KUNSILL LOKALI
IS-SIĠĠIEWI
Città Ferdinand

MINUTI

Laqgħa tal-Kunsill Lokali tas-Siġġiewi

IT-TMIEN LEĠISLATURA

Laqgħa Numru 383

Is-Sibt 21 ta' Diċembru 2019

Il-Kunsill Lokali tas-Siġġiewi ltaqa' fiċ-Ċentru Ċiviku tas-Siġġiewi li jinsab fl-indirizz 18, Pjazza San Nikola, is-Siġġiewi, fit-tmienja u nofs ta' filgħodu.

PREŻENTI:

Is-Sindku Kurstein Nicholas Sant
Il-Kunsillier Alessia Psaila Zammit
Il-Kunsillier Dominic Grech
Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg
Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia
Il-Kunsillier Francine Farrugia

ASSENTI B'APOLOĠIJI (Skont Ordni Permanenti 14A(3):
Il-Viċi Sindku Rodianne Haber

UFFIĊJAL PREŻENTI:

Ritienne Giorgino – Segretarju Eżekuttiv

Minuti

Is-Sindku preseda l-laqgħa.

383.1 **Qari tal-ittri ta' apoloġiji**

Is-Segretarju Eżekuttiv qrat l-ittra ta' apoloġija tal-Viċi Sindku Rodianne Haber.

383.2 **Kunsiderazzjoni u Approvazzjoni tal-Minuti**

Inqraw il-Minuti tas-Seduti 380, 381 u 382. Is-Sindku ressaq il-Minuti għall-approvazzjoni. Il-Kunsill approva unanimament il-Minuti moqrija bħala dokument korrett.

Punti li joħorġu mill-Minuti

383.2.1 380.2.2 Il-Kunsillier Alessia Psaila Zammit qalet li permezz ta' dik l-ittra ġenerika, il-Kunsill dejjem irriżerva d-dritt li jappella għad-deċiżjonijiet tal-PA. Hija talbet li ssir laqgħa mal-Perit Cacopardo flimkien mal-Avukat tal-Kunsill biex issir kjarifika dwar dan u jekk hemm bżonn l-ittra tiġi riveduta u emendata.

383.2.2 380.2.5 Is-Sindku qal li l-pjanti ma ġewx preżentati. Huwa qal li ser jitlob laqgħa dwar il-proġett.

383.2.3 380.2.6 Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia ta evalwazzjoni fuq l-attivita' Milied fis-Siġġiewi. Huwa qal li mill-*feedback* tan-nies, l-attivita' intlaqgħet tajjeb ħafna, anka l-fatt li s-*set-up* kien differenti minn tas-snin preċedenti. Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg issuġġerixxa li għal sena oħra tajjeb li jkun hemm pjan alternattiv f'każ li jkun maltemp. Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia qal li peress li kien hemm kollox ibbukjat u pjanat għal dak inhar kienet impossibbli li l-attivita' tiġi posposta. Il-Kunsilliera Francine Farrugia qalet li kien hemm xi tgergir mill-għaqdiet dwar il-pożizzjoni tal-*istands* għax uħud kienu 'l bogħod mill-attivitajiet u allura ma kienux jafu x'qed jiġri, u dan affetwalhom ukoll il-bejgħ mill-istands. Qalet li tippreferi li l-attivita' tkun iċċentralizzata fil-Pjazza anka biex kulħadd ikollu l-istess prominenza. Il-Kunsilliera Psaila Zammit staqsiet liema għaqdiet kienu qassmu l-fuljetti promozzjonali. Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia wieġeb li fil-laqgħa mal-għaqdiet kien hemm iż-żewġ għaqdiet tal-baned li wrew interess, allura t-tqassim inqasam bejniethom. Huwa qal ukoll li l-għaqda tal-armar tat is-sehem tagħha bit-tqassim tal-fuljett tal-laqgħa ta' konsultazzjoni.

383.3 **Komunikazzjoni mis-Sindku**

Is-Sindku nforma li kien irċieva invit għall-okkazjoni taż-Żagħżugħ tas-Sena, għas-7 ta' Frar 2020 fis-6.30pm. Huwa qal li flimkien miegħu ġew mistiedna l-Kunsilliera, Francine Farrugia u Julian Borg ffirmaw in-nominazzjoni.

383.4 **Mistoqsijiet tal-Kunsilliera**

383.4.1 Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg staqsa għaliex il-Kunsilliera ma' kienux invitati għall-attivita' Tentakli tal-Memorja li saret fit-13/12/2019 fis-Sala tal-Każin Banda San Nikola. Is-Sindku wieġeb li din kienet attivita' oriġinata mill-Active Ageing Centre, b'kollaborazzjoni mal-Kunsill u bil-parteċipazzjoni ta' artisti Siġġiwin b'diżabilta' biex jesibixxu pitturi minn tagħhom. Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia qal li l-ftuħ sar ġurnata qabel l-attivita' ta' Milied fil-Pjazza biex l-għada tkun miftuħa wkoll għall-pubbliku waqt l-attivita' tal-Kunsill. Is-Sindku qal li hu kien mistieden u li għal futur se jara li jkunu nfurmati l-kunsilliera kollha.

B'referenza għal dan, il-Kunsilliera Alessia Psaila Zammit qalet li din mhix l-ewwel darba li kien hemm attività li fiha nvolut l-Kunsill Lokali u kunsilliera jsiru jafu mill-media jew ftit minuti qabel l-attivita'. Hi sostniet li għandu jkun hemm komunikazzjoni sħiħa bejn is-Sindku u l-Kunsilliera.

383.4.2 Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg saqsa b'liema kriterju ġiet identifikata s-Sala tal-Każin tal-Banda biex tinżamm din l-attivita' u min kien li ħa d-deċiżjoni. Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia wieġeb li d-deċiżjoni ittieħdet f'laqgħa ma' rappreżentanti tal-AAC peress li din kienet l-unika sala aċċessibbli għal persuni b'diżabilta' u anzjani. Il-Kunsilliera Alessia Psaila Zammit saqsiet għaliex ma nżammitx fiċ-Ċentru Ċiviku li huwa aċċessibbli. Il-Kunsillier Farrugia wieġeb li s-Sala taċ-Ċentru Ċiviku kienet ikkunsidrata pero kienet 'il barra miż-żona fejn saret l-attivita'. Għalhekk ġie deċiż li s-Sala tal-Każin tal-Banda San Nikola qegħda fl-aħjar pożizzjoni. Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg qal li kien jistenna li l-Kunsilliera jkunu nfurmati b'deċiżjoni bħal din fejn intgħażlet għaqda waħda fuq oħrajn. Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia qal li hu kien nforma lill-Kunsill Lokali f'Seduta preċedenti li kien se jkun hemm wirja fil-Kazin tal-Banda San Nikola. Il-Kunsilliera Alessia Psaila Zammit qalet li dak li kien qal l-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia fil-laqgħa preċedenti ma kienx ċar li din kienet marbuta ma' attività tad-Day Centre, u l-programm ta' Milied fis-Siġġiewi kien vag wisq.

Il-Kunsillier Dominic Grech qal li l-kunsilliera kellhom jingħataw aktar informazzjoni fuq l-għażla tal-post għal din l-attività u kkonferma li lanqas hu ma kien jaf bl-attività li fl-aħħarnett kien hemm l-Kunsill Lokali nvolut fiha. Hu qal li qed ikun hemm nuqqas ta' nformazzjoni lill-kunsilliera u appella għal aktar trasparenza f'dak li jkun qed jiġri fil-Kunsill Lokali.

Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg staqsa jekk kienx hemm ftehim għall-ħlas għall-użu tas-Sala tal-Każin Banda San Nikola u jekk fl-affermattiv kemm hi t-talba għall-ħlas. Is-Sindku wieġeb li kien se ikun hemm ħlas. Il-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia qal li kien għadu ma jafx kemm hi t-talba għall-ħlas. Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg qal li dan mhux mod serju u trasparenti kif jitmexxew attivitajiet tal-Kunsill Lokali u sostna li għandhom jiġu segwiti proċeduri finanzjarji fl-attivitajiet tal-Kunsill u f'kull ħaġa oħra.

Il-Kunsillier Psaila Zammit qalet li l-Kunsillier Adrian Farrugia jifforma parti mill-Kumitat tal-Każin Banda San Nikola u fl-istess waqt bħala kunsillier ftiehem mal-għaqda li tintuża s-Sala għall-attività tal-Kunsill Lokali, bi ħlas mill-Kunsill Lokali, liema ħlas ħadd ma jaf kemm hu jew kien infurmat dwaru. Il-Kunsilliera Psaila Zammit qalet li f'kull materja finanzjarja anke jekk tkun se ssir deċiżjoni ta' *direct order* skont il-parametri u regolamenti, għandha tkun nfurmata s-Segretarju Eżekuttiv u mhux tiġi maqbuża biex isiru negozjati bejn il-Kunsillier u terzi.

Is-Segretarju Eżekuttiv fakkret lill-Kunsilliera li ħadd m'għandu jieħu deċiżjonijiet ta' nfieq tal-fondi pubbliċi tal-Kunsill Lokali mingħajr ma tkun infurmata u jiġi assigurat li kull nefqa qed issegwi proċeduri li l-Kunsill Lokali obligat isegwi. Hi qalet li kienet qed tirċievi kontijiet ta' nfieq fl-attivita' tal-Milied li ma kienitx nfurmata dwarhom minkejja li kemm il-darba ġibdet l-attenzjoni. Il-Kunsilliera Francine Farrugia qalet li mhux aċċetabbli li kunsilliera jieħdu deċiżjonijiet fuq nfieq ta' fondi pubbliċi waħedhom u bla ma jinfurmaw lis-Segretarju Eżekuttiv.

Il-Kunsillier Dominic Grech qal li ma jistax jifhem kif membru tal-Kunsill Lokali jista' jkun parti minn Kumitat ta' każin meta dan joħloq kunflitt ta' interess.

Is-Sindku qal li għal attivitajiet futuri għandu jkun hemm koordinament sħiħ bejn il-Kunsillier li jieħu ħsieb l-attivita' u l-Amministrazzjoni tal-Kunsill tul l-organizzazjoni kollha.

383.5 PA/04576/19 – *Relocation of kerbside fuel station MRA/KPRS/105 from Pjazza San Nikola – Siggiewi to a site on Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi – Siggiewi and construction of servicing garage at basement, ancillary office and shop Class 4B, car wash, ATM and landscaping at ground floor level.*

Is-Sindku ressaq id-dokument li kien tfassal b'kontribut mill-Kunsilliera kollha wara li saret il-laqgħa ta' konsultazzjoni mar-residenti tas-Siġġiewi. Hu qal li l-Kunsill kien wasal għal pożizzjoni li hija oġġettiva; li ssostni li:

- l-pompa għandha tiċċaqlaq mill-Pjazza,
- waqt li ssostni wkoll li dwar is-sit alterattiv għandhom isiru aktar konsultazzjonijiet u studji biex ikun assigurat li dan is-sit huwa adekwat kif ukoll biex jiġu mħarsa l-aspetti ambjentali tal-lokalità.

Huwa qal li l-Uffiċċju kien irċieva petizzjoni bi 'l fuq minn elf firma favur ir-rilokazzjoni tal-pompa minn Pjazza San Nikola għal Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi u anka diversi emails li l-maġġor parti tagħhom huma favur ir-rilokazzjoni. Hu qal li referenza għall-petizzjoni għandha tiddaħħal fis-sezzjoni tas-sottomissjoni tal-Kunsill Lokali lill-Awtorità tal-Ippjanar fejn hemm l-kummenti li għamlu r-residenti.

Il-Kunsillier Dominic Grech, tenna li hu favur li ssir din ir-rilokazzjoni mill-Pjazza kemm minħabba l-aspett ta' sigurta' tar-residenti u dawk li jiffrekwentaw din il-Pjazza, kif ukoll minħabba l-aspett estetiku tal-istess Pjazza li hi mdawwra f'bini arkelogiku ta' valur storiku. Huwa qal li dan is-sentiment ġie espress ukoll minn residenti Siġġiwin li attendew għal-laqgħa ta' konsultazzjoni f'dan ir-rigward, kif ukoll tal-istess sid ta' din il-pompa. Il-Kunsillier Grech saħaq li hu kruċjali li r-residenti fi Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi, fejn qed jiġi propost ir-rilokament ta' din il-pompa ikunu ikkonsultati filwaqt li jiġu preżentati d-dokumenti kollha professjonali li jistabilixxu b'mod ċar l-impatt ta' dan il-proġett fuq ir-residenti tal-madwar kif ukoll fuq l-ambjent innifsu ta' din l-akkwata.

Is-Sindku issospenda l-laqgħa.

Is-Sindku fetaħ il-laqgħa.

Il-Kunsillier Alessia Psaila Zammit qalet li fil-laqgħa ta' konsultazzjoni issemmiet ukoll petizzjoni li nbdiet mir-residenti kontra l-applikazzjoni. Hi qalet li l-Kunsill għandu jniżżel ir-referenza għall-petizzjonijiet kollha li kien nfurmat dwarhom. Alessia Psaila Zammit qalet ukoll li meta tiddaħħal l-pożizzjoni tal-Kunsill Lokali lill-Awtorità tal-Ippjanar, għandhom jiżdiedu d-dettalji tas-Sindku u s-Segretarju bħala r-rappreżentanti tal-Kunsill Lokali jew li tiddaħħal mill-perit f'isem il-Kunsill Lokali. F'kull każ għandu jittieħed parir biex ikun assigurat li l-mod kif issir s-sottomissjoni tkun qed tippreserva drittijiet legali tal-Kunsill Lokali.

Is-Sindku qabel ma' dan u qal li din s-sottomissjoni se tkun l-pożizzjoni li jieħu l-Kunsill Lokali f'dan l-istadju tal-applikazzjoni. Hu qal li kien se jżid magħha r-referenza għall-petizzjonijiet u jiċċirkola din l-aħħar verżjoni lill-Kunsilliera kollha.

Kopja tal-pożizzjoni tal-Kunsill qed tkun annessa ma' dawn il-Minuti bħala Annex 1.

383.6 **Approvazzjoni tal-*Performance Bonus* tas-Segretarju Eżekuttiv u tal-istaff għas-sena 2019**

Is-Sindku propona li l-*performance bonus* lis-Segretarju Eżekuttiv u lill-impjegati tal-Kunsill għas-sena ta' ħidma 2019, jingħata għall-massimu li tipprovdi l-liġi.
Il-Kunsill qabel unanimament.

383.7 Laqgħa Pubblika Annwali

Is-Sindku propona li l-laqgħa pubblika annwali ssir fl-20 ta' Jannar 2020 fis-6.00pm.
Il-Kunsill unaniment qabel.

Il-Kunsilliera Alessia Psaila Zammit proponiet li tintbagħat komunikazzjoni lill-għaqdiet kollha biex naraw l-interess biex jitqassmu l-avviżi bieb bieb.

383.8 Materji konnessi mal-Awtorita' tal-Ippjanar

Is-Segretarju Eżekuttiv ippreżentat lista ta' applikazzjonijiet li daħlu mal-Awtorita' tal-Ippjanar biex isir xi tip ta' żvillupp fis-Siġġiewi.

Ma ssemmew l-ebda materji konnessi.

383.9 Rapport tal-Korrispondenza

Is-Segretarju Eżekuttiv ppreżentat ir-rapport tal-korrispondenza li l-Kunsill irċieva bejn l-aħħar Seduta u llum.

Ma tqajjem l-ebda punt fuq il-korrispondenza.

383.10 Rapport tal-ilmenti

Is-Segretarju ppreżentat ir-rapport tal-ilmenti li l-Kunsill irċieva bejn l-aħħar Seduta u llum.

383.11 Kunsiderazzjoni u approvazzjoni tal-iskeda ta' pagamenti

Is-Segretarju Eżekuttiv ippreżentat l-iskeda tal-pagamenti.

Is-Sindku propona li l-Kunsill japprova il-lista tal-pagamenti. Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg issekonda u l-Kunsill approva l-iskeda tal-pagamenti b'mod unanimu.

383.12 Items oħra ta' xogħol ieħor li jkun meħtieġ

383.12.1 Il-Kunsilliera Julian Borg u Francine Farrugia qalu li l-area ta' Kirċippu, Triq Angelo Dorini, Triq Salvu Borg Olivier u Triq id-Difa għadhom mingħajr dawl minn wara l-aħħar maltemp.

Il-Kunsilliera Alessia Psaila Zammit ħarġet fl-10.15am.

383.12.2 Il-Kunsillier Julian Borg staqsa rigward iż-żewġ lanterni li tkissru minn terzi: waħda fi Triq Ta' Brija u l-oħra fi Triq il-Knisja l-Qadima. Huwa sostna li għalkemm hemm proċeduri biex jitħallsu minn min kissirhom għandhom jeħlu mill-iktar fis peress li r-residenti qegħdin fid-dlam.

383.12.3 Il-Kunsilliera Francine Farrugia qalet li qed jgħaddu ħafna trakkijiet mit-toroq tal-Kirċippu għalkemm hemm it-tabelli biex ma jgħaddux. Hija talbet għal infurzar fiż-żona.

383.12.4 Il-Kunsilliera Farrugia qalet li żewġ arbli tad-dawl li kienu twaħħlu temporanjament f'nofs il-bankina fi Triq il-Muża għadhom ma' tneħħewx minkejja li l-iżvilupp lest. Hija talbet biex jerġgħu jiġu avżati l-Enemalta.

383.12.5 Il-Kunsillier Dominic Grech qal li għad hemm kwantita' ta' terrapien f'għalqa privata li kien mitfugħ waqt l-eżekuzzjoni tax-xogħol mill-WSC. Is-Segretarju Eżekuttiv talbet lill-Kunsillier biex jgħaddilha is-sit eżatt u d-dettalji tal-individwu biex jergħu jiġu infurmati il-WSC.

383.12.6 Is-Sindku propona li l-laqgħa ta' konsultazzjoni pubblika fuq proposti tat-traffiku fi Triq it-Tabib Nikola Zammit tinżamm fit-30 ta' Jannar 2020 fis-6.00 ta' filgħaxija.

383.13 Tmiem tal-laqgħa u aġġornament

Il-laqgħa intemmet fl-10.45 ta' filgħodu.

Is-Sindku propona li l-laqgħa li jmiss issir nhar it-Tnejn 13 ta' Jannar 2020 fis-6.00 ta' filgħaxija. Il-Kunsill unanimament qabel.

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Konfermati, illum 13 ta' Jannar 2020

Dr Kurstein N. Sant
Sindku

Ritienne Giorgino
Segretarju Eżekuttiv

Annex 1:

Case Number:	PA/04576/19
Location of Development:	Site on, Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi, Siggiewi
Description of Works:	Relocation of kerbside fuel station MRA/KPRS/105 from Pjazza San Nikola - Siggiewi to a site on Triq Mons.Mikiel Azzopardi - Siggiewi and construction of servicing garage at basement, ancillary office and shop Class 4B, car wash, ATM and landscaping at ground floor level.
Reception Date:	13/04/2019
Applicant:	Mallia Petrol Station Ltd. Attn: Frank Mallia
Architect:	Perit George Pullicino

The proposed development is for the relocation of an existing kerbside fuel station at Pjazza San Nikola - Siggiewi to an ODZ site at Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi - Siggiewi. The proposal also envisages an enlargement of the facility to include the construction of a new fuel servicing station including four car wash facilities, two electric charging stations, class 4B shop, ATM, tyre service vulcanizer, office/servicing garage, parking spaces, WC, four separate drying areas underground tanks for fuel storage and reservoirs. The current facility covers an area of c. 160 m2 whereas the proposed development would occupy an area of circa 1 600 m2

Current Location

The current fuel station is located in the kerbside of the village’s main square – Pjazza San Nikola, adjacent to a chapel dedicated to Santa Marija ta’ Cwerra. The current chapel was built in 1742 by the Dominican Friars. In the middle of the square, in front of the fuel station lies the statue of St Nicholas, work done by Pietro Felice in 1732.

The fuel station has been located in the Siggiewi square for more than 80 years and has served the community from this location since its start of operations. Over the years the fuel station has increased the number of pumps to the current number of 4 and a canopy was erected overlying the pumps.

The Local Council has always been of the opinion that the fuel station should be relocated for aesthetic purposes; health/safety purposes as well as better traffic management and for the regeneration of the main square. Indeed, from an aesthetic point of view, the fuel station does not fit in well with the village square and is incompatible with the main features of the square mainly The Church, the adjacent chapel, the St Nicholas Statue and with the various cultural and religious activities organised each year in Pjazza San Nikola.

The Local Council notes that throughout the years, its opinion has been that the fuel station should be relocated if agreement of an alternative site is found. The Local Council, however notes that it was not involved in the consultation, prior to this application. The Local Council does not at the present date have environmental studies, geographical studies, traffic management analysis and other desired documentation that confirms that the site of this application is the only and best location for the relocation of the fuel station.

The following is an extract of the council's minutes from session number 216 (15th February 2010).

"Il-Viċi-Sindku qal li huwa jħoss li għandu jsir kull sforz possibbli sabiex jinstab post alternattiv għall-pompa tal-petrol u dan peress li l-istess pompa ma' taqbel xejn mal-estetika ta' Pjazza San Nikola. Il-Viċi Sindku qal ukoll li Pjazza San Nikola hija ċ-ċentru tal-attivitajiet kollha tal-lokalità u għalhekk fil-proċess sabiex jitwettaq dan il-proġett għandu jkun żgurat li jkun hemm soluzzjonijiet alternattivi għall-parkeġġ. Il-Viċi Sindku qal ukoll li t-twettaq ta' dan il-proġett għandu jieħu in konsiderazzjoni wkoll il-bżonnijiet tar-residenti u n-negozji li jinsabu fiż-żona.

Is-Sindku qal li l-Gvern Ċentrali huwa konxju mid-diffikultà tal-pjazza u jekk jinstab post alternattiv kemm is-sid kif ukoll il-Gvern, lesti li jikkunsidraw il-possibilità. Rigward il-parking, is-Sindku qal li tista' tintuża aktar Triq Mons Mikiel Azzopardi.

Kien hemm qbil fil-prinċipju mal-proġett, u li għandha ssir it-talba, kif ukoll li meta l-pjan jibda jiġi ikkonkretarizzat, issir konsultazzjoni pubblika."

A further discussion on the fuel station was held in session number 331 (9th February 2017) in view of an application for this same fuel station for refurbishment and upgrading of the subterranean fuel tanks.

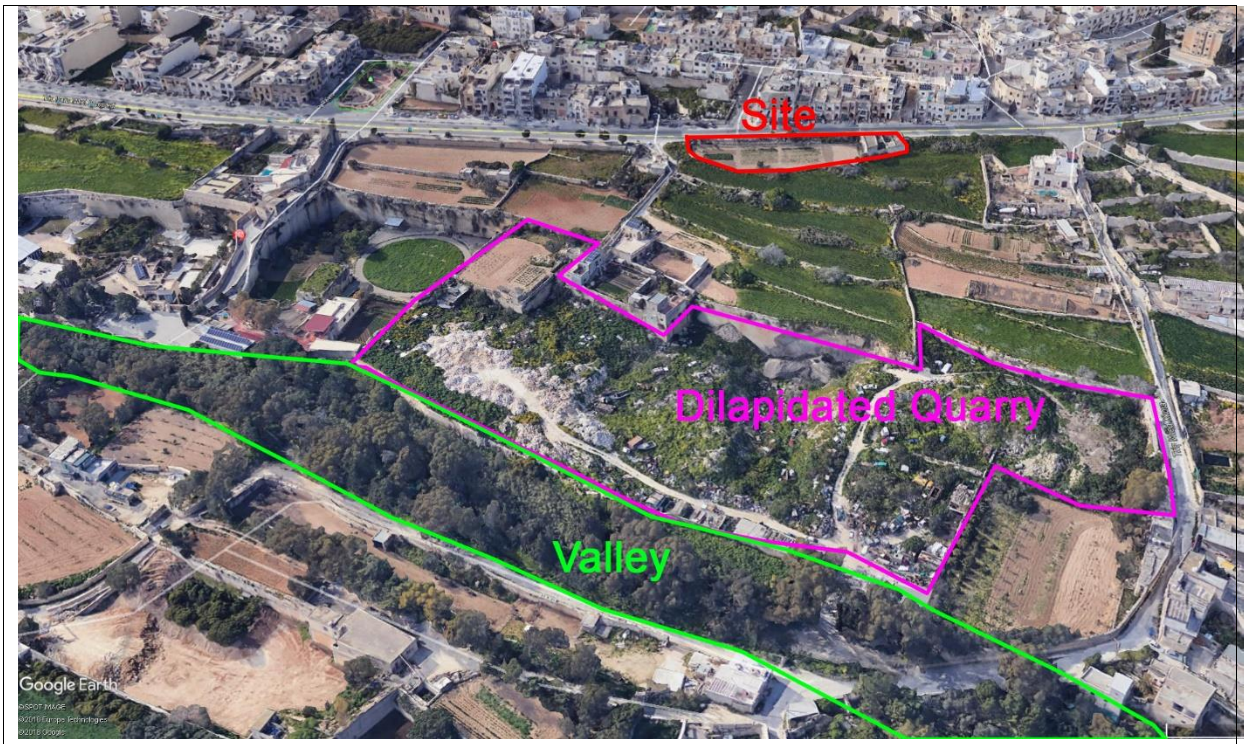
"Is-Sindku ippropona li fir-rigward ta' din l-applikazzjoni jadotta din il-pożizzjoni uffiċjali:
Il-Kunsill Lokali tas-Siġġiewi jqis is-servizz offrut mill-imsemmija petrol station bħala essenzjali għall-komunità tas-Siġġiewi u jista' jikkonferma li l-ħtieġa li tali petrol station tiġi upgraded mill-iktar fis possibbli, inkluż li jinbidlu t-tankijiet eżistenti u dan fid-dawl ta' diversi lmenti li l-Kunsill Lokali rċieva matul is-snin rigward irwejjeħ ta' petrol u diesel fid-djar viċin l-istess petrol station.

Il-Kunsill Lokali tas-Siġġiewi jifhem li fil-futur immedjat mhux possibbli li l-imsemmija petrol station tiġi trasferita għal zona oħra li ma tkunx fiċ-ċentru storiku tal-lokalità u dan peress li pass bħal dan bilfors ikun jinvolvi t-teħid ta' art lil hinn mill-konfini tal-iżvilupp, liema art sallum la ġiet identifikata u lanqas hija disponibbli."

The current situation involves cars which need refuelling to queue in the village square in order to wait for service, sometimes impinging on the traffic flow in the square. Trucks refilling the tanks of the fuel station currently park in front of the fuel station or in front of the above mentioned chapel. Traffic in the historical centre is also generated from cars coming from Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi (Siggiewi Bypass) who want to refuel at this station and will go up through Triq Nikola Saura to Pjazza San Nikola.

The relocation of the fuel station is desirable for the reasons mentioned above but the Local Council also notes that the alternative site for such relocation should be chosen after widespread consultation and after all necessary studies are carried out to identify the best alternative site in Siggiewi.

Proposed Site context



Site Surroundings

The proposed site is located at Triq Mons. Mikiel Azzopardi, Siggiewi, Malta and lies Outside Development Zone (ODZ) on the outskirts of Siggiewi. The site is currently an agricultural field with some citrus, pomegranate and olive trees and a small built structure to the north of the site and is surrounded by other agricultural areas.

Additionally, the site lies within an Agricultural Area (SMAG 01) and Valley Protection Zone (SMCO 07) as designated by the South Malta Local Plan as per Map SI5. In addition, the proposed area also lies within an area which requires an Environmental Management Plan for Wied Xkora as per the Siggiewi Policy Plan (SMCO 09, Map SI 1). The site falls within the 100m buffer zone of the groundwater safeguard area.

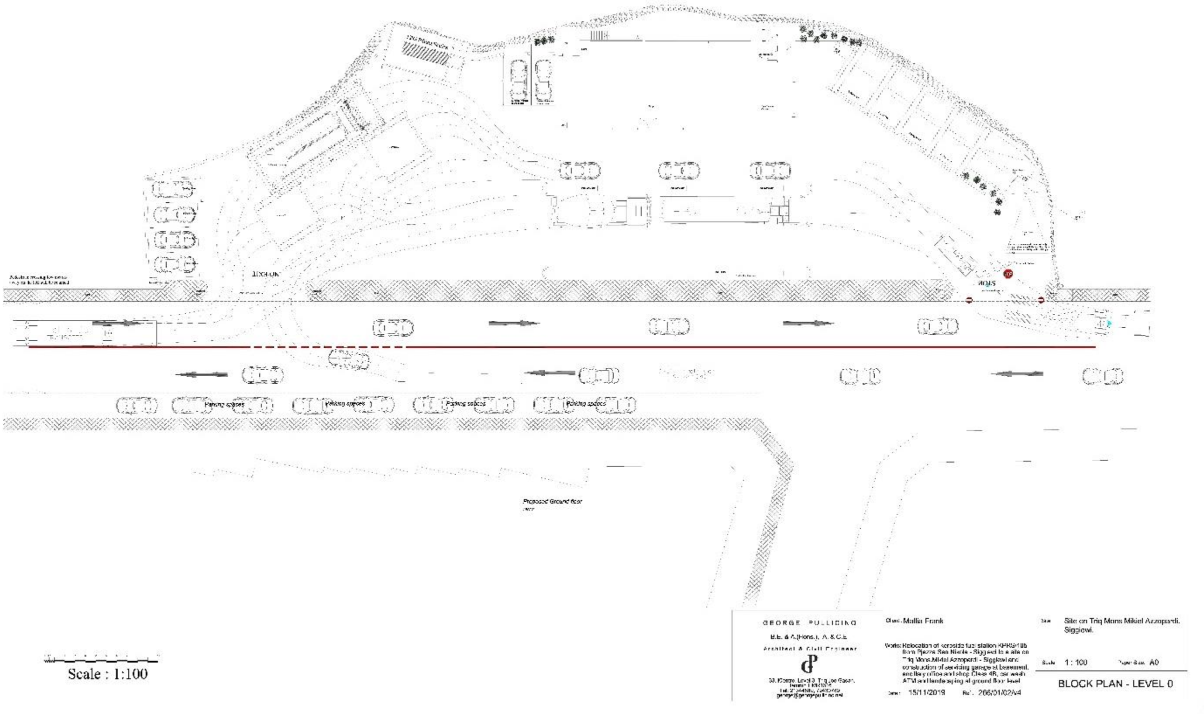
However, the expert report in minute 52b classifies the soil as Class S3 land is marginally suitable for agricultural production and that the main limitations are the moisture deficit and state of the soil. In view of this and the limitations referred to in the report, the Committee notes that the land does not constitute good quality agricultural land.

The construction of a fuel station on this site would introduce a dominant urban development which is incongruous within the rural characteristics of the surrounding rural environment. This area is in fact identified for its agricultural value in the South Malta Local Plan (SMLP) through Map SI5 and protected through the provisions of policy SMAG 01 which states "only buildings, structures and uses essential to the needs of agriculture will be permitted on condition that can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of MEPA that they will not adversely affect water supplies, soil and landscape, and accord with all other policies within this Local Plan" (SMLP, 2006:44). Hence, the proposal is in direct conflict with the Local Plan's designation and corresponding policies for the area, thereby prejudicing the effectiveness of such zoning as an environmental safeguard. Such type of development should be restricted to designated sub-urban zones such as Areas of Containment identified in the Local Plan.

During the public consultation meeting, the architect in charge of the application stated that alternative sites were considered. It is of the opinion of the Local Council that the selection criteria should be clearly indicated in an EIA, which EIA has to date not been submitted to the PA.

Therefore, before the proposal can move forward, a complete Environmental Impact Assessment would need to be commissioned and this would give a clearer idea of the implications that come along with this proposal.

The Local Council also notes that such development in Triq Mons Mikiel Azzopardi may lead to other development applications and the industrialisation of the mentioned ODZ area, in the long term. Therefore, if this application is referred for approval, a condition is to be made to the permit that this application is directly related to the policy that specifies the relocation of fuel stations to ODZ and not to be used as further case laws as approved commitments.



Latest proposal

The Local Council also notes that further studies are required on health and safety issues, especially since there are residences close to the mentioned site. Studies on noise and light pollution are also necessary.

While Transport Malta has stated that it has no objection for the latest layout presented by the applicant, the Local Council believes that studies on traffic management are also necessary for evaluating the traffic flow of vehicles, especially heavy vehicles, which are likely to increase in the mentioned bypass through the introduction of a fuel station. To this end, a Traffic Impact Study should be carried out highlighting issues created by this development and clear mitigation measures. To date, no TIS has been conducted and submitted to the PA.

Public Consultation by the Siggiewi Local Council (16/12/19)

The Siggiewi Local Council held a consultation meeting with the public on Monday 16 December 2019 during which residents' outlined concerns related to the following:

- The need of further studies to justify that this is the only and best site in Siggiewi for relocation of the fuel station. This is also necessary since the chosen site is not one included in the policy as a designated area which is potentially considered to be suitable to accommodate fuel stations.

- Issues pertaining to visual aesthetics of the area were mentioned. This site is facing a residential area and overlooking the valley and therefore one should consider the visual impact of placing a fuel station in this site.

- The issue of noise pollution from the car wash, especially during the night, was also brought up. Since this proposed station is near a residential area, it would be appropriate for the car wash to be closed during night-time in order to decrease the inconvenience to the neighbouring residents.

- The residents mentioned that the land at the proposed site, although classified as not constituting good quality agricultural land, is still being used for agricultural purposes and therefore concerns of taking up further agricultural land for development, were raised

- Residents also mentioned the depreciation of their properties in view that a fuel station is being built opposite their properties and on an undeveloped ODZ area. The Fuel Service Station Policy published in April 2015 should be adhered to, especially all points in Para. 4.3b. An emphasis was made on the need for establishing the 15m boundary from the nearest development zone.

- The site falls within the 100m buffer zone of the groundwater safeguard area.

- The need of further studies on nearby boreholes as well as on firework activities or any other similar hazard.

- The need for further environmental and health/safety studies.

- The landscaping scheme is not satisfactory and design of features such as the proposal of a sign that is 3m high do not suit the ODZ area.

- An observation of the fact that the application is being submitted at a time when the Fuel Service Station Policy is currently under review and may be updated in the very near future.

- With this proposal the current footpath, which is used by a lot of people, will be interrupted by the entry and exit access points of the fuel station. This would decrease the quality of life of the people using this footpath regularly as it would incur an increase in danger when crossing the access points.

In the days following the public consultation meeting, the Local Council was presented with two petitions:

- A petition in favour of this application and which was organised by the owners of the current fuel station in Pjazza San Nikola. The Council is informed that this petition has been signed by over 1000 persons.

- A petition against this application, organised by Siggiewi residents and which is still in circulation.

Submissions by other Authorities

The Siggiewi Local Council notes that the following submissions by relevant authorities also outline the need of further studies and consultation on this application:

ERA

- ERA considers that there is no valid justification for the further loss of undeveloped rural land and associated environmental impacts to accommodate even further development of petrol stations beyond the development zone boundary. There is also concern regarding the cumulative environmental impact caused by the numerous ad hoc proposals for petrol stations currently being proposed on ODZ land. Whilst the proposed development would qualify for an
- EIA as per the EIA Regulations, 2017 (S.L. 549.46),this proposal *per se* would still leave this strategic-level environmental concern unresolved. In this regard, ERA's comments PA/4576/19/41a) are being reiterated.
- In view of the above, ERA continues to consider the proposal as being objectionable from an environmental point of view.
- Given that the Fuel Service Station Policy (April 2015) is currently under review the proposal is also considered premature pending the coming into force of the updated Fuel Service Station Policy.
- Without prejudice to the above, should the proposal be considered favourably by the Planning Authority against ERA's objection, the applicant is to be informed that:
    - As mentioned in Section 5.1, the proposed development would qualify for
    - an EIA, whilst noting that such EIA studies would still leave the critical
    - environmental concerns indicated in Section 5 unresolved;

DAC

- The Committee considered drawings & photomontages 1, 4, 12, 51 & 60 and is of the opinion that the proposal would have a severe adverse impact on the surrounding ODZ landscape. (e.g. the extent of the take-up of land, the canopy height and extent, the stark colour of the structure)

AAC

- The Committee objects in principle to development not related to agriculture and is not permitted by the rural policy.
- However, with a view to the Fuel Stations Policy, the Committee notes that the expert

- report in minute 52b classifies the soil as Class S3 land is marginally suitable for agricultural production and that the main limitations are the moisture deficit and state of the soil.
- In view of this and the limitations referred to in the report, the Committee notes that the land does not constitute good quality agricultural land.

Other matters raised by the Local Council

The local council notices that an Environment Impact Assessment has not yet been carried out and is necessary for entities such as the Local Council to provide informed positions on the relocation of the fuel station. It is also necessary to analyse properly and professionally the impact that this proposal would have on the overall community by relocating the current fuel station from the village square; the impact on the residential area of the proposed relocation site; the traffic issues pertaining to adding a fuel station to the Siggiewi bypass, the visual impact and other relevant issues. A traffic assessment study as well as noise and light pollution studies are also necessary with the already mentioned Environmental Impact Assessment. The Council notes that studies should be extended to include a detailed analysis of whether this is the only and best site for relocation of the fuel station.

Further to all the above mentioned concerns, the Local Council notes that the site where this fuel station is proposed is situated near an accident black spot and fatalities did occur in the vicinity. For this reason, the council would object to the right-hand turn from the road to the fuel station as cars waiting to go in the fuel station would constitute an added danger on the oncoming traffic.

Although the footprint of the proposed site is not utilising the maximum permitted by the fuel service station policy, it is still a substantial increase in the footprint from the current fuel station. One should consider whether 4 drying stations are needed and possibly decreasing the number of built structures in order to decrease the visual impact. Any other structures built should be kept to a minimum. The colour scheme used in the photo montages may be changed in order to further decrease the visual

impact whilst also keeping the canopy structure and totem style price board to the smallest structure possible.

The area where the current footpath is situated would be disrupted and therefore, any alteration to this footpath would imply a deterioration in the conditions of pedestrians using the area. The area where pedestrians are meant to continue walking should be made clear, maybe by using different contrasting materials, whilst also making sure that enough space is dedicated to these pedestrians whilst keeping them safe by ensuring proper visibility. This should also be easily accessible to wheelchair/pushchair users and persons with impaired mobility.

The Council also notes that should this application, or any other site be identified for relocation of the fuel station, the applicant should contribute to the environment of the locality through, for instance, the planting of several trees in Siggiewi while also including the obligation of taking care and maintaining such trees as his expense.

End of report