

Environmental Impact Assessment

Schedule III

(Screening according to S.L.549.46)

ERA Reference no.: EA/00017/18

PA Reference no.: PA/07844/17

Project Title: Proposed four, above-ground, Class 4A Office Levels and one overlying receded floor Class 4A Office Level. One basement Level -1, Class 4A Offices Level and four underlying levels of Basement Car Parking at Basement Levels -2, -3, -4 and -5.

Location: Ex-Printex Factory, 70, Triq il-Mithna c/w Triq is-Sebh c/w, Triq Rikkarda Farrugia, Qormi, Malta

Screening date: April 2018

1. Description of Proposal

1.1 Outline of project/development

PA/07844/17 is a full development application for the construction of five levels of class 4A offices and a receded floor, and underlying levels (4) of basement parking (Table 1). The said development proposal replaces a printing press located at the corner where Triq il-Mithna meets Triq is-Sebh in Qormi. The proposal will also allow the construction and thus the completion of Triq Rikkarda Farrugia.

Table 1: Breakdown of levels (Source: PDS)

Level	Type	No.
Level -5	Parking spaces	196
Level -4	Parking spaces	192
Level -3	Parking spaces	192
Level -2	Parking spaces	192
Level -1	Offices	4,160m ²
Level 0	Offices	3,850 m ²
Level 1	Offices	5,030 m ²
Level 2	Offices	5,060 m ²
Level 3	Offices	5,060 m ²
Level 4	Offices	3,990 m ²
Total		27,150 m² offices 772 car parking spaces

1.2 Site description and related considerations

The site area is around 7,900m² (Figure 1 and 2) and the new development will have a building footprint of about 6,400m². The proposed uses will be similar to other office blocks and industrial uses in the area, which accommodate audit firms, corporate offices and banking/financial services amongst others in terms of height, scale and nature. The site lies adjacent to the Mrieħel bypass and the Mrieħel Industrial Estate. Agricultural fields are located circa 3 to 225m away from the site.



Figure 1: Location of the proposed development (blue): detail (Source: PA GeoServer)

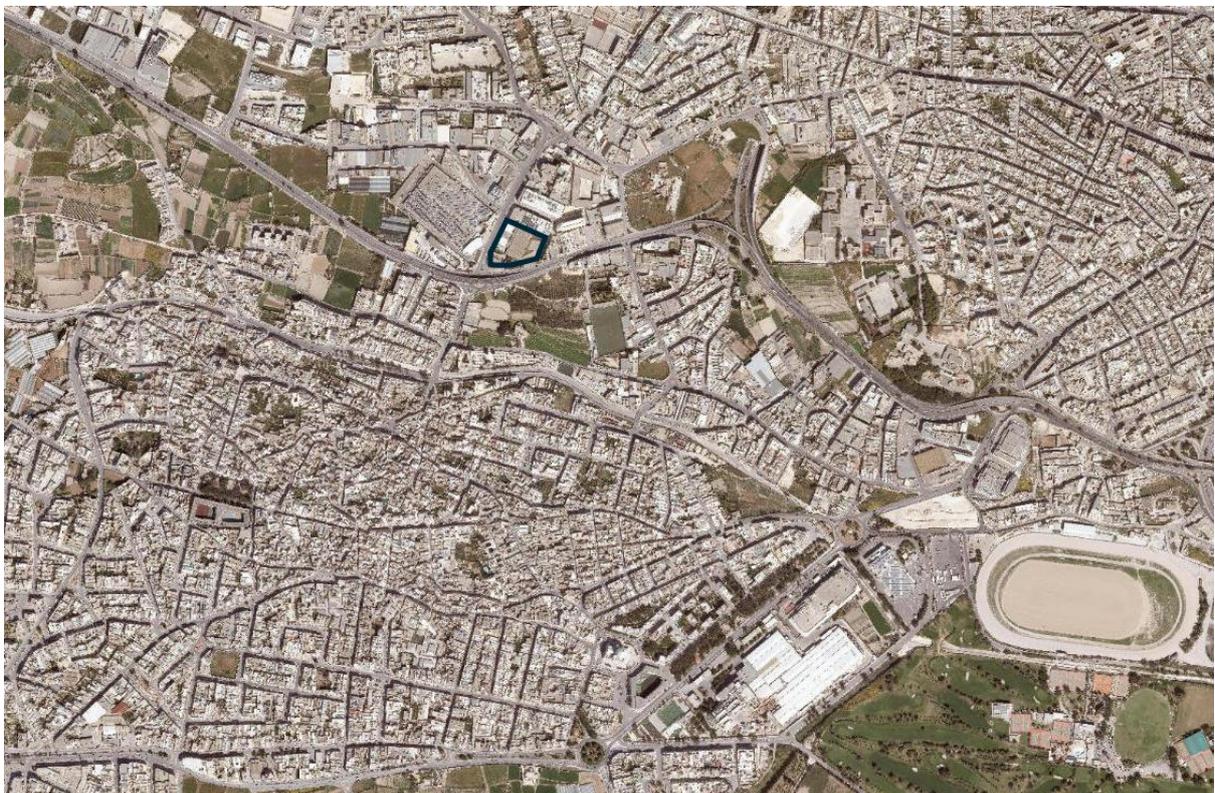


Figure 2: Location of the proposed development (blue): overview (Source: PA GeoServer)

1. EIA-relevant history

1.1. Relevant EIA/screening criteria (citations refer to S.L. 549.46, except where otherwise specified):

The proposal falls under Schedule I Category II Section 7.1.2.1 (iii) (Projects which have a gross floor area of 10,000 m² or more for commercial use, including shops, shopping centres, offices or other business); and Section 7.1.2.3 (Car-parks with a gross floor area of 15,000m² or more, or 600 parking spaces or more).

1.2. Documents used for screening:

1. PDS, as referred to ERA on 6th March 2018 (PA/07844/17/58a -b); and
2. Traffic Impact Assessment (PA/07844/17/46a).

2. Screening Matrix Checklist

The following screening checklist is based on information in the Project Description Statement provided by the developer in accordance with Schedule II of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 546.49) and the European Commission Guidance on Screening (2017).

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
1	Will construction, operation, decommissioning or demolition works of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, landuse, changes in water bodies, etc)?	Yes. Although the site itself is occupied by a printing press (Printex), the proposed complex will lead to physical changes in the land use due to its height and massing.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal will result in a major intensification of built development in an area which is already densely developed. Although the proposal will lead to physical changes in the area, no significant impacts are envisaged given that the proposal lies within a site designated for similar development, namely industrial, offices and retail.	PDS pg 2, 12
2	Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	About 94,000t of construction material for the actual construction will be used. Energy and water will be utilised during both construction and operation.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No. The use of such resources for this individual project <i>per se</i> is not likely to have a significant impact. The energy requirements of the proposal is expected to be minimal, thus no significant impact is envisaged. The PDS mentions the collection and reuse of second class water.	PDS pg 7, 16 & 18

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
3	Will the Project involve the use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health to the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>During demolition and excavation, the proposal will generate fugitive dust emissions.</p> <p>During operation, NO_x and PM₁₀ will be generated from the operational traffic.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Dust impacts during construction are short-term and temporary and can be mitigated through the Construction Site Management Regulations (S.L. 552.09) and through conditions in the mainstream development process mechanism. No significant environmental impacts are envisaged during construction.</p> <p>During operation, although the Traffic Impact Assessment shows that the proposal will have no noticeable adverse traffic impact, it is unclear whether there is an impact on air quality, as the proposal is expected to generate over 1000 AADT.</p>	PDS pg 5, 7, 18 & 22
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning?	<p>Yes. Solid waste during both construction and operation.</p> <p>Waste arising during construction will consist of demolition, excavation and construction waste in the form of inert material and rock (110,400t).</p> <p>During operation, the proposal will mostly generate municipal waste.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No. Given the nature of the development, the amount of waste to be generated during construction and operation is not considered to be significant.</p> <p>The waste generated during demolition and excavation will be carted off to authorised third party infilling sites.</p>	PDS pg 16 & 18
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air or lead to exceeding Ambient Air Quality standards in Directives 2008/50/EC and 2004/107/EC?	<p>Yes. During construction fugitive dust emissions from site clearance and excavation and exhaust (including NO_x and PM₁₀) from construction vehicles are expected.</p> <p>During operation, the proposal is expected to generate over 1000 AADT. As a result, NO_x and PM₁₀ from operational traffic to and from the development is envisaged.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>During construction, emissions of dust and NO_x are temporary and can be sufficiently mitigated through the application of measures identified in the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L.552.09). In this regard, the impact is not considered to be significant.</p> <p>Given that the proposal will generate over 1000 AADT, during operation, the impact is</p>	PDS Pg 5, 16. TIA pg 33

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			unclear and therefore an air quality study is required.	
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or the releasing of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	<p>The construction phase will give rise to noise and vibration.</p> <p>During the operational phase, noise is envisaged to be generated mainly through the offices and the car park.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Impacts from noise and vibration are temporary and not likely to be significant during construction as long as:</p> <p>(i) measures are adopted to reduce noise emissions at source;</p> <p>(ii) there is compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09); and</p> <p>(iii) Noise levels are within acceptable levels in accordance with BS 5228: Part 1: 1984: Noise control on Construction and Open Site – Code of Practice for Basic Information and Procedure for Noise Control.</p> <p>During operation, no significant impacts are expected from traffic generation in view that the site is located in close proximity to an arterial road network, thus vehicles will not travel through residential areas.</p>	PDS pg 9, 16 & 17
7	Will the Project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>During excavation and construction, there is potential risk of oil leaks and contaminated runoff from vehicle access routes on the site.</p> <p>During operation, there will be no handling of chemicals and oils on site.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The proposal is not likely to lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground, as long as the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L.552.09) are duly followed.</p>	PDS pg 17, 18
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect	No increase in the risk of accidents is envisaged, other than 'normal' occupational risks typically associated with construction activity and office operation.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.</p>	/

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	human health or the environment?			
9	Will the Project result in environmentally related social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	No changes are envisaged.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	
10	Are there any such factors which should be considered such as the consequential development which could lead to environmental impacts or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	The site and its surroundings area already extensively developed and the proposed development will not encroach beyond the delineated site boundaries. No factors are envisaged which could lead to consequential development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are being envisaged given that no potential consequential development is identified.	/
11	Is the project located within or close to any areas which are protected under international, EU or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Opposite to the site lies a Grade 1 scheduled windmill, referred to as <i>Il-Mithna tal-Erwieh</i> or <i>Il-Mithna ta' Pampalaw</i> , built around 1685 (GN 486 of 2012). Vibrations from the excavation works may further damage this cultural property.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged as long as compliance with the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09) during construction is duly adhered to.	Map Server
12	Are there any areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their	No protected areas are present on or around the site of the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/

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	ecology e.g. marshlands, wetlands, watercourses or other water bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the Project?			
13	Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over wintering, migration, which could be affected by the Project?	No such areas are known of on or around the site of the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters (or features of the marine environment on or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	There are no aquatic constraints on or around the site of the proposed development,	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/
15	Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which	No such areas or features are known of on or around the site of the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/

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	could be effected by the Project?			
16	Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the Project?	During the construction and operational phases, traffic will access and exit the site through the Mriehel bypass.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 5 refers.	PDS pg 15
17	Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the Project?	The road adjacent to the site of the proposed development (Mriehel bypass) is an arterial road and subject to heavy traffic flows and congestion during rush hours. The proposal is envisaged to employ circa 750 people during the operational phase, which could bring along an increase in the already heavy traffic flows.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to question 5 refers.	PDS pg 14, 17
18	Is the Project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	The proposal involves the construction of five levels of offices and underlying four levels of basement parking.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The proposal will be similar to other developments in the area, in terms of height, scale and nature, thus no significant impacts are envisaged..	PDS Pg. 1, 5 & 22
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location that could be affected by the Project?	Yes. Reply to Question 11 refers. Furthermore, a Class E Punic tomb (archaeological feature) lies in proximity to the site.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	Map Server
20	Is the Project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of	No. The site lies within the development zone boundaries. No greenfield land is present within the site boundaries.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged, as long as any discoveries are duly reported to the Superintendent for Cultural Heritage.	/

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
	greenfield/ODZ land?			
21	Are there existing land uses on or around the location e.g. homes, gardens, other private property, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying which could be affected by the project?	The site is located in between Qormi and Santa Venera, which include mainly private properties, but also commercial areas, public open spaces and community facilities. On the other hand, the site itself is located in an area predominantly characterized by industrial and commercial uses and agricultural uses (around 35 to 225m away from the site).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged given that the proposed uses are similar to what is currently present in and around the development site. There are no land uses which could be affected by the proposal.	CML P – SE1 & QO M1
22	Are there any plans for future land uses within or around the location which could be affected by the Project?	No such future land uses are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/
23	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, that could be affected by the project?	The site is located in between Qormi and Santa Venera, which are densely populated. The site itself is located in an area characterized by industrial and commercial uses and nearby agricultural uses.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged, given the nature of the proposal and the distance of the site to the densely populated areas.	CML P – SE1 & QO M1
24	Are there any areas on or around the location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities which could be affected by the project?	The site of the proposed development is located on approximately: - 500m from the St. Thomas Hospital, Qormi; - 500m from the St. George Parish Church, Qormi; and - 400m from the St. Michael School, Qormi.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts on the said sensitive land uses are envisaged, given that the proposal involves mainly the construction of office spaces.	Map Server

Question Number:	Questions to be Considered	Types and characteristics of identified potential impacts Briefly describe	Is this likely to result in a significant effect? Briefly justify	Document Reference
25	Are there any areas within or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	To the east of the site, agricultural fields are present, together with an abandoned field and a rural building, at a distance of approximately 100m from the site.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts on the said agricultural fields are envisaged, given that the development will retain the existing building footprint and will not take any agricultural land.	Map Server
26	Are there any areas within or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded that could be affected by the project?	The site of the proposal is located adjacent to the Mriehel Bypass, a main arterial network route, which is subject to heavy traffic flows and subsequent exhaust emissions during rush hours.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 5 refers.	PDS pg 11
27	Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, or subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	No, the likelihood of such extreme events in the area can be considered to be minimal.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/

4. EIA Screening Conclusion and recommended way forward

4.1 EIA screening conclusion

The above detailed EIA screening concludes that impacts of the development are unlikely to be significant to the point of warranting an EIA, as long as various mitigation measures are duly incorporated through the mainstream development consent mechanism. Further information is to be provided in relation to potential cumulative air quality impacts, through an air quality study. Any potential impact regarding air quality should be identified through this study and mitigated by means of conditions and specifications (e.g. approved documents) in the development permit.

In this regard, it was concluded that the proposal does not require the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment in line with the revised EIA Regulations, 2017 (S.L. 549.46).

4.2 Further submissions

4.2.1 Air Quality Study – Terms of Reference

This study should clearly establish the current background levels of pollution (including dust, chemical emissions such as VOCs, and odours) and should include a clear comparison to the relevant reference and limit values as specified in the relevant legislation as well as in any other relevant guidance documents. Details on prevailing wind and climate conditions should also be included, amongst other relevant parameters.

The methodology to be used should be submitted for ERA's evaluation prior to commencement of the studies. The Air Quality Study shall be conducted in accordance with the Standard Terms of Reference for Air Quality.

4.3 Screening disclaimer

The above screening results, the ensuing conclusions and recommendations are without prejudice to any required changes or updates should the development proposal be eventually modified or should the information/assumptions provided turn out to be incorrect. Any deviations of the proposal from this submission would need to be re-assessed and the merits of this screening would need to be re-opened.