



Project Description Statement for
Proposed Multi-Purpose Sports Village,
Ta' Qali, Attard

As per ERA requirements for PA/00372/19

Report



PROJECT DESCRIPTION STATEMENT


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1 INTRODUCTION

Mr Michael Spiteri on behalf of Flower Power Ltd. has submitted an outline development permit for the development of a sports village at the ex-Flower Power site, Ta'Qali. The application entails a multi-purpose sports village including 1 no. full-size rugby pitch, 1 no. half-size scrum training pitch, 2 no. full-size football pitches, 1 no. half-size intensive training pitch, 1 no. sprint track, 6 no. tennis courts, 1 no. tennis show court, 12 no. padel tennis courts, indoor sports complex, football & rugby club, tennis club, sports health club, sports rehabilitation clinic, sports hotel (class 3B), indoor and outdoor garden centre, sports retail, extensive landscaping, surface and underground parking.

The Applicant has commissioned AIS Environment Ltd to prepare a Project Description Statement (PDS) to pre-validate the impacts expected from the proposed activities (henceforth referred to as the “Scheme”).

The PDS report has been requested by the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) to provide the necessary information in terms of a justification for the project, and an outline of the potential impacts and/or benefits of the project. This PDS has been prepared and structured in accordance with Schedule II of S.L. 549.46 of 2017 (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS, 2017).

1.1 SCHEME LOCATION

The proposed Scheme site is located in the north-eastern border of Ta'Qali, as illustrated in Figure 1 and in greater detail in Figure 2. Ta'Qali incorporates a large recreational park which forms part of the administrative boundary of the Attard Local Council, a large residential town located in the centre of Malta.



FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF TA'QALI WITHIN THE MALTESE ISLANDS (SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH)



FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME SITE

1.2 SCHEME JUSTIFICATION

1.2.1 Aim

The Scheme aims to provide a high-class multi-sports training facility to cater for the training and sporting requirements of both local and foreign elite athletes/teams. The favourable climatic conditions in Malta render the island an ideal destination for organising warm weather training camps. However, due to the limited supply of high-end facilities on the island, this potential is not being actively exploited.

The demand for such a complex, stems from the fact that most sport facilities in Malta are spread out across the island and are not equipped with accommodation and commercial services. Consequently, the proposed scheme provides a pioneering opportunity for the Maltese islands, as the Scheme is expected to generate a lot of interest from foreign sport communities. At a local level, this development will also provide additional opportunities for local teams/athletes to perform at higher levels and to carry out training camps with foreign professional athletes, thus raising the competitive threshold for local athletes.

1.2.2 Relevant policies

1.2.2.1 Central Malta Local Plan (2006)

Attard, and consequently Ta'Qali, fall under the provisions of the Central Malta Local Plan (CMLP, 2006). One of the main strategies for the overall CMLP is to *promote recreation and sport provision (SE1)*. The proposed Scheme is very much in line with this vision.

Polices of the CMLP which are most relevant to the proposed development are summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1: POLICIES OF THE LOCAL PLAN WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED WORKS

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
CG29	Protected areas of hydrological importance	Ensures the protection of water protection areas, aquifer zones, public boreholes, underground gallery systems, springs, pumping stations and valley water courses. Developments in the protected	Figure 4

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
		<p>areas will only be permitted if it can be guaranteed that the water resources will not be harmed in any way.</p> <p>The Scheme site is located within such a protected area.</p>	
CG23	Protection of sites of archaeological importance	<p>Ensures that all known archaeological features are protected and are persevered in the best way possible. Any developments which will adversely affect the identified sites will be refused.</p> <p>Two such features are located in close proximity to the northern eastern boundary of the site.</p>	Figure 5
CG40	Cycle routes	<p>Outlines a number of cycle routes that can be developed in the area. The aim is to encourage cycling as a means of</p>	Figure 6

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE REFERENCE
		<p>alternative transport to the car, as well as providing exercise opportunities.</p> <p>The Ta'Qali cycle routes encircle the Scheme site.</p>	

1.2.2.2 Ta' Qali Action Plan (2006)

Under the Structure Plan, the Ta' Qali area has been recognised as the national recreation centre for Malta. As a consequence, a specific action plan for the area was drafted in 2006 (Figure 7). This plan has since been revised in 2010 and 2012. The Action Plan aims to ensure that the Ta' Qali area is safeguarded for the development of both formal and informal recreational activities. Those policies which relate directly to the proposed Scheme footprint are summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2: POLICIES FROM THE TA' QALI ACTION PLAN WHICH ARE RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE No.
NWTQ 2	National recreation centre	<p>A designated area for developments which provide additional recreational, sports, art and cultural facilities will be permitted in the area designated as NWTQ 2 if they will attract people at a national scale.</p> <p>The area is currently being used for other purposes, such as agriculture and industry. Help will be provided to help these parties relocate.</p> <p>The Scheme site falls within this area.</p>	<p>Figure 8</p> <p>Figure 9</p>

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE No.
NWTQ 3	Recreation, sport, art and cultural uses	<p>Developments of recreational, sports, art and cultural facilities will be permitted in the areas covered by NWTQ 3 if they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <i>It is located within the National Recreation Centre;</i> ii. <i>The development has a genuinely national catchment area; or has a special affinity to visitors with the historic heritage of the wartime airfield;</i> iii. <i>The scale, location, landscaping and quality of design is consistent with the character and appearance of the Action Plan area;</i> iv. <i>It is well-related to access roads and has no significant adverse impact on the local highway network;</i> v. <i>Adequate access and off-road parking is provided;</i> vi. <i>Use is made of existing buildings if possible and any new buildings are reduced to the minimum necessary size and are acceptable to the specific location within the plan area;</i> vii. <i>The proposed use is compatible with the adjacent existing or proposed recreational use; and</i> viii. <i>It has not significant adverse impact by way of noise on adjacent users or residential areas.</i> <p>The Scheme site falls within this area.</p>	<p>Figure 8</p> <p>Figure 9</p> <p>Figure 10</p>

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE No.
NWTQ 5	Change of use of land to recreational purposes	<p>Applications which involve the conversion of land and buildings from agricultural/horticultural purposes to recreational, sport, art and cultural purposes in the area designated for the National Recreation Centre will be viewed favourably by the PA.</p> <p>The Scheme site falls within this area.</p>	Figure 10
NWTQ 7	Camping	<p>The development of a camp site within the area dedicated to the National Recreational Centre will be viewed favourably by the PA as long as it meets a number of specified criteria.</p> <p>The Scheme site falls within this area.</p>	Figure 10
NWTQ 16	Recreation (mixed use)	<p>This area of land is reserved for general recreational activities, specifically those to accommodate family activities such as children's play grounds, picnic areas and animal sanctuaries.</p> <p>This area of land fall just beyond the southern boundary of the Scheme site.</p>	Figure 10
NWTQ 25	Nature Reserve	<p>A proposed extension of the existing nature reserve.</p> <p>The Scheme site falls within this area.</p>	<p>Figure 10</p> <p>Figure 11</p>

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE No.
NWTQ 31	Garden Centre/Nursey	<p>A change of use to recreation or sport purposes from agriculture/horticulture in the area which is operated as a garden centre/nursey may be permitted, if it meets the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <i>The submission and approval of an Outline Development Application in the form of an overall comprehensive plan for the whole of the site;</i> ii. <i>The development has a genuinely national catchment area; it has a special affinity with the historic heritage of the wartime airfield;</i> iii. <i>The scale, location and quality of design does not detract from the open character of the area;</i> iv. <i>It has no adverse noise impact on adjacent residential areas located immediately to the north;</i> v. <i>The access road to the south east boundary of the site shall be upgraded to include the necessary improvements to its width and surface where required;</i> vi. <i>Adequate access and onsite parking is provided;</i> vii. <i>Building structures will only be permitted within the building zone adjacent to the north east boundary and be restricted to a maximum height of 7metres;</i> viii. <i>Details of water supply, drainage and sewage disposal arrangements shall be submitted and approved; and</i> ix. <i>A landscape scheme is submitted and approved to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed development, together with a programme for implementation and maintenance.</i> 	<p>Figure 9</p> <p>Figure 10</p>

POLICY CODE	POLICY NAME	DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE	FIGURE No.
		<p>The policy also states that part of the site may be kept as a garden centre, whilst listing sports facilities as a possible development option. Any buildings must be confined within the designated building zone and ensure that the open character of the site is retained. It further dictates that residential, retail, commercial offices and manufacturing/service industrial uses are not permitted.</p> <p>The Scheme site falls within this area.</p>	
NWTQ 44	Height Limitations	<p>The policy specifies height limitations for buildings around the Ta-Qali area. Those located within the building zone within the Scheme footprint must not exceed 7m.</p> <p>The policy also states that developments must be appropriate in design, layout and scale to complement the surrounding area.</p>	Figure 12

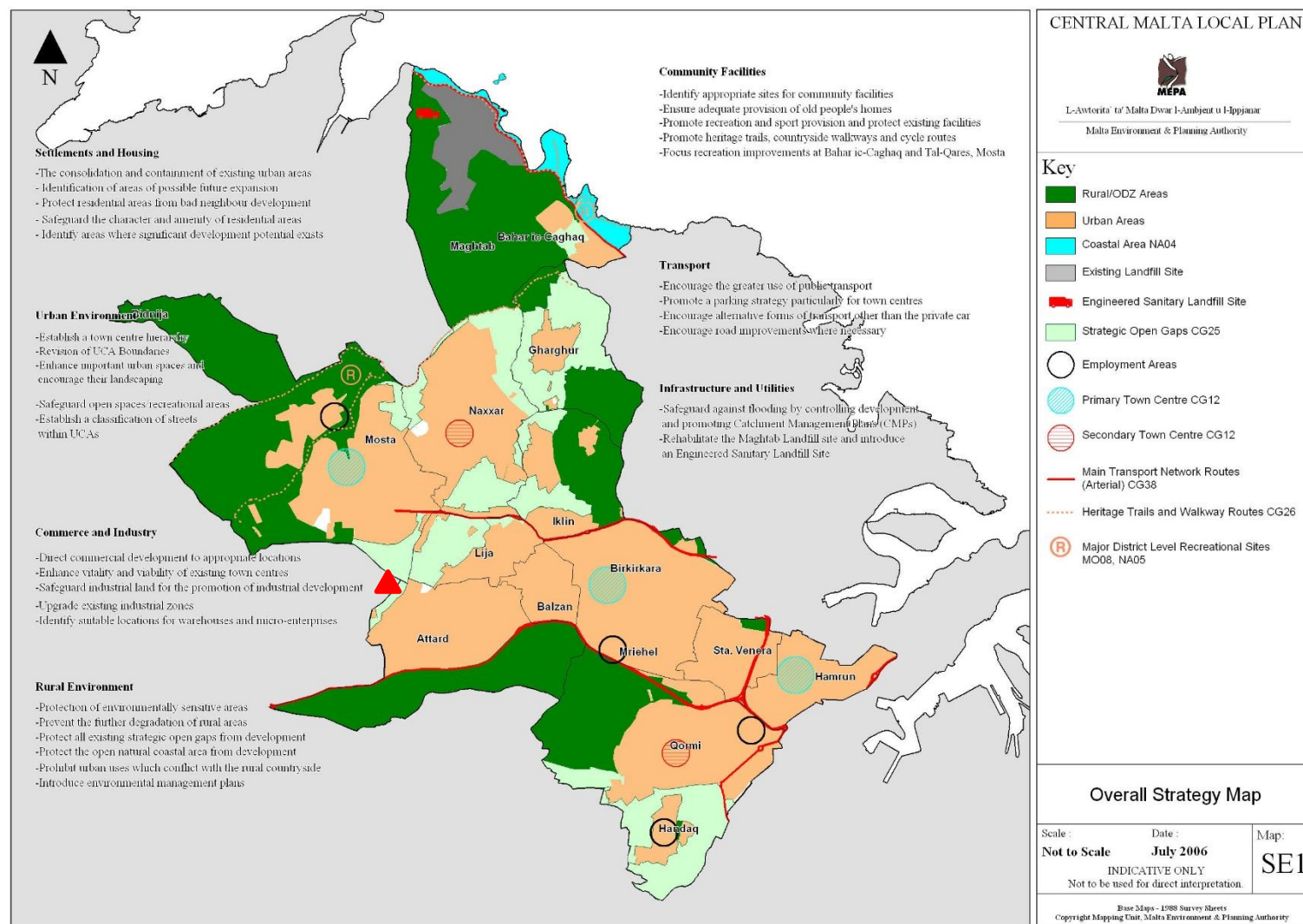


FIGURE 3: OVERALL STRATEGY MAP FOR THE CENTRAL MALTA AREA (SOURCE: CMLP, 2006)

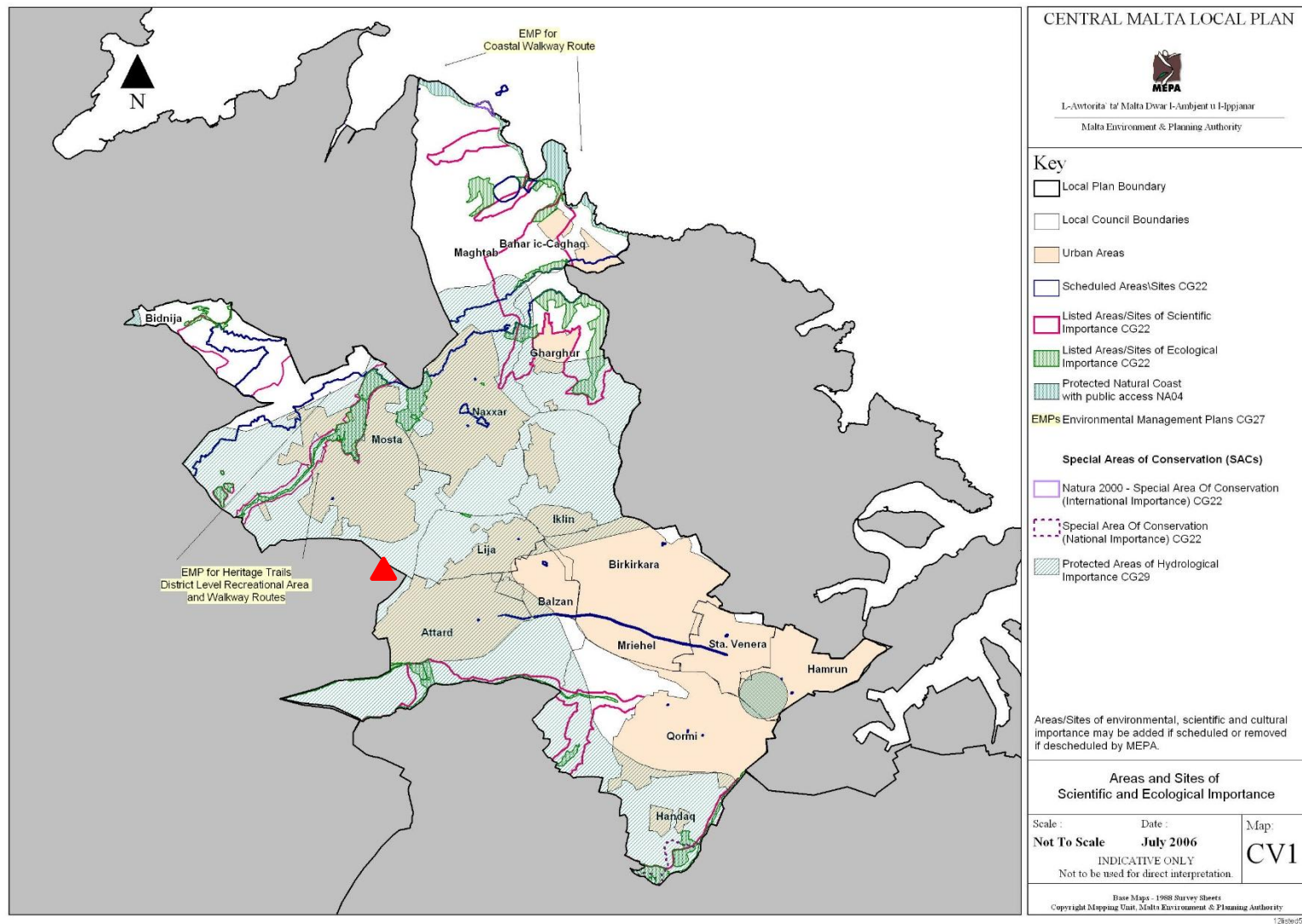


FIGURE 4: AREAS AND SITES OF SCIENTIFIC AND ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE, APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: CMLP, 2006)

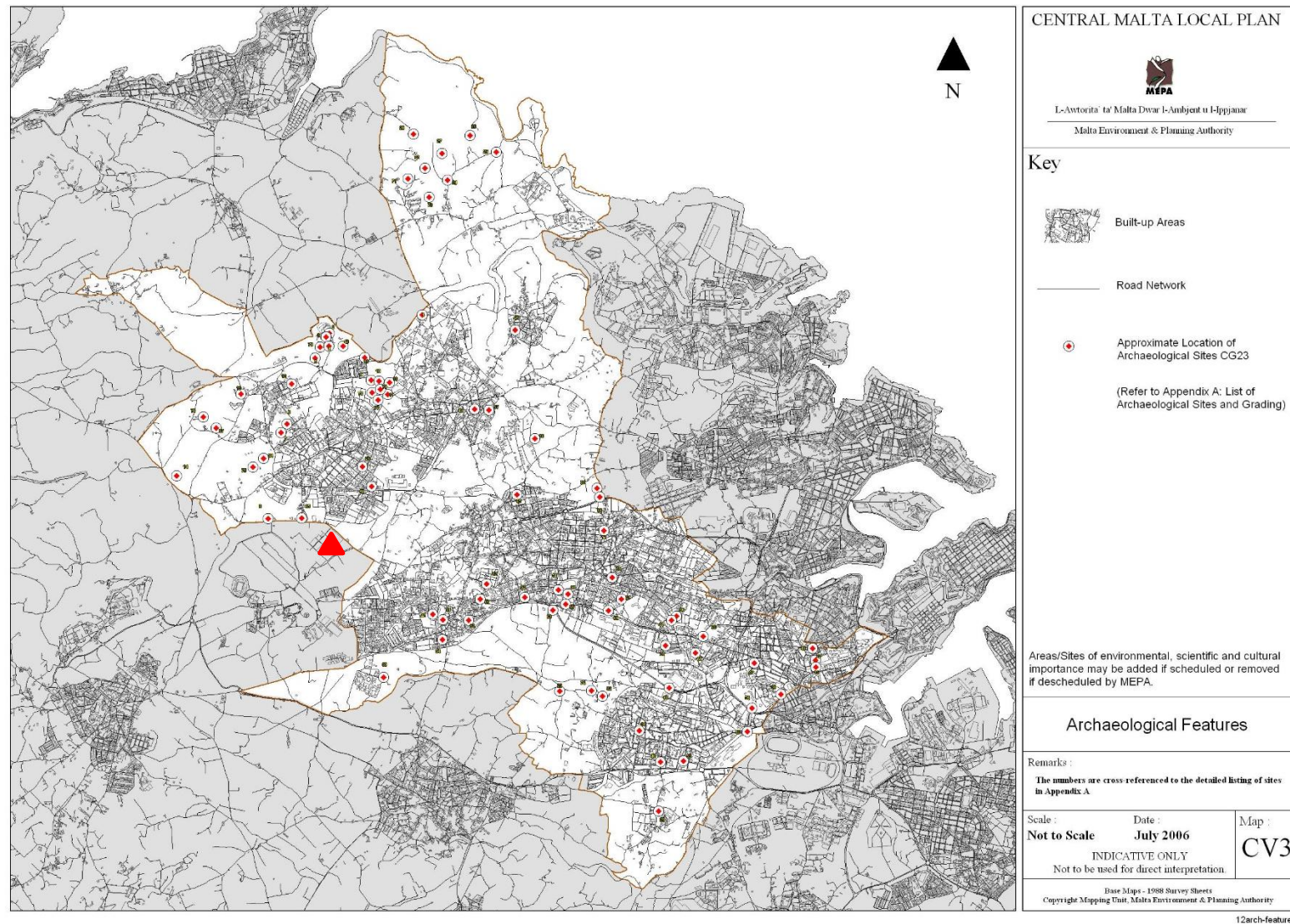


FIGURE 5: ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES, APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: CMLP, 2006)

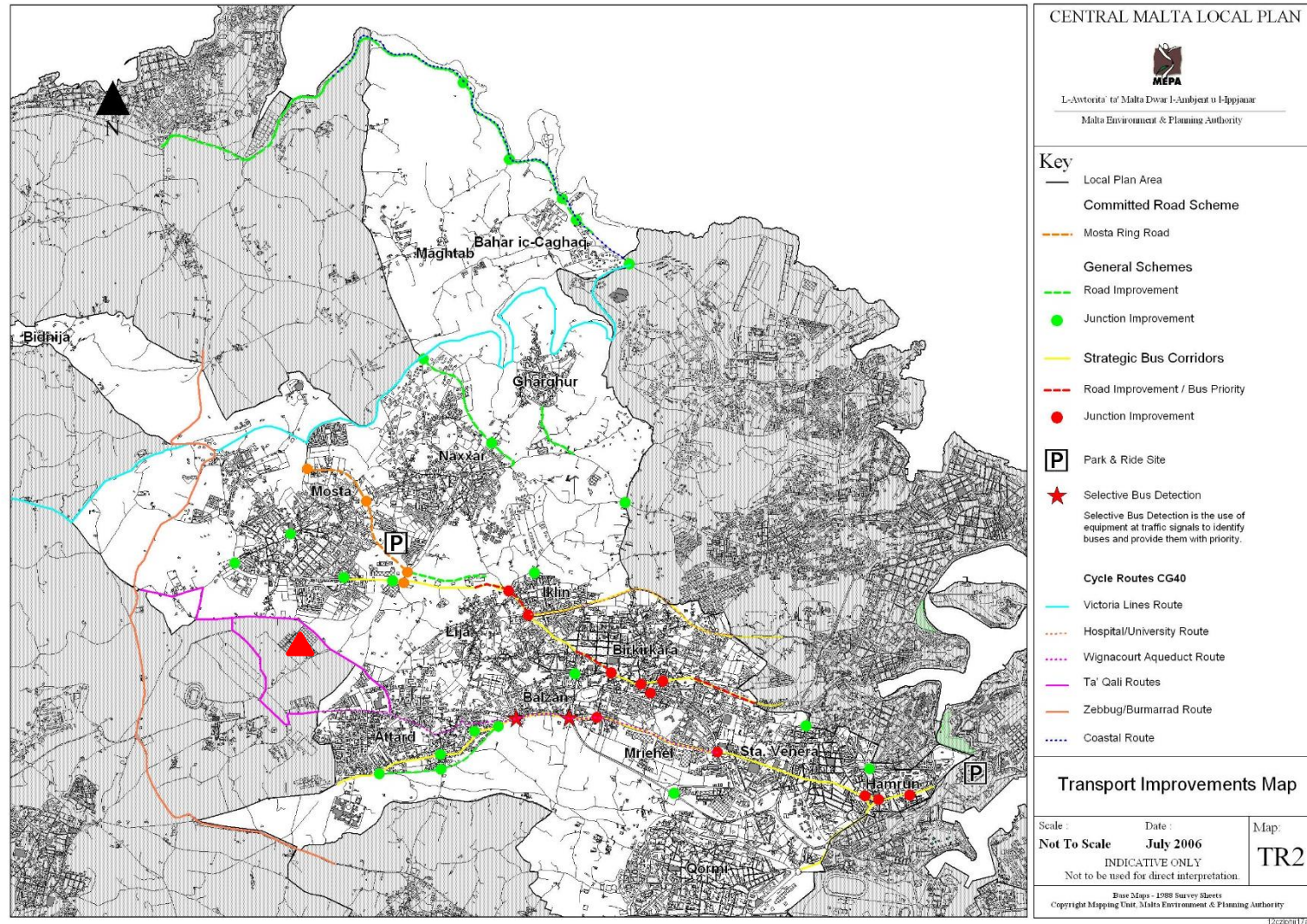
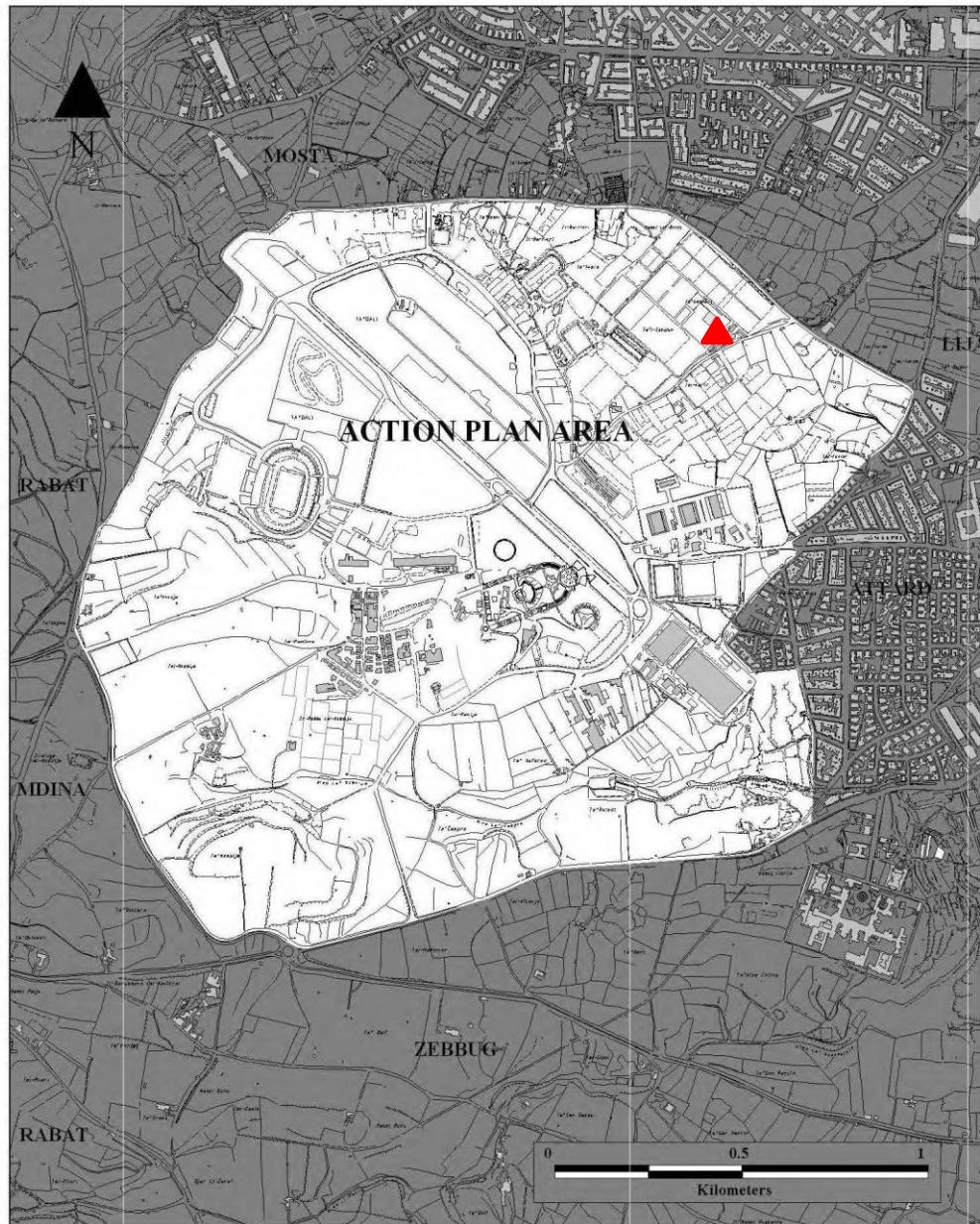


FIGURE 6: TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT MAP, APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: CMLP, 2006)





Key  Action Plan Area	Ta' Qali Action Plan Action Plan Area 		
	Scale : 1:15,000	Date : June 2006	Map : 1
	INDICATIVE ONLY Not to be used for direct interpretation.		
	Base Maps Copyright Mapping Unit, MEPA		

FIGURE 7: TA'QALI ACTION PLAN AREA, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA'QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)

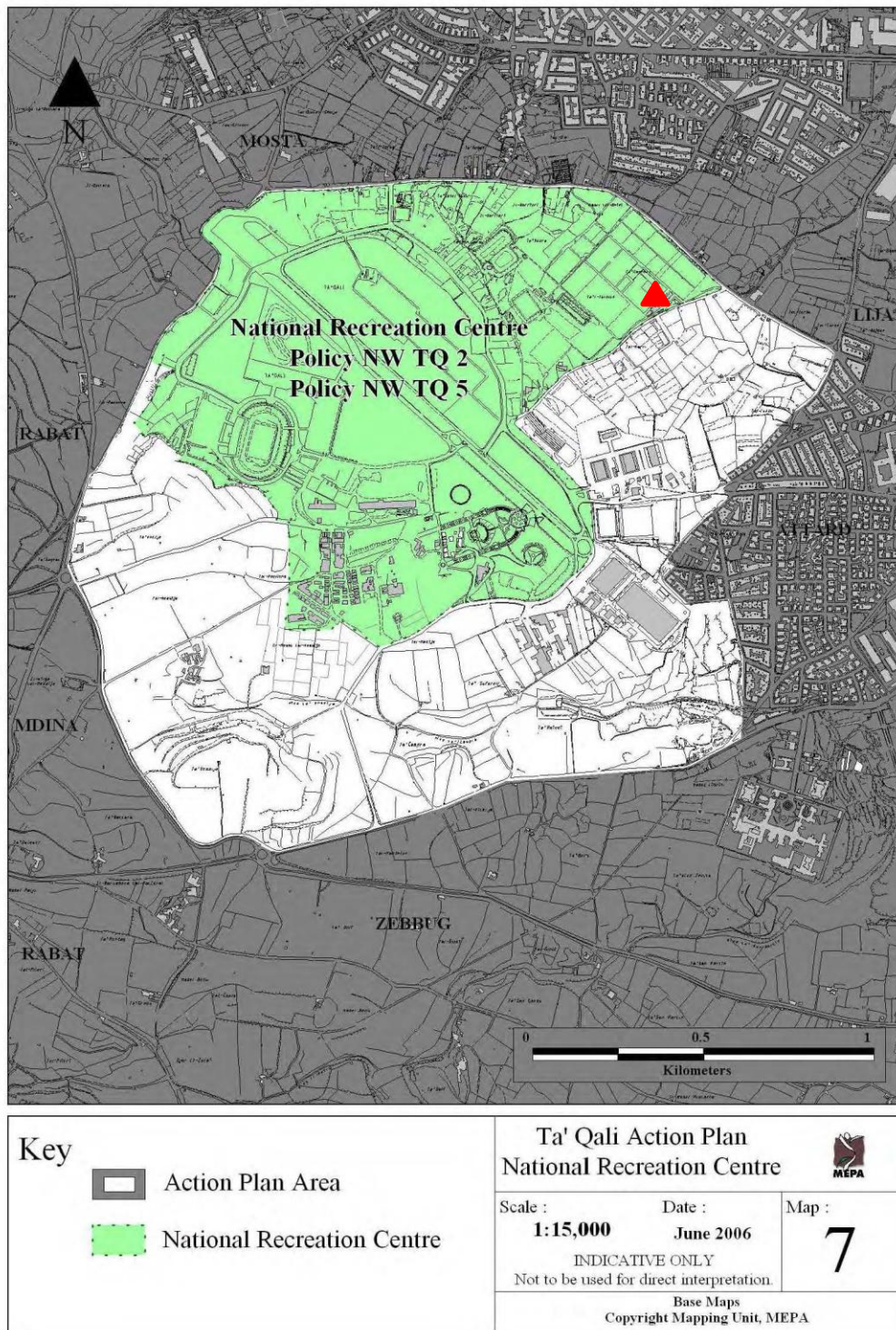


FIGURE 8: NATIONAL RECREATION CENTRE, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA'QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)

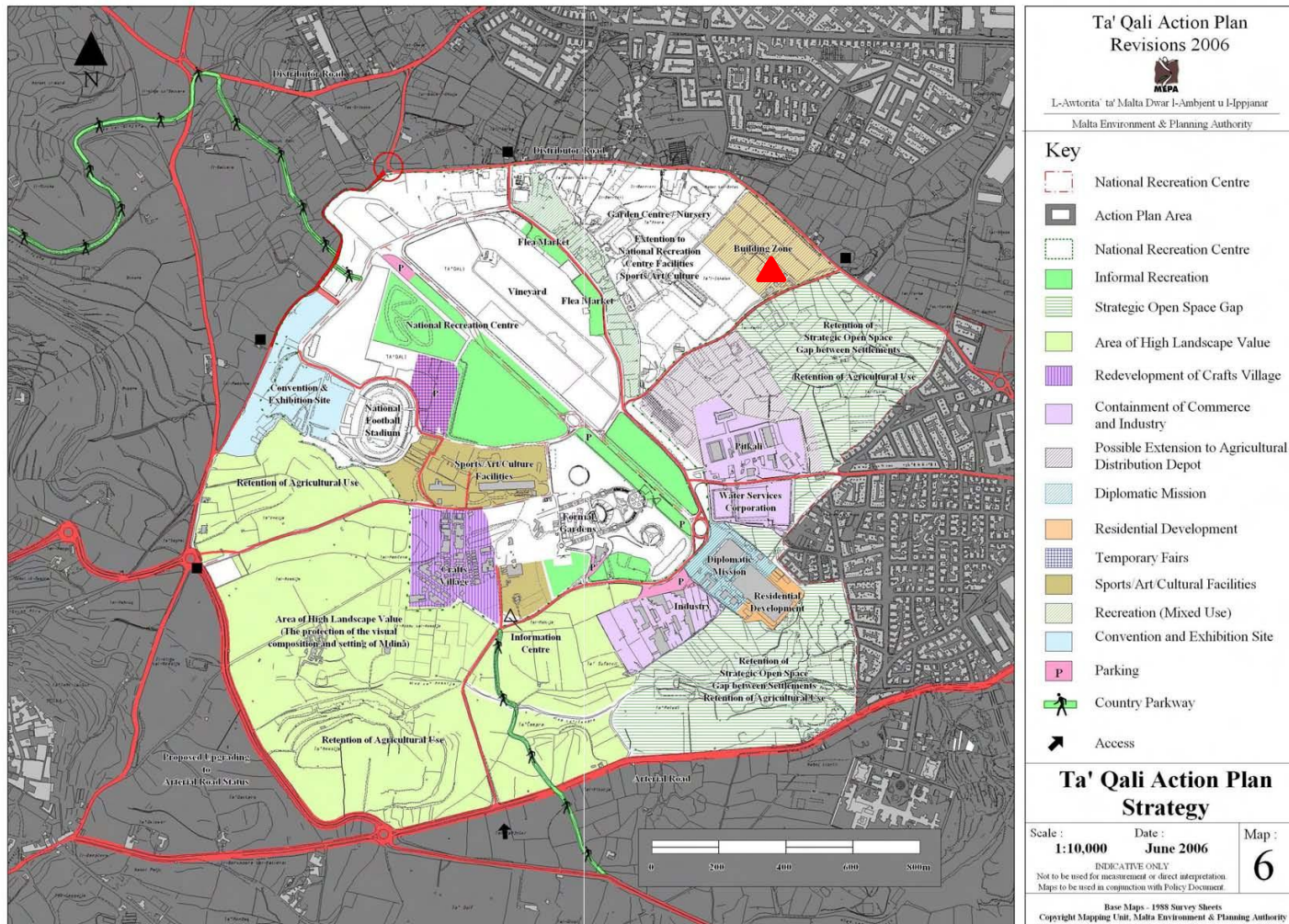


FIGURE 9: TA'QALI DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA'QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)

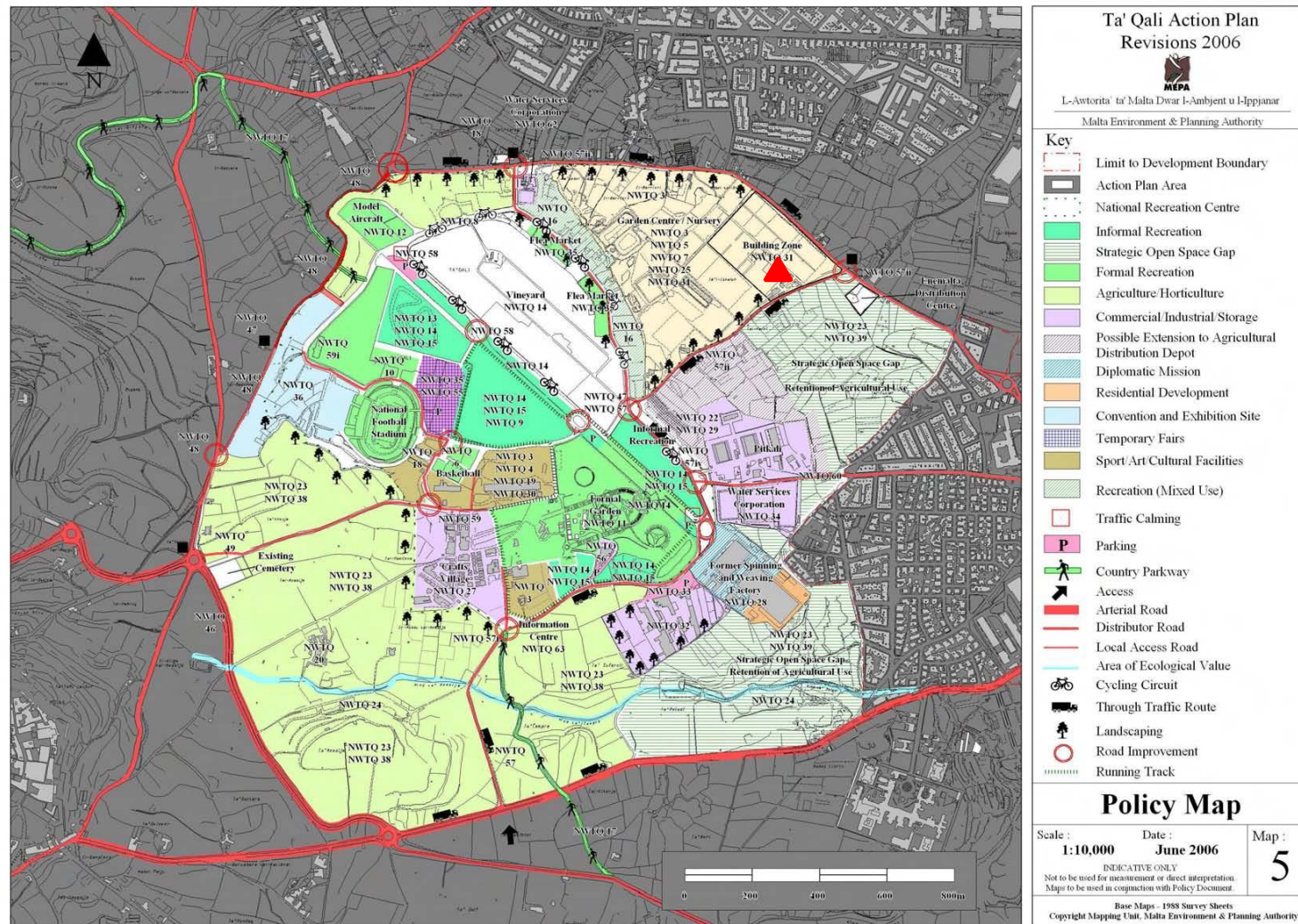


FIGURE 10: TA' QALI POLICY MAP, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA' QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)

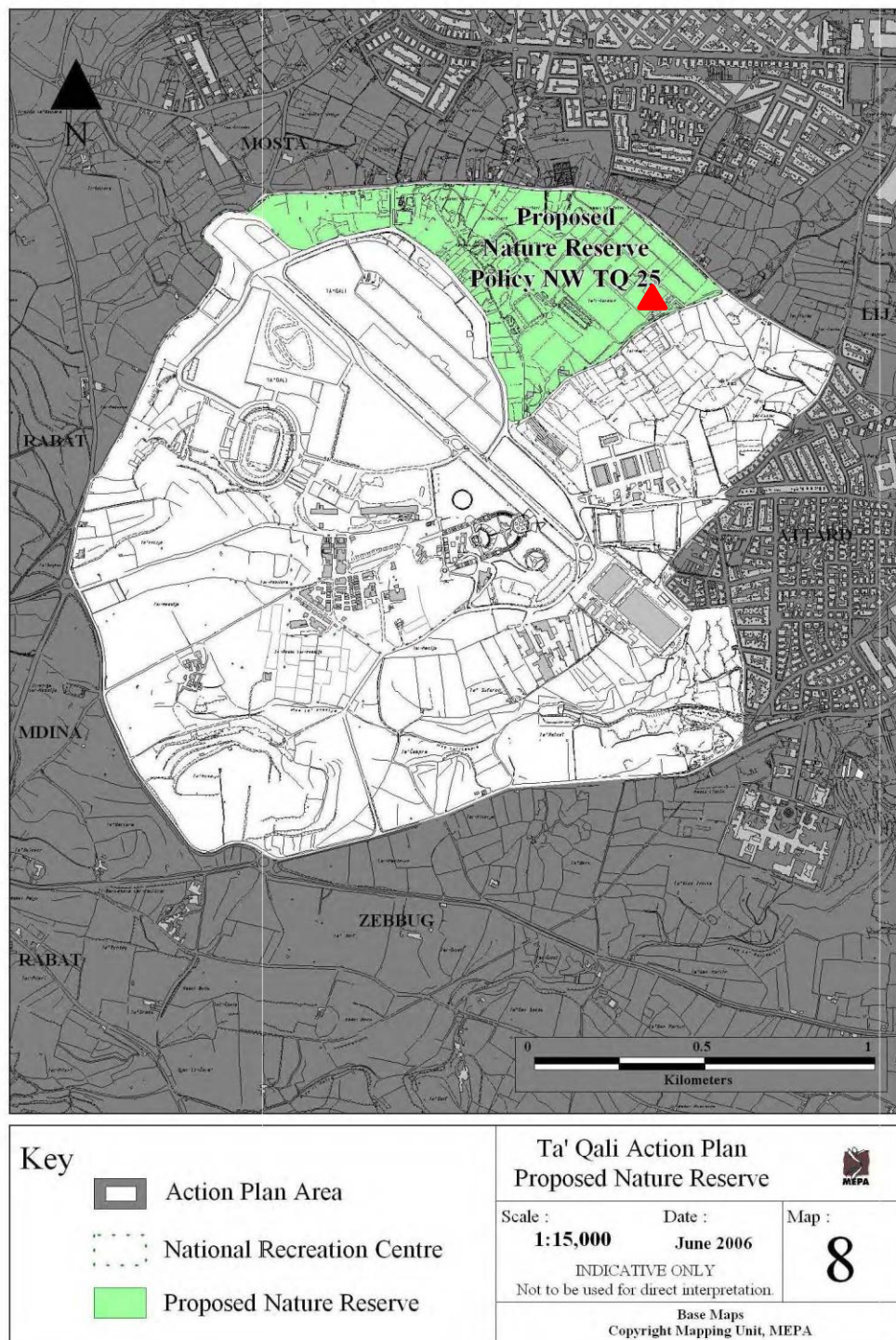


FIGURE 11: NATURE REVERSE, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA' QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)

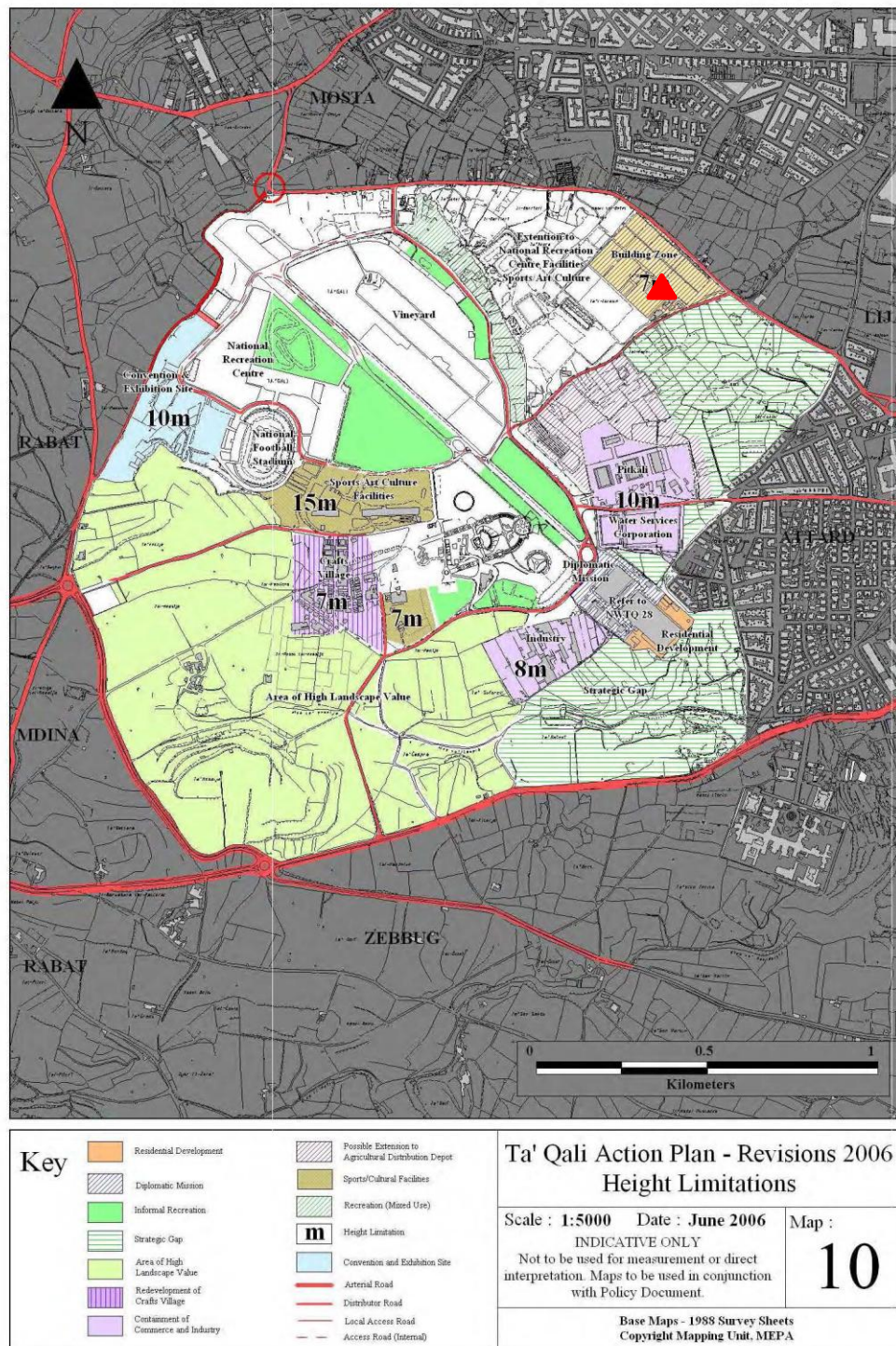


FIGURE 12: BUILDING HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA' QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)

1.2.2.3 Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (2015)

All new developments must complement the goals and objectives outlined in the STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (SPED, 2015). SPED aims to guide development to ensure that land and sea resources of the Maltese Islands are

utilised effectively, whilst ensuring that the environment is protected and enhanced. lists the SPED objectives which are most relevant to the proposed Scheme.

TABLE 3: OBJECTIVES OF THE SPED (2015) RELEVANT TO THE PROPOSED SCHEME

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
Socio-Economic Development Thematic Objective 1	<i>To manage the available potential space and environmental resources on land and sea sustainably to ensure that socio-economic development needs are met whilst protecting the environment an limiting land take up within the Rural Area by.....socio-economic development should ensure that rural areas are not exploited by uses which are not legitimate or necessary.</i>
Socio-Economic Development Thematic Objective 5	<i>To ensure that existing recreational resources are protected, enhanced and accessible, and to facilitate the provision of new recreational facilities to improve social cohesion, human health, air quality and biodiversity by.....safeguarding Salina National Park, Xrobb I-Ghagin National Park, San Antinin Family Park, Ta' Qali National Recreational Centre, Marsa Sports Centre, Mellieha Foresta 2000, Buskett and Majjistral National Park from deleterious and incompatible land uses.....Ensuring that proposed recreational facilities respect the water scarce characteristics of the islands.</i>
Environment Thematic Objective 7	<i>To promote the efficient use of resources including local stone, water and soil, and manage waste in a manner that safeguards natural processes, and minimises impacts on cultural heritage, landscape and human health by.....promoting rain water harvesting provided that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on protected areas and species.....controlling the location of development to prevent soil sealing and erosion.....protecting agricultural land and gardens to prevent loss of soil and soil sealing.</i>
Environment Thematic Objective 8	<i>To safeguard and enhance biodiversity, cultural heritage, geology and geomorphology by.....controlling sources of light pollution which negatively affect the rural areas.</i>
Climate Change Thematic Objective 9	<i>To control Greenhouse gas emissions and enhance Malta's capacity to adapt to Climate Change by.....promoting energy efficiency in the design of buildings.</i>

OBJECTIVE	DESCRIPTION
Rural Area Rural Objective 1	<i>To facilitate sustainable rural development and the diversification of activities within the Rural Area to sustain agriculture and safeguard its distinctiveness by.....protecting good quality agricultural land from development.....controlling the cumulative effect of rural development.</i>
Rural Area Rural Objective 2	<i>To ensure that existing rural recreational resources are protected, enhanced and accessible and to facilitate the provision of new recreational facilities which enhance the public's rural experience in a manner which does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on protected areas, species and areas of high landscape sensitivity by.....ensuring compatibility between recreational activities and between these activities and other land uses</i>
Rural Area Rural Objective 3	<i>To guide development which is either justified to be located in the Rural Area in approved Government policies, plans or programmes, or is incompatible with urban uses and where alternatives are not possible, to the Rural Area away from protected areas and areas of high landscape sensitivity, preferably on Areas of Containment, previously developed land or existing buildings whilst ensuring the improvement of the quality of the rural environment by.....controlling the cumulative effect of such development.....requiring compensation measures to enhance the rural environment.</i>

2 SCHEME SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 LAND USE

A land use survey, incorporating the Scheme site and a 100m buffer zone was conducted, to enable the current land uses and character of the area to be determined.

The Scheme site is located on privately owned land (vide Figure 13). Part of the proposed site is located on the former grounds of the Flower Power Garden Centre (refer to Figure 24). The garden centre has been closed down for several years, causing most of the previous facilities to fall into a state of disrepair (Figure 14). Some metal frames that previously housed the centre's greenhouses are still present on site (Figure 15).

The remainder of the site is currently composed of open plots of unworked soil which are not being used for a specific purpose, as shown in Figure 16. Many of the plots in fact contain piles of discarded litter and inert construction waste (Figure 17). Other significant features in the Scheme footprint include traditional rubble walls and trees.

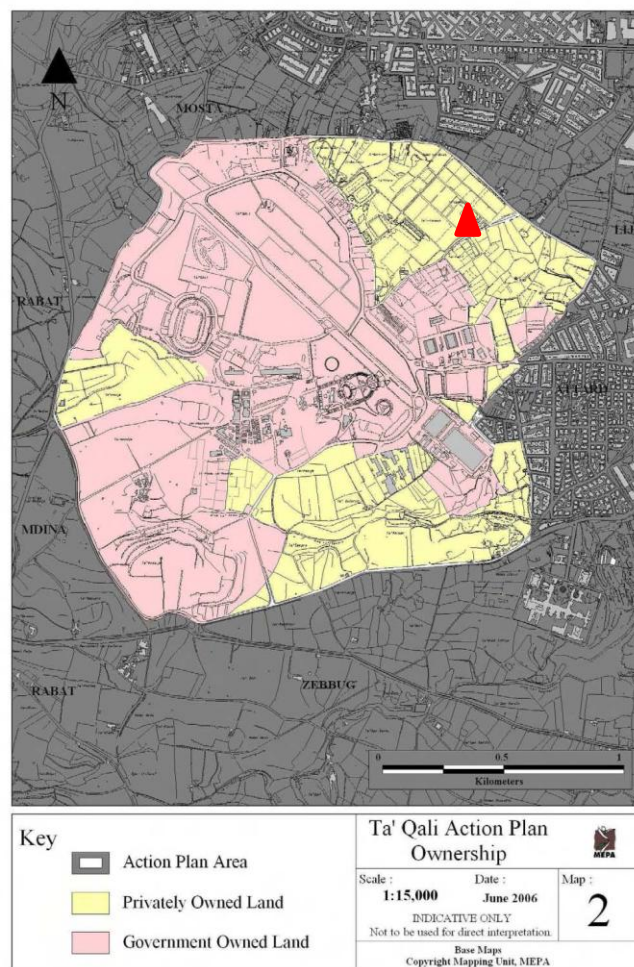


FIGURE 13: OWNERSHIP OF LAND WITHIN THE TA'QALI ACTION PLAN AREA, LOCATION OF PROPOSED SCHEME INDICATED BY THE RED TRIANGLE (SOURCE: TA'QALI ACTION PLAN, 2006)



FIGURE 14: ABANDONED GARDEN CENTRE FACILITIES WITHIN THE SCHEME SITE (16TH AUGUST 2021)



FIGURE 15: METAL FRAMEWORK OF THE REMAINING GREENHOUSES AT THE SCHEME SITE (16TH AUGUST 2021)



FIGURE 16: OPEN PLOTS OF LAND, CONNECTING ROAD BETWEEN TRIQ SAN GAKBU AND TRIQ DURUMLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)



FIGURE 17: WASTE MATERIAL DUMPED WITHIN THE PROPOSED SITE (16TH AUGUST 2021)

The Scheme site is surrounded by a mixture of different land uses, including: residential, agricultural, industrial and commercial premises; the most predominant being agricultural. The agricultural fields located on the south western boundary of the Scheme site comprise of small private holdings situated behind a tall concrete wall. In contrast, the agricultural fields found in the rest of the study area are larger and tend to be demarcated by traditional Maltese rubble walls. The site visit was carried out in the summer months when most of the fields were in the fallow season.

Consequently, it was not possible to determine the types of crops that are grown in the area. Some of the fields appear to have been abandoned for a significant a period of time; and were subsequently classified and mapped as “open plots”.



FIGURE 18: LARGE PARCEL OF AGRICULTURAL LAND DEMARCATED WITH RUBBLE WALLS, TRIQ DURUMBLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)



FIGURE 19: OPEN PLOT, TRIQ DURUMBLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)

Residential properties, industrial premises and commercial outlets are few in number and scattered around the periphery of the study area. The residential properties are composed of detached and semi-detached houses.

Two of the five commercial premises are sport related: the badger go-cart racing track and an outdoor adventure park. The former site has recently closed down, and will be eventually replaced by a new garden centre following the Planning Authority's approval.¹ In contrast, the outdoor adventure park is in the final construction phases and not yet open to the general public. The other commercial premises identified in the study area include a commercial lorry business and a marble shop, with an adjoining marble works.



FIGURE 20: COMMERCIAL MARBLE SHOP, TRIQ DURUMBLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)

¹ Malta Independent (2021) <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-04-19/local-news/PA-gives-the-thumbs-up-for-Ta-Qali-go-kart-track-to-be-replaced-with-garden-centre-6736232734>



FIGURE 21: INDUSTRIAL MARBLE WORKS, TRIQ DURUMBLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)

Other notable land uses identified within the study area include a carpark to the west of the site, a cemetery and school to the north and an Enemalta distribution centre to the south east.



FIGURE 22: INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, TRIQ DURUMBLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)



FIGURE 23: ENEMALTA DISTRIBUTION CENTRE TRIQ DURUMBLAT (16TH AUGUST 2021)

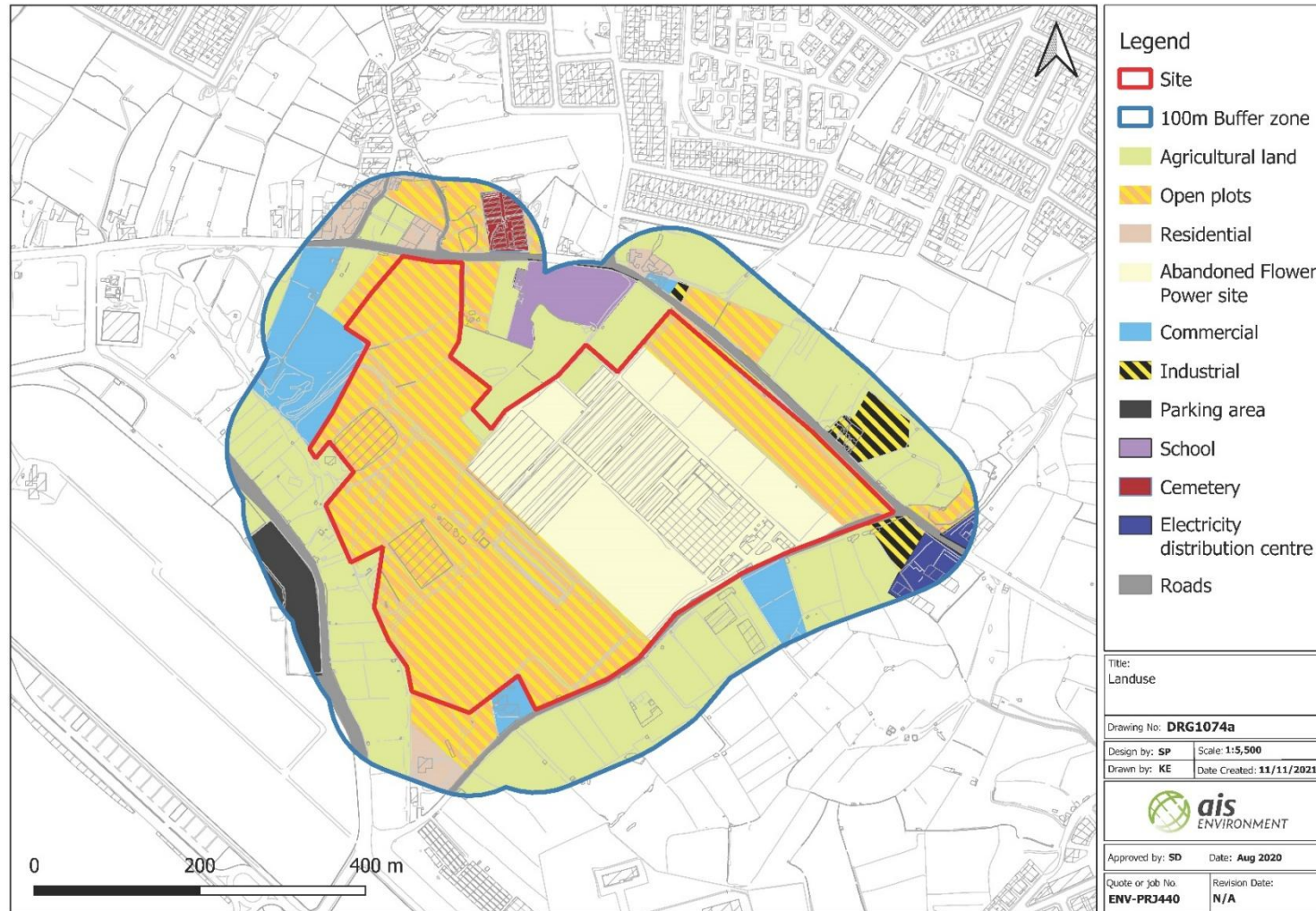


FIGURE 24: CURRENT LAND USE OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.2 GEOLOGY AND SOIL

The entire footprint of the Scheme and the surrounding 100m lie on Lower Globigerina Limestone, as illustrated in Figure 25. Globigerina Limestone is the second oldest rock formation within the Maltese Islands, as it was formed during the Aquitanian to Langhian stages of the Miocene epoch. It is composed of three members: Lower, Middle and Upper Globigerina Limestone. The former is the oldest, whilst the latter is the youngest member. The three members are separated by two distinctive phosphate conglomerate beds. The Lower member is typically pale yellow in colour and characterised by massive bedding and globigerinid biomicrites.

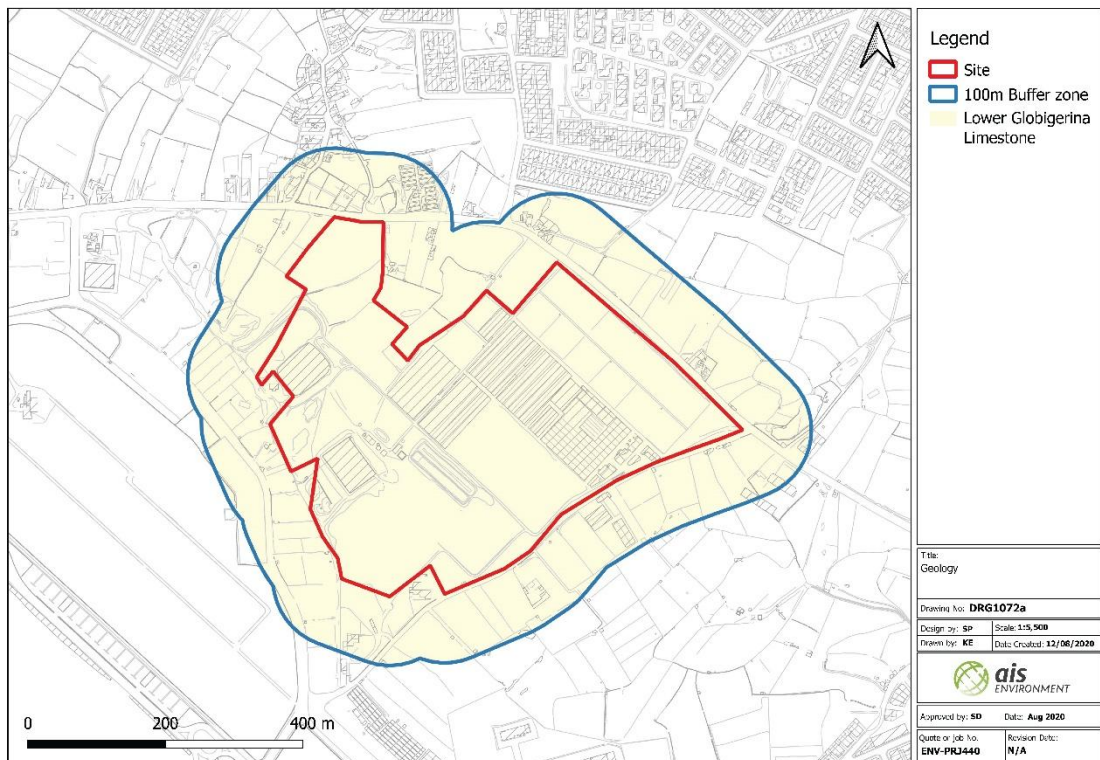


FIGURE 25: GEOLOGICAL MAP OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The proposed Scheme site and surrounding area are relatively flat with no predominant hills, as illustrated by the contour map in Figure 26.



FIGURE 26: 10M CONTOUR MAP OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME SITE AND ADJACENT AREA (SOURCE: PA GEOSERVER)

The majority of the study area, and also the Scheme site footprint, is composed of Tal-Barrani Series soil as shown in Figure 27. This soil is classified as a Xerorendzina. Xerorendzina soils are typically pale brown in colour and have a relatively high carbonate content (50 – 80%).

A relatively small area of Tas-Sigra soil is located within the north eastern section of the site and AoI. Tas-Sigra soil falls under the soil classification of a Terra Rossa Soil, such soils are typically red in colour due to the high iron oxide content. They are highly decalcified, yet rich in humus.

No soil is found along the eastern edge of the study area as it has been subject to development so is built-up area.

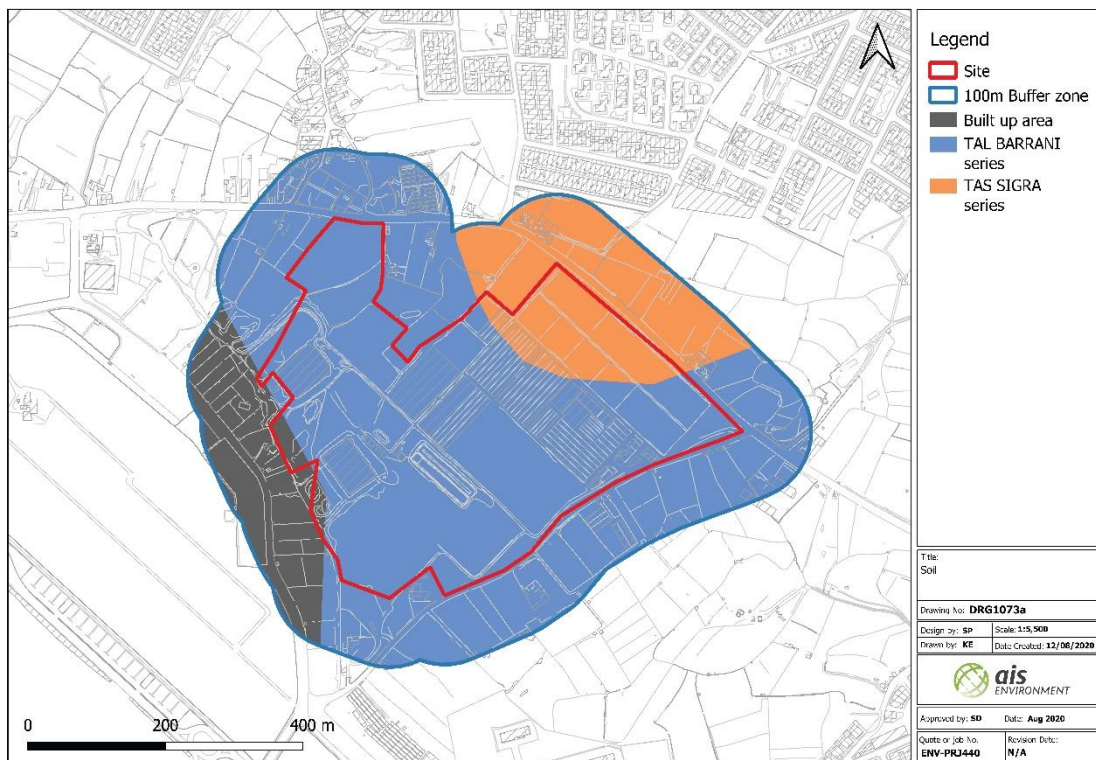


FIGURE 27: SOIL MAP OF THE PROPOSED SCHEME SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.3 HYDROLOGY

The proposed Scheme site overlies the Malta Mean Sea Level Aquifer (MSLA), as indicated in Figure 28. The MSLA is the largest aquifer of the Maltese Islands with an area of 216.6km².² The presence of such an aquifer is a direct result of the geology of the Maltese Islands. The top rock layers are highly porous which allows rainwater to percolate through to form the ghyben-herzberg system. Since freshwater is less dense than seawater the fresh water lens lies above the saline seawater.

² ERA. (2015). The 2nd Water Catchment Management Plan for the Malta Water Catchment District 2015 - 2021. Valletta, Malta.

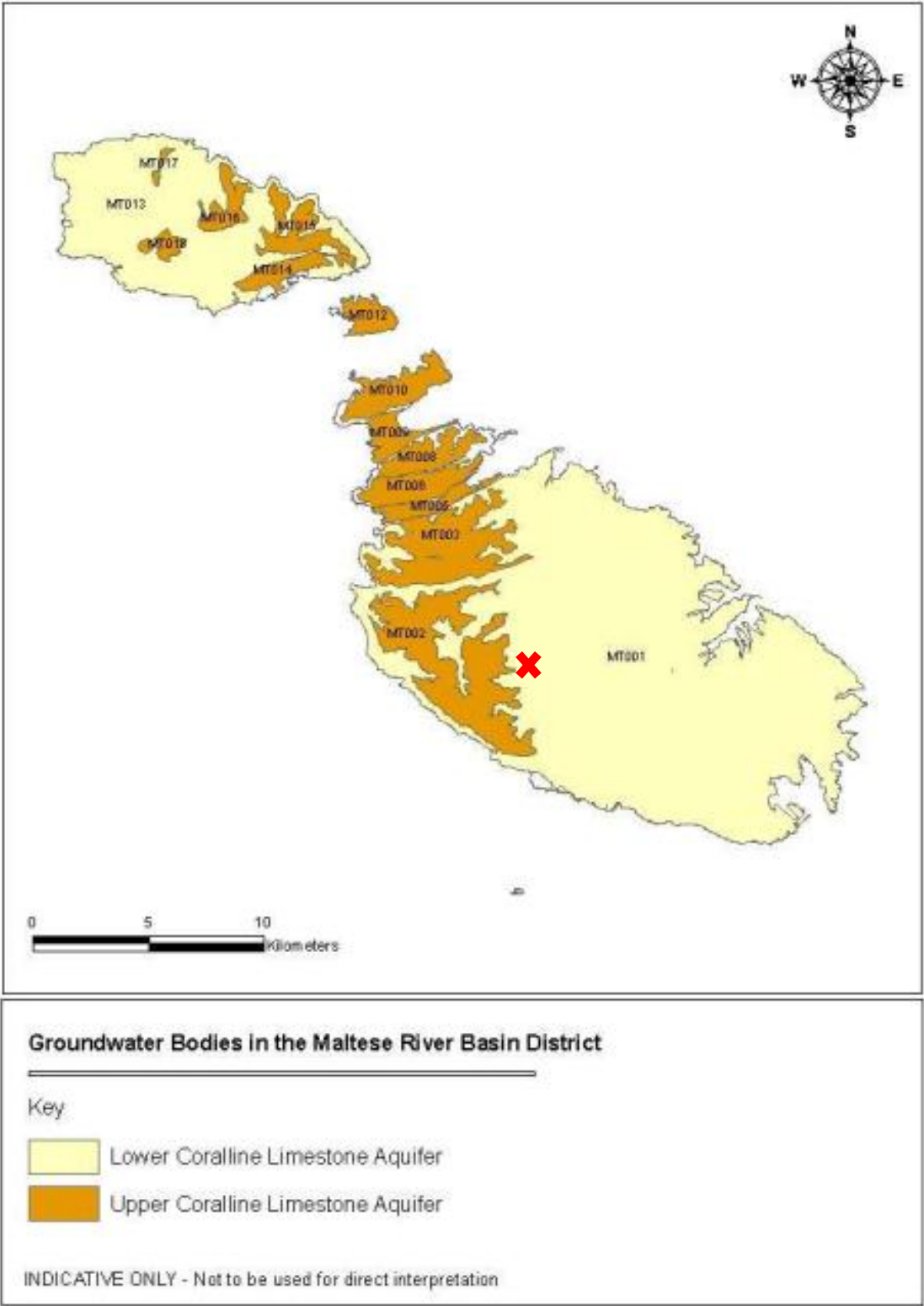


FIGURE 28: GROUNDWATER BODIES IN THE MALTESE RIVER BASIN DISTRICT, RED CROSS INDICATES APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SCHEME

2.4 ECOLOGY

No internationally protected Natura 2000 sites lie within the study area. However, a designated bird sanctuary, which is protected under local regulations (CONSERVATION OF WILD BIRDS REGULATIONS of 2006, S.L. 549.42) lies a short distance south outside of the Scheme footprint (Figure 29). The Ta' Qali bird sanctuary occupies an area of approximately 101 ha. Due to the highly mobile nature of birds, it is important to ensure that the proposed development does not interfere with the nearby habitat and behavioural patterns of the bird populations that frequent the area.

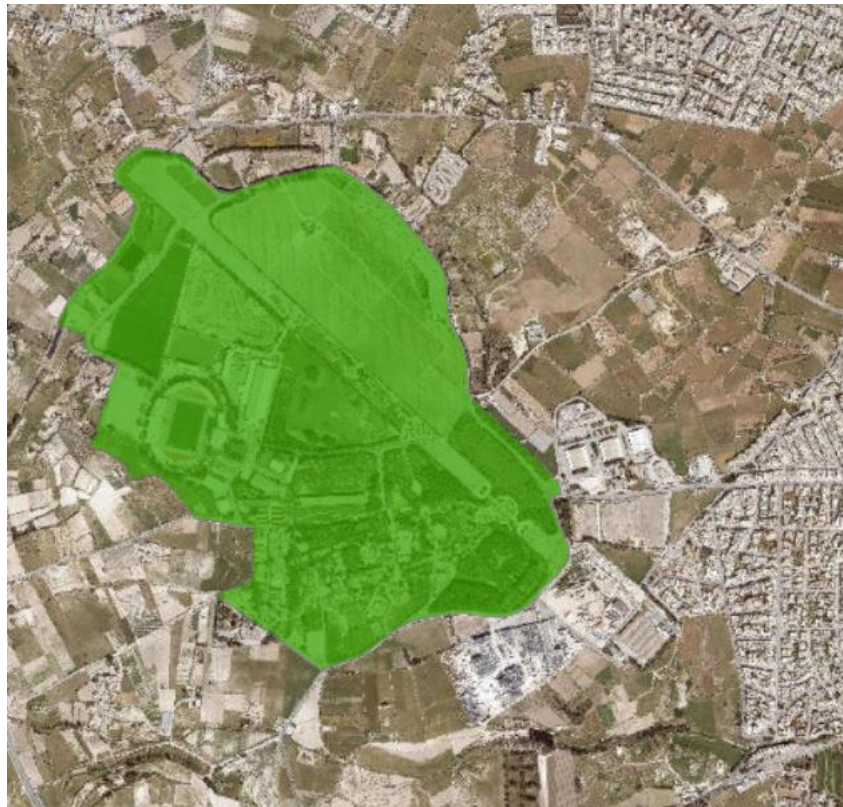


FIGURE 29: LOCATION OF THE TA'QALI BIRD SANCTUARY (SOURCE: PA GEOPORTAL)

The proposed site encompasses several trees, some of which are shown in Figure 30. The Applicant has carried out a preliminary survey in 2015 (refer to Figure 31). A more detailed tree survey needs to be carried out to correctly identify the number and species of trees now present on site (6 years later). Once the survey has been carried out, the trees which may be affected to accommodate the proposed Scheme shall be determined.



FIGURE 30: TREES WITHIN THE PROPOSED SITE BOUNDARY (16TH AUGUST 2021)

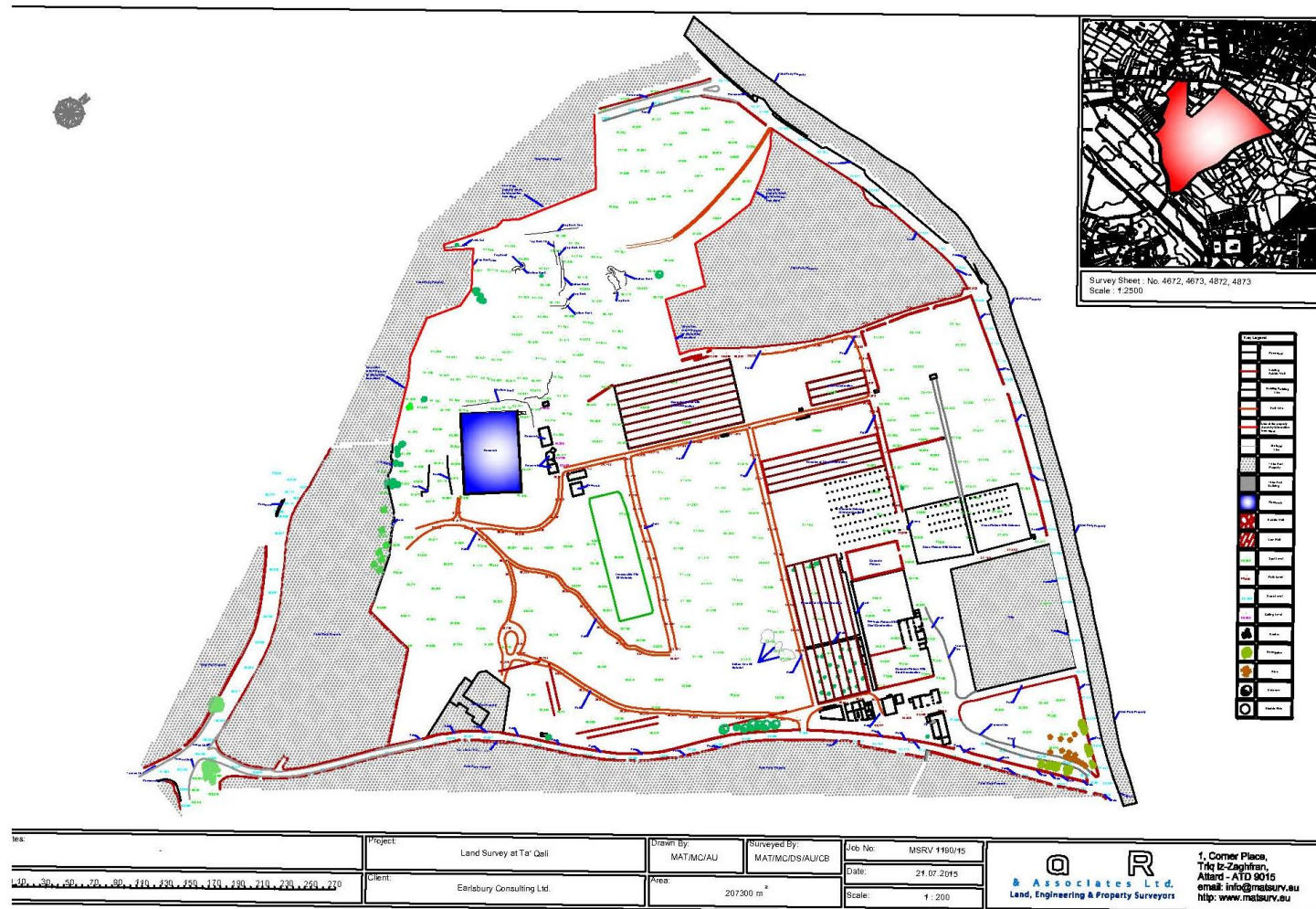


FIGURE 31: PRELIMINARY TREE SURVEY CONDUCTED IN 2015 (SOURCE: AR & ASSOCIATES)

2.5 CULTURAL HERITAGE

The status of the cultural heritage features within the 100m buffer zone was researched on the PA geoportal website. The desktop study revealed that no protected structures are located within the Scheme footprint. A protected building is situated at the northern tip of the AoI, specifically at the corner of Triq it-Torri and Triq Durumblat. It is described as a tower and gardens, and has been designated a Grade 2 protection level.



FIGURE 32: LOCATION OF THE SCHEDULED TOWER AND GARDENS (SOURCE: PA GEOPORTAL)

2.6 SERVICES

A section of the proposed site is currently connected the national electricity grid. The proposed development will require the replacement and expansion of the existing infrastructure. The Applicant will contact Enemalta (the competent authority) to discuss the required modifications and expansion to the national network.

Parts of the Scheme site are currently connected to the national water supply and sewage systems. The proposal will necessitate the replacement and expansion of the existing infrastructure. The Applicant will contact Water Services Corporation (the competent authority) to discuss the required modifications and expansion to the national network.

3 THE SCHEME

3.1 SIZE, SCALE AND DESIGN

The masterplans for the proposed Scheme are presented in Figure 33 to **Error! Reference source not found.**

The proposed facilities are spread out over the entire site with large open spaces separating the facilities. Due to the size of the site and the relatively long distances between the different facilities, an internal road network for the exclusive use of buggies has been incorporated into the design of the Scheme.

Since the aim of the Scheme is to provide a world-class training facility, rather than a competitive venue, only limited stands/spectator areas are incorporated within the Scheme. Due to the inclusion of both indoor and outdoor facilities, the complex will be open all year round. It is envisaged that the individual facilities will be run by third-parties which will be governed under a facilities management company.

Most of the proposed buildings have been located within the building zone area, as stipulated in the Ta' Qali Action Plan, and have adopted the 7m building height restrictions (refer to Section 1.2.2.2 for details). The footprint of each building is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4: FOOTPRINTS OF THE BUILDINGS IN THE PROPOSED SCHEME

BUILDING	TYPE OF AREA	NO OF FLOORS	FOOTPRINT ABOVE GROUND (SQM)	TOTAL GFA (SQM)
Sports hotel	Sports ancillary activities within building zone	4	3,500	7,100
Sports retail		1	3,250	3,250
Sports ancillary activities within building zone			6,750	10,350
Garden centre indoor	Sports related activities within building zone	1	2,500	2,500
Garden centre outdoor*		1	6,000	6,000
Sports hall		2	3,158	3,158
Rehab clinic		2	500	1,500
Sports Health club		2	1,000	3,500

BUILDING	TYPE OF AREA	NO OF FLOORS	FOOTPRINT ABOVE GROUND (SQM)	TOTAL GFA (SQM)
Tennis club		3	1,580	2,830
Sports-related FGA within Building Zone			8,738	13,488
Football/rugby club	Sports activities outside building zone	2	430	860
Storage/rest rooms		1	140	140
Sports activities outside building zone			570	1,000
Floor space of proposed complex			13,313	24,838

**Outdoor garden centre omitted from GFA calculation*

According to the project proponents, the maximum allowed built coverage on site is equal to 75% of the building zone. The building zone within the 207,000sqm site is equal to 60,000sqm, therefore the maximum allowed built coverage on site is equal to 45,000sqm. The built-up area allowed for sports ancillary use is 15% of the maximum allowed built coverage i.e. 6,750sqm. This limit has been respected as shown in the table above for the GFA for sports ancillary use.

The total gross floor area of the proposed complex is 24,838sqm (i.e. 55% of the allowable built coverage). The total visible footprint is equal to 13,313sqm, which is equal to 22.2% of the building zone area and just 6.4% of the total site area.

3.1.1 Site Plans



FIGURE 33: MARKED MASTERPLAN OF THE PROPOSED SPORTS COMPLEX



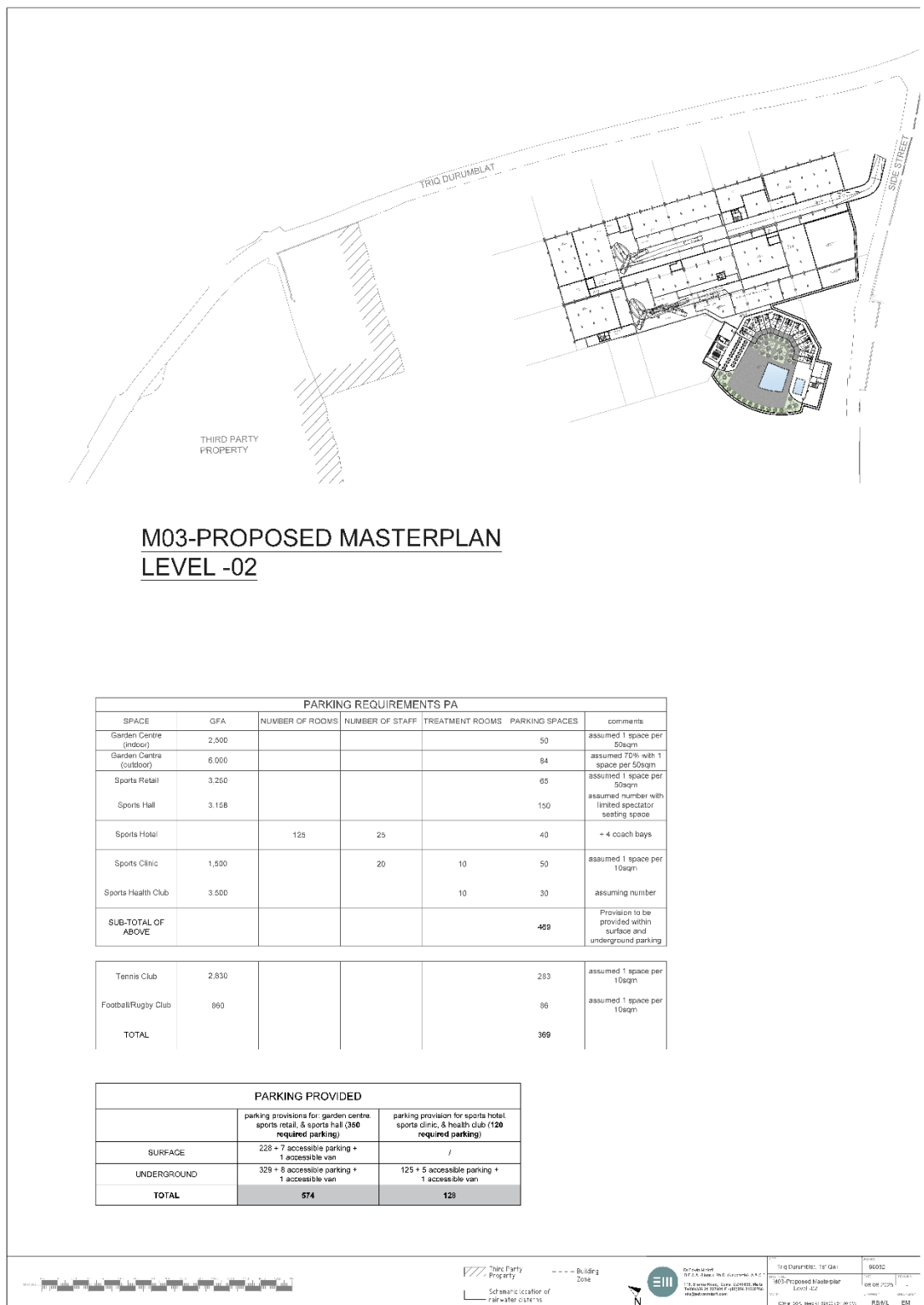


FIGURE 35: PROPOSED MASTERPLAN LEVEL -2

3.2 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

3.2.1 Number of employees

It is estimated that a maximum of 120 persons will be required on site at any one time during the construction phase.

3.2.2 Phasing

The construction of the project will be divided into four individual phases, each involving the building of several facilities, as summarised in Table 5.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF THE INDIVIDUAL CONSTRUCTION PHASES

PHASE	FACILITIES TO BE CONSTRUCTED
1	Sports hall complex Sports retail blocks Garden centre blocks Surface commercial carpark
2	Sports hotel Sports rehabilitation clinic
3	Padel tennis Sprint track Rugby pitches Football and rugby clubhouse Football pitch x 1 Recreational area
4	Sports health club Tennis courts Tennis clubhouse Football pitch (full) x1 Football pitch (half) x1

Each phase is expected to take two years to complete, totalling a period of 8 years for the construction of the whole facility. Each phase is scheduled to commence in January. The timeframes provided include contingency time to cater for possible delays. The phasing details are still provisional and subject to change depending on:

- » The number of project managers;
- » The number of workers;
- » The working hours; and
- » Type and quantity of machinery.

3.2.3 Raw materials

Since the Scheme is still in relatively early stages, specific details on the type and quantities of raw materials required for the construction phase are currently unavailable. However, it has been estimated that on average 150 tons of raw materials per day will be required once all the preliminary phases are complete and all the employees and machinery is available.

The proposed project will require a vast range of raw materials, including but not limited to:

- » PVC
- » Gravel
- » Sand
- » Cast iron
- » Stainless steel
- » Wood
- » Polypropylene
- » Masonry/concrete blocks
- » Cement
- » Concrete
- » Reinforcement

Temporary warehouses will be constructed on site to store the raw materials throughout the construction phase.

3.2.4 Machinery

The type and quantity of machinery which is envisaged to be required for the construction of the proposed Scheme is presented in Table 6. Since the project is still only in the Outline Development Permit stage the list of machinery provided may be subject to change.

TABLE 6: TYPE AND QUANTITIES OF MACHINERY REQUIRED DURING THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE

MACHINERY	QUANTITY
Excavator	6
Dumper	18
Trencher	2
Tower crane	3
Concrete pump	2
Ready-mix trucks	6

3.2.5 Energy, Water & Sewage

Since part of the Scheme site was formally used as a garden centre, the Applicant assumes that it is already serviced with electricity, water and sewage system connections. However, due to the scale of the proposed project the existing infrastructure will need to be completely overhauled to accommodate the new facilities. The Applicant will contact the competent authorities (Enemalta and Water Services Corporation) in due course to discuss the existing infrastructure necessary modifications.

Details related to the water demands and sanitary arrangements required during the construction phase are not available at this time. Such information will be provided at a later date on the submission of the Full Development Permit.

The type and quantity of energy necessary to construct the proposed Scheme has been estimated based on the average daily consumption over a period of 6 years. The estimated values are as follows:

- » Fuel (diesel): 109,500 litres
- » Electricity: 131,4000 KWh
- » Lighting 21,900 KWh

3.2.6 Waste

Details related to the generation of waste during the construction phase of the proposed Scheme is limited at this time. However, it has been calculated that approximately 7 tons of waste will be produced per day once all the preliminary phases are complete and all the employees and machinery is available. The majority of the waste is expected to be the offcuts/excess of the raw materials. Temporary warehouses will be constructed on site to act as designated waste management storage areas throughout the construction phase. Further information will be submitted at a later date at the time of the Full Development Permit application.

All waste management operations on site will be in accordance with the legal provisions of L.N. 184 of 2011 [WASTE REGULATIONS, 2001] and L.N. 106 of 2007 [WASTE MANAGEMENT (ACTIVITY REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS, 2007].

3.2.7 Access

The Scheme site will be accessed via the existing road network during the construction phase, namely via Triq Durumblat.

3.2.8 Parking arrangements

A total of approximately 50 on-site parking spaces will be available during the construction phase. The location of these parking spaces will change throughout the construction period depending on the Construction Management Plan (which is still to be drafted), the activities taking place and the number and role of the personnel who require the parking spaces.

3.3 OPERATIONAL PHASE

3.3.1 Number of employees

Due to the size of the proposed complex, significant numbers of employees are required to run the site operations. An estimation of the number of people required in each of the main facilities is provided in Table 7.

TABLE 7: ESTIMATION OF THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL REQUIRED DURING THE OPERATIONAL PHASE

FACILITY	APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PEOPLE
Commercial complex	200
Food court	40
Sports hall complex	3
Rehabilitation clinic, club houses and health club	250
Sports hotel	250
General site maintenance, upkeep, gardening and security	50

3.3.2 Raw materials

Details related to the raw materials required for the operational phase of the proposed Scheme are not available at this time. Such information will be provided at a later date on the submission of the Full Development Permit.

3.3.3 Machinery

Details related to the machinery required during the operational phase of the proposed Scheme are not available at this stage. Such information will be provided at a later date on the submission of the Full Development Permit.

3.3.4 Energy & Water

Since the Scheme is still in the early phases, the electrical installations have not yet been determined. However, it is the Applicant's intention to install a range of equipment to reduce the energy demand of the complex on the local infrastructure, as well as reducing its carbon footprint. Examples of such equipment include PV panels, solar water heaters and heat pumps. All buildings will also be equipped with building management systems to keep energy consumption as low as possible.

The energy demand of the proposed Scheme during the operational phase is not available at this time. This information will be submitted in due course as part of the Full Development Permit application.

The Scheme involves the installation of ten underground reservoirs which will be used to harvest rain water and surface water run off on site. The location and the capacity of the proposed infrastructure are summarized in Table 8. The collected rain water will be used for a range of different purposes, including the irrigation of the landscaped areas. The reservoir system will have a collective capacity of approximately 36,200m³.

TABLE 8: APPROXIMATE CAPACITIES OF THE PROPOSED WATER RESERVOIRS

RESERVOIR	APPROXIMATE CAPACITY (M ³)
Sports retail	9,600
Sports hall complex	1,900
Tennis club and surrounding area	3,600
Sports hotel and rehabilitation clinic	5,000
Rugby pitch, scrum pitch and sprint track	1,400
Football pitches (including intensive training half pitch)	600
Sports health club	2,100
Recreational area	12,000

3.3.5 Waste

Details related to the type and quantities of waste to be generated during the operational phase of the proposed Scheme are not available at this time. Such information will be provided at a later date on the submission of the Full Development Permit.

All waste management operations on site will be in accordance with the legal provisions of L.N. 184 of 2011 [WASTE REGULATIONS, 2001] and L.N. 106 of 2007 [WASTE MANAGEMENT (ACTIVITY REGISTRATION) REGULATIONS, 2007].

3.3.6 Access & Parking Arrangements

The Scheme site will be accessible by car via Triq Durumblat. Two entry points will provide access to the commercial carpark, one of which will be located in the eastern corner of the surface carpark, whilst the other will be in the centre. Two separate exit points will be located near the centre of the carpark and the western corner of the carpark.

The internal roads within the complex will be bi-directional, however the roads within the car parking areas will be one-directional to regulate car flow and minimise congestion. In addition to the internal roads, there will be a network of buggy routes connecting the main sports facilities.

The site is also accessible to public transport commuters, with the nearest bus stop being located at Triq il-Mithna, approximately 250m away from the complex entrance.

3.3.7 Parking Arrangements

The underground carpark will accommodate 467 cars (inclusive of reserved disabled spaces) and 2 vans. The overlying carpark will cater for another 235 (including spaces for disabled persons) and 1 van. Smaller car parking areas are also included in the complex next to the various sports facilities. A breakdown of the parking provision is provided in Table 9. Overall, the site will accommodate 682 vehicles (20 disabled) and 3 vans.

The complex will also provide bicycle racks for bicycles. The racks will be spread out across the entire complex for the convenience of those opting to travel using sustainable modes of transportation.

TABLE 9: PARKING PROVISION FOR THE OPERATIONAL PHASE

CAR PARKING LOCATION	NO. OF SPACES		
	STANDARD	DISABLED	VANS/COACHES
Underground carpark	454	13	2
Surface commercial carpark	228	7	1

CAR PARKING LOCATION	NO. OF SPACES		
	STANDARD	DISABLED	VANS/COACHES
TOTAL	682	20	3

4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

A preliminary indication of the environmental impacts that are likely to be associated with the Scheme are described in this section, and may serve as an initial scoping assessment in the context of the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS OF 2017 (S.L. 549.46). The potential impacts of the Scheme and their respective mitigation measures are listed in Table 10.

TABLE 10: POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
Land Uses	<p>Moderate Beneficial</p> <p>The development of the derelict Flower Power Garden centre and surrounding area is considered to be a beneficial impact on land use since the land is currently abandoned and serves no particular purpose. The development of open plots of land into a formal outdoor recreation area is also deemed to be beneficial and in line with the land use policies of the area.</p>	N/A
Landscape and Visual Impact	<p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>During the construction phase, the construction machinery will temporarily reduce the landscape and visual amenity of the area.</p>	The machinery should be parked within designated areas when not in use.
	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The construction of new buildings will increase the number and consequently the density of built structures within the area. This will not only cause a deterioration of the visual amenity of the adjacent areas, but may also disrupt viewpoints from other localities which overlook the area.</p>	<p>The materials used for the structures should be selected to ensure that they complement the surrounding buildings.</p> <p>The landscaping plan should be specifically designed to help improve the visual appeal of the whole development.</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	On the other hand, the removal of the currently dilapidated structures will undoubtedly be an improvement to the current situation.	
Ecology	<p>Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The Scheme may entail the uprooting of trees which will have a negative impact upon the local ecological communities.</p>	<p>A detailed tree survey is required to identify the trees and ecological communities which are present within the site boundary and whether they will be directly impacted by the proposed development. The quantity of trees to be transplanted and/or uprooted should be kept to a bare minimum.</p> <p>If any trees require uprooting or transplanting, the Applicant must obtain the relevant permits from the ERA and follow the compensatory tree planting regulations.</p> <p>The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be enforced and implemented throughout the construction phase to minimise the occurrence of such risks. Specific measures include the provision of emergency spill kits on site and the storage of all liquids in spill trays.</p>
Agriculture	Moderate Adverse	<p>The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be enforced and implemented throughout the construction phase to keep the</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	<p>The construction phase will lead to the generation of fine dust which will easily disperse into the surrounding agricultural fields.</p>	<p>level of dust generation to a minimum. Specific practices include the covering of all stockpiles of loose materials and damping the internal road surface if they become dry and dusty.</p>
	<p>Minor Adverse</p> <p>The conversion of abandoned agricultural land for other uses will prevent the land being used again for agricultural purposes.</p>	<p>The Scheme should be designed to limit the area of agricultural land which requires conversion.</p>
<p>Archaeology and Cultural Assets</p>	<p>Unknown</p> <p>The development site does not contain any known/documented cultural features or assets. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to note that the site is located in an archaeologically sensitive area.</p>	<p>Should any artefacts be discovered, monitoring should be carried out according to the guidance provided by the SCH.</p>
<p>Geology, Geomorphology, Palaentology, Hydrology, Hydrogeology</p>	<p>Minor to Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The excavation and levelling of land required for the construction of the new structures will affect the geology and geomorphology of the area.</p> <p>It is envisaged that there will be no substantial changes in the hydrology and hydrogeology of the area.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
Air Quality	Moderate Adverse During the construction phase an increased levels of dust generation is predicted. This will temporarily reduce the air quality of the surrounding area.	The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be enforced and implemented throughout the construction phase to minimise the dispersal of dust into the surrounding environment. For example, all stockpiles should be kept covered by a heavy-duty sheet when not in use.
	Moderate - Major Adverse The Scheme is expected to give rise to increased vehicular emissions in the area. The severity of the impact will depend on the number of additional trips generated by the project. However, it can be expected that the increase in vehicle numbers would be greater than 1000, giving rise to a moderate to major impact.	A traffic impact study should be carried out to determine the number of additional trips generated by the proposed Scheme. In turn, this can be used to assess the impact of the project on the local air quality. All the employees of the complex should be encouraged to use the public transport system and other green travel modes to commute to and from work.
Noise	Moderate Adverse During the construction phase of the Scheme, additional noise will be generated which may disturb the local residents, businesses and the school.	The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be implemented to minimise the disturbance to locals in line with S.L. 435.79. Specific measures include restricting working hours to daylight hours and switching off machinery when not in use.

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	<p>Moderate - Major Adverse</p> <p>The operational phase of the Scheme may result in an increase in noise generation within the area. Considering there is currently no activity on the Scheme site and the fact that a number of the activities will take place outdoor the severity of the impact is considered to be moderate to major.</p>	<p>The new buildings should be fitted with double-glaze windows to minimise the amount of noise that disperses beyond the confines of the Scheme site.</p> <p>Noise studies should be carried out to establish the current noise conditions in the area. This will enable accurate calculations to be made to predict the noise levels generated during the operational phase of the project.</p>
Waste Management	<p>Minor to Moderate Adverse</p> <p>During the construction phase, the transport of material to and from the site may be a nuisance to local residents and businesses.</p>	<p>The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS of 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be implemented to ensure that waste is stored and managed on site in an appropriate manner before being transported to a registered waste disposal facility.</p> <p>Where possible any waste material should be re-used on site to limit the volumes of waste that needs to be disposed of.</p>
	<p>Minor to Moderate Adverse</p> <p>The Scheme is expected to give rise to higher volumes of waste than currently generated. The waste generated will</p>	<p>The 3 Rs (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) will apply to all recyclable material. Unrecyclable waste will be disposed of</p>

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	consist of various waste streams due to the variety of activities which will take place on site. It is likely that the rehabilitation centre will also generate hazardous medical waste.	accordingly in authorised landfills or waste disposal facilities.
Social Impacts	Moderate Adverse During the construction phase of the project the typical disturbances associated with construction sites may cause a nuisance to local residents, businesses and visitors to the area. the biggest inconveniences are expected to relate to noise and dust. The impact is considered to be minor since the majority of the surrounding land use is agricultural.	The ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSTRUCTION SITE REGULATIONS OF 2007 (S.L. 435.79) should be implemented to minimise the disturbance to local residents, businesses and sports clubs. The Applicant should also regularly consult the local council, farmers and local businesses to identify and rectify any causes of concern.
	Moderate Beneficial The Scheme seeks to provide a high-class sports training facility in which all the services the athletes/teams require can be provided within a single site. Such a facility would be of great benefit to Malta since there is currently no other facility like it on the island. It will not only benefit the local teams/athletes but also attract elite sport people from abroad.	N/A

FEATURE POTENTIALLY IMPACTED	DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL IMPACT	MITIGATION MEASURES
	<p>The proposed commercial block will provide additional shops and food outlets for residents in the nearby localities. This will not only provide more jobs but also help boost the local economy. The positive effect would be increased by the spending of the foreign athletes.</p> <p>On the other hand, the economic growth and increased visitor attraction towards the area, may give rise to nuisances and complaints from nearby residents, farmers and local businesses. The additional vehicular trips would bring about traffic bottlenecks, reduced air quality conditions and surplus noise disturbance at the local context.</p>	