



REF:OCEA:SKK

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

P. O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM  
AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
CONSERVATION AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
CONSERVATION AND  
RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
CONVEYANCES  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
LAND MANAGEMENT  
STATE PARKS  
WATER AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

FILE NO.: 93-480  
DOC. NO.: 2790

MAY 25 1993

The Honorable Virginia Goldstein, Director  
Planning Department  
County of Hawaii  
25 Aupuni Street, Room 109  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Dear Ms. Goldstein:

SUBJECT: Special Management Area (SMA 93-01) and Use Permit  
(UP 93-02) Application: Oceanside 1250 (Villages of Hokukano),  
North and South Kona, Hawaii, TMK: 7-9-12: por. 3,  
por. 5 and 11; 8-1-04: por. 3

We have reviewed the SMA and UP application information for the Villages of Hokukano golf course project transmitted by your memorandum dated February 25, 1993, and appreciate the additional time necessary to make the following comments:

Brief Description:

The applicant, Oceanside 1250, is seeking a Use Permit and SMA Permit from the County of Hawaii to develop a 27-hole golf course, clubhouse, driving range and related facilities on approximately 350 acres of Agricultural District land located along the Kona coastline, between Keahou and Kealakehua Bays.

The golf course is part of the 1540-acre master planned community which would be known as the Villages of Hokukano. The applicant is also seeking a Change of Zone from A-5a and Unplanned to A-1a to allow for the creation of approximately 367 one-three acre subdivision lots. When completed, the "Villages of Hokukano" master planned community would encompass 1,440 residential lots.

Approximately 140 acres of the seaward portion of the proposed master plan area is located within the Conservation District. The Project area is presently used for grazing cattle. The proposed development will not include the Conservation District land.

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Division of Forestry and Wildlife

- 1) A representative from the Villages of Hokukano gave a presentation at a Na Ala Hele Advisory Council meeting on November 4, 1992. The initial impression of the council was generally favorable and appeared that the concerns of Na Ala Hele were adequately addressed. However, the Environmental Assessment (EA) will be referred to for discussion at the next Na Ala Hele meeting on April 15, 1993. A response from the council will follow.
- 2) Two notable native plant species were found during the botanical survey; *Chamaesyce celastroides* var. *amplectens* (approx. 200 individuals) and *Capparis sandwichiana* (1 individual). *Capparis sandwichiana* is a candidate 2 plant, and may be on the Federal Endangered Species list in the future. One individual was found growing among a colony of approximately 200 *Chamaesyce celastroides* var. *amplectens* plants. It would be desirable for this patch of native vegetation to remain intact.
- 3) Although no map was readily available to indicate where the plants are located, the survey did mention that these plants are growing on a rocky ridge. Unless leveling of the ridge is planned, these native plants may be included as part of the landscape plan instead of being removed. No mention of these plants is made in the Integrated Golf Course Management Program, which notes merely that clearing of vegetation will be done.
- 4) Page I-7-7 of the survey states that indigenous vegetation is a factor included in the design approach. There is no follow-up to this comment. Whether this refers to future plantings or to the indigenous plants already in place is unknown.

Division of Land Management

The Division of Land Management comments that:

- 1) The "Hokukano Village" site, identified as a portion of TMK: 8-1-04: 3, is owned by the State of Hawaii, in fee simple. This area was excluded from Grant No. 1651, dated April 4, 1985 to Charles Hall and, hence, remains in government ownership.
- 2) An unlocated School Grant 10, Apana 2, adjoins the east boundary of the "Hokukano Village" site. Although this school grant remains unlocated (no modern metes and bounds survey description and survey map), the State of Hawaii claims fee simple ownership of the parcel.

- 3) A public road right-of-way traverses over and across Grant No. 1651 which the State of Hawaii or County of Hawaii has probable cause for claiming fee simple ownership. In the survey description under Civil No. 3498 (Quiet Title Action) filed in 1974 by the Greenwell family, this public road right-of-way (old government road) is encumbered as an easement. Further, this public road is not shown on the preliminary development plan and no mention of its existence is summarized anywhere in the SMA and UP application.

#### Division of Aquatic Resources

The Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) comments that according to the applications, the planning and management of the proposed golf course is expected to include practices that are environmentally sensitive to the marine environment, that channels excess irrigation water and runoff to collecting points for reuse, minimizes fertilization and pesticide/herbicide rates, and establishes a monitoring plan.

A marine community and water quality impact assessment was performed by Dr. Richard Brock. He found water quality and marine community to be typical of well-flushed open coastal conditions of the Kona coast. Additionally, he found diverse fish populations and attributed it to the undeveloped nature of the adjacent coastline.

In a similar situation at Waikoloa, Dr. Brock observed a significant increase in inorganic compound concentrations which may have come from a golf course built near the shoreline. He noted however, that this increase did not bring about a notable change in adjacent marine communities. He attributed the increase to:

1. Large numbers of marine herbivores that controlled marine algae proliferation;
2. Well flushed open coastal area and the ocean's capacity to dilute pollutants;
3. The adaptation of marine organisms to highly variable nutrient concentrations.

Hence, Dr. Brock reasons that because environmental conditions are similar, he does not expect a similar increase in inorganics to result in a significant adverse change to the marine environment.

According to Dr. Brock, there is a monitoring and mitigation plan included in this proposed development. The monitoring plan include establishing baseline information for marine communities and water quality parameter profiles (already completed), continued year monitoring plan after construction is completed, and an action mitigation plan. The action mitigation plan would be activated when the following is detected:

1. An increase in nutrients in coastal waters;
2. A decrease or significant change in dominant marine species, or;
3. The detection of pesticides/herbicides used on the planned development.

The plan calls for changes in management until these problems are resolved.

DAR also comments that the scenario as proposed, given the area's low rainfall (35 inches per year, average) and the proposed environmentally-sensitive management practices, it is unlikely that the proposed monitoring of selected parameters will detect any significant changes in chemical constituency or marine communities. As Dr. Brock notes at Waikoloa, it is probable that even significant water quality changes may not result in observable impacts (with present monitoring technologies).

Greater impacts to the marine environment may result from the increased fishing activity encouraged through improved public access than those which result from excess nutrient and pollutant runoff produced by the development.

DAR expects decreases to selected stocks of marine food and game fish populations in this area once it is opened to the public for fishing. Creel censuring done both before and after the project, may be able to detect changes in the fish populations which result from the increased public access. This censuring may also provide data that is more reflective of the impacts to the marine environment.

Our Historic Preservation Division comments will be forwarded as they become available.

We have no other comments to offer at this time. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Please feel free to call Steve Tagawa of our Office of Conservation and Environmental Affairs, at 587-0377, should you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



KEITH W. AHUE