

The Executive Chairperson
Planning Authority
St Francis Ravelin
Floriana

Date: 21/12/2022
ERA Ref: EA/00007/22

Dear Sir,

Planning Ref.: PA 07333/22
Description Proposal: Proposed upgrading of existing airfield including the extension of the runway, construction of a concrete-surfaced apron, three grass-reinforced aprons and perimetral retaining walls, shifting of security fence and new landscaping.
Location: Site at Gozo Rural Airfield, Triq ta' Lambert, Ghajnsielem

Reference is made to the Project Description Statement (PDS) along with appendices which was referred to ERA on 21st November 2022. The PDS was reviewed and the proposed development was screened in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (S.L. 549.46); and the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44).

1. Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (S.L. 549.46)

The proposed development falls under Schedule I, Category II, Sections 1.0.2.1, 2.2.2.1, 2.2.2.2 and 13.0.2.1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (S.L. 549.46). The screening determined that the submission of an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required since the impacts of the development are unlikely to be significant as long as the various preventive mitigation measures listed hereunder are adhered to:

- i. Minimising the need for excavations and reusing as much of the excavated material as possible;
- ii. Careful consideration should be given to the design especially of the boundary walls to minimise the impact of the proposal on the rural landscape character and on visual amenity;
- iii. Ensuring the availability of adequate onsite parking for participants, park-and-ride services and provision of bicycle racks as well as other facilities that allow/promote alternative modes of transport to alleviate traffic. These should be included within the committed site; and
- iv. Ensuring the adoption of best practice environmental measures throughout the construction phase, including measures for mitigating noise, vibration, and dust impacts as well as managing surface water, and the putting in place of appropriate operational monitoring regimes. Also, ensuring compliance with waste management regulations during operation.

With respect to points ii and iii above, revised plans/submissions are required.

As mentioned in the screening carried out in **Annex I**, further assessment on the impacts from noise emissions and vibrations during operation is required. The afore-mentioned environmental issues should be addressed in detail through further submissions as follows:

- An investigation of noise emissions and vibrations during air movements (modelling is to take into account different scenarios with and without mitigation), in accordance with methodology approved in advance by ERA.

2. Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44)

The proposal requires the submission of an Appropriate Assessment (AA) as per Regulation 19(1) of the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44). The AA study should address the considerations identified in Section 7 of **Annex I**.

You are requested to confirm in writing, whether you wish to carry out the AA and when you estimate it will be completed. You may wish to note that ERA considers the eventual AA and reports for the detailed studies as public documents and will be made available for consultation purposes.

ERA Conditions

ERA reserves the right to issue its conditions once the above further submission has been duly assessed by the ERA.

Yours faithfully,

Ryan Busuttil

Environment Protection Officer
f/Director of Environment and Resources
Environment & Resources Authority