

Environmental Impact Assessment

Screening according to Schedule III of S.L. 549.46

ERA Reference no.:	EA 00017/23
PA Reference no.:	PA 03117/23 & PA 04143/23
Project Title:	Demolition of existing property, excavation of a plot, and proposed construction of 240 garages, at the basement levels. Proposed construction of 2 shop class 4B and construction of 197 apartments, including 17 apartments at receded floor level. The proposal includes pools at different levels. & Proposed demolition of existing building and excavation of 2 basement levels as per proposed plans. Phase 2 is to be covered by TN/272843. (Proposed temporary wall surrounding the property).
Location:	Site at 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, Triq it-Torri, Trejqa ta' Boxbox, Msida
Screening date:	23 November 2023

I. BACKGROUND

1. Outline of Proposal

- 1.1 The proposal is for the demolition of the existing storage/warehouses and administration offices and for the construction of 2-eight storey building blocks, comprising 197 apartments, 252 garages (263 spaces), two shops class 4B and pools at different levels. The proposal will also consist of an internal access road which will connect the blocks and provide access for pedestrians and vehicles, six reservoirs (total capacity 600 cb.m), a substation and landscaping.
- 1.2 The site area is circa. 4,200 sq.m and the proposal will have a Gross Floor Area (GFA) of 33,920 sq.m. A summary of the uses along with the breakdown of the GFA of the current and proposed uses is provided in **Table 1**.
- 1.3 During the construction phase a total of circa. 22,600 cb.m of waste will be generated, of which circa. 16,500 cb.m. is excavation waste. The development is proposed to be constructed over 42 months.

Table 1: GFA of existing and proposed uses. Source: PDS, dated October 2023.

EXISTING				PROPOSED			
LEVEL	USE	Nº OF UNITS	S.M.	LEVEL	USE	Nº OF UNITS	S.M.
				Level 00 Lower	Garages	83	3463.80 s.m.
Ground Floor	Administration	---	268.90 s.m.	Level 00 Upper	Garages	84	3401.10 s.m.
	Industrial & Deposit	---	2801.14 s.m.		Residential	2	244.11 s.m.
	Parking	---	933.50 s.m.		Shop	1	47.04 s.m.
First Floor	Administration	---	488.72 s.m.	Level 01	Garages	85	3395.45 s.m.
Second Floor	Administration	---	488.72 s.m.	Level 02	Residential	3	394.40 s.m.
					Residential	27	3159.49 s.m.
Third Floor	Administration	---	288.22 s.m.	Shop	2	95.01 s.m.	
Fourth Floor (Roof)	Services	---	75.19 s.m.	Level 03	Residential	30	3083.59 s.m.
				Level 04	Residential	30	3083.59 s.m.
				Level 05	Residential	30	3083.59 s.m.
				Level 06	Residential	29	3049.37 s.m.
				Level 07	Residential	28	2925.00 s.m.
				Level 08	Residential	17	2656.34 s.m.
				Level 09 (Roof)	Services	---	1838.80 s.m.

2. Site context

2.1 The proposal is located within the development zone along Triq it-Torri and Triq BoxBox; Msida (refer to **Figures 1** and **2**). The site currently comprises of a storage/warehouse of pharmaceutical products, administrative offices and parking.

2.2 The site slopes downwards towards the south-east and is located within a flood hazard area and at approximately 50 m to the south of a flood risk area, located in the Msida Valley.

2.3 The area is predominantly residential, however there are also a number of automotive service shops and garages at approximately 30 m to the southeast from the site. Other commercial units along Msida Valley Road and Triq Reġjonali include car accessories stores, travel agencies and accountancy offices. Across Triq Reġjonali, the land which lies Outside of the Development Zone (ODZ) is agricultural. Similarly, the land south of the site is also ODZ.

2.4 Il-Wied tal-Imnsida is located approximately 75 m to the south to the site, which is an artificially constructed reservoir intended for irrigation and water storage. This is also a Tree Protection Area (TPA) as scheduled under Government Notice (G.N.) 00473/11.

2.5 Eight townhouses abutting the site to the east and southeast are scheduled as Grade 2 architectural protection under G.N. 01428/17.

2.6 The site is located on the Malta Mean Sea Level Aquifer and lies outside the 300 m buffer zone of the public groundwater protection zone.



Figure 1: Aerial ortho-photo (2018) showing the location of the site in blue along with the delineation of the Development Zone in red. Source: *PA Geoserver*.



Figure 2: Close-up aerial ortho-photo (2018) showing the location of the site in blue along with the delineation of the Development Zone in red. Source: *PA Geoserver*.

PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

ESC 1:100

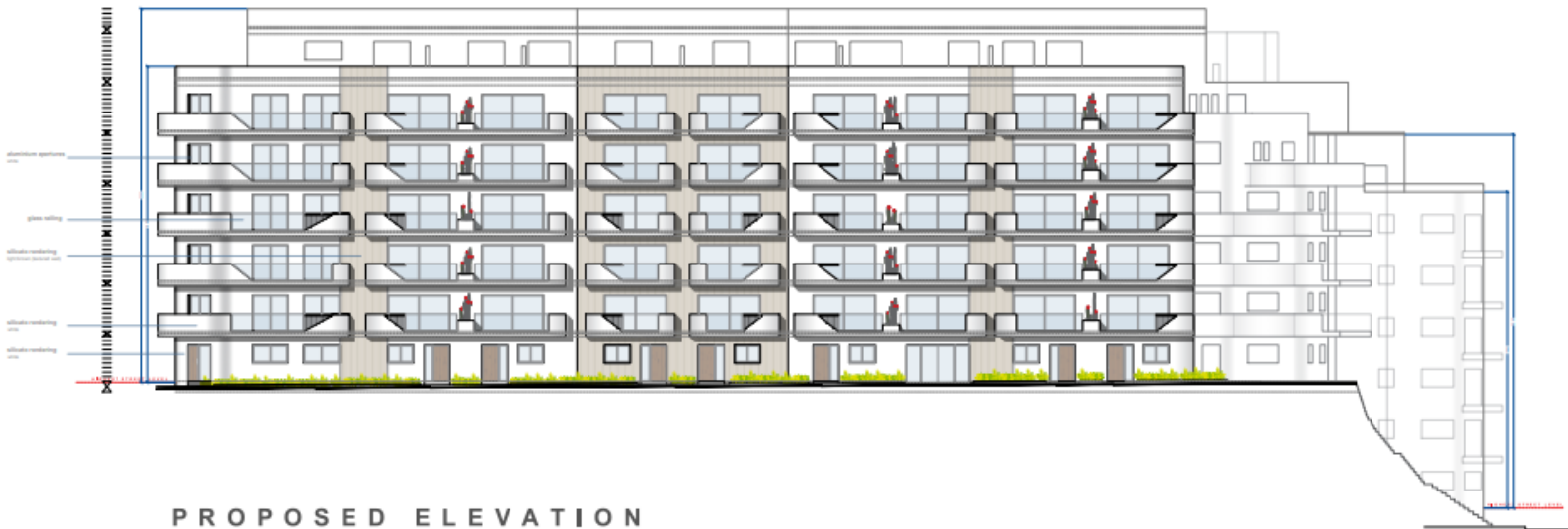
Annex I



PROPOSED ELEVATION
ON TREJQA TA' BOXBOX



PROPOSED ELEVATION
ON TRIQ IT-TORRI



PROPOSED ELEVATION
INTERNAL ROAD

Figure 3: Elevations of the proposed development. Source: *E-Apps PA 03117/23 Doc 10s*.

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Figure 4: Proposed plan at level 2. Source: E-Apps PA 03117/23 Doc 10k.



3. Case history

3.1 The site was previously subject to the following Planning Control, which is relevant to the proposal: PC 00009/23; Proposed change to building alignment – Awaiting topographical survey.

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: 7.1.2.1 (ii) a gross floor area of 30,000m² or more. Therefore, the proposal was screened in terms of the EIA Regulations.

5. Documents used for screening

- Project Description Statement (PDS) along with AADT report, referred directly to ERA on 31st October 2023; and
- ERA screening replies at Docs PA/03117/23/38a and PA/04143/23/51a.

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)

General

- 6.1 The proposed change of land use from industrial to residential and commercial (proposal also includes 2 Class 4B shops) is not considered environmentally significant from a land use point of view, also noting that the site lies within the development zone.
- 6.2 In view that the site is located within a flood hazard area, ERA recommends that feedback from Energy and Water Agency (EWA) is sought to ascertain that should there be any increased flooding risks posed by the proposal, these are effectively mitigated.
- 6.3 Due to the proposed increase in elevation within the site, the proposal is envisaged to have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding environment. Since the site lies within the development zone, adherence to the relevant planning policies vis-à-vis building design and façade details (colour, receding building lines etc.) is to be ensured and the necessary follow up be made by the competent authority i.e. Planning Authority.

Construction Phase Impacts

- 6.4 A geological impact caused by the proposal will be the extraction of geological resources, which represents the most significant alteration to the Lower Globigerina Limestone formation. Around 23,000 cb.m of inert material will be generated as a result of the proposed demolition and excavation works. The impact is not considered significant as long as the waste is recycled and if not possible, recovered in a quarry suitable to accept such waste. As stated in the PDS, such practice would reduce the need for raw materials. The necessary geo-technical investigations are to be carried out to assess the quality of the excavated rock and its suitability for re-use.
- 6.5 The proposal will generate dust, noise, vibration and light emissions during the construction phase. Such impacts are temporary and can be minimised at source in line with the Environmental Management Construction Site Regulations (S.L. 552.09). Mitigation measures including the use of a dust misting lance; power washing HGVs wheels; hoarding as a means to catch dust and debris, also serving as a noise barrier, should be implemented to further reduce the significance of said impacts. Other measures include, noise enclosures should always have all doors or hatches closed when the equipment is in use; stationary equipment such as pumps and generators should be located away from receptors e.g. neighbours; and all works are to be carried out during daytime hours.

Operation Phase Impacts

- 6.6 Common municipal waste which will be generated during operations, is not considered significant as long as all the waste is managed in accordance with the Waste Management Regulations (S.L. 549.63), and efforts are done to recycle and reduce waste generation at source.
- 6.7 The proposal will generate an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) of c. 337 trips i.e. an increase of 208 trips over and above the existing 129. Given this is not considered significant in relation to the set thresholds, no further assessment with regard to air quality is required.
- 6.8 On the other hand, ERA requires information on the peak hourly traffic flows, both at present in the impacted surrounding roads as well as once the development would be in operation in order to assess the potential noise impacts.

Energy and Water Use (recommendations)

- 6.9 The ERA recommends that to mitigate impacts on resource use during operation, noting the scale of the proposal, the design of the development should take into consideration sustainable measures such as:
- Skylights and large apertures, to provide additional natural light;

- Roof gardens and green walls, to provide additional shading as well as improving air quality by serving as a green area;
- Double/Triple-glazed apertures and exterior facade/aperture shading; and
- Ventilated cladding system and efficient air conditioning systems.

6.10 Sustainable or green architecture will also inevitably cut down costs relating mostly to reduced energy use which in principle should serve as an incentive for the developer to implement such measures. Moreover, the ‘*Malta’s Sustainable Development Vision for 2050*’ aims for low-carbon, carbon-neutral or carbon-positive, green, resilient and affordable construction solutions. In this regard, ERA recommends that landscaping is an integral part of the proposed development.

6.11 In general, 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 building 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.

6.12 The ERA promotes the local application of EU projects such as the E2STORMED project which deals with the challenge of capturing and reusing storm-water runoff before it flows as surface water, by exploring Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), with the end goal of increasing energy efficiency. The information document published by ERA, ‘*Investing in the Multi-Functionality of Green Infrastructure (GI)*’ lists many other sustainable measures and projects. In this regard, it is highly recommended to adopt any relevant sustainable measures to the project.

Cultural Heritage

6.13 The ERA recommends that the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (SCH) is to be consulted.

III. ERA CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD

Following screening of this proposal, ERA concludes that the impacts of the development are unlikely to be significant to the point of warranting an EIA, in accordance with Regulation 15 of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46). However, further information on the peak hourly traffic flows in the impacted surrounding roads, both at present as well as once the development would be in operation; is being requested to determine whether further assessment vis-à-vis operational noise is required.

ERA will be in a position to issue its conditions once the requested peak hourly traffic flows are submitted to and assessed accordingly by ERA.

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.