

# Environmental Impact Assessment

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

<b>ERA Reference no.:</b>	EA/00023/21
<b>PA Reference no.:</b>	PA/01304/20
<b>Project Title:</b>	Sanctioning of existing structures and aggregate spaces (including stone crusher, weighing scale, pre-1967 structure and area used for stockpiling of materials). To propose an extension to stores approved by virtue of PA 2530/04 and construction of office space.
<b>Location:</b>	Road Servicing Ltd, Triq il-Hwawar ta, Ix-Xwieki, Iklin
<b>Screening date:</b>	November 2021

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## I. BACKGROUND

### 1. Outline of Proposal

1.1 The proposed development seeks to:

- i) sanction the existing structures and equipment (including stone crusher, weighing scale, pre-1967 structure and area used for stockpiling materials),
- ii) extend an approved facility (PA02530/04),
- iii) build a roof over the conveyors and enclose them by means of a curtain, and
- iv) construct an office building (Fig. 1)

1.2 The PDS explains that the mineral will consists of scarified material derived from road repair/upgrading projects. The crushed material will be transported to a mixing/batching plants located elsewhere and it would be mainly used in base-course mixes for road construction.

1.3 The proposed site has a total area of c. 5, 900 m<sup>2</sup>.

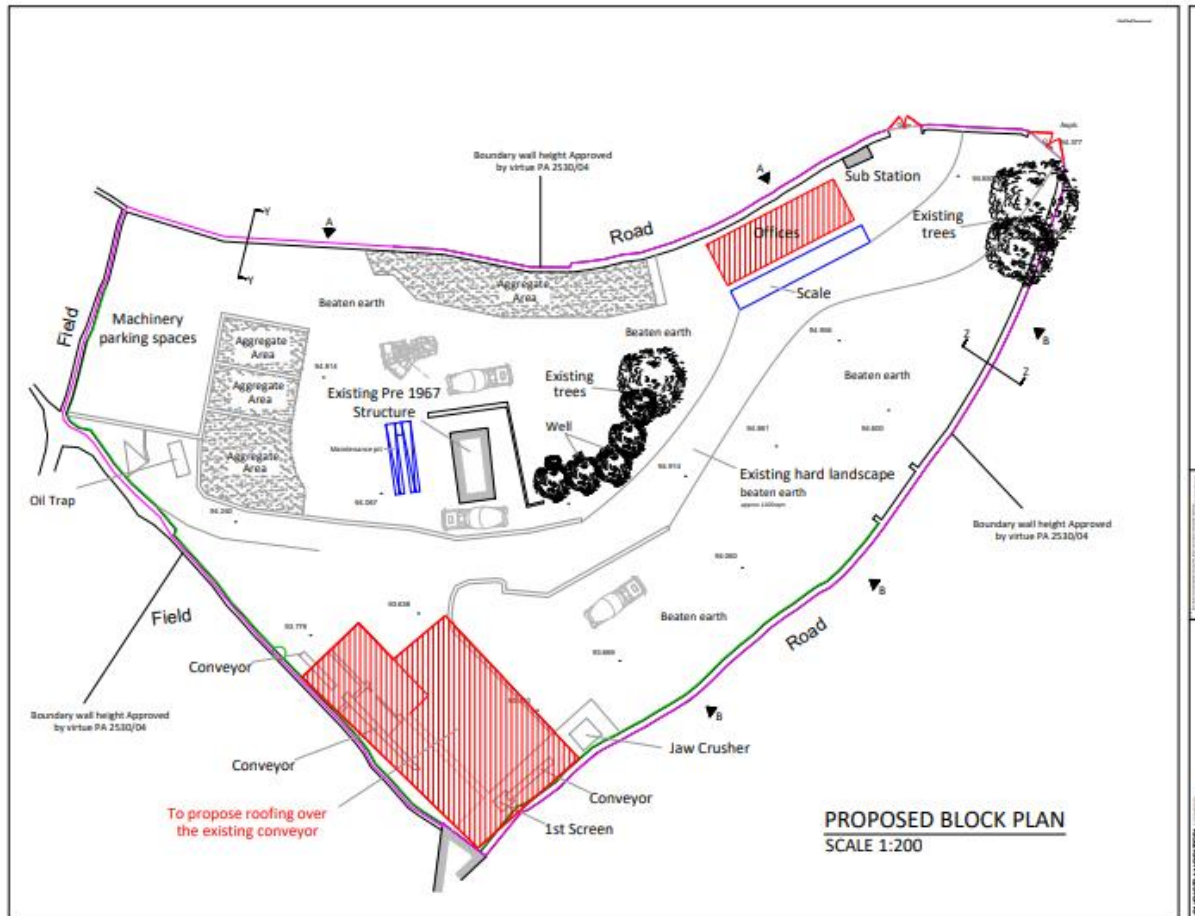


Figure 1: Proposed block plan of whole site (Source: E-apps doc. 63b)

## 2. Site context

2.1 The proposed site falls outside the development zone of Iklin at Triq il-Hwawar, in an area known as ix-Xwieki (Figure 2 - 3).

2.2 Previously, the site was a franka stone block quarry. However, in 2005, the PA granted permission to sanction the construction of garages and stores and to raise the height of the boundary wall (PA/02530/04). The surrounding area is a characteristic of a mixture of quarries, industrial sites and agricultural activities.

2.3 The proposed site also falls within the 100 m buffer line from the Groundwater Safeguard Zone as identified by MRA under the Water Policy Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.100). The Central Malta Local Plan (CMLP) policy CG33 recommends that quarries at Ix-Xwieki/Tat-Tabib, Iklin and at Misraħ Basili, Għargħur are restored for agricultural purposes or nature conservation following infilling with inert waste, except as otherwise permitted in other approved subsidiary plans. Whereas, the larger surrounding area is designated as an Area of Agricultural Value (CMLP policy CG24). The site abuts an industrial area of containment (CMLP policy CG05), and the site falls within the limits of A Protected Area of Hydrological Importance (CMLP policy CG29).



Figure 5: Location of the site (Source: Geoserver, 2016 at a scale of 1:8000)



Figure 6: Location of the site (zoomed in) (Source: Geoserver, 2016 at a scale of 1:500)

### 3. Case history

The proposed site was subject to:

#### Enforcement notices

3.1 EC/00483/93 – Structures, boundary wall and extensions without permit. *Case status is not available.*

3.2 EC/00360/07 - Installation of stone crusher and intensification of land use for inert recycling purposes without permit. *Case status is not available.*

#### Planning Application

3.3 PA/03896/88 – No further information is available.

3.4 PA/00803/91 – No further information is available.

3.5 PA/04205/92 - Boundary Wall Shed and offices. *Application was refused and the applicant appealed to the decision. However, the EPRT confirmed the refusal.*

3.6 PA/06579/97 - To construct a store as an extension to the existing licensed yard and provide parking spaces. Application includes an office block for which full details are being submitted. *Application was refused in 1999. The applicant appealed against the decision but this EPRT decision remained the same.*

3.7 PA/04607/98 - To construct a store as an extension to the existing licensed yard and provide parking spaces. Application includes an office block for which full details are being submitted. *Application was refused by the PA.*

3.8 PA/02530/04 - To sanction construction of garages and stores in old and disused quarry and to raise height of boundary wall. *Application was approved by the Planning Board.*

3.9 PA/03761/07 - Sanctioning of jaw stone crusher and area for stock piling. *This proposal required an EPS, however application was dismissed as per Article 86(10) in 2014 in view of breach of Enforcement Notice ECF360/07. The applicant appealed against this decision but the EPRT sustained the refusal.*

### 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:

- 9.0.2.4 – Rock processing plant, not within an existing operational quarry, and not covered in Category I.

Therefore, the proposal was also screened in terms of the EIA Regulations.

## 5. Documents used for screening

- a. Project Description Statement (PDS) (PA/01304/20/86a – 86d and 87a – 87c) referred to ERA on 24/09/2021 (PA/01304/20/88a),
- b. ERA screening memos at docs. PA/01304/20/45a, 58a, 64a and 77a, and
- c. Plans, Site plans, sections etc (PA/01304/20/14a, 41b-c, 50b-c, f-h, j-k, 51a-d, 63a-b, 69a-b, 72a-b, 73b-e, 75a).

## 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 ERA notes that the proposed site is an old quarry and is already committed to industrial activity as per PA02530/04. Additionally, it abuts an Industrial Area of Containment. In terms of visual impact, it is being noted that the height of the boundary wall was raised through PA/02530/04 and as shown in doc. 50b - Approved and Proposed Elevations, thus, the proposed development will not be visible from the surrounding area. Given the nature of the proposal, no significant impacts are being envisaged in terms of land use.

#### Hydrology

6.2 The proposed site falls within the limits of a Protected Area of Hydrological Importance (CMLP policy CG29). However, no significant impacts are envisaged since activities are expected to be contained within the confines of the existing industrial site, and the implementation procedures for industrial activities should be sufficient for ensuring that there are no significant overspills of material onto the surrounding land. Additionally, no significant impacts are envisaged from leaching/percolation of pollutants.

#### Installation-phase impacts

6.3 The proposal will generate noise and vibration emissions during the installation phase. Potential impacts arising during this phase are temporary and can be minimised at source in line with the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09).

#### Operational-phase impacts

6.4 Whilst the proposed development is likely to generate operational noise, dust and emissions from vehicular traffic, any increase over and above the current baseline is not

considered to be significant. With respect to light emissions, no significant impacts are expected, as long as all illumination levels are according to the standard (EN12464-2) and all external lights are switched off when the plan is not in operation. Any required security lighting should be intruder-triggered so as to avoid continuous nocturnal lighting and associated light pollution.

### **Screening outcome**

The above screening concluded that no significant impacts are being envisaged subject to the condition in Annex II.

## **7. Permitting Requirements**

From the submissions provided, the proposed activities (acceptance of waste) qualify for an Environmental Permit (EP). In this regard, the permit holder shall submit an application for an EP to ERA. Application forms can be found on <https://eris.eraportal.org.mt>.

## **III. ERA CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD**

Following screening, ERA does not object to the proposal from an environmental point of view. No further assessment in terms of Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46) is required, subject to the implementation of mitigation measures and pre-emptive safeguards throughout both construction and operation phases of the proposed development. In this regard, a number of conditions are being referred for inclusion in the development permit (refer to Appendix II).

### **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.*