

ERA Report on the Environmental Impact Assessment

PA 00021/14: COMBINED CYCLE GAS TURBINE AND LIQUIFIED NATURAL GAS RECEIVING STORAGE AND RE-GASIFICATION FACILITIES; AND,

PA 00022/14: CONSTRUCTION OF JETTY AND ANCILLARY FACILITIES;

AT, DELIMARA POWER STATION, TRIQ IL-POWER STATION, MARSAXLOKK

1.0 Procedural aspects following proposed modifications to the approved development

Following the approval of the relevant development planning applications in March 2013, the applicant (ElectroGas Malta) informed the then MEPA that some modifications needed to be made to the approved:

- (i) Electricity generation, storage, receiving and regasification plant (PA 00021/14) and,
- (ii) The jetty and ancillary facilities (PA 00022/14).

The main modifications to the proposed development include:

- (i) Additional plant/buildings including a gas receiving station (GRS) and a building for switch gear;
- (ii) The relocation of the stacks of the gas turbines resulting from a modification to the design of heat recovery steam generator;
- (iii) The redesign of the regasification facility which resulted in its covering a larger footprint; and,
- (iv) The addition of a spread anchor system to which the floating storage unit (FSU) would be attached during major storm events.

The EIA Coordinator was originally requested to submit one statement regarding the modifications which were proposed for each of the two approved developments (one for each development planning application).

In terms of the marine aspects related to the proposed development, i.e. the jetty development (PA 00022/14), a statement regarding the modifications to the jetty and ancillary facilities was submitted in October 2015. The then EPD concluded that it was in agreement with the proposed conclusions made by the EIA Coordinator, where no additional impacts on marine ecology and marine archaeology were identified. In this regard, no further EIA-related assessment, in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2007 (S.L. 549.46) on this aspect of the development was required.

With reference to PA 00021/14, focusing on the land-based interventions, the Statement on the EIA (referred to as the EIA Addendum) was requested in the light of the proposed modifications to the combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT), the floating storage unit (FSU) for liquefied natural gas (LNG), and the re-gasification facility.

The EIS Addendum was issued for public consultation, together with the IPPC documentation (which was being processed in parallel) with the deadline for comments being 27th November 2016. A public hearing covering both processes was held on the 18th November 2016.

2.0 The 2016 update to the Environmental Impact Assessment

The EIA Addendum submitted in 2016 provided an update with respect to the following environmental aspects as follows:

- (i) **Land and sea uses**
No changes to the impacts already identified in the original EIS are envisaged; namely in relation with a larger footprint of the re-gasification facility and the relocation of the jetty and the spread anchor system.
- (ii) **Visual impact**
The EIA Addendum noted that that the amendments to the proposed development did not result in any significant changes to the manner in which the proposed development affects the landscape and visual amenity of the Delimara/Marsaxlokk area. In terms of the FSU, the EIA Coordinator notes that this will have an impact of high adverse significance on both the character and the visual amenity of Marsaxlokk Bay. Revised photomontages indicating such have been provided as part of this EIA Statement.
- (iii) **Marine Water Bodies**
The EIA Addendum indicated that the proposed modifications will not result in any changes to the impacts on water quality as already indicated in the 2013 study, and no additional mitigation measures are required.
- (iv) **Marine Ecology**
The EIA Addendum noted that the offshore sections of the proposed development would not result in any changes to the impacts on marine ecology during both construction and operational phases other than those identified in the 2013 EIS; would not result in any different impacts on the ecological status of the MTC107 water body; and thus no additional mitigation measures are envisaged.
- (v) **Marine archaeology**
No impacts on any marine archaeology sub-bottom targets are envisaged.
- (vi) **Cultural heritage (terrestrial)**
The EIA Coordinator notes that the impact of the proposed modifications on the terrestrial cultural heritage aspects is not considered to be any different to what was anticipated in the EIS; therefore no additional assessment was carried out.
- (vii) **Agriculture**
The impact of the proposed modifications on agricultural land is not considered to be any different to what was anticipated in the original EIS; therefore no additional impacts were envisaged.
- (viii) **Air quality (NO₂ and PM₁₀)**
The update to the air quality study indicated that there were no additional impacts associated with NO₂ and PM₁₀. In term of impacts in combination with all other sources (DPS and background), the new additional sources do not affect the overall impacts and compliance beyond the hourly NO₂ values during their limited hours of operation.

- (ix) **Sulphur dioxide emissions**
The modelling carried out as part of the EIA Addendum indicated that the emissions to atmosphere at the guaranteed maximum fuel sulphur content of 30 mg/Nm³ (273 k, 101.3 kPa) would be compliant with Regulation 3(3) in Legal Notice 11 of 2013, thus no additional mitigation measures would be required.
- (x) **Noise**
No new additional impacts are envisaged arising from the new proposal (both the CCGT and the FSU).
- (xi) **Climate change**
The EIA Consultant notes that the climate change aspect does not need to be revisited. The overall strategy whereby natural gas will be as principal fossil fuel to be used at the DPS will minimise substantially green-house gas (GHG) emissions; to the lowest possible minimum for any fossil fuel, given that natural gas produces 72% of the CO₂ that is produced by oil and 56% of that produced by coal.
- (xii) **Infrastructure**
The EIA Coordinator notes that no updating to the original EIA is required.
- (xiii) **Public access**
In terms of access, the EIA Coordinator indicates that the Delimara Power Station site shall not be accessible to the public, therefore no further comments on the matter were deemed necessary.
- (xiv) **Quantitative Risk Assessment**
The EIS indicates that the findings of the preliminary risk assessment prepared in 2013 are still valid. The statement indicated that additional detailed risk analysis studies would need to be carried out during later stages of the development (NB: Such studies have been now carried out as part of the IPPC process).
- (xv) **Health impact including waste management**
The EIA Coordinator concludes that this aspect of the EIS did not require any updating.
- (xvi) **Social impact**
The EIA Coordinator concludes that this aspect of the EIS did not require any updating.

The EIA Coordinator also provides the following conclusion (EIA Addendum; Pg. 81):

“On the basis of the findings of this Statement, this EIA Coordinator submits that this same Statement, together with the original Environmental Impact Statement – Delimara Gas and Power: Combined Cycle Gas Turbine and Liquefied Natural Gas Receiving, Storage and Re-gasification Facilities (Gauci, 2013) provide sufficient information for the decision-maker to judiciously determine whether the development proposal under consideration is acceptable or not under Maltese Environmental and Development Law.”

3.0 Environmental assessment of the proposed development and ERA position

As already indicated in the 2013 report on the EIA, the ERA acknowledges that the main justification for the proposed development is based on: (i) the National Energy Policy for the Maltese Islands, 2012, (ii) the economic considerations, and (iii) commitments with reference to EU environmental and energy policies. The proposal is intended to contribute towards an overall reduction in air pollution and is expected to function more efficiently in terms of fuel use and energy efficiency.

As discussed in the above sections, the EIA Addendum concluded that no new impacts are envisaged following the modifications and amendments to the development. The ERA is in agreement with the said conclusions of the EIA Addendum and has no further comments to add. No additional conditions are being proposed from an EIA point of view, other than those already included in the development planning permissions (PA 00021/14 and PA 00022/14).

ERA's assessment in terms of EIA as summarized in this report is primarily concerned with the environmental implications of the proposal, and is without prejudice to any other potentially relevant considerations (e.g. evaluation of safety risks, navigation and port management issues, etc.) falling within the competence of other authorities.
