

Environmental Impact Assessment

Screening Report

PA file no.: TRK 160087

Other reference: EA 00003/16

Project Title: Demolition of existing structures and construction of fuel filling depot including ancillary offices, facilities and widening of access road.

Location: Has-Saptan, off Vjal I-Avjazzoni, Has- Saptan, Għaxaq, Malta

Screening date: January 2016

1. Description of Proposal

1.1 Outline of project/development

TRK 160087 seeks permission for the construction of a fuel dispensing station for the refueling of road tankers servicing local fuel service stations, with a site area of approximately 6,600 sqm. It is planned that gasoline, diesel, gasoil and other fuels shall be dispensed from filling points connected to 14 new prefabricated underground day tanks compliant to the standard EN 12285, each with a capacity of 100 cubic metres. The day tanks will receive fuel daily from the existing underground Has Saptan fuel storage facility via pipelines constructed within a new tunnel. The fuel dispensing station shall consist of six loading lanes with three loading arms in each lane supplying different fuels. Figure 1 below provides an indication of the general layout of the proposal:

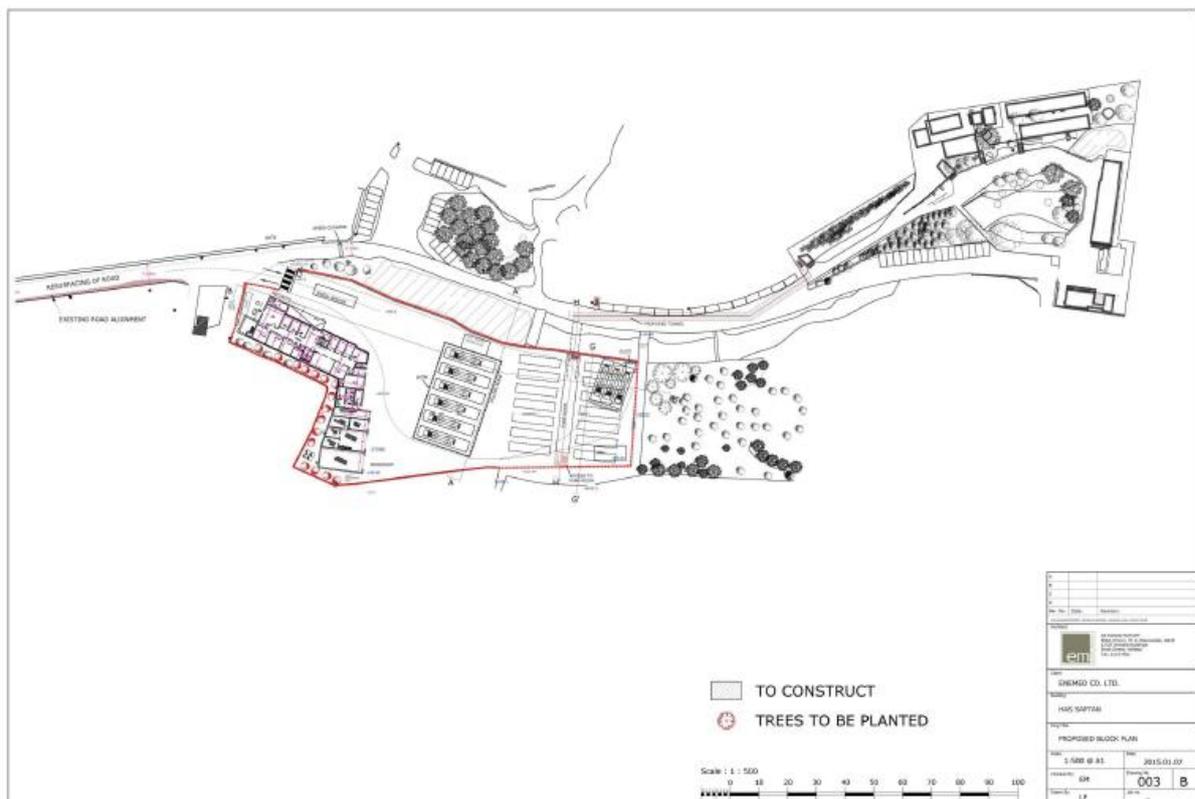


Figure 1: General layout of the proposed development
(Source: PDS, 2015)

Furthermore, the applicant (Enemed Co. Ltd,) intends to relocate the fuel dispensing station at the 31st March 1979 fuel installation at Birzebuga to the proposed site. The existing Has-Saptan fuel storage facility, is an underground fuel storage facility, with an area of 4,600sqm whose access is ocated over 40m away from the proposed site. The existing underground facilities have a total fuel storage capacity of around 170,000m³, part of which is currently rented out to third parties. The PDS notes that the current capacity of Has-Saptan will not be increased, as a result of which the applicant's (Enemed Co. Ltd.) total fuel storage capacity will be reduced by around 40,000m³, leading to a total of 130,000m³.

1.2 Site description and related considerations

The site earmarked for the proposed development is approximately 6,600 sqm, with current access through a narrow country road off Triq Ħal Far in Luqa. The site, as present, consists of a reclaimed agricultural field on the western side, with the eastern side consisting of an olive-carob afforested area, composed mainly of olive trees. A number of buildings (occupied by third parties) are located towards the west of the site. The northern boundary of the site and the area delineating the field from the afforested area contain rubble walls that divide fields into sections. Figure 2 provides an indication of the location of the proposed site.



**Figure 2: General layout of the proposed development
(Source: PDS, 2015)**

In terms of designations, the site falls within the area covered by the South Malta Local Plan (SMLP) and is partly covered by policy SMGH 03, which promotes the use of the olive grove for informal recreation and does not allow the development of any built structures other than those that may support the use of the area as a recreational area. The policy also prohibits the expansion of existing uses at the existing Has-Saptan underground fuel storage installation and encourages the relocation of such facilities elsewhere.

The site boundary is situated within the Għaxaq Environmental Constraints Map (Figure 3 below refers), as presented in the SMLP, and lies within an area that entirely or partly includes the following designations:

- Area of High Landscape Value (as designated through policy SMCO 04);
- Valley Protection Zone (as designated through policy SMCO 07);
- Aquifer Protection Zone (policy SMCO 06);
- Agricultural Area (policy SMAG 01);
- Proposed Area of Ecological Importance (AEI) and Site of Scientific Importance (SSI) (SMCO 03); and,
- Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (policy SMCO 04).

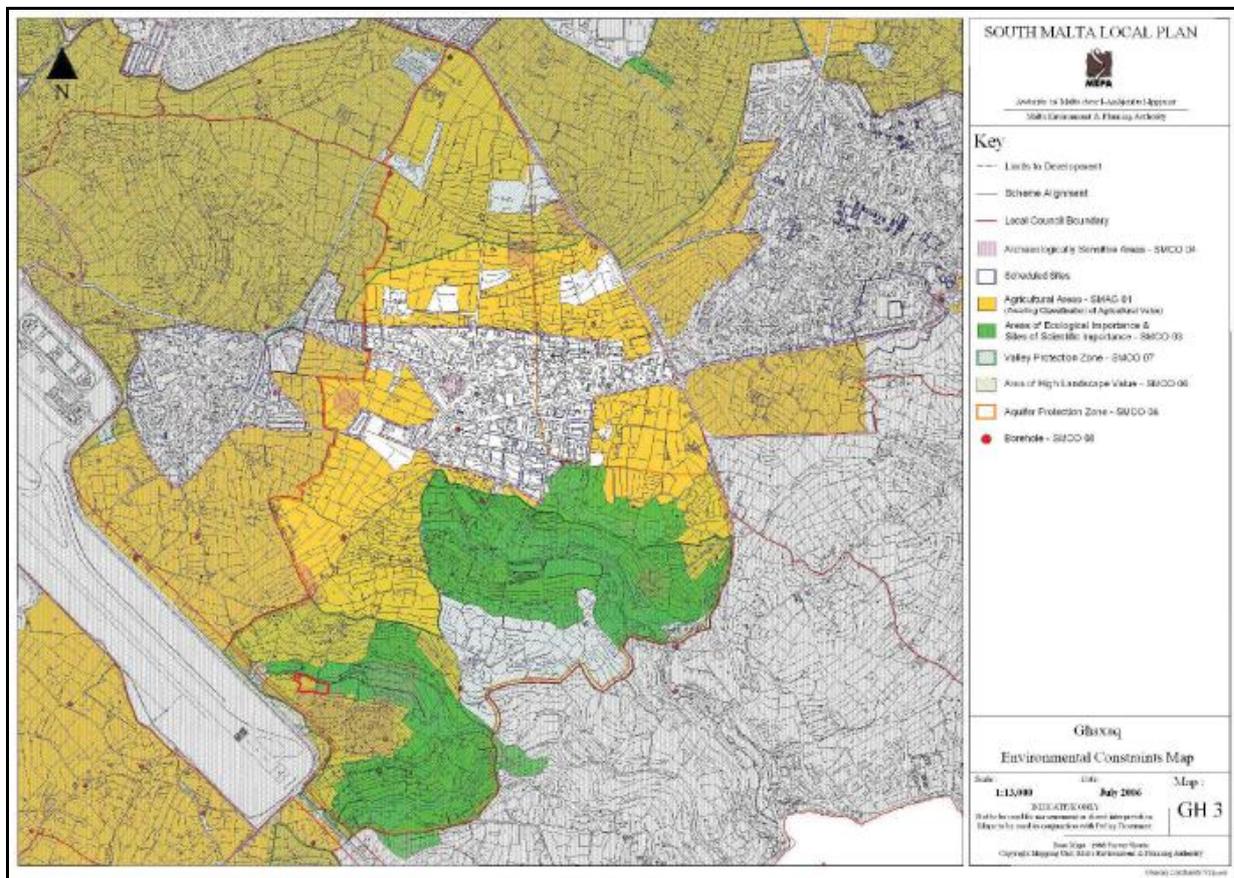


Figure 3: Għaxaq Environmental Constraints Map
(Source: South Malta Local Plan, 2006)

In terms of land uses, the PDS provides a detailed land-use survey (Figure 4 below refers) indicating that the primary land use in the area is agricultural. The existing Ħas-Saptan underground fuel storage facility is located east of the proposed site, and is surrounded by afforested land, which is the result of an afforestation project carried out after the excavation of the underground storage complex in the 1960s. A 70,000m³ water reservoir is located to the north of the site across the road leading to the underground fuel storage facility.



Figure 4: Surrounding Land-Uses
(Source: PDS, 2015)

With respect to ecology, part of the site is located in a proposed Area of Ecological Importance (AEI) and Site of Scientific Importance (SSI), and also lies within a Valley Protection Zone. The site consists partly of agricultural land and partly of an olive-carob planted woodland that has development into a high maquis, towards the eastern stretch of the site. In terms of archaeology and cultural heritage, the site is located in an area known for agricultural and funerary archaeological discoveries, and lies in an Archaeologically Sensitive Area.

There are no legally protected areas/scheduled areas in close proximity to the proposed development.

1.3 **Alternatives Considered**

The PDS discusses a number of alternatives, as follows:

- (1) **Alternative locations:** Discussions related to alternative locations focused on the following options:
- *'Do-nothing' option:* such option would require maintaining the current fuel dispensing facility at the 31st March 1979 installation at Birżebbuġa, which however is not considered favourably for environmental and risk reasons and will be relocated to the existing underground Has-Saptan fuel storage facility.
 - *Relocation to Ras Hanzir installation:* such option was considered for the fuel dispensing facility, however it was considered preferable, for logistical and operational efficiency reasons, to locate the dispensing facility close to an installation that is able to store the fuels being dispensed; however such option would have required the existing installation to be upgraded to start storing gasoline and other fuels. Moreover, the cost factor associated with the construction of new pipelines for gasoline, diesel and kerosene to another site was also considered given the higher costs involved, rendering such unfeasible. The close proximity to residential buildings in Paola and the MCAST campus also led to this option being discarded.
 - *Relocation to Wied Dalam installation:* such option was also taken into consideration; however it presented potentially significant environmental impacts due to its location within

a valley and its designation as an Area of Archaeological Importance and as a Special Area of Conservation of International Importance. Thus, such option was discarded.

- *A site at Bengħajsa*: such option was also considered, however the land at this site is not the applicant’s property – additionally, existing facilities in the area, including a gas bottling plant and the Oiltanking Malta Ltd facility would increase the hazards of the area. Moreover, such location would also require extensive construction of new pipework to connect the dispensing station to a storage location operated by the applicant.

The site currently under scrutiny in this proposal was chosen as the fuel dispensing station in view of its proximity to an existing site that is already permitted to store fuel, including gasoline.

(2) **Alternative layouts and techniques**: Several layouts and techniques were considered to the development’s operations and a number of refinements in the layout and design have resulted in the current proposal. These are detailed in paras. 70 – 74 of the PDS.

2. EIA-relevant history

2.1 **Relevant EIA/screening trigger** (citations refer to the EIA Regulations, 2007 (S.L. 504.79), except where otherwise specified): Schedule IA, Category II, Section 7.6.2.6 (Construction of a new fuel servicing station).

2.2 Version of documents used for screening:

1. PDS dated 9th November 2015.
2. Documents in related development permit application (TRK 160087).

3. Screening Matrix

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
1	Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the Project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, landuse, changes in water bodies, etc)?	<p>Yes. The proposal includes the construction of a fuel dispensing station for refuelling of road tankers, with a site area covering approximately 6,600sqm. The PDS indicates that gasoline, diesel, gasoil and other fuels shall be dispensed from filling points connected to 14 new prefabricated underground day tanks compliant to the standard EN 12285, each with a capacity of 100 cubic metres. The fuel dispensing station shall consist of six loading lanes with three loading arms in each lane supplying different fuels.</p> <p>The site, as present, consists of a reclaimed agricultural</p>	<p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>In terms of topography and physical changes to the site, the proposed development is likely to lead to significant impacts vis-à-vis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - impacts on landscape, given that the proposal shall introduce a new structure into an otherwise largely rural environment; - impacts on the ecological characteristics of the site, given that the development of the proposal shall result in the removal of protected trees and a reduction of the associated habitat; and, - impacts on agricultural land, with the loss of around 4,000sqm of agricultural land to be replaced by an industrial use. 	PDS Pgs. 1, 5, 6, 49, 50.

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
		field on the western side, with the eastern side consisting of an olive-carob afforested area, composed mainly of olive trees. A number of buildings (occupied by third parties) are located towards the west of the site. The northern boundary of the site and the area delineating the field from the afforested area contain rubble walls that divide fields into sections.		
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?	Yes. The proposal will take up approximately 6,600sqm of land Outside Development Zone and will make limited use of natural resources such as block work (1,800m ³), concrete (2,200m ³), sand (4,450m ³) and road surfacing (1,400m ³); local limestone, land, energy and water, which are non-renewable. Such resources are neither renewable nor in such short supply as to be markedly affected by this project <i>per se</i> .	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> The use of such resources for this individual project <i>per se</i> is not likely to have a significant impact, particularly since the amount of resources expected to be used are relatively minimal (when compared to other medium-to-large scale proposals). The energy requirements of the project are expected to be minimal, thus no significant impact in terms of energy requirements is envisaged.	PDS Pg. 41
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?	Yes; the project will entail the transportation of fuel (gasoline, diesel, gasoil and other fuels) to the site, the storage and supply of same fuel. Fumes and/or vapour emissions (including VOCs) are thus expected to be emitted, should there be no abatement. Furthermore, petrol, diesel and gas (LPG) are classified as hazardous substances.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is unclear on whether the project is likely to have a significant effect on the air quality of the area in terms of the additional fumes and/or vapour emissions (including VOCs) generated. No direct impacts with respect to health of human populations are expected given that the nearest settlement (Gudja) is located approximately 1km away from the site for the proposed development.	PDS Pg. 44,45

	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. During the construction phase, the principal wastes to be generated are the following: material from site clearance (vegetation and soil – 1100 cubic metres), demolition (concrete and masonry – 200 cubic metres), excavation (8,300 cubic metres) and other miscellaneous construction and finishing waste materials.</p> <p>In terms of operational waste, the PDS indicates that the following waste streams will be generated via the petrol station operations: oil-water separator contents, sludges, glycol from VRU, engine gear, lubricating and compressor oils, oil filters, brake fluids, antifreeze, oily rags and mixed municipal waste, including paper., most of which are of a hazardous nature.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Considering the nature and size of the proposal, the impacts arising from the amount of waste likely to be produced during site clearance, excavation and construction are not considered to be significant. The PDS notes the a ground investigation report has indicated that limestone fill reaches a depth ranging from 0.2m up to 2m in some areas (debris likely to have been generated from the excavation of the storage facilities already present on site). Estimates indicate that approximately 60,000 truckloads of inert waste were dumped in Has-Saptan valley and Wied Dalam.</p> <p>During operations, operational waste would need to be appropriately managed in view of the hazardous nature of certain waste streams.</p> <p>Waste management is subject to the provisions of the Waste Regulations, 2011 (Legal Notice 184 of 2011, as amended by Legal Notice 441 of 2011) and the Waste Management (Activity Registration) Regulations, 2007 (Legal Notice 106 of 2007).</p>	PDS Pg. – 43, 44.
5	Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	<p>Yes. Dust may be released during site clearance and excavation. Emissions, including fumes and/or vapour emissions (including VOCs), during operation of the fuel petrol station may occur. It is further noted that petrol vapours contain benzene which is classified as a carcinogen.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Unclear. Impacts associated with dust generation during the construction phase are not considered to be of major significance, given the amounts of excavations required for the proposal, and as long as the construction phase of the project abides with the requirements of the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations,</p>	PDS Pg. 44

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
			<p>2007 (Legal Notice 295 of 2007). Moreover, such impacts are of a temporary nature and can be appropriately mitigated.</p> <p>During operation, the project is likely to introduce higher levels of benzene (a carcinogen) and VOCs amongst others. These emissions are directly related to the operation of the fuel filling service station. The significance of the impacts arising from increased levels of benzene and VOC pollutants, during refuelling, on surrounding areas is considered to be unclear.</p>	
6	Will the Project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes. The project will be a source of noise and vibration during both the construction and the operation phase of the project. Noise and vibration during operation are expected to result from the operation of the fuel dispensing facilities pumps, and any associated loading and unloading.	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>It is unclear whether noise and vibration impacts will be of significance. The project will result in the introduction of new machinery and activity in a site which is currently undeveloped (on land), and hence the impact from the net increase in environmental noise in the area and on the immediate surrounding uses is considered to be unclear.</p>	/
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?	Yes. There is a risk of surface contamination of land and water, including groundwater due to fuel spillages, leaks of any hazardous waste and runoff, as well as in the event of any leakage from the storage tanks, which may affect the underlying bedrock and aquifer. Of particular note is that the site is located adjacent to the Has-Saptan borehole and the Has-Saptan valley, is within the Groundwater Protection Zone and the groundwater at the site is the Mean Sea Level	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Unclear; potential impacts on both the underlying bedrock and aquifer (Mean Sea Level Aquifer) may occur. The PDS indicates that any risks of contamination shall be mitigated through appropriate measures such as: the installation of impermeable surfacing throughout the site; the implementation of a surface water management system that includes separate collection of roof water and rainwater from outdoor areas; and day tanks are to be double-skinned and</p>	PDS Pg. 68

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
		Aquifer.	equipped with appropriate leak detection systems. Although this indicates that risks of contamination may be adequately mitigated through the implementation of good construction management and operational practices, the proposal involves a potential high contamination activity, given the proximity of the site to Wied Has-Saptan.	
8	Will there be any risk of accidents during construction or operation of the Project which could affect human health or the environment?	Yes. Mainly risks during operation due to potential leaks, emissions, polluted runoff from the site, and other worst-case scenarios such as fires or explosions.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is unclear whether the project is likely to result in significant impacts vis-à-vis the existing baseline situation. The project will introduce increased risks vis-à-vis fuel leaks, benzene and VOCs emissions, which may potentially have cumulative/secondary impacts with the underground fuel storage facilities already found on site.	/
9	Will the Project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles, employment?	No changes in demography and traditional lifestyles are expected given the nature of the proposed development. In terms of employment, the PDS indicates that the proposed fuel-filling depot shall employ approximately 18 people during the construction phase and approximately 40 people working on the site during operations.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant negative impacts are envisaged.	PDS Pg. 48
10	Are there any such factors which should be considered such as the consequential development	TRK. 160087 only relates to the development of the fuel dispensing station for refuelling of road tankers, arising from the decommissioning of the 31 st March 1979 installation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear; it is not clear as to whether the development of a fuel dispensing facility at Has-Saptan, located on the same site being used for underground	PDS Pgs. 1, 2.

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	which could lead to environmental effects or the potential for cumulative impacts with other existing or planned activities in the locality?	located in Birżebbuġa (which in accordance to a decision by Government, would be closed down by June 2017). The relocation of the facilities shall also lead to the upgrading of the fuel storage facilities to bring such in line with all the necessary regulatory requirements. The PDS notes that there will be no increase in the current capacity of the Has-Saptan storage facilities.	storage of fuel, would lead to any cumulative impacts arising from such a proposal.	
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?	<p>No legally protected areas for ecological and landscape value are present on the proposed site per se. The site falls within the area covered by the South Malta Local Plan (SMLP) and is partly covered by policy SMGH 03, which promotes the use of the olive grove for informal recreation and does not allow the development of any built structures other than those that may support the use of the area as a recreational area.</p> <p>The site boundary is situated within the Ghaxaq Environmental Constraints Map (Figure 3 below refers), as presented in the SMLP, and lies within an area that entirely or partly includes the following designations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Area of High Landscape Value (as designated through policy SMCO 04); - Valley Protection Zone (as designated through policy SMCO 07); - Aquifer Protection Zone (policy SMCO 06); - Agricultural Area (policy SMAG 01); - Proposed Area of Ecological Importance (AEI) and Site of Scientific Importance (SSI) 	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Unclear; the proposed site is located on agricultural land and part of an olive-carob woodland. The PDS notes that although this area was originally planted as part of a rehabilitation project, the ecological value of the area today is noted in particular in relation to the maquis species established in the area. The development proposal shall result in the removal of a number of protected trees from the site and a reduction of the associated habitat as well as lead to loss of agricultural land, which could lead to potentially significant impacts.</p> <p>The PDS also notes that during operations, potential impacts may result due to accidental spillages of petroleum products resulting in contamination of the surrounding environment and an increased fire risk. Therefore, impacts on ecology in the area are considered to be unclear and merit further assessment.</p> <p>In terms of cultural heritage, the site is located in an area that is considered to have high cultural heritage value, and its topography suggests that it may yield further archaeological</p>	PDS Pg. 17 – 19, 50

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
		<p>(SMCO 03); and, - Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (policy SMCO 04).</p> <p>A number of species of conservation significance, as protected under the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations, 2006 (Legal Notice 311 of 2006) and the Trees and Woodlands Protection Regulations, 2011 (Legal Notice 200 of 2011) are the following: - <i>Ceratonia siliqua</i> (Carob); - <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> (Hawthorn); - <i>Capparis orientalis</i> (Caper); - <i>Carlina involucrata</i> (Carline Thistle); and, - <i>Olea europaea</i> (Olive).</p>	<p>discoveries. In this regard, the PDS notes that potential impacts could arise from possible loss or damage to unrecorded archaeological or cultural heritage discoveries on site during excavation, making the impact on archaeological/cultural heritage assets unclear.</p>	
12	<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, which could be affected by the project?</p>	<p>Reply to Question 11 above refers.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reply to Question 11 above refers – impacts on sensitive ecological locations, i.e. olive-carob woodland, agricultural land; located in the area for the proposed site could lead to potentially significant impacts and therefore merit further assessment.</p>	<p>PDS Pg. 17 – 19, 50</p>
13	<p>Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora</p>	<p>Reply to Question 11 above refers.</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reply to Question 11 above refers – impacts on sensitive ecological locations, i.e. olive-carob woodland, agricultural land; located in the area for the proposed site could lead to potentially significant impacts and</p>	<p>PDS Pg. 17 – 19, 50</p>

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over wintering, migration, which could be affected by the project?		therefore merit further assessment.	
14	Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The site lies adjacent to the Has-Saptan borehole and the Has-Saptan valley, and is within the Groundwater Protection Zone.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear. Given the nature of the proposed development (i.e. fuel dispensing facilities), impacts on hydrology and hydrogeology may occur due to accidental spills or leaks of hazardous raw materials (petroleum products) and waste, which could result in potentially significant contamination of the underlying bedrock and aquifer.	PDS Pg. 51
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 known areas or features of particular landscape or scenic value are located in or around the site; however the proposed development consists of a reclaimed agricultural field on the western side, with the eastern side consisting of an olive-carob afforested area, composed mainly of olive trees.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. The development will introduce a new structure into an otherwise largely rural environment – the PDS notes that major adverse landscape impacts in terms of the landscape vaule of the site and the introduction of the proposed facility in an otherwise largely rural landscape. In terms of visual amenity, impact on such is considered to be of relatively minor significance.	PDS Pg. 49; Appendix 6
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 can be accessed through a narrow country road off Triq Hal Far, Luqa.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No; no significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/
17	Are there any transport routes on or around the	No such transport routes are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?		envisaged.	
18	Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	No. The PDS notes that the development is considered to be visible from only one suitable viewpoint where the proposal is considered likely to result in an impact.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No. The proposal is not considered to have a significant impact on visual amenity and thus impact is considered to be of minor significance.	PDS Pg. 49
19	Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	Yes. In terms of cultural heritage, the site is located in an area that is considered to have high cultural heritage value, and its topography suggests that it may yield further archaeological discoveries.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear. The PDS notes that potential impacts could arise from possible loss or damage to unrecorded archaeological or cultural heritage discoveries on site during excavation, making the impact on archaeological/cultural heritage assets unclear.	PDS Pg. 50
20	Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes. The proposed site consists of a reclaimed agricultural field on the western side, with the eastern side consisting of an olive-carob afforested area, composed mainly of olive trees. A number of buildings (occupied by third parties) are located towards the west of the site. The northern boundary of the site and the area delineating the field from the afforested area contain rubble walls that divide fields into sections.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> In terms of topography and physical changes to the site, the proposed development is likely to lead to significant impacts vis-à-vis: - impacts on landscape, given that the proposal shall introduce a new structure into an otherwise largely rural environment; - impacts on the ecological characteristics of the site, given that the development of the proposal shall result in the removal of protected trees and a reduction of the associated habitat; and, - impacts on agricultural land, with the loss of around 4,000sqm of agricultural land to be replaced by industrial use.	PDS Pgs. 1, 5, 6, 49, 50.

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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?	Yes. The nearest residential area of Gudja is located approximately 1km away from the proposed development. The proposal is also located in close proximity (within 150m) of the Malta International Airport runway.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear. Impacts associated with environmental risk in relation with the combination of the installation of a fuel dispensing system and the underground fuel storage already located in the area are considered to be unclear at this stage.	PDS Pg. 51, 52.
22	Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No. None that are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are envisaged.	/
23	Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected by the project?	Yes. The nearest residential area of Gudja is located approximately 1km away from the proposed development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No. Given the distance from the proposed development, no significant impacts in terms of impacts on land-uses, particularly residential, are envisaged.	/
24	Are there any areas on or around the	No. None that are known of.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant impacts are	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
	location which are occupied by sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities which could be affected by the project?		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?	Yes. The site lies adjacent to the Has-Saptan borehole and the Has-Saptan valley, and is within the Groundwater Protection Zone. With respect to agricultural land, the proposal will result in the loss of around 4000sqm of agricultural land which will be replaced with an industrial use.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. Given the nature of the proposed development, impacts on hydrology, hydrogeology and potentially on Wied Has-Saptan may occur due to accidental leakages of oils and lubricants during construction and of accidental leakages of petroleum products. Furthermore, significant impacts on agricultural land are envisaged, with the loss of around 4,000sqm of agricultural land to be replaced by industrial uses.	/
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 present within the site, or its immediate surroundings.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged.	/

	Issues to be considered	Relevant constraints, environmental considerations & potential impacts	Is any significant effect envisaged?	Document reference
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.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unclear <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> No significant environmental impacts are envisaged, given the location of the proposed development.	/

4. EIA Screening Conclusion and recommended way forward

4.1 EIA screening conclusion

The above EIA screening matrix indicates that the proposed development qualifies for an EIA as per Schedule IA, Category 7.6.2.6 of the EIA Regulations, 2007 (S.L. 504.79), which would need to address the following aspects:

- Impacts on land use, topography and landscape;
- Impacts on the ecological characteristics of the site, given that the development of the proposal shall result in the removal of protected trees and a reduction of the associated habitat;
- Impacts on agricultural land, with the loss of around 4,000sqm of agricultural land to be replaced by industrial;
- Effects of the proposal on air quality, including effects on public health;
- Impacts due to increased noise and vibrations;
- Risks of land contamination/impacts on hydrology and hydrogeology from possible spillages or leakages, particularly due to the proximity of Wied Has-Saptan;
- Risks to the environment given the storage of hazardous substances;
- Possible impacts on any archaeological/cultural heritage assets that might potentially be located within the area; and,
- Cumulative impacts on the surrounding area of influence.

In the light of the above, it is being confirmed that:

1. The proposed development qualifies for an EIA (Environmental Planning Statement - EPS); and,
2. The envisaged impacts of the proposal are such that the development cannot be exempted from such EIA requirement.

4.2 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.