

# Environmental Impact Assessment

## Screening according to Schedule III of S.L. 549.46

<b>ERA Reference no.:</b>	EA/00052/20
<b>PA Reference no.:</b>	PA/02262/20
<b>Project Title:</b>	Construction of two storey car park for 506 small to large private vehicles and bike park.
<b>Location:</b>	Site at, Ta' Qali, Attard
<b>Screening date:</b>	January 2021

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## I. BACKGROUND

### 1. Outline of Proposal

- 1.1 The proposal seeks to remove and relocate the existing Nissen Huts, excavate and construct a two-storey car park and bike park in Ta Qali, Attard (Figure 1).
- 1.2 The proposal will cover a total site area of circa 10, 300 m<sup>2</sup> and a Gross Floor Area (GFA) of circa 19, 800 m<sup>2</sup>. The building structure will be composed of a reinforced concrete frame with beams and columns at regular intervals and roofed over with pre-stressed concrete slabs.
- 1.3 The interventions being proposed are designed so that the lowest level of the car park is one storey lower than the lowest level of the road, a ground floor car park and a bike park at the uppermost level (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 1: Block plan showing existing trees and structures (Source: E-apps doc PA2262/20/64d)

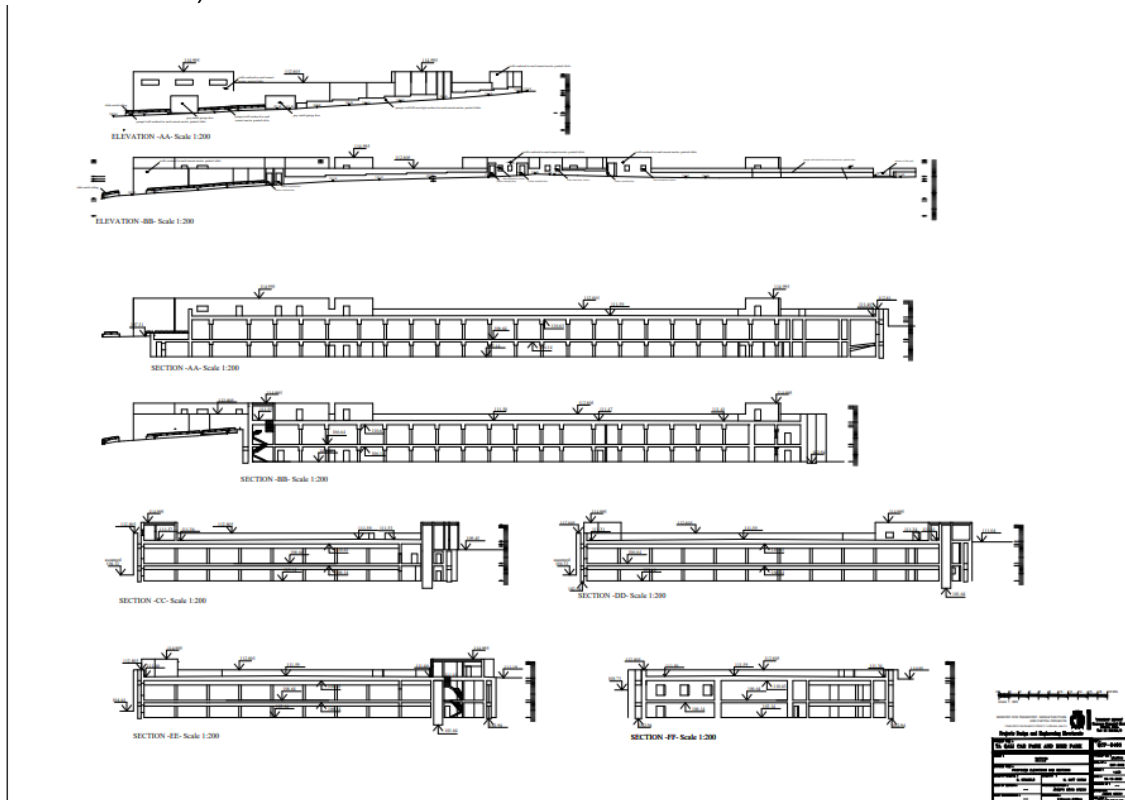


Figure 2: Proposed elevation and sections (Source: E-apps doc PA2262/20/67e)

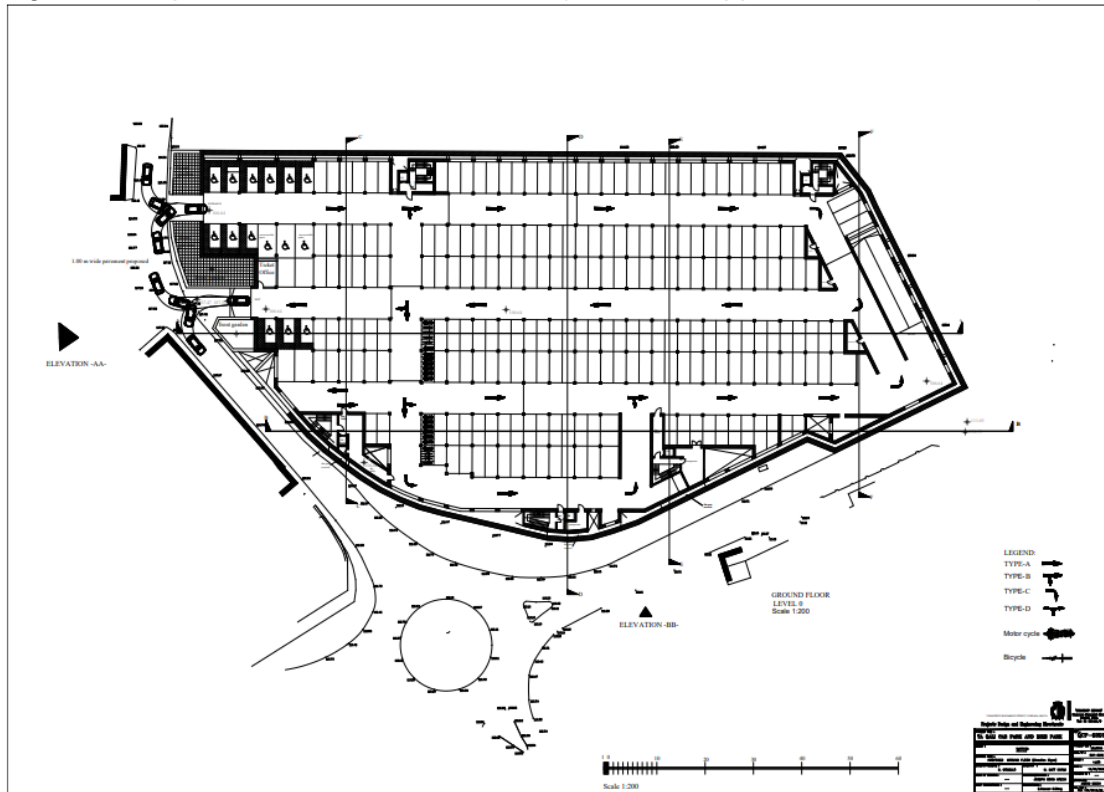


Figure 3: Proposed Ground floor plan (Source: E-apps doc PA2262/20/67c)

## 2. Site context

2.1 The proposed site is located in Ta Qali, Attard, Outside Development Zone (ODZ) (Figures 4 and 5) and is:

- within the 100 and 200m buffer line from the Groundwater Safeguard Zone as identified by MRA under the Water Policy Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.100),
- within the area designated as a Bird sanctuary – Ta' Qali – as per LN 41/03, and
- circa 100 m away from the scheduled Area of High Landscape Value of Chadwick Lakes, and part of Mdina as per G.N. 1236 of 2012.

2.2 The site was previously part of Ta' Qali Airfield, but once this was decommissioned it was used as part of a factory which manufactured concrete products. Presently, part of the site is derelict abandoned land comprising of various abandoned Nissen huts and rooms, whereas the remaining site is organic soil (Figures 6 and 7).

2.3 The site is surrounded by the Malta Basketball Pavilion to its north, the Ta Qali National Stadium and Malta Aviation Museum to the west, the Crafts village to its south and an area which is being constructed for recreational purposes to its east.





Figure 4: Map showing the location of the proposed development (Source: PA Geoserver, 2016)



Figure 5: Map showing a close up of the location of the proposed development (Source: PA Geoserver, 2016)





Figure 6: Photo taken during a site visit showing the organic soil (December 2020)



Figure 7: Photo taken during a site visit showing the Nissen huts (December 2020)

### 3. Case history

The site was previously subject to the following planning applications:

3.1 PA/04836/97 – No information is available on e-apps.

3.2 PA/02604/99 – To convert existing building & 6 huts into a Military Vehicles Museum Complex (mainly World War 11). Application includes display hall, restoration workshop & storage space for vehicles awaiting restoration for display. *Application was approved.*

3.3 PA/03139/02 – Cycle / Jogging tracks verges and pavements. *Application was approved.*

3.4 PA/04626/20 – Upgrading and extension of the present formal garden on the basis of the original designs by Architect Joseph M Spiteri (1934-2013). Works include the removal of several post war accretions, the reversal of soil erosion and desertification, and extensive landscaping works. New facilities to be provided include family facilities and refreshment kiosks. The Greek theatre will be completely refurbished and finished in such a manner that accentuate its geometric lines; the area underneath the seating will be transformed into a multi-media gallery and other facilities. *Application is at screening stage but according to the site plan at doc. PA/04626/20/53a, the proposed development will not overlap this application.*

The site was previously subject to the below Enforcement notification:

3.5 EC/00055/18 - Dumping of construction material. *Enforcement Action Closed - Illegal development was removed by PA.*

## 4. Screening Criteria

### 4.1 EIA Screening

*(citations refer to S.L. 549.46, except where otherwise specified):*

The proposed development falls within the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (S.L. 549.46), notably in terms of the following Category II criteria in Schedule I: 7.1.2.3. *Car parks with a gross floor area of 15, 000 m<sup>2</sup> or more, or 600 parking spaces or more.* Therefore, the proposal was also screened in terms of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46).

## 5. Documents used for screening

- a. Revised Project Description Statement (PDS) referred to ERA on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (PA/02262/20/61a), via e-apps (PA/02262/20/57b),
- b. ERA's pre-screening replies at doc. PA/02262/20/28a, 44a and 51a,
- c. Site visit held in December 2020, and
- d. Other documents such as plans, sections etc. at docs: 1a, g, d, 64d – 67e.

## II. ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSAL

### 6. Assessment of Impacts and Ancillary Considerations

*(Screening in terms of Schedule III of the EIA Regulations, S.L. 549.46)*

#### Land use and visual impact

6.1 Part of the site is occupied by derelict Nissen huts and rooms, whereas the remaining part of the site consists of organic soil. The proposed development has a total footprint of c. 10, 300 m<sup>2</sup> and will include the interventions listed in Section 1 above. Given that the predominant land uses where the proposed intervention lies is related to sports and recreational facilities, being within the Malta Ta' Qali National Park, the proposed change in land use is not going to have a significant effect on the environment.

6.2 Even though the proposal will be visible from the main road, mainly due to its height, the site is not considered sensitive from a landscape point of view. Given the location of the project, no significant impacts are being envisaged.

#### Trees and soil

6.3 Within the proposed site, there are 23 trees (of which 15 are protected) which will be removed. A nature permit for tree uprooting and compensation planting has already been submitted to ERA and is currently pending further information. In this regard, no significant impact is being envisaged.

6.4 The PDS also mentions that c. 10, 000 cu.m. of organic soil will be transported to nearby sites. Whilst ERA has no objection in this regard, it is to be noted that this favourable consideration only covers this development permit and it should not be considered as an indirect authorisation to other interventions on other sites located Outside Development Zone.

6.5 In addition, where appropriate, green infrastructure are recommended. Reference is also made to ERA's Information Document, 'Investing in the Multi-functionality of Green Infrastructure (GI)' (<https://era.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GI-InformationDocument-ERA-2019.pdf>) outlining practical applications of how resource planning and conservation can be achieved.

#### Waste

6.6 The PDS indicates that the main volume of waste expected to be generated is during excavation (c. 88, 400 cu.m.). The excavated material will be reused to infill sites in various areas at Ta' Qali or in future land reclamation. Impacts from the waste during construction are not expected to be significant. Given the nature of the proposal, during operation only small amounts of municipal waste will be generated. In this regard, the project is not envisaged to have significant waste impacts during operation.



### Air quality

6.7 Airborne dust and emissions are expected during the demolition, excavation and construction phases of the project. Associated environmental impacts are not considered to be significant in view of the temporary nature and short-term duration of the construction phase. Impacts can also be mitigated through the use of dust suppression methods and standard measures in accordance with the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L.552.09).

6.8 The expected increase in AADT is of 142 vehicles. Thus, no significant impacts are being envisaged during the operational phase in relation to air quality.

### Noise and light emissions

6.9 Noise and light emissions during the demolition, excavation and construction phases are likely to have a short-term and temporary impact. In addition, in view of the location and the absence of any sensitive receptors, no significant impacts are envisaged.

6.10 With regard to noise during operations, although the car park may generate an increase in traffic flows, there are no sensitive receptors. In addition the PDS also mentioned that acoustic lining and foam will be applied in ducting to reduce noise levels. In this regard, any increase in noise levels is not envisaged as significant.

6.11 As for the light emissions during operation, the PDS mentions that to limit the use of lighting, a surrounding space around the circumference of the building will be constructed around the building separating the car park from the road and the adjacent sites that will create natural lighting. In this regard, no significant impacts are being envisaged. In addition, ERA recommends the installation of energy-efficient luminaries/lighting systems as well as renewable energy. In this regard, plans to install Building Applied Photovoltaics (BAPVs) on roofs of the proposed car-park or any other renewable energy installations, are highly encouraged. Such measures are also in line with 'Malta's Sustainable Development Vision for 2050' objective to transition towards low-carbon energy.

### Cultural heritage

6.12 The site contains six Nissen huts which are historic military structures which were used during the World Wars and thus have a degree of cultural heritage value. Therefore, as also stated in the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (SCH) consultation reply on E-apps (doc. 53a), these should be dismantled and relocated. In view of this, direct consultation with the SCH is to be undertaken.



## 7. Permitting Requirements

The proposal qualifies for a Nature Permit. Applicant is already in liaison with the ERA's Permitting Unit in this regard.

## III. ERA CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD

The above detailed EIA screening concludes that the proposed development does not require an EIA, in accordance with Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46) and thus, the case is favourably considered as long as the various mitigation measures are duly incorporated into the mainstream development consent mechanism and mitigated by means of conditions and specifications (e.g. approved documents) in the development permit.

ERA requests that the conditions annexed with this consultation reply (Annex II) are duly included as an approved document in the permit.

### ***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.*