University of Hawaii at Manoa

Environmental Center
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RP:0071

Shoreline Management Permit Application
Kaiser Development Company's Golf Course 5 and 6 Project
Hawaii Kai, Oahu

Statement for
City Council
Public Hearing - April 1, 1987

By
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center
Peter Flachsbart, Urban Regional Planning
Peter Rappa, Sea Grant

In response to a request from Councilman Gill's office to evaluate the environmental impact of the proposed golf course 5 and 6 development, the Environmental Center has reviewed the fact sheets provided. Our statement does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The project proposed consists of the development of approximately 211 one and two story houses directly across from Wawamalu Beach Park and Sandy Beach Park and will be built on filled land raised about 10-20 feet above Kalanianaole Highway. The site is within the Shoreline Management Area.

In reviewing the material provided by your office the following points have come to our attention:

The height of the project, 30-40 feet above Kalanianaole Highway, will have a significant impact on the view plains both mauka and makai. It will impact the Makapuu-mauka view from the beach parks and the blow-hole visitor attraction lookout. Depending on the design and location of the cluster houses, ocean views from houses mauka of the project will be lost. Such loss of views is in direct conflict with HRS 205A-2 (c)(3) and specific conditions under HRS 205A-26 (1),(2), and (3). Furthermore, we understand that the Department of Land Utilization is currently conducting The Coastal View Study which is intended to inventory and identify significant coastal views. It would seem highly appropriate to defer decision making on projects directly affecting coastal views until the results of this study are completed.

The intersection of Kealahou Street and Kalanianaole Highway may present significant safety problems particularly because of the height of the makai corners on either side of the entrance to Kalanianaole Highway.

Traffic congestion, particularly on the weekends, is currently excessive. Mitigation measures such as a signal at Kealahou Street and Kalanianaole Highway will be needed to provide a safe exit for the increased traffic load.

We understand that the project area is not in the Federal Flood Insurance Program 100 year boundary for floods. However, it should be noted that tsunami run-up during the April 1, 1946 tsunami ranged from 31 to 23 to 15 feet from the blow hole to the area commonly referred to as Alan Davis Beach and that most of the project area lies in the tsunami inundation area as indicated on page 30A of the 1987 telephone directory.

We were unable to evaluate the ability of the Sewage Treatment Plant to handle the increased flow as no pertinent information was provided in the fact sheets supplied.

The Environmental Center reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared in August 1985 for this project and provided comments to the Department of Land Utilization in February 1986. A copy of this earlier review is attached for your information. At that time, we called attention to a number of deficiencies in the EA and suggested that an expanded EA or Environmental Impact Statement should be prepared. No response to our review was received and according to the Office of Environmental Quality Control, no follow up expanded assessment or EIS has been submitted. Based on information provided in recent telephone conversations with Council representatives, major changes in the project are now proposed that differ significantly from the plans presented in the 1985 EA. If this is indeed the case, then there is an even more compelling reason to require the preparation of an expanded EA or Environmental Impact Statement. Given the significance of the project in terms of its affect on mauka-makai views, contribution to already excessive traffic conditions, cummulative impacts with other ongoing developments, and the history of sewage treatment plant failures, the preparation of an assessment, or an EIS, that adequately examines the current plans would seem essential for decision makers with regard to the issuance of a shoreline management permit.

Attachment

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February 14, 1986

RN:0139

Mr. John Whalen
Department of Land Utilization
City and County of Honolulu
650 South King Street, 7th Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Mr. Whalen:

Negative Declaration
Hawaii Kai Cluster Development
Hawaii Kai, Oahu

The proposed cluster development project is located on the mauka side of Kalanianaole Highway within the shoreline management area and will accommodate approximately 225 single family dwellings on golf course sites 5 and 6 constituting a total of 31 acres.

The primary concerns with regard to the proposed project relate to potential impacts to archaeological resources, water availability, nearshore coastal environments and recreational resources and the relationship of this project to other developments within the Hawaii Kai area.

Our review was prepared with the assistance of Ray Tabata, Sea Grant; Matthew Spriggs, Anthropology; and Martha Diaz, Environmental Center.

Archaeological/Historical Resources

The environmental assessment (p. 23) cites that a "topographic field survey," of the project site has been conducted, however, it is not clear whether this survey encompassed an archaeological reconnaissance as well. If not, the statement (EA, p. 2) that "there is no evidence of archaeological sites in the parcel" seems unsupported and subsurface testing should be required to assess the likelihood of burials or other prehistoric remains which may be affected during development. This may be particularly important in the makai areas closest to the highway where excavation for the proposed 30" water line will be required.

Vegetation

Native plant communities, rarely encountered on Oahu, are found just makai of Kalanianaole Highway. Ilima and beach naupaka are the dominant species. An array of botanically and culturally interesting native Hawaiian strand plants such as: the hinahina, nehe, pauohilakia and Hawaiian cotton (mao), as well as the beach 'akoko are supported by these species. Although no endangered vegetation has been identified within the project area, it should be recognized that the proposed development is likely to lead to secondary impacts in terms of increased foot traffic on the nearby fragile dune system. The importance of this dune system has been recognized in the Queens Beach Park Feasibility Study that recommends expansion of the present boundaries of the Shoreline Management Area (SMA) to include all the area makai of the proposed project and Kalanianaole Highway (Department of Parks and Recreation, City and County of Honolulu, December 1984; see attached).

Sewage Treatment Plant

It is our understanding that the proposed project will require expansion of the existing sewage treatment plant to provide sufficient capacity for all planned new developments. Under present discharge volumes, contamination of the coastline at Sandy Beach is usually (but not always) avoided due to the strong currents which help to dilute and disperse wastes. A more extensive discussion of the expansion plans for the present outfall is needed so as to adequately evaluate the effects of the proposed additional discharge.

Infrastructure

Water Supply

The (EA p. 4) states that existing reservoir capacity is adequate to service the additional cluster developments. However, in order to provide "loop service," the developer will have to extend the existing 30 inch line along Kalanianaole Highway. What is meant by loop service? Based on current water shortages experienced islandwide, what impacts on instream flow will occur if water sources are transported from Windward Oahu to facilitate continued urban development in Hawaii Kai?

Drainage/Runoff

The Hawaii Kai area is dry and erosion during development poses significant impacts. Special care in grading and scheduling of land clearing operations will be required to avoid major sediment impacts to the nearshore beach and reef environment. The established mangrove forest in the low, makai area provides evidence of sediment deposition from runoff mauka of the project. Mitigative measures will need to be implemented to avoid excess sediment load to the coastal marine environment. Will the developer utilize siltation ponds? If so, the EA should include maps identifying their proposed locations and drainage outlets.

Recreation

Although the EA cites an abundance of recreational opportunities available in the area it fails to mention that many of these resources, such as Hanauma Bay and Makapuu Beach Park, are already approaching their capacity. Much of the Sandy Beach area is basically unsafe for swimming and many of the areas are also minimally useable because of the rugged topography. A further discussion of recreational resources seems warranted.

Cummulative Impacts

The cummulative impacts of present and future planned developments in Hawaii Kai and their increased demands on resources and infrastructure should be addressed. It would appear that either an expanded EA, or an EIS, should be prepared to consider these secondary and cummulative impacts.

We thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments and hope you find them helpful in evaluating the needs of this project.

Yours truly,

Jacquelin N. Miller
Acting Associate Director

Attachment

cc: OEQC
Patrick Takahashi,
Acting Director, Environmental Center
Ray Tabata
Matthew Spriggs
Martha Diaz

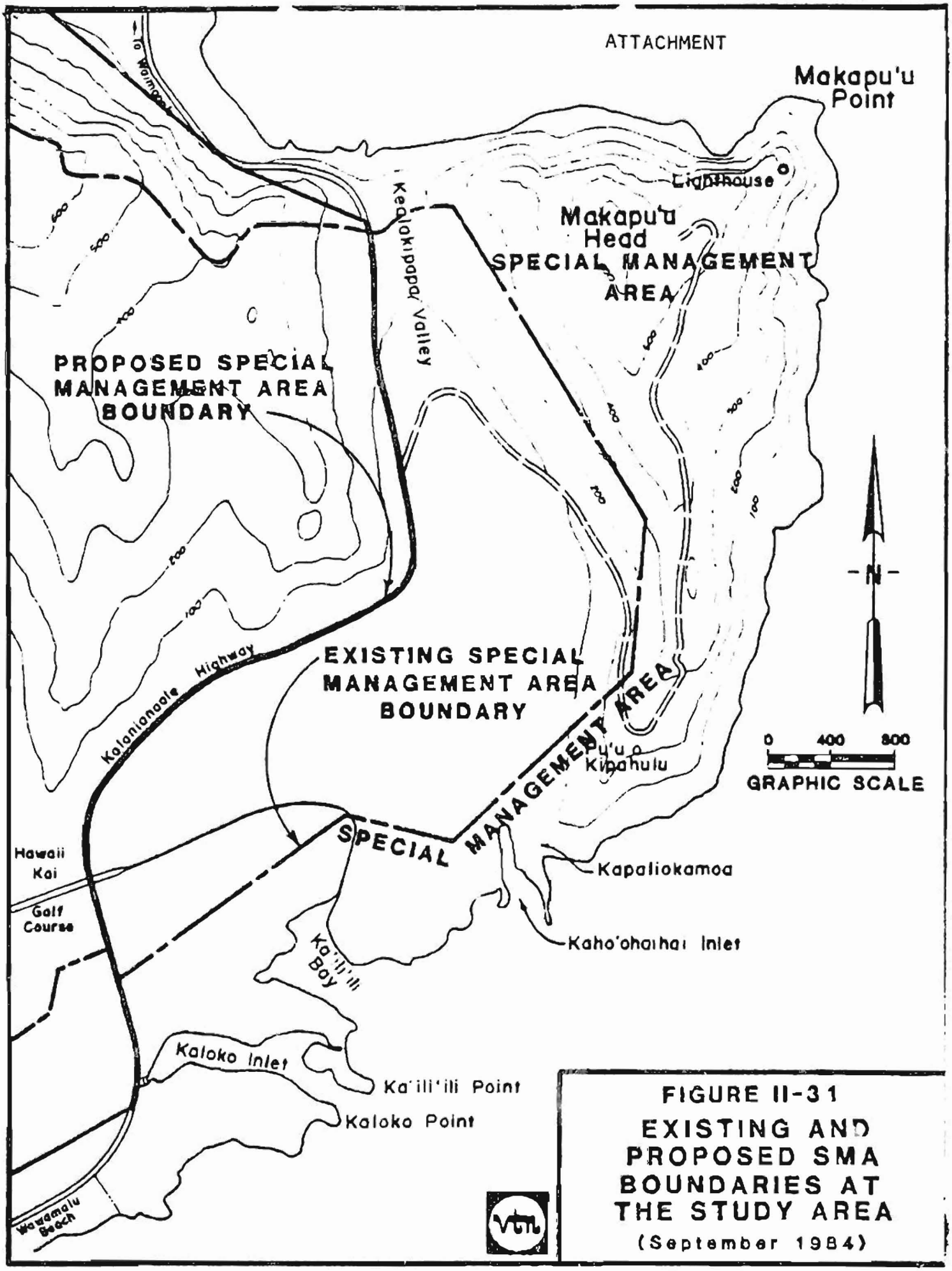

FIGURE II-31
EXISTING AND PROPOSED SMA BOUNDARIES AT THE STUDY AREA
(September 1984)