulations, 2016 (Legal Notice 162 of 2016).

1. Site Description

PA 08969/19 seeks to build an old people's home on approx. 19,000m² of land located outside the development zone (ODZ) at quarry SM61, Triq Valletta, Mqabba, Malta. North of the site is dominated by quarrying activity and the Malta International Airport, while the South is largely agriculture with the beginning of the Mqabba development zone.

2. Overall Environmental Assessment

The proposal will have a built-up area of approx. 7,500m², with the remainder of the site (approx. 11,500m²) being landscaped. The total gross floor area of the project will be approx. 43,000m², including accommodation units (252 beds), amenities, landscaping, parking (144 spaces), and building services.

Impacts associated with the proposal include dust and noise during the excavation and construction phases, as well as waste generation and traffic during operation, and the take-up of ODZ land.

These impacts can be effectively mitigated, and, although the proposal lies ODZ, ERA has no particular prima facie environmental concerns in this regard given that the site is currently a quarry void, is surrounded by other quarrying activity, and lies adjacent to the Mqabba development zone.

3. Environmental Studies

a. EIA Screening

Reference is made to the Project Description Statement (PDS) that was referred to ERA on 11/11/2019.

The PDS was reviewed and the proposed development was screened against the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2017 (S.L. 549.46). It was determined that the proposed development falls under Schedule I, Category I, Section 7.1.1.1 (*Construction or extension of hotels, holiday complexes, holiday villages, hostels, accommodation facilities, homes for the elderly, hospitals, or associated development, if located wholly or partly outside development zones and having: (i) a capacity of 250 beds or more; or (ii) a gross floor area of 10,000m² or more; or a site area of 2.5 ha or more*) and in this regard, the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

Full details of the EIA process should be obtained from the EIA Regulations, a copy of which can be downloaded from the ERA website at: <https://era.org.mt/en/Pages/EIAreg.aspx>

In accordance with Regulation 15(2) of the EIA Regulations, you are requested to confirm in writing, within 30 days of receipt of this letter, whether you wish to carry out the EIA and when you estimate that it will be completed.

You may wish to note that ERA considers the eventual EIA Report as a public document and in its review it consults widely with Local Councils, entities of government, NGOs and the general public.

Yours faithfully,

Daniel Xuereb

Environment Protection Officer
Environmental Assessment Unit
f/Director Environment and Resources

Disclaimer

The above comments are being issued without prejudice to any additional issues which are regulated by ERA through any relevant environmental permitting and, or compliance mechanisms, as well as to any environmental considerations that may be beyond the scope of the application under consideration.

The above assessment is based on the information provided to ERA in the application. Should it result that such information is incorrect, incomplete or misleading, or in the event of any omissions, or subsequent modifications, amendments or changes to the proposal, application and/or related submissions, the above assessment (including any favourable consideration, lack of objection, any proposed conditions or lack thereof, or any other equivalent stance, etc.) may need to be reopened to ERA's satisfaction. ERA shall not take responsibility for comments, assessments or judgments based on information that is incorrect, incomplete, missing or misleading, and which is only discovered after its assessment, nor for any environmental impacts resulting from developments which it was not specifically consulted on. Furthermore, ERA also retains the right to take additional action should the information provided, or any incorrect, incomplete, missing or misleading details, be tantamount to fraud.