

Environmental Impact Assessment

Screening

(According to Schedule IB of S.L. 549.46)

PA file no.:	PA 07240/16
Other reference:	EA 00018/17
Project Title:	To change use of property from parking of commercial vehicles as approved in PA7390/06 to an SME site (including excavation of basement) and erection of class 6a garages (storage & distribution) at ground floor and basement level. .
Location:	Site at, Ta' Xwieki, Triq, Tal- Balal, Iklin, Malta
Screening date:	May 2017

1. Description of Proposal

1.1 Outline of project/development

PA 7240/16 is an application for the construction of 29 garage units together with their respective basement in order to house the existing on site vehicles and equipment; the proposal also includes some office space and a kitchenette. The site is currently being utilised as an open storage facility where it is occupied by a number of trucks, caravans and lifters, mostly utilised for the filming industry in Malta. This site has been subject to various permits and, at present, is covered by permit PA 7390/06 for an open storage usage for the parking of commercial vehicles.

The site is serviced by electricity, but is not connected to the water and sewerage systems.

1.2 Site description and related considerations

The site is already committed to industrial use and lies within the Area of Containment between the localities of L-Iklin and San Ġwann. The site has an area of 8,842 m² and is serviced by a distributor road, namely Triq tal-Balal. It must be noted, however, that around 3,842 m² are going to be occupied by the proposed industrial units, with the remaining spaces consisting of circulation space and landscaping. Developments in the surrounding vicinity of the site are mainly of an agricultural nature, interspersed with industrial activity and pockets of miscellaneous built development.

Furthermore, the site lies: (i) within a Groundwater Safeguard Zone, and (ii) c. 300 metres from the Iklin Development Zone.

Figures 1 - 4 below indicate the location and plans of the proposed development.

1.3 Relevant Planning History

- **EC/00875/04:** Ghandek zvilupp li jikkonsisti minn twaqqiegh ta' serer ezistenti, tnehhija ta' hamrija, bini ta' struttura tal-bricks kif ukoll bdil t'uzu minn art agrikola ghall-post fejn qed tipparkja vetturi nkonnessjoni mal-attivita kummercjali tieghek u dan kollu minghajr permess (**Enforcement Action Closed - Permission was granted to sanction the illegal development**)
- **PA/05397/04:** To change use from agricultural to commercial for parking only of commercial vehicles and re-construction of dilapidated buildings (**Granted**)
- **PA/07390/06:** To sanction alterations and additions to buildings and change of use of site (**Granted**)
- **PA/07240/16:** Current Application



Figure 1: Location of the site earmarked for the proposed quay (Source: PDS)



Figure 2: Close-up of the site and its immediate surroundings (Source: PDS)



Figure 3: Proposed Plans (Source: PDS)

2. EIA-relevant history

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

At application screening stage (PA 07240/16/Doc. 41a), the proposed development was deemed to qualify for an EPS as per Schedule IA, Category II Section 3.7.B.2.2 (*Industrial developments not within an industrial estate with a gross floor area of more than 3,000m²*) of the EIA Regulations, 2007 (S.L. 549.46) and thus the submission of a Project Description Statement (PDS) was required.

2.2 Version of documents used for screening:

1. PDS dated 27th April 2016 (PA/07240/16/Doc. 49a).
2. Plans and Drawings (PA/07240/16/Doc. 49a).

3. Screening Matrix

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
1	Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, landuse, changes in water bodies, etc)?	<p>No.</p> <p>The site is currently being utilised as an open storage facility where it is presently occupied by a number of trucks, caravans and lifters. This site has been subject to various permits and, at present, is covered by PA 7390/06 for an open storage usage for the parking of commercial vehicles.</p> <p>The current application seeks to build 29 garage units, with some office space, over the already committed site.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No.</p> <p>Given that the site is already committed, the proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on the environment in terms of land use.</p>	PDS Pg. 3
2	Will construction or operation of the Project use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The proposal includes the use of a variety of building materials, including steel, concrete, bricks, plastic, membranes, and glass during construction, and of water and electricity during operations.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No.</p> <p>The use of such resources for this individual project <i>per se</i> is not likely to have a significant impact, particularly since the amounts expected to be used are minimal.</p> <p>The energy and water requirements of the project are expected to be minimal, thus no significant impact is envisaged.</p>	PDS Pg. 17
3	Will the Project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials or energy, especially any resources which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Dust emissions and aerial pollution will take place during site clearance, excavations and construction phases. Such emissions may have a temporary impact on the surrounding areas.</p> <p>During operations, pollutants from operational traffic to and from the site are expected.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Impacts associated with dust generation during the construction phase are not considered to be significance given the nature of the proposal, due the fact that construction is temporary and as long as the construction phase of the project respects the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 522.09).</p> <p>No additional impacts are expected during operation, as the current application seeks to construct garage units for the equipment already stored on site.</p>	PDS Pg. 24

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
4	Will the Project produce solid wastes during construction, operation or decommissioning ?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>During the excavation and construction phase, waste will include surface material removed from the site (c. 45,000 m³ of excavated rock) and normal construction waste streams associated with the construction of structures.</p> <p>The operational phase will produce low amounts of municipal waste from the offices and kitchenette, as well as grey water and sewage effluent from the toilets and showers.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No. The amount of waste to be generated during construction is not considered to be significant when considering the scale of the proposal.</p> <p>Any possible impacts may be sufficiently mitigated through the application of mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 522.09)</p> <p>Operational municipal waste may be absorbed by the existing national waste management mechanisms.</p> <p>Waste management on site is required to be carried out with the legal provisions of the Waste Regulations (S.L. 549.63).</p>	PDS Pgs. 16-21
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Dust emissions will be generated during site clearance, excavation and construction phases. Such emissions may have a temporary impact on the nearby residential dwellings and commercial areas.</p> <p>During operations, pollutants from operational traffic to and from the site are expected.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Impacts associated with dust generation during the construction phase are not considered to be of significance, given the nature and location of the proposal, due to the fact that construction is temporary and as long as the construction phase of the project respects the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 522.09).</p> <p>No additional impacts are expected during operation as the current application seeks to construct garage units for the equipment already stored on site.</p>	PDS Pgs. 24
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The proposal will generate noise, vibrations, and light emissions during site clearance, excavation and construction.</p> <p>During operation, noise is expected to be generated from the proposed activity. Light emissions may be generated during night-time.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged.</p> <p>During construction, noise, vibration and light impacts are likely to be short term, temporary and localised given the scale, duration and nature of the proposal.</p> <p>Operations are not likely to generate significant impacts due to the nature and scale of the proposal, especially since the current application only seeks to construct units for the equipment already stored on site.</p>	PDS Pg. 13

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
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>The site falls within the Groundwater Safeguard Zone under the Water Policy Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.100), thus the project may increase the risk of contamination of groundwater through the potential release of contaminated water, risks of oil leaks and accidental spillages from construction vehicles and operations on site.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>Likely impacts are not considered to be significant. The implementation of appropriate design and operational measures should suffice for ensuring that there is no percolation of waste materials into the groundwater. Furthermore, any spillages can be effectively prevented through the application of mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations, 2007 (S.L. 522.09).</p> <p>A number of mitigation measures will also be implemented during operations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All paved areas will have a membrane layer and sealed concrete to make them impermeable to any liquids. • All paved areas will be connected to an oil/water separator system where surface water runoff will be filtered, collected into two reservoirs and recycled for use as second class water on site and for irrigation. 	PDS Pgs. 22-23
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	No increase in the risk of accidents is envisaged, other than 'normal' occupational risks typically associated with proposed development.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged during both construction and operation.</p>	/
9	Will the Project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	No. The proposed development is not expected to lead to demographic or social changes.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>No significant changes are expected.</p>	PDS Pgs. 6, 24
10	Are there any such factors which should be considered such as the consequential development which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or	No impacts are envisaged. The site is already committed to industrial use and lies within the outside Area of Containment between the localities of L-Iklin and San Gwann. There are also numerous pockets of industrial development in the surrounding areas.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <hr/> <p>No significant changes are expected when considering the already committed nature of the site and the industrial uses in the surrounding areas.</p>	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	planned activities in the locality?			
11	Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the project?	No such areas are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
12	Are there any areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?	No such areas are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
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, overwintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?	No such areas are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which	Reply to Question 7 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 7 refers.	PDS Pgs. 23-24

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	could be affected by the project?			
15	Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be effected by the project?	No such areas are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
16	Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site is located along the distributor road of Triq tal-Balal. This road is used for access to the Naxxar and Iklin Development Zones, and the surrounding agricultural and industrial areas. An increase in traffic is expected during the construction phase.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No. Any impacts during construction are likely to be short term, temporary and localised given the scale, duration and nature of the proposal. Operations are not likely to generate significant impacts due to the nature and scale of the proposal, especially since the current application only seeks to construct garage units for the equipment already stored on site. No significant impacts are envisaged as the development is not expected to entail any substantial increase in traffic.	/
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?	Yes. Triq tal-Balal is prone to traffic congestion. However, it is not expected to be significantly affected by the proposed development. Reply to Question 16 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 16 refers.	/
18	Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Potentially yes, albeit limitedly. The site lies along Triq tal-Balal. Therefore, the proposal will likely be visible to people using this road. However, the site topography and surrounding uses are such that this development is not expected to stand out relative to the baseline situation.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The site topography and surrounding uses are such that this development is not expected to stand out relative to the baseline situation. This situation can be further improved through landscaping measures, to be applied directly through the mainstream development consent process.	/
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or	No such areas are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	around the location which could be affected by the project?			
20	Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	<p>No.</p> <p>The site is within an Area of Containment and is currently being utilised as an open storage facility which is occupied by a number of trucks, caravans and lifters. This site has been subject to various permits and, at present, is covered by permit PA 7390/06 for an open storage usage for the parking of commercial vehicles.</p> <p>The current application seeks to build 29 garage units, with some office space, over the already committed site.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No.</p> <p>As the site is already committed and designated as an Area of Containment, no significant impacts are expected.</p>	PDS Pg. 3
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?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Developments in the surrounding vicinity are mainly of an agricultural nature, interspersed with industrial activity and pockets of miscellaneous built development.</p> <p>Furthermore, the site lies c. 300 metres from the L-Iklin Development Zone.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Operations are not likely to generate significant impacts since the current application seeks to construct garage units for the equipment already stored on site. The site is already committed for broadly similar use/activity.</p>	
22	Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No - the site is committed for industrial use as per Area of Containment designation..	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged.</p>	/
23	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected by	<p>No.</p> <p>The nearest densely populated area (L-Iklin) lies c. 300 metres away and outside the expected area of influence of the development.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No significant impacts are envisaged.</p>	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	the project?			
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?	No such land uses are present.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
25	Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, which could be affected by the project?	Reply to Question 7 refers.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Question 7 refers.	/
26	Are there any areas on or around the location which have already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No such areas are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts envisaged.	/
27	Is the project location susceptible to earthquakes, or subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding	No. The likelihood of such extreme events in the area can be considered as minimal.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	or extreme or adverse climatic conditions e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?			

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 and mitigated by means of conditions and specifications (e.g. approved documents) in the development permit.

In this regard, the proposal does not require the submission of an Environmental Planning Statement (EPS), and qualifies for the exemption process as per Regulation 3(8) of S.L. 549.46.

Basic mitigation measures (as outlined in the above matrix) are to be duly addressed directly through the mainstream development permitting process namely:

- The application of mitigation measures identified in the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 522.09); and
- The management of wastes through the installation of sealed concrete flooring, a membrane layer, reservoir, and soil/water separator system.

4.2 Pending Further Submissions (Required pre-development permission)

1. The proposal qualifies for an Environmental Registration with ERA's Environmental Permitting Unit. Applicant is to be requested to immediately contact the Environmental Permitting Unit (industrial.applications@era.org.mt) to discuss the proposal further.

4.3 Proposed ERA Conditions.

Construction

1. Any soil on the site shall not be built over and shall be collected for re-use in accordance with the Fertile Soil (Preservation) Act, 1973. A permit from the Director of Agriculture may be required to remove the soil from the site and to transport it to a different location. This condition does not exonerate the applicant, contractor or any other relevant party from complying with all permitting requirements as may be applicable for deposition of the removed soil onto other land. In particular, the deposition and reuse of any soil removed from the site shall be approved in advance by ERA if it would involve deposition or re-use in any site which is located Outside Development Zones or within a scheduled or otherwise legally protected site or if the soil is to be used for land reclamation.
2. Any vegetation and non-inert waste on the site where the infilling will be carried out shall be removed prior to the commencement of backfilling operations.

3. All surface water runoff shall be entirely contained within the construction site and discharged through appropriate means and in appropriate locations. No overflows, spillages, seepages or leakages of runoff water shall be permitted to occur, whether intentionally or otherwise, to the ground or to the surrounding environment.

Operational

4. Within 3 months of issue of the development permission applicant shall submit an environmental registration/ permit application form to the ERA, compiled to their satisfaction. This shall cover all operational aspects of the applicant's site including related operations not necessarily covered by this development application.

Lighting and Landscaping

5. The permitted development shall not be a source of light pollution on ODZ areas, especially at night. The below requirements apply to the parts of the development on or facing ODZ areas;
 - i. lighting shall be strictly limited to within the developed part of the site, and its height and orientation shall be designed in a manner that it does not cause illumination beyond the development site;
 - ii. there shall be no lighting beyond the site boundary;
 - iii. the lighting fittings and their supports shall be installed on the inner side of any peripheral landscaping, so as to be screened by the landscaping itself; and
6. Landscaping shall be implemented in its entirety in accordance with the drawings at Doc. PA07240/16/1B. The landscaping scheme shall be implemented in its entirety prior to the issue of any compliance certificate on the site. The landscaping scheme shall be maintained in perpetuity.

Waste Management

7. When considering the waste management of the site, the following should be adhered to:
 - All operations concerning the management of waste are subject to the legal provisions of the Waste Regulations, 2011 (S.L.549.63) and the Waste Management (Activity Registration) Regulations, 2007 (S.L.549.45).
 - Inert waste material resulting from construction and demolition may be reused as fill material within the site as long as such reuse is in line with the approved plans and other conditions of this permit, or shall be deposited at facilities duly permitted by ERA and in accordance with the Waste Regulations, 2011 (S.L.549.63) and the Waste Management (Activity Registration) Regulations, 2007 (S.L.549.45).
 - All wastes shall be separated according to the different waste streams as per EWC codes as defined in Commission Decision 2000/532/EC, and deposited in sites permitted by ERA to accept such wastes; wastes to be recycled should be stored in a designated container or area and not mixed with other wastes.

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.