

The Executive Chairperson
Planning Authority
St. Francis Ravelin,
Floriana

Date: 16th February 2026
ERA Ref: EA/00014/25

Dear Sir/Madam,

PA Ref.: PA/03462/25

Description Proposal: Demolition of existing boundary walls, site clearance, and excavation to the required levels, followed by the construction of an extension to the existing Sewage Treatment Plant. The extension will include a pre-treatment area, a new water plant room, thickening and dewatering facilities, a ferric dosing kiosk, a subterranean sludge holding reservoir, and an MBR area.

Location: Site at, Ta' Mgarr ix-Xini, Ghajnsielem

Introduction

Reference is made to the application in caption and the Project Description Statement (PDS) that was referred directly to ERA on 22nd October 2025 and subsequent clarifications from the architect dated 4th February 2026. The proposal involves the upgrading of the existing wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), through the construction of an additional treatment unit.

The proposed extension falls within the scope of Schedule I of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46), notably in terms of Category II, Section 13.0.2.1 (*Any change to, or extension of, projects [even if the project is already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed], particularly projects covered by Category I or Category II, where the change or extension itself does not fall under Category I but: (i) meets the thresholds or criteria set out in Category II; or (ii) may have significant adverse effects on the environment*); and the associated section 4.2.2.1 (*Waste-water treatment plants, not falling within Category I*). Furthermore, the site is situated within the area of influence of a number of protected Natura 2000 sites designated under the Flora, Fauna and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44) and the treated water is discharged into a water body covered by the Water Policy Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.100). In this regard, the proposal was screened in terms of all the afore-mentioned regulations.

Environmental assessment - Screening

Screening (refer to Annex I) has determined that that no further assessment is required in terms of the EIA Regulations (S.L. 549.46) and the Water Policy Framework Regulations (S.L. 549.100).

With respect to the Flora, Fauna, and Natural Habitats Protection Regulations (S.L. 549.44), a targeted study (Appropriate Assessment) is required to evaluate any potential effects from increased operational light and noise emissions onto the surrounding protected sites (notably in relation to the seabirds species and their coastal habitat), and from and from any malfunctioning or breakdown of the plant and resulting spillages/run-off to the surrounding downstream areas and into the sea. Terms of reference are included in Annex II.

Way-forward

ERA will issue its final position once the required study is concluded and the required mitigation measures are duly reflected in the project design.

Yours faithfully,

Leonora D'Amato
Senior Officer Environmental Assessment
f/Director Regulatory Affairs

Disclaimer

The above assessment results, the ensuing conclusions and recommendations are without prejudice to any required changes or updates should the development proposal be eventually modified again 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 assessment would need to be reopened.