

Appendix I: Environmental Impact Assessment Screening report

TK file no.:	TK146476
Other reference:	EA 00005/13
Project Title:	It is proposed to construct unbuilt section of carpark at all levels and include landscaping at roof level, creation of underground pedestrian crossing, linking carpark with King Edward VII avenue.
Location:	MCP Carpark in, Triq l-Assedju Kbir , Vjal ir-Re Dwardu VII and Triq Nelson, Floriana, Malta
Screening date:	June 2013

1. Description of Proposal

1.1 Outline of project/development

This application seeks permission to construct the central void of the MCP car park creating an additional 402 parking spaces to the existing 1,138 parking spaces, further proposing to create a green area at levels 0 and part of -1 of the same car park, and an overpass.

1.2 Site description and related considerations

The site is located within the limits of an Urban Conservation Area (UCA) of Floriana, forming part of the harbour fortifications Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) (Government Notice 133 of 2001). The proposed scheme respects the requirements of Grand Harbour Local Plan Policy GF13 which identifies and seeks to protect areas of open space and public gardens.

Relevant Site History

PB2659/91 – A building permit for the construction of a carpark issued on the 30th November 1992.

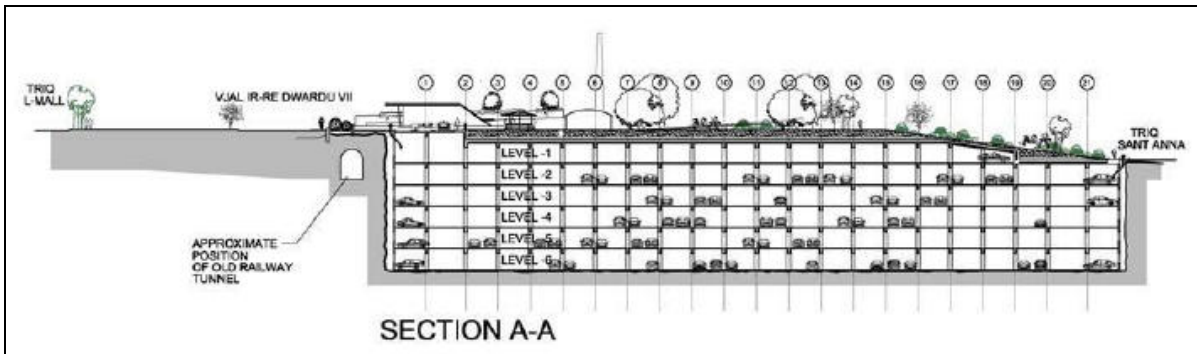
PA3474/93 – A full development permission issued on the 31st October 1994 for the excavation and construction of an underground car park.



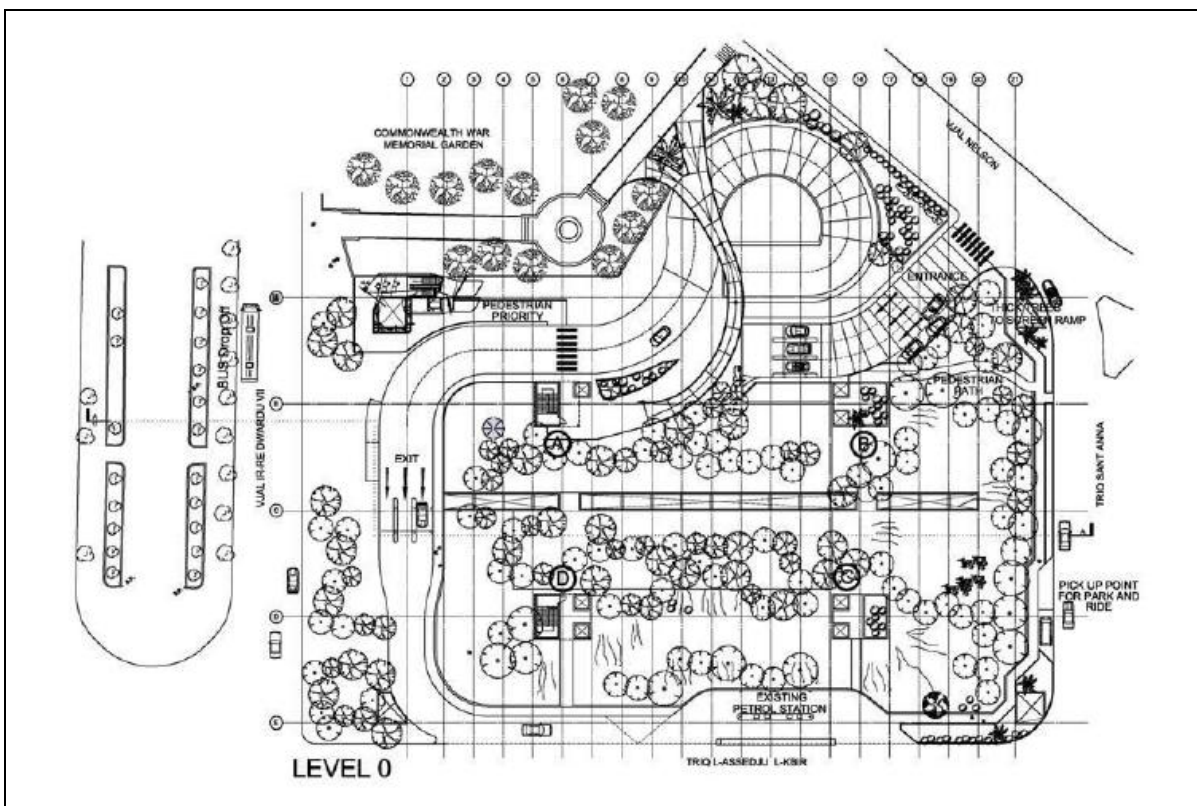
Figure 1: Location of development (Source: MEPA Database)



Figure 2: A digital rendered image of the proposed scheme (Source: Doc. TK146476/26P).



(i)



(ii)

Figure 3: A (i) section and (ii) plan of the proposed scheme (Source: Doc. TK146476/26P).

2. EIA-relevant history

2.1 Relevant EIA/screening trigger (citations refer to LN 114 of 2007, except where otherwise specified):
Schedule IA Section 10

2.2 PDAT sitting of 02/03/2012

The possibility of placing the exit lanes below ground level and increasing the garden area should be investigated. The EPD have requested a PDS and detailed issues relating to the landscaping scheme will be addressed in this process. Transport Malta (TM) clearance is important in view of the increased loads on the entrance/exit junctions. Fire safety and ventilation will now become critical as the car park will be roofed over. The proposed structures to cover the pedestrian exits will create a negative impact on the heritage value of the area. The re-modelling of the terrain needs to have a gentler slope and the height of

the glass structures should be reduced. The areas shown as utility shops should have a specific indication of the use. Screening letter may be issued.

2.3 Version of documents used for screening:

1. Project Description Statement dated 8th March 2013 as per Doc. TRK146476/30A.
2. Construction Method Statement, formal documentation, and drawings submitted on the 26th February 2013, as per Doc. TRK146476/26A-J/26O/26Q, resubmitted at Doc. TRK146476/28A-Q.

3. Screening Matrix

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
1	Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, landuse, changes in water bodies, etc)?	<p>Yes. The proposed scheme will contribute to:</p> <p>(i) the further intensification of an existing car park, increasing the number of parking spaces by 402 spaces, to a total of 1,540 spaces;</p> <p>(ii) the covering of a massive and prominently located artificial void in the ground, and the extensive landscaping of the upper levels of the car park (level 0 and part of level -1), such that a major eyesore is eliminated.</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>The proposed scheme will result in a significant beneficial impact on the physical character of the area. Whilst the scheme proposes to intensify the number of parking spaces on site, the project further proposes the landscaping and greening of the upper levels of the car park, hence contributing to an improved urban landscape.</p>	Section 1 of PDS TK146476/3 OA
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>Yes. The scheme will contribute to the use of stone blocks and other building materials such as concrete, and steel, during construction; water and electricity during operations.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>Although the proposed construction materials are finite resources, the amounts expected to be used for the project per se are expected to be relatively minimal.</p> <p>Alternative means to supplement the water needs of the project, adopting water management systems such as the construction of a reservoir system that harvests rainwater would nevertheless be appropriate, particularly to support the proposed garden.</p> <p>The energy requirements of the</p>	/

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			project are expected to be relatively minimal.	
3	Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials or energy, especially any resources which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	No. The scheme will not involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials or energy, which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health, other than standard construction and finishing materials. Ventilation of the car exhausts generated within the enclosed spaces is likely to be required.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant EIA-relevant impacts are envisaged in this regard. The ventilation aspect is best addressed through the safeguards afforded by the mainstream development consent mechanism and ancillary procedures such as sanitary endorsement as may be relevant.	/
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning?	Yes. Construction Phase: The construction phase is expected to generate nominal inert waste, concrete, metals and other materials. Operational Phase: The solid wastes created during the operational phase are expected to be normal municipal waste and quantities are not expected to be significant.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear The amount of solid wastes likely to be produced by the project during construction, and operation of the project are not likely to be significant, considering the nature and size of the project. The quantities and nature of the waste produced are likely to be manageable through established waste management procedures and facilities.	/
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes. The proposed scheme seeks to increase the number of parking spaces by approximately 400 spaces, and hence	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The road network leading up to the Sciberras Peninsula is characteristic	Doc. TK146476/260/28N Letter from

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		<p>potentially attracting more traffic to the area. Ventilation of the car exhausts generated within the enclosed spaces is also likely to be required.</p>	<p>of heavy congestion in the rush hours.</p> <p>As pointed out in Doc. TK146476/26O/28N development permissions for PA 02112/08 (Upgrading of square including slight shifting of monument within same square, site at, Pjazza San Ġorg, Belt Valletta), and PA03521/09 (Construction of a new city gate for Valletta, Parliament building, new theatre at the Royal Opera House and ditch landscaping, site Royal Opera House, Freedom Square, Triq ir-Repubblika, Belt Valletta) have contributed to the reduction of approximately 575 parking spaces from Valletta.</p> <p>It is however further noted that a number of permits have been issued between 2010 till present PA4884/05, PA1969/10, & PA208/11, for the provision of approximately another 500 parking spaces along the same peninsula. In this regard the impact significance of an additional increase of approximately 400 parking spaces in an already congested area, and the resultant increase in traffic induced pollutants over and above the baseline, is not clear.</p>	<p>TM dated 06/05/2013</p>
6	<p>Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?</p>	<p>Yes. The project will be the source of noise and vibration during both the construction and the operation phase of the project. Noises and vibration during</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The road network leading up to the Sciberras Peninsula is characteristic of heavy congestion in the rush hours.</p>	<p>Doc. TK146476/26O/28N</p> <p>Letter from TM dated 06/05/2013</p>

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		<p>operation are expected to be traffic induced.</p> <p>Ventilation of the car exhausts generated within the enclosed spaces is also likely to be required (currently, ventilation relies on natural air circulation through the large unroofed cavity at the centre of the site), and operational noise may thus be generated if mechanical ventilation is required.</p>	<p>As pointed out in Doc. TK146476/260/28N development permissions for PA 02112/08 (Upgrading of square including slight shifting of monument within same square, site at, Pjazza San Ġorg, Belt Valletta), and PA03521/09 (Construction of a new city gate for Valletta, Parliament building, new theatre at the Royal Opera House and ditch landscaping, site Royal Opera House, Freedom Square, Triq ir-Repubblika, Belt Valletta) have contributed to the reduction of approximately 575 parking spaces from Valletta.</p> <p>It is however further noted that a number of permits have been issued between 2010 till present PA4884/05, PA1969/10, & PA208/11, for the provision of approximately another 500 parking spaces along the same peninsula. In this regard the impact significance of an additional increase of approximately 400 parking spaces in an already congested area, and the resultant increase in traffic induced pollutants over and above the baseline, is not clear.</p> <p>In understanding that the car park will be naturally ventilated by means of the proposed ventilation shafts, and that mechanised ventilation will be used for store areas only (pg. 8 of Doc. 146476/28B), significant noise impacts resulting from the ventilation systems, are not envisaged. This does not</p>	

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			exonerate the client from adopting all necessary measures to retain noise emissions to a minimum.	
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?	No. The project may contribute to contaminated runoff from exposed vehicle access routes on the site, or runoff from the proposed landscaped area. However this is not likely to 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 <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts are envisaged. This however does not exonerate the applicant from adopting adequate pre-emptive safeguards by directing the water runoff into a reservoir which is adequately equipped with an interceptor/filter.	
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	No. None other than those typical for normal construction sites and (during the operational phase) for car park traffic.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts are envisaged.	
9	Will the Project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	Not envisaged. The project is in an urbanised area which is already a strategic commercial hub, administrative centre, and commuting node, and will effectively replace previous parking spaces lost in Valletta due to other approved projects as outlined above. In this regard, it is unlikely that the	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts envisaged.	/

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		project will cause such changes to any appreciable degree.		
10	Are there any such factors which should be considered such as the consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	Consequential development is not envisaged. The development complementary to already-existing uses and is at least partly intended as a remediation of an existing major scar in the urban landscape.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts envisaged, considering the nature and overall scale of the facility, its general location and the configuration of the overall development relative to the site.	
11	Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	The site falls: 1. Within the Urban Conservation Area (UCA) of Floriana, also forming part of the scheduled harbour fortifications Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) (Government Notice 133 of 2001); 2. Just outside the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Valletta; 3. Adjacent to the scheduled Glacis (Grade 1 as per Government Notice 133 of 2001); 4. Adjacent to the Air Force Memorial (scheduled at Grade	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear Yes. The proposed scheme will result in a significant beneficial impact on the physical appearance and character of the area and is not likely to have a significant effect on the protected areas in close proximity to the said proposal. Whilst the scheme proposes to intensify the number of parking spaces on site, the project further proposes the landscaping and greening of the upper levels of the car park, hence contributing to an improved urban landscape that complements the existing urban setting. However, detailed attention to design and site levels in relation to the surroundings is required, as part of the mainstream development	/

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		<p>1 as per Government Notice 522 of 2012);</p> <p>5. Close to the War Memorial and Christ the King Monument (Grade 1 as per Government Notice 522 of 2012);</p> <p>6. Within 57m of the Valletta fortifications (scheduled at Grade 1 as per Government Notice 133 of 2001);</p> <p>7. Within 65m of the Grade 2 Phoenicia Hotel (Government Notice 628 of 2008).</p>	<p>consent mechanism, and MEPA's Heritage Planning Unit (HPU) is requesting further information (e.g. submission of photomontages) accordingly, whilst the Superintendence of the Heritage have requested a Cultural Heritage Impact Study in line with the 2011 ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties.</p>	
12	<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>No formally designated areas for ecological, value are present.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <hr/> <p>Not relevant.</p>	/
13	<p>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,</p>	<p>Reply to question 12 refers.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <hr/> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged on the ecology of the site.</p> <p>Reply to question 12 refers.</p>	/

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	resting, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?			
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No. Furthermore, the site in question is not a designated groundwater protection zone.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts are envisaged. This however does not exonerate the applicant from adopting adequate measures for abatement of polluted runoff, by directing the water runoff into a reservoir which is adequately equipped with an interceptor/filter.	/
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?	Yes. Reply to question 11 refers.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The proposed scheme will result in a significant beneficial impact. Reply to question 11 refers.	/
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, but adverse effects are not envisaged. The project is in an urbanised area, and will effectively replace previous parking spaces lost in Valletta as outlined above. In this regard, it is unlikely that the project will cause such changes to any appreciable degree.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts envisaged.	/
17	Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or	Yes, the main access route to the site is via a major distributor road which is typical of congestion in the rush hours. The project will	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts envisaged.	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	effectively replace previous parking spaces lost in Valletta. In this regard, it is unlikely that the project will cause additional congestion relative to the baseline.		
18	Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Yes. The project is located within an Urban Conservation Area (UCA), forming part of the Floriana urban setting, and is within the immediate area of influence of strategic public open spaces such as the main entrance to Valletta, the Valletta bus terminus, the Beltissebħ administrative hub, the public gardens and main squares of Floriana (e.g. Il-Mall, Il-Biskuttin, Il-Fosos, and Il-Ġnien tal-Kalkara).	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <p>Yes. The proposed scheme will be visible resulting in a major beneficial impact on the physical appearance and character of the area, through the covering and landscaping of the current eyesore. Whilst the scheme proposes to intensify the number of parking spaces on site, the project further proposes the landscaping and greening of the upper levels of the car park, hence contributing to an improved urban landscape where it is most required.</p>	/
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes. Refer to Question 11.	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <p>Refer to Question 11.</p>	/
20	Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	No. The site is an existing multi-storey car park within the development zone.	<p><input type="checkbox"/>Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <p>Not relevant.</p>	/

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21	<p>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?</p>	<p>No, insofar as the site itself is concerned. The site is a committed car park within the development zone.</p> <p>Yes, vis-à-vis the immediate site surroundings. Refer to question 18 above.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <hr/> <p>No significant effect is envisaged, other than identified in question 18 above.</p>	/
22	<p>Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>No such future uses are currently envisaged or known of.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>Unclear</p> <hr/> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged.</p>	/
23	<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>Yes. The site is located within the development zone, and an Urban Conservation Area (UCA), where the surrounding land uses are characterised by a mix of residential, administrative and commercial uses. The immediate surroundings also include some of the most important urban public open spaces in the Maltese Islands.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>The road network leading up to the Sciberras Peninsula is characteristic of heavy congestion in the rush hours, and the impact significance of the resultant increase in traffic induced pollutants, and noise emissions over and above the baseline, is not clear. This may have secondary effects on the densely populated areas of Floriana and Valletta. Reply to question 5 also refers.</p>	/

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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. Reply to question 23 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 23 refers.	/
25	Are there any areas on 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 area (at the entrance to Valletta) is highly frequented by tourists, and a major tourism establishment (Phoenicia Hotel) lies across the road.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant impacts are envisaged, other than already discussed in question 18.	/
26	Are there any areas on or around the location which have already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which	Yes, the site abuts a distributor road that is an air pollution and noise pollution source.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The road network leading up to the Sciberras Peninsula is characteristic of heavy congestion in the rush hours, and the impact significance of the resultant increase in traffic induced pollutants, and noise emissions over and above the baseline, is not clear. This may have secondary effects on the densely populated areas of	/

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	could be affected by the project?		Floriana and Valletta. Reply to question 5 also refers.	
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 such events are likely to occur in this area given its location, topography and context.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear No significant effects are envisaged.	/

4. EIA Screening Conclusions

The above detailed EIA screening, which has been updated following an EIA exemption consultation process (02/05/2013 – 16/05/2013), identified potential significant negative impacts of the proposal. Whilst noting that the proposed scheme will result in a significant beneficial impact on the physical character of the area through the landscaping and greening of the upper levels of the car park, hence contributing to an improved urban landscape, it might also contribute to further congestion, and hence result potentially significant air quality and noise impacts. In this regard further consultation with the relevant bodies has not facilitated the clarification of this concern, such that the significance of the relevant impacts remains unclear. In the absence of clear documentation (e.g. a traffic impact statement) identifying the congestion implications of the project, the requirement or otherwise of further EIA studies cannot be excluded.

On noting that it is not clear whether the case requires further EIA studies or otherwise, it is recommended that the cultural heritage assessment requirements identified the Heritage Planning Unit, and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, are addressed through the planning process.