

TRK 149186: CONSTRUCTION OF FUEL STATION INCLUDING AUTOGAS, ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING, CAR WASHES, ANCILLARY CLASS 4 RETAIL FACILITIES, AND UNDERLYING GARAGES AS A REPLACEMENT OF TWO EXISTING 2-STOREY BUILDINGS,

AT, MAGHTAB, L/O NAXXAR

1. INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) requested an Environmental Planning Statement (EPS) for the development proposed in permit application TRK 149186 (*Construction of fuel station including autogas, electric car charging, car washes, ancillary Class 4 retail facilities, and underlying garages as a replacement of two existing 2-storey buildings, at Magħtab, limits of Naxxar*). The application required the submission of an EPS in accordance with Schedule IA, Category 7.6.2.6 (*Construction of a new fuel servicing station*) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2007 (Legal Notice 114 of 2007, as amended). The EPS was coordinated by Mr. Adrian Mallia, Ms. Rachel Xuereb, Ms. Krista Farrugia, Ms. Ellis McCullough and Ms. Rachel Decelis for ADI Associates Ltd.

1.1 Description of the proposed development

The proposed development shall provide for the construction of a fuel station consisting of the following:

- Four fuel dispensing points linked directly to Triq is-Salina;
- One fuel dispensing point in a lay-by linked directly to Trejġet I-Arznu;
- Autogas (Liquefied Petroleum Gas – LPG) filling facilities;
- A charging station for electric vehicles;
- Car wash facilities;
- A class 4 shop, selling pre-packed food, beverages and tobacco, as well as car consumables in a dedicated section;
- Car valeting and tyre services adjacent to the shop;
- An underground mechanic's garage, carrying out general vehicle servicing (not including spray-painting);
- An underground store next to the garage; and,
- A 17-space underground parking area for employees' and clients' vehicles.

The corner site will have access off both Triq is-Salina and Trejġet I-Arznu, l/o Naxxar (Figure 3-10 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment refers).

The proposed development site is a triangular parcel of land in Triq is-Salina and Trejġet I-Arznu, Naxxar located in close proximity to the T'Alla w Ommu hill in the direction of Magħtab. The site area is approximately 3,593m² and is presently abandoned. The EPS indicates that the site may have formerly been used for agricultural purposes. There are two abandoned buildings on the site, both overlooking Triq is-Salina.

An overview of the planning policies and legislative framework which relate to the proposed developments is provided throughout Chapter 4 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment.

1.2 Assessment of alternatives

With respect to the assessment of alternatives in terms of siting, the EPS notes that the site meets the general requirements for the development of a fuel service station, particularly in terms of avoidance of urban areas and minimization of environmental impacts on residents and sensitive receptors, together with the selection of a site characterized by high traffic movements which is relatively unserved by other service stations. The EPS also indicates that no other alternative sites are available to the applicant in the area in question.

In terms of alternative technologies, the EPS notes that in relation to technology the proposal has been designed in accordance with both MEPA and MRA requirements for similar sites (i.e. leak minimization, detection and management, abatement of emissions and treatment of wastewater before discharge).

The EPS assessed two alternative layouts: (1) the first design considered two entry points in the north part of the proposed site and two exit points in the southern part, with this proposal having vehicles entering and exiting the station from and to both Triq is-Salina and Trejjet l-Arznu; and (2) following discussions with Transport Malta and the compilation of the Traffic Impact Statement (TIS), the proposal was further revised to comprise one entry point and no exits on the Triq is-Salina side, while retaining the entry and exit points at Trejjet l-Arznu. The second alternative layout is the one discussed and assessed in the EPS.

Downscaling of the project and the do-nothing option were not considered as realistic options in the EPS. Should the development of the proposed fuel station not take place, the site would remain in its neglected state.

2. EIA CONSULTATIONS

2.1 EIA Scoping

During the scoping stage, the Project Description Statement (PDS) was circulated to the following consultees and made available for a 21-day public consultation period between 16th July and 6th August 2013:

- Naxxar Local Council;
- Malta Resources Authority;
- Transport Malta;
- Environmental Health Directorate;
- Superintendence of Cultural Heritage;
- Civil Protection Department;
- Magħtab Residents Association;
- Environmental NGOs: Din l-Art Hejwa, Kummissjoni Ambjent, Birdlife Malta, Nature Trust Malta, Ramblers Association of Malta, Flimkien għal Ambjent Aħjar, Friends of the Earth Malta, Żminijietna, Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna, GAIA Foundation, Light Pollution Awareness Group, Moviment Graffiti, Malta Organic and Agriculture Movement, Malta Water Association, Youth for the Environment, Noise Abatement Society of Malta.

The PDS was also circulated for internal review within MEPA. Comments were received from Malta Resources Authority (e-mail dated 18th July 2013), the Civil Protection Department (e-mail dated 21st July 2013), Transport Malta (e-mail dated 24th July 2013), the Environmental Health Directorate (e-mail dated 2nd August 2013), a member of the public (Mr. Jonathan Buttigieg – email dated 5th August 2013), the Magħtab

Residents' Association (email dated 6th August 2013), the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (email dated 7th August 2013 and revised feedback dated 17th August 2013) and Din l-Art Ħelwa (email dated 8th August 2013).

A copy of the comments as submitted are included as Appendix I. The final Terms of Reference were issued to the applicant and architect in August 2013, with amended versions issued in October 2013 and January 2014, respectively.

2.2 EIA Review

The draft EPS was submitted to MEPA on the 25th April 2014 and was circulated for review to the same consultees consulted during the scoping stage (see Para 2.1 above). The EPS was also circulated for internal review within MEPA.

Within the stipulated consultation period, comments were received from Transport Malta (e-mail dated 29th April 2014), the Environmental Health Directorate (e-mail dated 21st May 2014), a member of the public (Mr. Jonathan Buttigieg (e-mail dated 26th May 2014) and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (e-mail dated 27th May 2014).

Comments made by MEPA and its consultees during the review stage were forwarded to the EIA Coordinator, the developer and the architect on 5th June 2014. These comments were addressed by the EIA Coordinator and responses included in Appendix II to this report.

2.3 EIA Certification and Public Consultation

The EPS was certified on the 22nd August 2014 and was published for a three-week public consultation period, with a deadline for submissions being the 16th September 2014. Comments were received from members of the public (email dated 15th September 2014), the Naxxar Local Council (email dated 16th September 2014) and Magħtab Residents Association (e-mail dated 16th September 2014). Details of these submissions can be seen in Appendix III to this report.

3. EIA FINDINGS

The characteristics of the site, assessment of impacts and mitigation measures were identified in the EPS as follows:

3.1 Geo-environment

The study was based on field surveys and subsurface investigation in relation to geology, geomorphology, hydrology and hydrogeology of the site. Figure 5.1 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment indicates the extent of the Area of Influence covered by the studies, also taking into account the catchment of two valley systems (Wied Magħtab to the northeast and Wied il-Għasel to the southwest).

3.1.1 Geology

The EPS notes that the site for the proposed development is located in an area where Globigerina Limestone is the exposed rock formation. The Lower Coralline Limestone Formation occurs at about 25m below ground level and is hydrogeologically of importance as it constitutes the host rock for the mean sea level aquifer. No Quaternary deposits were identified within the Area of Influence. Figure 5.3 in the EPS

Coordinated Assessment provides the geological map for the site in question, while Figure 5.4 provides a schematic geological cross-section across the site.

In terms of structural geology, one fault traverses the Area of Influence and is located a few metres east of the proposed development site, striking NNW – SSE. The fault brings the Lower Globigerina Limestone into structural contact with the Lower Coralline Limestone (Xlendi Mb). Another fault, striking NNE – SSW passes at about 250m west of the development site. The EPS notes that on-site studies have indicated that the rock is jointed with some of the joints being open permeable fissures.

Whilst being an area with rock outcrop mostly covered by a thin layer of topsoil, with gentle slopes and exhibiting no features that would suggest any potential instability, instability could arise during the proposed works, due to exposure of rock wedges bounded by steeply dipping discontinuities.

Two boreholes were drilled to assess the quality of the soil and of the stone material to be removed from site. Rock core samples derived from these boreholes resulted in good quality Lower Globigerina Limestone, having a high fracture frequency. Uniaxial compressive strength¹ was also tested for, and indicated that due to the nature and frequency of burrowing in the samples, the excavated material is not suitable as building stone, but can however be utilised as screed or for the production of mass concrete.

Soils located on site are of the Tal-Barrani Soil series, which is moderately decalcified, with a humus-enriched surface layer and having an A C D profile on a calcareous parent material. The EPS notes that the soil present on site indicates that the site has been already disturbed by past development.

3.1.2 Geomorphology

The geomorphology of the Area of Influence consists of a low and broad spur of agricultural land developed mainly on Globigerina Limestone. Three distinct geomorphological features were identified in the Area of Influence:

- Saddle (also known as 'col') at Ta' San Pietru: the site for the proposed development lies on a saddle, flanked on the east by the gentle slopes of Wied Magħtab and Wied il-Għasel on the west.
- Il-Qadi – Ta' Ħammud Uplands, flanked by Wied Magħtab on the east and Wied il-Għasel on the west: the proposed site, is located on a broad spur, roughly oriented N – S and forms part of the Għallis structural high; and,
- Il-Qadi – Ta' Ħammud Uplands: characterized by gently sloping areas, typical of Globigerina Limestone features.

3.1.3 Hydrology and hydrogeological features

The EPS notes that the area for the proposed development is underlain by Lower Coralline Limestone, which constitutes the mean sea level aquifer and lies close to the boundary of the water protection zone (Figure 5.5 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment refers). The site is located on the side of the downstream zone of the catchment of Wied il-Għasel, which is the major catchment in the area. Another minor catchment area is located close to the proposed development site, Il-Qadi (Wied Magħtab) and drains northeast of the site, towards Is-Salini.

The hydrological and hydrogeological features located close to the proposed site are as follows:

- Wied Magħtab: a low valley covered by terraced fields, in which no watercourse is developed, suggesting scares run-off episodes.

¹ The capacity of a material or structure to withstand loads tending to reduce size, which can be measured by plotting applied force against deformation in a testing machine. Compressive strength is a key value for design of structures.

- Wied il-Għasel drainage system: located within the area of influence, Wied il-Għasel and its tributary, Wied Għajn Riĥana, discharge into L-Għadira, where the watercourse disappears and is replaced by the flat agricultural land comprising the Burmarrad flood plain.
- The catchment of the proposed site.
- The mean sea level aquifer: lies some 30m below ground level and is the closest hydrogeological feature to the area for the proposed development.
- Water reservoirs

In terms of groundwater, the site for the proposed development lies inside the water protection zone, which extends through most of central and southern Malta (Figure 5.5 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment refers).

IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE AND PREDICTIONS

The EPS notes that impacts on geo-environmental resources are likely to be of *major significance*, in view of the extraction of mineral resources, which will amount to approximately 6,000m³.

In terms of hydrology, changes in the quality of aquifer and recharge and the change in the quality of run-off are both of minor to no significance, particularly to appropriate mitigation measures that would substantially reduce any possible contamination risks.

PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures as proposed by the EPS include:

- Construction of the proposed development in accordance with all the appropriate industry standards for fuel stations, including the installation of the underground fuel storage tanks with double skins, leak detection systems, surrounded by impermeable bunding and the installation of an impermeable forecourt and oil-water interceptor.
- Preparation of a Construction Management Plan, addressing groundwater and surface water pollution issues arising from the construction of the proposed development.
- Adoption of operational management practices designed to monitor the performance of pollution control measures, including regular inspections.

RESIDUAL IMPACTS

With the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measures with respect to impacts on the aquifer and on surface water, residual impacts are considered to be *minor to not significant*. In terms of impacts on geo-environmental resources, residual impact is still identified as being of *major significance*, however the EIA Coordinators confirmed that the excavated material is to be used as screed or for the production of mass concrete (EPS Coordinated Assessment Addendum refers).

3.2 Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage study involved (i) a baseline survey of the cultural heritage assets (artistic, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, palaeontological and geological assets) and an evaluation of their importance; (ii) an assessment of the impact of the construction and operation of the proposed development on the cultural heritage assets and an evaluation of the significance of these effects; (iii) input to the design and operational plan for the proposal to minimise potential adverse impacts on the cultural heritage assets; and (iv) a description of mitigation measures designed to minimise adverse impacts on cultural heritage. Figure 6.1 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment illustrates the area of influence studied in the EPS.

Historical background

The proposed development lies in an area known as 'Bingħalia'. The EPS notes that there is no direct source of historical information pertaining to the area of influence, particularly due to the area's historical use for agriculture and the lack of any major development in the area. Two abandoned farmhouses, together with a number of wells are located within the area of influence.

Cultural heritage features

In terms of cultural heritage features, no scheduled cultural heritage sites or features are located within the site for the proposed development, or in its immediate vicinity. The assessment also notes that two farmhouse complexes (BNG14/001 and BNG14/002) and a well have been identified during the study, and are being proposed for a Grade 3 protection status. With respect to rubble walls, the EPS indicates that the majority of these can be dated to before 1899. The condition of the rubble walls in the area for the proposed development can be divided as follows: good to fair (A) – 0m; fair to poor (B) – 24m; and bad condition/slight traces only (C) – 138m.

Cultural landscape

The EPS notes that the cultural landscape in the area of influence is typical of an agricultural zone, largely maintaining its vernacular characteristics with farm complexes.

IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE AND PREDICTIONS

The EPS indicates that the construction of the proposal shall result in the destruction of two farmhouses and a well located on site, which are of limited cultural significance and thus their loss is considered to be of minor significance. Impacts on rubble walls identified in the area of study are not considered to be of significance. Other possible damage to external features, such as boundary markers, has been identified to be of minor to no significance.

PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures as proposed by the EPS include:

- Recording of the farmhouses and well within the proposed site;
- Collection and re-use of rubble wall material off-site;
- Further investigation and dredging of the well, under supervision of an archaeological monitor, to make sure that no cultural material has been deposited in it;
- Supervision of works in particular where there are cultural heritage features by qualified archaeologists who would report to the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage in the eventuality that uncharted artefacts are encountered; and,
- Implementation of a Construction Management Plan that ensures that heavy vehicles do not damage structures outside of the Area of Influence (with a cultural heritage monitoring plan, that would include a watching brief).

RESIDUAL IMPACTS

The EPS notes that the loss of features will result in a residual impact that ranges from *not significant to minor*, however the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed may reduce the scale of such impact.

3.3 Landscape and Visual Amenity

The landscape assessment was based on a desk study and field survey. The visual amenity assessment was based on a desk study, the assessment of related viewpoints and field survey methodology. The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) is illustrated in Figure 7.1 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment.

GENERAL LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

The development site is located on the broad Għajn Riħana plain (as illustrated in Figure 7.2 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment). To the north of the site, and beyond the Għajn Riħana plain, lie Salina, Qawra and eventually the sea. Quarries are located to the south of the site and are situated on a sloping fault scarp, whilst residential areas lie to the southwest and southeast of the quarries. Further southeast to the site, on an untouched part of the escarpment, are barren karstlands crisscrossed by cart ruts.

Landscape characterisation²

The following are the landscape character types and landscape character areas as identified in the EPS:

- **Broad Plain:** An area that stretches from the foot of the escarpment northwards to the coast and the higher areas of Tal-Qadi. The area also comprises three distinct Local Landscape Tracts (LLTs):
 - LLT: Industrial area – area comprising warehousing, rock crushing and stockpiling, concrete products manufacture, open storage, small industries and a micro-enterprise park (at T'Alla u Ommu), with low landscape sensitivity.
 - LLT: 'River bed' – Braided watercourse at Wied Filep and Wied il-Għasel, with moderate landscape sensitivity.
 - LLT: Broad plain – Range of dry farming, market gardens, bird trapping, and farmhouses form a patchwork of colour and texture when views from the upper levels of the escarpment/Victoria Lines, with moderate landscape sensitivity.
- **Escarpment:** North and North-East facing slope of up to 26° comprising three Local Landscape Tracts:
 - LLT: Barren Rock – NNE facing exposed Upper Coralline slope with extensive cart rut network and a restored World War II defence post, with high landscape sensitivity.
 - LLT: Quarries – Series of operational and disused quarries including rock crushing plant, concrete products manufacture (a substantial building within Quarry HM 15), with low landscape sensitivity.
 - LLT: Ravine/watercourse – characterised by a watercourse/ravine, a number of cultural heritage features and agricultural areas with high landscape sensitivity.
- **Uplands:** A broad plain sloping towards the escarpment, currently developed for residential purposes.

VISUAL AMENITY

Three viewpoints (VPs) (Figure 7.1 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment) were identified to assess the visual impact of the proposed development as follows:

- Viewpoint 1: Trejġet I-Arznu – *Minor to major significance.*
- Viewpoint 2: It-Telgħa t'Alla u Ommu – *Minor significance.*
- Viewpoint 3: Triq is-Salina, North-bound – *Minor to major significance.*

IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE AND PREDICTIONS

Impacts on landscape character

² Landscape types and character areas that provide the landscape context to the development site are listed in this section. The distinction between the types and areas is defined as follows:

- Landscape Character Types: describe distinct and homogenous generic landscape units that share common combinations of elements.
- Landscape Character Areas: single unique areas that represent the discrete geographical areas of a particular type. Each of these areas can be divided into Local Landscape Tracts (LLT) that describe potential problems and pressures affecting the landscape character.

In terms of landscape character, the EPS notes that there shall be *no significant impacts* on most of the landscape character areas. However, with respect to the LLT: Broad plain, the EPS indicates that the introduction of a fuel station to this landscape tract shall take away from the countryside experience leading to a more urban one, with a number of rural structures present on site being lost. On noting that local moderate change that is considered to be incompatible with the landscape characterising this area of moderate sensitivity shall occur, some changes in the landscape shall be noticeable and thus impact would be of *minor to major significance*.

Impacts on visual amenity

Impacts for each of the viewpoints analysed in the EPS are as follows:

- Viewpoint 1: Trejjet I-Arznu – *Minor to major significance*.
- Viewpoint 2: It-Telgħa t'Alla u Ommu – *Minor significance*.
- Viewpoint 3: Triq is-Salina, North-bound – *Minor to major significance*.

The EPS notes that the impact of the proposal on the visual amenity from the viewpoints ranges from *minor to minor/major significance*, with significance mainly dependent on the scale of change to the landscape and the visual amenity of the area.

PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

In terms of mitigation measures, in order to reduce the impact on the long-distance view (Viewpoint 2), the EPS recommends that the colour scheme for the development design is purposely selected with a view to minimise the degree to which the building will stand out.

RESIDUAL IMPACTS

The EPS indicates that the impacts from the short-distance views (Viewpoint 1 and 3) will remain (*minor to major significance*).

3.4 Air Quality

The air quality assessment carried out for the EPS focuses on the potential impacts on air quality as a result of the emissions from fuel delivery to the station and emissions during vehicle refuelling. Impacts on air quality arising during the construction phase and impacts arising from increase in traffic were scoped out, given (i) the scale of the development, (ii) the air quality thresholds, related to particulate matter and nitrogen oxides are not likely exceeded by the proposal and (iii) no significant impacts were envisaged from the proposal. In this regard, the assessment focused on benzene and odour emissions during the operational phase of the proposal.

In terms of sensitive receptors, the EPS notes that considering the position of the tank vents and the fuel dispensers, the nearest sensitive receptor is the residence located to the east of the site, approximately 18m away from the nearest potential source of emissions within the fuel station (Figure 8.1 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment refers).

BASELINE DATA

Benzene

Data from MEPA's long-term diffusion tube network was used to establish a baseline indicating the current levels of benzene in the area. Annual average data for the year 2012 from MEPA's station BUB6, located in Triq il-Barrakki tal-Melħ in Buġibba was utilized, while diffusion tube data from other localities (Naxxar and other areas in Buġibba) was used for comparative purposes. It was also assumed that current benzene concentrations will remain constant in the future, in the light of increasing update of vapour recovery systems in fuel stations and lower hydrocarbon emissions from newer vehicles. The annual

average data for 2012 (most recent full year available) was calculated to be $0.52\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, well below the limit value of $5\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

Odour

Baseline odour levels were established through a sniff test, which consisted of noting the odours experienced at the nearest sensitive receptor and another site located the eastern flank of the proposed development (Figure 8.3 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment refers). Records were made of any existing odours, including frequency; intensity, duration and effectiveness, as well as the prevailing wind direction. The odour survey indicated a prevalence of farm animal smells in the surroundings, and some odours from heavy vehicle exhaust outside the nearest air sensitive receptor due to passing of heavy vehicles.

IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE AND PREDICTIONS

In terms of benzene concentrations at the air sensitive receptor, the EPS predicts that with the development in place, this is likely to increase by $0.16\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ and thus notes that impact is *negligible*.

With respect to odour, no fuel odours were observed at either of the locations that were surveyed (at an operational fuel station on another site), despite the fuel station being in operation and servicing several vehicles simultaneously. The EPS expects that the proposal, which would be fitted with Stage IB and Stage II vapour recovery, would not lead to odour emissions that reach the nearest sensitive receptor. In this regard, impact on odour from the proposal is considered to be *not significant*.

PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures as proposed by the EPS include:

- Design of the proposal to include appropriate (Stage IB and Stage II) vapour recovery systems.
- Regular maintenance of vapour recovery systems.

RESIDUAL IMPACTS

In terms of residual impacts, given the effectiveness of the mitigation measures to be implemented, no further mitigation is required and therefore the residual impacts associated with air quality are considered to be *negligible*.

3.5 Environmental Risk Assessment

The aims of the environmental risk assessment³ include:

- Describing and evaluating the risks to the environment associated with the proposal, including risks due to the nature of the materials being stored, risk associated with the equipment proposed (e.g. tanks, dispensers, etc) and risk associated with the activities on site.
- Describing the measures which will be undertaken to mitigate such risks, and evaluating the residual risk levels.

The proposal, will include significant storage of fuel, and extensive activities related to fuel dispensing activities, which, without mitigation, could provide a risk to the environment through underground, surface and airborne pollution. Tables 9.4 and 9.5 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment identify potential sources of pollution and the respective pathway to the relevant sensitive receptor, together with the relevant mitigation measures.

³ Environmental risk assessment is the process by which source-pathway-receptor linkages are identified and evaluated, and should any of the three elements be absent there would be no complete linkage and thus no unacceptable risk (Figure 9.1 in the EPS Coordinated Assessment provides an illustration of source-pathway-receptor model for underground storage tanks).

Risk evaluation

Risks associated with both the unmitigated and mitigated scenarios were evaluated and assessed. As illustrated in Table 9.6 of the EPS Coordinated Assessment, the highest resultant risk levels without any mitigation measures are associated with fuel spills during underground fuel tank filling, rainwater runoff from forecourt, car wash waste water and VOC from unleaded petrol; all of which lead to an *extreme* resultant risk level. *High* resultant risk levels are associated with ruptures at the fuel tanks/fuel pipes, leaks at the dispensers, release from explosions and spillage resulting from earthquakes.

With the appropriate mitigation measures in place, the resultant risk levels all range from moderate to low, with possible risks (of a *moderate* nature) arising from ruptures at the fuel tanks/fuel pipes, fuel spills during vehicle dispensing and accidental release from explosion. Appropriate mitigation measures include double-skinned tanks, leak detection systems, Stage IB and Stage II vapour recovery systems, amongst others.

3.5 Interaction between Impacts and Cumulative Impacts

With respect to interaction between impacts, minor to major impacts arising from changes in the landscape and visual amenity could potentially interact with impacts on cultural heritage, however considering that the latter impacts range from minor to not significant, the overall impact is not expected to change significantly. With regards to geo-environment and air quality, the EPS notes that there is no foreseeable interaction between these impacts that is of particular significance.

In terms of cumulative impacts, the EPS note that given that the proposal is not likely to generate the need for additional development, and there are no current plans for the proposal's longer-term development, no particular cumulative impacts are envisaged.

4. ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION DIRECTORATE COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The EPS has predicted a number of potential impacts on the environment as a result of the proposed development. Whilst the EPS proposes mitigation measures to minimise these impacts, it still identifies potential adverse residual impacts (that is, impacts that are still likely to prevail after all mitigation measures have been exhausted), particularly:

- i. Impacts on geo-environment, in terms of excavated waste, which however may be re-used as screed or for the production of concrete; and,
- ii. Impacts on visual amenity from short-distance views.

As an overall position, the Environment Protection Directorate cannot consider the proposed development favourably, for the following reasons:

1. The Environment Protection Directorate notes the absence of an approved comprehensive policy framework that regulates the development of fuel stations and sets a limit as to how many such stations are really justified. In this regard, the Directorate considers the proposed development as premature, and objects to further open-ended or ad hoc commitments for new or extended petrol station developments Outside Development Zone (ODZ). It should be noted that the proposed site is not a designated area considered potentially suitable for accommodating a fuel service station in the *Draft Fuel Service Stations Policy 2014*.

2. Whilst noting that the proposed development is located in an area mainly characterised by industrial uses, the Environment Protection Directorate considers the proposal as unacceptable from an environmental point of view, given that it is located in a predominantly open and undeveloped rural area and involves excessive land take-up to accommodate such development.

APPENDIX I:

Comments received through EPS Scoping stage (16th July to 6th August 2013)

A. Malta Resources Authority (E-mail dated 18th July 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
Please note that the Authority has already given its comments to the Planning section within MEPA and a conditional clearance issued in January 2013.	Noted; no further comments.

B. Civil Protection Department (E-mail dated 21st July 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
With reference to TRK 149186 (EA 7/13): Construction of fuel station including autogas, electric car charging, carwashes, ancillary Class 4 retail facilities and underlying garages as a replacement of two existing 2-storey buildings, at Maghtab, l/o Naxxar, the CPD have already been consulted by the developer. Fire safety and ventilation report dated 18 th February 2013 was vetted on fire safety and recommendations given.	Noted; no further comments.

C. Transport Malta (E-mail dated 24th July 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
Kindly note that a traffic impact statement has been prepared in relation to this proposed development and Transport Malta has already provided its consultation feedback to the developer.	Noted; no further comments.

D. Environmental Health Directorate (E-mail dated 2nd August 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
With reference to your e-mail dated 16 July 2013 regarding subject indicated in caption and following review of the Project Description Statement, please be informed that we would like to have the following issues related to public health included in the terms of reference for this proposed development : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Air pollution especially from particulate matter during the demolition/excavation and construction stage, from engine exhaust, traffic generated pollution and emissions of VOCs during the operation stage and their effects on the Area of Influence, the general public and on the environment. 2. Noise, odour and vibration impacts. 3. Adverse impacts caused by unsafe, inadequate storage and improper handling of raw materials on site. 4. Waste management and disposal issues for all generated waste streams. 5. Traffic management and related problems and access arrangements including safety measures. 6. Mitigation measures regarding aquatic sources in terms of water quality (especially related to ground water pollution) including runoff management. 7. Potential accidental spillage of hazardous fluids, fuel and lubricants which are to be well managed and adequately stored. 8. Air pollution control at proposed underground mechanic's garage, underground store and underground parking area i.e. effective ventilation measures to prevent build-up of emissions during operational phase. 9. Potential adverse public health impacts during the construction and operational stages. 10. Description of the hazards associated with the development. These should take into consideration health and safety and emergency measures. 11. Assessment of the overall cumulative impacts of the development on receptors in 	Issues related to air quality and emissions, noise and vibrations during construction and operation, spillages, waste management, traffic management, impacts on air quality, odours, risk assessment and cumulative impacts have been included in the TORs for the proposed development.

<p>the area and on the general public.</p> <p>12. The VOCs vapour recovery unit which is to be installed in line with the relevant Directive prior to the start of operation of the proposed petrol station.</p> <p>The EPS should also include a detailed description of the measures envisaged to prevent, minimize and where possible offset any significant adverse health effects on sensitive receptors in the Area of Influence and on the general public. This should include details of monitoring programmes that may be proposed. The EPS should also identify, describe and discuss in detail the possible health effects of any residual impacts that cannot be mitigated.</p>	
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E. Member of the public – Mr. Jonathan Buttigieg (E-mail dated 5th August 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
<p>NOTICE OF OBJECTION TO: Reference No: EA 00007/13 - TRK. 149186 Location: Site at, 13 and 14, Triq is-Salina c/w, Trejjet l-Arznu, Maghtab, Naxxar. Proposal: Construction of Fuel Station including: auto-gas, electric car charging, carwashes, ancillary Class 4 retail facilities and underlying garages as a replacement of two existing 2-storey buildings.</p> <p>Having read the above-mentioned Project Description Statement (PDS) dated 19th February 2013, we hereby register our objection to the proposed project for the following reasons:</p> <p>1. Paragraph 00.1.3. This paragraph is not entirely correct and is very misleading. The Northern side of the site abuts with RJ Woodworks then followed by a residential unit. Immediately across the proposed site and within a distance of less than 15 meters is also another residential unit, namely my home having the address of 'Ta Benjamin' Nr. 4, Triq is Salina, Naxxar. Why doesn't the PDS specifically mention these Residential Units?</p> <p>2. Paragraph 02.1.1. It is stated here that there will be "a car wash facility consisting of consisting of five jet washing stations and an automatic car wash, combined with a drying area for vehicles using the jet washes". The hours of operation shown in Tables 10.1 and 10.2 state that the hours of operation for the car wash and valeting will be between 07:00 and 18:00 during weekdays and between 06:00 and 18:00 during weekends. The PDS fails to mention specifically the hours of operation of the five jet washes which are located with a distance of less than 15 meters from the corner of my house, and more specifically, the bedroom. As will be discussed further down, the report makes no mention of the additional noise pollution which will be caused by the Jet Wash Operations. Furthermore, it is unclear from the PDS, whether or not these Jet Washes will be operated outside the normal hours of operation indicated in Tables 10.1 and 10.2.</p> <p>a. Consultations with Transport Malta (reference to Transport Malta's letter dated 5th February 2013). In this letter Transport Malta fails to mention the frequent traffic accidents which occur on Junction B between Arm B and Arm D located in Figure 0.5.2. Despite our appeals to both Transport Malta and the Naxxar Local Council to put in place a speed camera</p> <p>3. Paragraph 02.1.4. a. Consultations with Transport Malta (reference to Transport Malta's letter dated 5th February 2013). In this letter Transport Malta fails to mention the frequent traffic accidents which occur on Junction B between Arm B and Arm D located in Figure 0.5.2. Despite our appeals to both Transport Malta and the Naxxar Local Council to put in place a speed camera just before this intersection after we cited several traffic accidents, nothing has been done. A traffic sign which limits the speed in this junction to 40km per hour (See Applicant's Photo on Figure 04-2 confirming the presence of the sign) does little to slow down the traffic. Has there ever been a study on how fast traffic flows by this junction? I am convinced that the speed traversed is well above the stated limit. It is appalling to read that Transport Malta agrees with the TIS which concluded that "the network could absorb both the increase in traffic generated by the</p>	<p>Noted; no further comments.</p>

proposed station and the movements required for the vehicles to enter and exit the station". Did the Traffic Impact statement take into consideration the dangerous Junction B and all the accidents which have occurred due to over-speeding and blind turns? Did the Traffic Impact Statement take into consideration that an increase in the traffic generated will substantially increase the danger of turning traffic at Junction B? The proposed measures for widening Triq Is-Salina for "safety reasons irrespective of the proposed development" are flawed. There would be no need to widen Triq is-Salina to create a ghost island into the site if the development is not approved. What is required to improve the safety of the Junction B (between arm B and Arm D) is either a set of traffic lights or else a speed camera as I have been repeatedly reminding both Transport Malta and the Naxxar Local council. Furthermore, the proposed widening of Triq is-Salina at that point will promote speeding and increased illegal overtaking resulting in even more traffic accidents. Traffic proceeding Northbound will have to switch from driving in a relatively wide road to a sudden narrowing of the road (the distance from my facade to the facade across the road is less than 10 meters). I am attaching copies of correspondence sent to both Transport Malta and Naxxar Local Council labelled Appendix JB01 which clearly show the seriousness of the situation.

b. Consultation with the Civil Protection Department. No correspondence with the Civil Protection Department is annexed to the Project Description Statement. It is therefore unclear to us what safety measures the Applicant needs to consider. In light of the recent fire at the Tomato Factory directly opposite the Proposed Site, which resulted in the closure of Triq is-Salina for several hours, the correspondence exchanged between the Civil Protection Department and the Applicant needs to be disclosed. There should also be specific reference to the risks associated with spontaneous fires from the adjacent fields shortly after the spring harvest and the measures which need to be taken to prevent the spread of these frequent fires to the Filling Station which clearly pose a severe risk to combustion or explosion of the stored fuels. Ing. Bonello's report makes reference to standard fire fighting measures to be employed in a Petrol Station but fails to make specific mention of the added risk posed by probable spontaneous field fires which could rapidly spread to the Petrol Station.

c. Consultation with the Superintendent of Public Health (reference DH/2012/345 dated 17th January 2013). It is unclear if the Superintendent of Public Health was made aware of the proximity of the proposed development to the existing residential units due to the omission mentioned in my paragraph 1. Paragraph 6 of the Superintendent of Public Health's letter states that the "applicant is to take all the necessary measures to prevent above mentioned premises from being a statutory nuisance to neighbouring properties from emit fumes, gases, dusts, steam, odour, noise or having accumulation of deposits that are prejudicial to health or a nuisance." Fumes, gases and foul odours. A recent study shows that living near a petrol station can be a health hazard. In a report co-authored by Marta Doval Minarro published in the Journal of Environmental Management, 91 (12), pages 2754 - 2762 (2010), it was found that toxic fumes have an influence at a distance of up to 100 meters away from the filling station. The study shows that the air at petrol stations and in their immediate surroundings is especially affected by emissions stemming from evaporated vehicle fuels. These pollutants, besides having a foul odour, are also considered to be carcinogens.

Noise. I have explained my concerns about the lack of clarity in the Applicant's intentions regarding the hours of operation of the five jet washes. I am also concerned that the ambient noise pollution will substantially increase due to the increased traffic.

Accumulation of Deposits. It is unclear from the Project Description Statement what the applicant intends to do when severe rainfall resulting in flooding occurs. The Proposed site is situated at a low point in the road and winter rains often flood Triq is-Salina at precisely this point. It is very common for vehicles to be stranded at this point due to the depth of water which accumulates. Although there is a storm sewer in the road, it cannot cope with the volume of rain which falls. Our concern is that flooding will occur into the proposed Petrol Station and wash away hazardous deposits which accumulate during the normal operation of a Petrol Station such as spillages, oils, dirty water from the car wash collection tanks. When flooding occurs, rainwater flows like a river directly past my house and into the surrounding farmland and I am very concerned that this water will

now carry with it pollutants which have accumulated in the proposed petrol station and contaminate my property as well as the crops of our neighbors. Since my property is less than 15 meters away from the proposed petrol station, and based on the above, it is my belief that the proposed development fails to address the points which I have mentioned and will be a statutory nuisance. On this basis, the proposed development will violate the conditions stipulated Superintendent of Public Health.

d. Consultation with Water Services Corporation (reference Water Services Letter dated 18th February 2013). From this letter, it is understood that the Applicant will be required to divert all of the rainwater which accumulates on his property into fuel/oil separator tanks as outlined in Chapter 4 of the report of Ing. Bonello. The report states that this fuel separator has been sized to have 7,000 litres of waste fuel/oil retention. It is unclear how the Applicant intends on maintaining, emptying, and transporting the ever increasing build-up of contaminated storage. Reference is made to the Project Description Statement Paragraph 02.1.1 where there is no mention of any underground reservoirs being built nor how the Applicant intends to control surface runoff. There is however a drawing number PR-05 which shows 2 underground reservoirs below the proposed basement. The PDS makes no mention on how the Applicant intends to collect, channel, separate the fuel / oil and what safe practices he is going to adopt to maintain, empty and transport the stockpile of waste fuel/oil mentioned in Ing. Bonello's report. Drawing MFS/MTB/DR-01 shows that the surface run-off collection system is installed adjacent to the car wash facility, while the area earmarked for the re-fueling of vehicles does not contain any surface runoff collection systems. On the contrary, Applicant's drawing PR-10 shows that cars being re-fueled are situated on hardstanding which is laid to fall towards Triq is-Salina without any bunds or water collection systems thereby ensuring that contaminated surface water will flow directly into the street. It is therefore clear that the proposed development does not address the conditions stipulated by Water Services Corporation nor does it address the condition imposed by the Malta Resource Authority in their letter of 16th January 2013 page 2 paragraph iv which states "There should be no direct or indirect discharges of effluents into the environment or groundwater in particular". With the added risk of flooding mentioned in my previous paragraph, it is very evident that the applicant has failed to address how he will be preventing untreated rainwater from leaving his site and entering the storm sewer or worse still, overflowing into the road, past my property and into the farmed fields. This is clearly environmental contamination.

4. Paragraph 02.2.2

The Proposed Development is located outside the development zone. SET11 clearly states "No form of urban development will be permitted outside existing and committed built-up areas and primary development areas as designated in the Structure Plan even where roads and public utilities are available." Therefore based on this alone, the proposed development is not permissible by law. However, SET12 places the onus on the Applicant to "present evidence as to why the policy should be infringed, giving reasons from a Planning point of view such proposed use cannot be relocated in areas designated for development." The only reason mentioned by the Applicant for infringing SET11 is that a Fuel Station is a type of development that is considered "necessary". According to an article published in the Times of Malta on August 20th 2011, there were 89 petrol stations in Malta, which means 1 petrol station every 3.6 square kilometers. To put this figure in perspective, in 2003 there was 1 petrol station for every 41.4 square kilometers in the USA (Journal of Petroleum Marketing).

A "necessary" project which infringes on SET11 and allows a development located outside the development zone are ones of national interest. "Necessary" as defined by the Oxford Dictionary means "needed to be done, achieved or present; essential". Clearly there are enough Petrol Stations across Malta and this development is not "necessary". A "necessary" development is one which would be in the National Interest of Malta. Given the ever decreasing areas being used for agriculture, taking away land and replacing it with a development which will pose a serious threat to pollution is clearly not necessary. On the contrary, the purpose of this development is solely for the Commercial Benefit of the Applicant (paragraph 02.2.1) which would come at a detriment to the people living in the vicinity as well as the environment.

The applicant also states in 02.2.2.4 that the CMLP does not indicate a use for the site. There is no need to indicate a use since the present site is dilapidated farmhouse with surrounding fields. The applicant should be encouraged to restore the farmhouse as has been done to a number of properties in the vicinity.

Therefore, the Applicant has not sufficiently demonstrated that SET 11 can be infringed and the proposed development should be rejected outright.

5. Paragraph 04 Location of Site. Again the Applicant fails to mention that there are residential units less than 15m away from the proposed development. In this section, the Applicant attempts to describe the area as being industrial in nature citing various activities. On the contrary, the images presented by the Applicant in Figures 04-1, 04-2 and 04-3 show well worked farmland, residential units and 2 cattle farms (fig 04-1 on the top left and top right side). Figure 04-3 is interesting to see as it shows a person standing directly outside my bedroom window facing the proposed development less than 15 meters away. Contrary to the Applicant's description of the surrounds, the area is predominantly rural in nature.

6. Paragraph 05 Alternative Land Uses. Contrary to what is stated by the Applicant, the property farmhouse could be restored into a residential unit as has been done to a number of similar farmhouses in the area, just like mine. The applicant goes on to admit that service stations are unpopular in urban areas, probably for the same reasons which I have mentioned in my letter. However this proposal will not only affect me personally, but will also affect the surrounding rural area. If the applicant is concerned about citing the development away from residential units, then perhaps Applicant should consider the industrial site located on the southern side of Triq Burmarrad.

7. Paragraph 05.2 Alternative Layout.

It is stated that there is concern about the sub-standard layout of Junction A. having lived at my present address for nearly 6 years I can honestly say that there have hardly been any accidents at Junction A. On the contrary, the majority of accidents occur at Junction B. The problems associated with Junction A are limited solely to traffic wishing to go northbound along Triq is-Salina from Trejget l-Arznu. This can be simply solved by prohibiting such turns. Traffic coming from Trejget l-Arznu and wishing to go Northbound along Triq is-Salina need only proceed southbound along Triq-is-Salina for 300 meters, join an existing roundabout to change direction and head back north. This would come at very little expense to the Maltese taxpayer. However, and contrary to what is argued in Paragraph 05.2.9, the proposed road widening and creation of a ghost island is only required to ensure the safety of vehicles turning into the proposed fuel station. Why should this come at the taxpayer's expense?

Once more, I am preoccupied over the fact that the PDS fails to mention the existing condition of Junction B and how this development would affect it.

8. Paragraph 06 Physical Characteristics of the Proposed Project. Please refer to the photomontage on Figure 06-2 which clearly shows a person standing just outside my bedroom window and the proximity of the proposed development less than 15 meters from my house.

9. Paragraph 07.2.1. Again, the Applicant fails to mention that beside the Woodworks factory, there are residential units in the built-up section of the "triangular island".

10. Paragraph 07.3.3 Aquatic Environments. The Applicant again fails to mention or is unaware that the site is located at a low point on the road and is susceptible to flooding during rainstorms. The Applicant has provided inconsistent and unclear information on how he intends to treat any surface runoff water which will be contaminated prior to discharge and pollute the surrounding farmland including my house. These points have been explained in my previous paragraphs.

11. Paragraph 07.3.4 Agriculture. It is not understood why the Applicant has classified the site as "abandoned agriculture". The title of the PDS clearly states that there are two existing 2 storey buildings which are disused farmhouses with adjoining land.

12. Paragraph 07.3.5 Landscape. According to the Applicant, the land allocated for agriculture is well taken care of land. The quarrying activity referred to is limited either to the Ghallis landfill (which is not for industrial use) and the Ballut Blocks quarry well to south of the proposed development and within an existing industrial zone south of Triq Burmarrad. It is also public knowledge that the Maghtab Waste Complex is currently being transformed into a public park. This rural area has suffered so much over the past years as a result of the Maghtab Waste complex that there is finally a concerted effort to restore the beauty of this natural rural environment. The proposed petrol station would harm the environment and setback any progress made to improve the rural surrounds.

13. Paragraph 07.3.6 Noise and Vibrations. Although the site in its present state is not the source of any Noise and Vibrations, the proposed development would significantly increase the noise pollution generated by the increased traffic, as well the operations of the five jet washes separated only by lightweight partitions. Having lived across the street from RJ Woodworks, I can honestly say that no noise pollution comes from this activity. The owner is a very responsible person, keeps the main door closed at all times and only operates the business during normal working hours.

14. Paragraph 07.3.7 Air Quality. Although the site in its present state is not the source of any air pollutants, the proposed development would significantly increase air pollution within a radius of at least 100 meters as I have mentioned in my previous paragraphs. This air pollution would contain carcinogens and will affect people living in the vicinity, including me and my family.

15. Paragraph 08.3. Once again, the Applicant fails to mention that there are residential units within 15 meters of the proposed development. The Applicant gives the impression that residential buildings are located 1 kilometer away which is totally false.

16. Paragraph 10.2. This explains the hours of operation of the proposed development. I fail to understand why the applicant is proposing to have 17 underground car park spaces split between the staff and the Basement Garage. The PDS does not state what this Basement Garage will be used for, but from the vagueness of the description, it is being assumed that this will be a Mechanical Garage tailored for motor vehicle repair. This seems to be confirmed in paragraph 13.3.5.2 of the PDS which states that there will be "tools used for the maintenance and servicing of vehicles...". Besides failing to mention the specific hours of operation of the five jet car washes, the Applicant fails to mention the hours of operation of the Mechanical Garage. This is not to be confused with the Tyre Service which is clearly located at Street Level.

17. Paragraph 13.3.2.2. This makes references to mitigation measures for Aquatic Environments to be adopted during operations and annexed as Appendix A and B to the PDS. As I have previously mentioned, both the PDS and Ing. Bonello's report fail to clearly explain how the Applicant intends to collect the contaminated surface rainwater runoff and treat it before this is disposed in the main sewer line. It is also unclear whether the PDS has taken into consideration the frequent flooding of the site during the wet season.

18. Paragraph 13.3.3.1. The CMP should also mention how the Applicant intends to control particulate emissions during construction works which will affect my house situated a mere 15 meters away from the site.

19. Paragraph 13.3.4.1. The impact on the landscape and visual amenity would be mitigated if the development was rejected. Let's leave rural areas rural.

20. Paragraph 13.3.5.2. Noise and Vibrations. The Applicant fails to mention what mitigation measures are going to be used to limit the noise coming from the five jet car washes located less than 15 meters from my bedroom window.

21. Paragraph 13.3.6.2. This makes references to mitigation measures for Air Quality to be adopted during operations and annexed as Appendix A and B to the PDS. It unclear whether the PDS and Ing. Bonello have taken into consideration the proximity of the

<p>residential units located less than 15 meters from the proposed development.</p> <p>22. Paragraph 13.3.7.1 Health and Safety. This makes references to Safety in General, Fire Safety and Ventilation during operations and annexed as Appendix 2 and 4 to the PDS. It is unclear if the PDS and Ing. Bonello have taken into consideration the spontaneous fires which occur in the dried fields shortly after harvest and the risk of fire spread to the proposed petrol station. Furthermore, the proposed ventilation grille from the basement garage is situated 15 meters away from my house.</p> <p>23. Light Pollution. There is no reference in the PDS regarding the Light Pollution that will be introduced as a result of the proposed development and its effect on the surrounding residential properties.</p> <p>Based on the above, I respectfully request that MEPA rejects outright the Applicant's proposed development.</p>	
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E. Magtab Residents Association (E-mail dated 6th August 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
<p>We write with reference to the above development proposal requiring an Environmental Planning Statement and we would like to submit the following comments for your consideration.</p> <p>To start with, the proposal is incorrect and misleading on several points, some of which are crucial to the determination of this proposed development.</p> <p>1. Location The Project Description Statement very clearly states that there are already a number of identical developments at less than 2.8 km distance from this proposed development. No less than 6 stations have been identified by the applicant, making the additional facility redundant and un-necessary.</p> <p>THE SITE POLICY CONTEXT Some Structure Plan Policies being infringed by the proposed development: BEN 1 & 2 SET 11 - prohibition of urban development in the countryside; SET 12 - justification required for infringing policy SET 11; CG 24 - Protection of Areas of Agricultural Value" RCO 2 - prohibition of development within rural conservation areas except for structures essential to agricultural, ecological, or scenic interests;</p> <p>BEN 1: Development which would constitute bad neighbourliness would not normally be permitted, or which has a detrimental impact because of; visual intrusion, noise, vibration, atmospheric pollution, unusually high traffic generation and unusual opening times.</p> <p>BEN 2: Development will be assessed on its conformity with guidelines. Good urban design will be a requirement of permitted development including compatibility with the visual integrity of the area, natural heritage and adjacent uses.</p> <p>The site lies in a Rural Conservation Area (as designated by the Structure Plan and indicated on the Key Diagram). The proposal does not comply with Structure Plan policy RCO 2 which clearly states that no form of urban development will be permitted within Rural Conservation Areas.</p> <p>The proposal does not fall within one of the categories of development, namely structures or facilities essential to agricultural, ecological or scenic interests, which may be permitted in Rural Conservation Areas where they meet the principles and criteria set</p>	<p>Noted; no further comments.</p>

out in Structure Plan policy RCO 4. The proposal is not essential to, nor does it enhance agricultural, ecological, or scenic interests.

The proposed development conflicts with Structure Plan Policy SET 11, which does not permit urban development outside existing and committed built-up areas. The development does not fall into a category of non urban development which may be permitted outside existing or committed built-up areas in accordance with Paragraph 7.6 of the Structure Plan. The proposed development also therefore runs counter to policy BEN 5.

There is no justification for the development of this site as required by Structure Plan policy SET 12. It is apparent that there are no reasons from a planning point of view why the proposed development cannot be located in an area designated for development or in an industrial area.

The proposal would generate a considerable volume of vehicular movements which would have a significant and unacceptable impact on the road network in the area whilst increasing safety issues.

Furthermore, reference is made to the Central Malta Local Plan where the site in question was included in an area designated as "Agricultural Areas – Policy CG24".

Policy CG24 deals with the "Protection of Areas of Agricultural Value". This policy states that "Within designated Areas of Agricultural Value, only buildings, structures and uses essential to the needs of arable agriculture will be permitted".

This clearly shows the Authority's commitment to strengthen the agricultural activities within the area and as such, non-agricultural activities (such as the requested Petrol Station) are not permitted by this Local Plan.

2. Land uses in the surrounding

The developer states that this development is located circa 1km to the East of the Maghtab settlement. This is INCORRECT SINCE THE SITE IS PART OF THE SETTLEMENT OF MAGHTAB

According to MEPA's CMLP, (CG04 Category 2 Rural Settlements):

The settlements of Maghtab and Bidnija as indicated in Planning Control Maps NAB7 and MOB8 are designated as Category 2 Rural Settlements located within a wider rural area that should be conserved, consolidated and rehabilitated while protecting their rural character. The buildings being proposed to be replaced actually form part of the settlement.

3.3.7 The two rural settlements covered by this policy include Bidnija and Maghtab. The Bidnija settlement includes two clusters of buildings situated at Tal-Hireb and Tal-Milord but excludes the villas found to the west of Tal-Milord. These villas are too distant and dispersed to be considered as part of the main rural settlement. On the other hand, the Maghtab settlement is spread out over a large linear area.

3.3.8 Maghtab lacks an identifiable core area and has a number of existing different uses apart from farmhouses. These existing uses include residential units of varying types and design, batching plants, plant yards, garage industries, animal husbandry farms as well as a substantial number of disused buildings. Due to these mixed and conflicting uses and the disorganised character of this settlement, Maghtab is affected by a fall in rural quality and amenity. The aim of this policy is to counteract these problems by preventing the further development of incompatible uses in the area and by directing further growth only to infill, corner and end of terrace sites as defined in the policy.

3.3.9 This policy seeks to reach a balance by allowing the consolidation of these settlements through sustainable rural development and protecting their rural character by preventing development, which may adversely affect those intrinsic

features of the settlements (historical buildings, considerable gap sites between buildings, landscaping), and their setting.

The development proposal fails to mention that within the immediate vicinity there are 6 residences and that within 250 m there are 11 residential units, most of which homes for child bearing families.

MEPA considers the operation of petrol station as Hazardous, and has justified the relocation of such operations from urban areas on the basis that these "are incompatible within the urban environment and are a health hazard" and thus it would be contradictory for

MEPA to allow such objectionable development.

<http://www.mepa.org.mt/newslet17-article10>

'HAZARDOUS' ACTIVITIES MOVED OUT OF MGARR CENTRE

The proposed development is mostly taking place on FRESH Agriculture land. The fact that the site has been described as "Abandoned" does not justify the uptake of agriculture land. Through the EU DIRECTIVE establishing a framework for the protection of soil risk from erosion, compaction, salinisation, decline of soil organic matter, landslides, contamination, sealing and loss of soil biodiversity (DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing a framework for the protection of soil and amending Directive 2004/35/EC),

Malta has the obligation to protect this limited and valuable resource.

3. Protected Trees.

The development statement declares that a number of protected trees will be affected; this includes a carob tree and two Aleppo Pines. The developer failed to declare that on this site there is also a number of Black Mulberry Trees which are also protected species. It is also to be noted that the two Aleppo Pines are very old trees and these are located on public land that form part of the Aleppo Pine plantation to be found on this road and are not located within the boundary of the proposed development. Thus we ask how come this developer is expecting to remove such trees located on public land.

4. Road Safety

It has been confirmed that the location under consideration has endemic problems with safety due to the number of junctions and these will be overcome with the proposed upgrading of this junction.

This is far from the yearning reality since the curve located to the North of the site blocks the visibility to the proposed entrance into the petrol station, and once the road is shifted towards the petrol station, the dangers arising from this development are multiplied due to the curve on this road which will further reduce visibility. By introducing another crossover point on a road that is already problematic as regards to road safety, one is only increasing the potential points of accidents.

5. Hours of operation

The developer for some concealed reason is trying to give the impression that this is an operation with limited operating hours. It is common knowledge that such installations now operate on a 24 x 7 basis which will cause untold inconvenience to the neighbors to this site. It is to be noted that the number of braking, stopping and starting and accelerating will be very disturbing.

The noise generated by the power wash units will also cause untold annoyance to the residents. These units on other petrol stations are being operated on a 24 x 7 basis.

6. Flooding and Pollution

The proposed site is a locality susceptible to water flooding, with car drivers necessitate to be rescued from their vehicles every time we experience a heavy downpour. The proposal has made no reference as to how this problem is to be mitigated. The flooding is likely to cause pollution into the surrounding fields and residences and will further

<p>reduce the soaking area for the water.</p> <p>Based on the above, but not limited in any way to just these points, the Maghtab Residents Association on behalf of the several member residents residing in this locality requests that MEPA should reject outright the applicant's proposed development.</p>	
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F. Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (E-mails dated 7th August 2013 & 17th August 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
<p>The Superintendence is continuing to assess the proposed development and will communicate its recommendations within the coming days.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we note the presence on site of vernacular structures that are evident in images and documents as received.</p> <p>The Superintendence intends to inspect these properties before its response and wishes to do so with officers of MEPA's HPU.</p> <hr/> <p>Ref. Cultural Heritage Act 2002, (CAP 445) Environmental Planning Statement (EPS) i.c.w. EA 007/13 (TRK. 149186) – 13 & 14, Triq is-Salina c/w Trejjet l-Arznu, Maghtab, Naxxar</p> <p>In response to your e-mail of 16 July 2013, the Superintendence draws attention to the value of the landscape in the area, which has been spared intensive development, and bears mainly agricultural activity. The documentation as received also indicates the presence of vernacular structures within the site that require description and evaluation.</p> <p>Please find following Terms of Reference for a Cultural Heritage Assessment i.c.w. the Environmental Planning Statement (EPS).</p> <p>1.0 Preamble</p> <p>The proposed project would involve development over an extensive area and may lead to intensification of activity over a larger area. Potential impacts may occur within the footprint of the project, in the immediate environs, and along access routes to the site. Potential impacts may include direct and immediate material impacts, as well as subsequent impacts that might arise from the modification of the existing situation.</p> <p>2.0 Scope and Definitions of the EIA</p> <p>For the purposes of this document, cultural heritage is defined by Article 2 of the Cultural Heritage Act (2002). This includes movable or immovable objects of artistic, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnographic, palaeontological and geological importance.</p> <p>2.1 The study area will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The total footprint of the proposed project. A 50 metre radius around the footprint. A 200 metre radius around the footprint. <p>2.2 In the context of this particular application, cultural heritage considerations may include:</p> <p>Features of archaeological value and potential. Military or civil architecture from the Knights period to British period. Vernacular structures. Field systems and agricultural features such as irrigation systems.</p> <p>The above cultural heritage definitions and considerations are not to be considered as exhaustive. The EIA must consider all other forms of cultural heritage, both known and</p>	<p>Impacts on cultural heritage were included as part of the Terms of Reference for the EPS.</p>

<p>unknown.</p> <p>2.3 The Environmental Impact assessment will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the Cultural Heritage assets within the study area - Analyse the cultural heritage features within the context of the cultural landscape - Assess the physical, spatial and visual impacts of the proposed development on the cultural heritage assets - Propose corrective measures for the protection of the cultural resources. <p>3.0 Methodology</p> <p>In quantifying the cultural heritage assets within the study area, and assessing the impacts of the proposed development, the EIA will undertake:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Description and assessment of the property. - Desktop and archival research to the 200 metre radius; - Fieldwork and research, including “field walking”, topographic survey and remote sensing as may be necessary within the site and to the 50 metre radius. All fieldwork has to be authorised by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage as defined below under point 4; - Consultations with any relevant bodies, including the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Heritage Malta, the University of Malta, NGOs and Local Councils. - Compilation of an inventory of the cultural heritage assets identified within the study area. The features of cultural heritage are to be described and plotted with grid references, on Data Capture Sheets, the design of which should be approved in advance by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. The Data Capture Sheets will be presented as an appendix to the EPS. The analysis of the features will be included in the main report. - A cultural heritage Risk Assessment Map examining the various impacts of the proposed project is to be included in the EIA. <p>4.0 Authorisation by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage</p> <p>As per Cultural Heritage Act 2002, any form of investigation or prospection required for the identification of cultural heritage (including excavation, field walking, topographic survey and remote sensing) may only be undertaken by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage or with its written approval.</p>	
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G. Din I-Art Helwa (E-mail dated 8th August 2013)

Comments	EPD Comments
<p>1. The proposed site for the location of this petrol station is predominantly agricultural and rural, with livestock farming and various residences in the vicinity. The proposed site consists of agricultural land outside the development zone. The fact that this agricultural land is abandoned should not lead to it being made available for irreversible excavation and development, and this argument should not be taken into consideration. The loss and fragmentation of agricultural land is to be avoided.</p> <p>2. There are already several petrol stations in the vicinity. This facility is clearly not essential for the amenity of the area as any vehicles requiring fuel can easily reach the petrol stations nearby within minutes. Any developments that are not essential should not be allowed in ODZ areas. If any new petrol stations are constructed they should be located within areas that are designated for development.</p>	<p>Noted; no further comments.</p>

APPENDIX II:

Comments received through EPS Review period (25th April – 28th May 2014)

A. Transport Malta (Email dated 29th April 2014)

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
<p>Reference is made to the above-mentioned proposal and the Traffic Impact Statement (TIS) submitted to Transport Malta for assessment. The site area under consideration is 3,593m² and the proposal assessed in the TIS is made up of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 4-station fuel-filling facility linked directly to Trejjet L-Arznu; • a Class 4 shop; • a 1-station fuel filling facility in a lay-by linked directly to Trejjet L-Arznu; • an LPG facility; • a Charging Station for electrically-powered vehicles; • a Car Wash facility consisting of 5 jet-washing stations and an automatic car-wash, combined with a drying area for vehicles using the jet washes; • an underground Mechanic's Garage; • an underground Store; • an 18-space underground parking area for employees and clients. <p>There is also a proposal for the introduction of a ghost island right-turn layout on Triq Is-Salina, in order to allow north-bound traffic to access the site in relative safety.</p> <p>The TIS submitted to support this proposal was assessed by TM and the following comments are referred:</p> <p>(1) Traffic Impact: The conclusion of the TIS is that the network could absorb both the increase in traffic generated by the proposed station and the movements required for vehicles to enter and exit the station - Transport Malta agrees with this conclusion, based on the supporting analysis.</p> <p>It is also stating the road and junction upgrading in the area, primarily for safety reasons, is required irrespective of the proposed development. The upgrade primarily includes the widening of Triq Is-Salina (into the site) in order to create a ghost island right turn on Triq Is-Salina, thereby permitting safe right-turning into the site.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>	<p>Noted; no further comments from an EPD point of view.</p>

<p>(2) Site Access: With regard to the site vehicular access, the TIS is stating the road and junction upgrading in the area, primarily for safety reasons - again, there is agreement with this proposal.</p> <p>Following a number of meetings and discussions, an acceptable layout (where the widening takes place within the development site) was proposed, as per TIS Addendum dated 4th February 2013.</p> <p>The modified layout shows one entry point only from Trig is-Salina and another entry point and an exit on Trejget L-Arznu. The paved footways around the forecourt include two overruns abutting Triq is-Salina. The one to the west of the station is intended for emergencies only and a security gate should be installed in order to preclude this overrun being used for unauthorized vehicles; the one located by the entry point is intended to facilitate the entry into the station of HGVs particularly the fuel suppliers' tankers.</p> <p>The visibility assessments indicate that the SSDs would be acceptable.</p> <p>It is understood that that the applicant proposes that all the land required for the ghost island junction would be taken up from the development site, without the need for expropriating third-party or public property; this is clearly indicated in the latest drawings submitted on 4th February.</p> <p>Therefore, in view of the above considerations, Transport Malta would find no objection, in principle, to the proposed development as per attached plans, subject to the floor-areas and land-uses being maintained as indicated and assessed in the TIS when formally applying to MEPA. Furthermore, since the assessments were carried out with the ghost island right-turn access layout, this should be in place prior to the commissioning of the site.</p>		
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B. Environment Health Directorate (Email dated 21st May 2014)

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
<p>With reference to your e-mail dated 28 April 2014 regarding proposal indicated in caption and following review of the EPS submitted, please be informed that this Directorate would like to submit the following comments/recommendations regarding this proposed development :</p> <p>Applicant is to adopt best practice methods</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. These requirements will be implemented, as described in the EPS.</p> <p>Aspects related to construction will be included in the full Construction Management Plan to be prepared at a later stage.</p>	<p>Noted; no further comments from an EPD point of view.</p>

<p>together with good site practices and ensure compliance with Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations during the site clearance/demolition, excavation and construction phase. Moreover applicant is to implement all proposed mitigation measures so as to cause least nuisance and mitigate adverse air (from dust dispersal and emissions from vehicles and machinery), noise and vibration impacts on nearby sensitive receptors (especially residences adjacent to the Site) in the Area of Influence , on on-site workers and on the general public. Hence the importance of drawing up and implementation of a Construction Management Plan to ensure adherence to proper site management practices so as to address groundwater and surface water pollution, to mitigate other adverse construction impacts, including construction traffic impacts and to ensure safety measures. The proposal regarding lighting indicating the construction site during night hours, and that 'care will be taken to reduce light spillage and glare, which may impact nearby residences' is highly recommended. Monitoring of construction works is also highly recommended so as to ensure implementation of all necessary mitigation measures and adherence to work practices throughout all the phases of the project.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed. These requirements will be implemented, as described in the EPS. Operational aspects of the facility will also be regulated by an Environmental Permit.</p> <p>These measures will be included, as described in the EPS.</p>	
<p>Safe and proper handling of raw materials on site should also be ensured. Adequate preventive measures are to be taken regarding the potential accidental spillage of hazardous fluids, fuel and lubricants which are also to be well managed and adequately stored.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>	
<p>In view that the Scheme Site lies within the water protection zone and that there is a potential risk of contamination of aquifer and in change of quality of surface water run-off, it is pertinent that all proposed mitigation measures (double skin tanks installed within impermeable pits, leak detection systems, oil-water separator to cater for any spills etc.) highlighted in the EPS are strictly implemented so as to prevent contamination of water especially water intended for human consumption. Monitoring to ensure that all mitigation measures taken by the developer are effective in preventing any possible negative impacts from this development on the underground water supplies is recommended.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>Noted and agreed.</p>	
<p>With regards to air (benzene and odour) emissions during the operation phase it is pertinent that the proposed vapour recovery systems (Stage IB and Stage II recovery) be</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>	

<p>installed in line with the relevant legislation so as to mitigate adverse impacts on sensitive receptors, mainly residents. Moreover, the vapour recovery systems should be maintained regularly to ensure their effectiveness in abating emissions and odours.</p> <p>Adequate measures are also to be taken to ensure that surface run-off, water used for dust control, water used for wheel washing and general cleaning and water from the car wash facility be strictly managed and properly channelled and do not run off the site.</p> <p>It is pertinent that during the operation of the scheme all proposed mitigation measures are strictly implemented so as to mitigate all environmental risks especially through underground, surface and airborne pollution.</p> <p>A Waste management strategy should be adopted and implemented during the demolition/ excavation/ construction and operational phases so that all generated waste streams will be contained, separated and disposed of safely through the appropriate facilities and according to the necessary permits/licences. With regards to removal and disposal of any hazardous waste, adherence to regulatory codes and procedures and due diligence is important in view of the health and safety of on-site workers and any adverse impacts on nearby sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Reservoir-harvested rain water and any recycled water from car wash should not to be used for human consumption and/or personal use.</p> <p>It is highly recommended that construction traffic follows established specific routes and adequate site management together with other measures such as covering of all trucks leaving site with proper tarpaulin sheets are taken to mitigate adverse dust impacts and nuisances from heavy vehicles during transportation. All other proposed mitigation measures to minimise nuisances and adverse health impacts from construction traffic are to be implemented.</p> <p>Effective ventilation measures at underground mechanic's garage and underground parking area should be in place to prevent build-up of emissions during operational phase.</p> <p>Re-page 84, 4.37 of EPS it is to be noted that Legal Notice 17 of 2009, Water Intended</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>Noted and agreed.</p>	
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<p>for Human Consumption Regulations, 2009 as amended by Legal Notice 242 of 2009 is a regulation in force under the Food Safety Act and not under the Malta Resources Authority Act as stated. Thus the Environmental Health Directorate is the regulator for the quality of water intended for human consumption while the water utility is responsible to supply drinking water of the quality intended for human consumption in line with the requirements of the above mentioned regulations.</p> <p>It is recommended that all proposed mitigation measures regarding adverse impacts arising from this development are to be strictly implemented by applicant to mitigate any significant adverse health effects and nuisances on on-site workers, sensitive receptors in the Area of Influence and the general public. The possible health effects of any residual impacts that cannot be mitigated should also be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Moreover any other unpredicted impacts and nuisances which may arise from this development and that may have a significant adverse effect on public health are to be immediately addressed by the applicant and the necessary mitigation measures taken.</p> <p>Complaints lodged by the public regarding any adverse impacts/nuisances should be immediately addressed by the applicant. All complaints lodged and actions taken are to be recorded and such records are to be readily available to the Competent Authorities when requested.</p> <p>A pollution incident control plan should also be in place. Records of all pollution incidents, especially regarding potential pollution of the surrounding environment, are also to be kept and reported to the respective authorities accordingly.</p> <p>Regarding any future plans for Scheme decommissioning, the recommendations highlighted in EPS (submission of full decommissioning plan to relevant authorities, etc.) are recommended to be followed.</p>		
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C. Member of the public (Mr. Jonathan Buttigieg - E-mail dated 26th May 2014)

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
Reference is made to the Project Description Statement (PDS) reference EA 00007/13 for the construction of a fuel station and ancillary facilities, site at Maghtab L/O Naxxar. On behalf of my client Mr. Jonathan Buttigieg I wish to submit an objection to the PDS for		Noted; no further comments from an EPD point of view.

<p>the following reasons:</p> <p>The site in question is located in an Out of Development Zone that is characterized by agricultural activity. The site per se is a typical example of low key vernacular architecture in an agricultural setting. In fact, the site forms part of a small hamlet composed predominantly of residential units. This is the sole pocket of residential development along the Triq is-Salini link road. No words can describe the nuisance created by the development of such a service station in the midst of a residential area.</p> <p>In contrast to this typical agricultural setting, the proposed petrol station would have a very significant visual impact since the station is designed to stand out. The siting of the petrol station would spoil the character of this otherwise quaint and authentic setting.</p> <p>Where the proposed development to meet the criteria set out by the draft policy issued for public consultation, one cannot possibly consider sacrificing virgin land on the basis of a numeric exercise that satisfies requirement on paper. The design per se is a non-sensitive, copy and paste exercise with no respect whatsoever to the surrounding setting. The scale and location of the development is intended to capitalize on the through traffic which in turn would inevitably cause major congestion and generate an intensification of activity in a setting that is otherwise characterized by low key activity of a residential nature.</p> <p>The PDS fails to detail the extent of any buffer zones typical for ODZ developments in such settings, since these are non-existent in the proposed design. The project comprises 100% site coverage with further intensification of use at the basement levels. There are no mitigation measures for the proposed intensification and the design of the service station detracts from the environment of the site.</p> <p>The PDS fails to mention the detrimental and inevitable light pollution that the development would create at night time. The Triq is-Salini link road is one of the few major roadways on the Maltese Islands that is not lit up at night. The proposed service station would stand out like a sore thumb at night time spoiling the quaint character of this ODZ setting.</p> <p>In view of the above, we urge the Malta Environment and Planning Authority to take</p>	<p>Impacts on the landscape have been addressed in Chapter 7 of the EPS.</p> <p>Impacts on visual amenity have been addressed in Chapter 7 of the EPS.</p> <p>Comment noted. Impacts on landscape and visual amenity have been addressed in Chapter 7 of the EPS. Additionally, a Traffic Study has been carried out by ERSLI and approved by Transport Malta. The findings are summarised in Chapter 3 of the EPS.</p> <p>A landscaping proposal is described in Chapter 3 of the EPS; further landscaping has not been included for safety reasons.</p> <p>The facility will employ an intelligent lighting system; the only lighting sources will be the backlit logo and downward-facing lighting located in strategic locations, used only in low light levels. Night-time lighting will be set to emit lower lux levels than evening lighting to minimise impacts.</p>	
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<p>a stand against such a development that is wrongly sited and would inevitably and irreversibly scar a landscape that is otherwise authentic.</p>		
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D. Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (E-mail dated 27th May 2014)

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
<p>We refer to your Letter of Consultation dated 22 April 2014 and the Environmental Planning Statement (EPS) received from the developer.</p> <p>Proposed development The application proposes: - to remove two existing 2-storey buildings - to construct a fuel station including auto-gas, electric car charging, carwashes, ancillary class 4 retails facilities and underlying garages</p> <p>Heritage Assessment The cultural heritage baseline report in the Environmental Planning Statement describes four cultural heritage features within the foot print of the proposed development. These include two late 19th/early 20th century farmhouse complexes, a well and the rubble wall enclosing the site. The well could not be described since the vegetation over its opening was too overgrown.</p> <p>This area is archaeologically sensitive. The proposed development site is surrounded by known ancient tombs, catacombs, car-ruts, and other landscape features such a British period milestones. Any development in this area may lead to accidental discoveries, posing a threat to the cultural heritage.</p> <p>The area proposed for development within the footprint of the site is presently soil covered. The survival of archaeological remains in this area cannot be excluded.</p> <p>Recommendations and Conditions The Environmental Planning Statement correctly assesses the visible cultural heritage within the footprint. On the other hand it fails to evaluate the footprint for archaeological remains that may be on the surface of the topsoil (such as pottery scatters) or covered by soil or vegetation. In correspondence sent by Nathaniel Cutajar on 27 September 2013, it was stated that 'the footprint of the proposed development is to be fully evaluated to establish its possible archaeological and cultural heritage value'. Mr Cutajar also added that the evaluation will need to be carried out in line with Terms of Reference issued by the Superintendence.</p>	<p>Comments noted. In the eventuality of MEPA approving the Scheme, an archaeological evaluation will be carried out before an executable permit is issued by MEPA. This can be included as a condition in the DPAR.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

<p>The Superintendence accepts the EPS but in order to investigate the risk of damaging potential cultural heritage remains within the property of the proposed development, the Superintendence requires the following conditions (as already stated in the correspondence dated 27 September 2013):</p> <p>Prior to the issuing of a development permit on this site, the site is subjected to an archaeological evaluation in terms of the Cultural Heritage Act. This archaeological evaluation will be carried out in keeping with directions and Terms of Reference issued by the Superintendence and will be resourced by the applicant;</p> <p>The applicant is to communicate directly with the Superintendence by sending an email on heritage.superintendence@gov.mt to initiate the archaeological evaluation.</p>		
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APPENDIX III: Comments received following certification of the EPS (Public Consultation – 22nd August – 16th September 2014)

A. Naxxar Local Council (Email dated 16th September 2014)

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
<p>With reference to TRK 149186 (EA 00007/13) for the construction of a Fuel Station including: auto-gas, electric car charging, carwashes, ancillary Class 4 retail facilities and underlying garages as a replacement of two existing 2-storey buildings, at, Maghtab, I/o Naxxar please find attached objection letter by residents of Maghtab. Kindly note that the Naxxar Local Council supports fully this objection and its contents and hence we would like to be registered officially as objectors to this project.</p> <p>This application goes totally contrary to what the Local Plan states, in particular to CG04, which was ultimately discussed and agreed with the Local Council. Hence it could not be ignored.</p> <p>For this reason the Naxxar Local Council strongly opposes to this development and appeals to MEPA not to consider it further.</p>	<p>Comment for MEPA. It is noted that an assessment of the Scheme against planning policy is included Chapter 4 of the EPS. Please also refer to earlier responses in this Chapter of the Addendum.</p>	<p>Noted; comments on the issue related to the Draft Fuel Stations Policy is located in Section 4 of this report.</p>

B. Maghtab Residents Association (Email dated 16th September 2014)

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
<p>On behalf of the residents of Maghtab, we would like to submit our objection to this development as this will be detrimental to the immediate residents of the development and in the surrounding. According to the Central Local Plan, the site lies within a Category 2 settlement and a residential area. In the Mgarr petrol station case MEPA had declared "While Mepa recognises that it is not ideal that petrol stations, which are a potential hazard within our village cores, get relocated to outside development zone sites, with this particular application Mepa was restricted and legally compelled to issue this permit on this site." and "All the present activities are incompatible within the urban environment and are a health hazard to the local community."</p>	<p>Comment for MEPA. It is noted that an assessment of the Scheme against planning policy is included in Chapter 4 of the EPS.</p>	<p>Noted; comments on the issue related to the Draft Fuel Stations Policy is located in Section 4 of this report.</p>

C. Member of the Public - Perit Joe Cassar (Cassar, Grech & Ebejer) o.b.o. 116 petitioners

Comments	ADI Responses	EPD Comments
<p>Detailed comments, in the form of a petition, can be found in Section 2 of the EPS Addendum.</p>	<p>Section 2 of the EPS Addendum refers.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>