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## CHAPTER 13

### SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

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#### 13.1 Project Site and Zone of Influence

Caye Caulker is the second largest populated caye on the Belize coastal shelf. Located one mile west of the Belize Barrier Reef, Caye Caulker is a five mile long island from north to south, and is part of a chain of islands forming the Belize Barrier Reef. Caye Caulker is divided into two parts by a small channel. Almost everyone lives on the southern part of the island which is about two miles long; the south end of the caye includes residential homes and tourist developments. The north part of the caye is only just being developed with a few homes constructed. The main culture on Caye Caulker is Mestizo, but other cultures are also represented.

Tourism in Caye Caulker first started in mid 1960's, with a few visitors on the weekends. Since then, tourism has grown increasingly every year and many local and expatriate islanders now own and operate restaurants, hotels, and other businesses in the tourism industry. Because of tourism growth, many properties on the island have been converted to tourism related facilities. It is noted however, that a number of locals have been selling properties which have been in their family for many generations.

Fishing continues to be an important industry on Caye Caulker with many of the registered fisherfolk members of the local fishing cooperatives. In earlier days, the island was also known for boat-building. Despite the population growth brought about from tourism, Caye Caulker remains a small village with a distinct cultural flavor not found in other large-scale tourist developments. Transportation on the island is mostly by foot, bicycle or golf cart and the occasional vehicles, as over the last few years there has been a moratorium on larger vehicles on the island.

#### 13.1.2 Introduction

The proposed development site is located along the southwestern coastline of the island of Caye Caulker. The development site itself, Pelican Point Resort and Marina forms approximately 4.5 acres of a 25 acre parcel of land. The Pelican Point subdivision which does not form a part of the assessment originally contained 36 half acre lots; however, two of the lots have been incorporated within the development.

Proposed development activities to be undertaken at the site include condominiums and associated tourist related infrastructure and facilities. All tourist accommodations on land will be constructed 8 feet above the ground on pilings, built to hurricane specification.

Existing infrastructure and related facilities at the site include but are not limited to: the main office/center building, diesel and storage tanks and drums, a generator house, boats, and other

equipment. It is noted that currently, water is carted from Caye Chapel every 2 – 3 weeks to complement related site activities.

An area just inside of the canal along the property was noted as being used by the proprietor's landing barge to unload local cargo supplies for sale. Also noted along the western front of the property is the remains of a 100 foot long pier which was destroyed by hurricane Keith in 2000; a wooden bridge has been constructed across the canal to connect the site to the local airstrip and southern areas of Caye Caulker. Commercial activities at the site between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. include the sale of gasoline, diesel, ice and 2 cycle oil.

The developer is one of the main local shipping agents for the island and provides personal and commercial services to local islanders and others. Local commerce activities are carried out twice weekly or based on local requests. The landing craft is 74 feet long and 40 feet wide.

Eight full time staff is currently employed at the site in a variety of employment activities. At completion of the project, it is anticipated that an additional 30 full time and part time staff will be hired within the development. At the completion of the proposed development (third phase) and at 100 % occupancy, it is estimated that the total population and occupancy including staff is estimated at 894.

### **13.1.3 Socioeconomic Framework**

Traditionally, fishing have been the main traditional economic activity; however, because of the growth of tourism, Caye Caulker has undergone vast changes over the years providing a viable alternative to fishing. Many of the locals work both fields as the seasons arise. For example, many of the fishermen, licensed boat operators, etc. are registered tour guides. Many of the locals also work in tourist related spin-off facilities.

## **13.2 The Social Assessment**

The social assessment has been prepared in order to look at those demographical social and user activities which may be affected by proposed development activities. Additionally, the social assessment will look at tourism and transportation related characteristics of the project in order to determine those impacts (if any) the project will have on the area and the region on a whole.

The social assessment will also identify those demographical and economic activities that are currently in place as well as proposed benefits of the project. In the final analysis, these characteristics will be analyzed to determine proposed actions or recommendations.

### **13.2.1 Land Tenure**

The Developer has owned the property since the 1970's; however the Developer has lived on the property for the past 8 ½ years. Immediately south of the proposed development site is the local municipal airstrip: the land for the airstrip was donated to the Government of Belize. South of the airstrip and along the southeastern and southwestern coastline are privately owned lands.

Immediately north and east of the proposed development site is the remaining parcel of land the Pelican Point subdivision. Most of the subdivided lots have already been sold (pers.com.), with at least one residential home in the process of being completed. North of the Pelican Point subdivision is a new government subdivision and other privately held lands. It must be noted however, that within the Government subdivision only a few individuals have actually commenced the construction of homes etc., due to lack of existing infrastructure at the site (e.g. road access and utilities).

### **13.2.2 Population/Housing**

Unofficial population count of the inhabitants of Caye Caulker is estimated at approximately 1300 (pers. comm.), though the National Population and Housing Census of 2005 population count estimated 800 inhabitants. In 1999 there were 1,228 permanent and part time residents. Resident population near the proposed development site is sparse, however, at project completion it is expected that seasonal temporary and permanent population will increase by 30 percent.

To accommodate population growth and housing needs on Caye Caulker, at least one new government subdivision has been completed north of the proposed development site, while other housing and rooming facilities are currently being constructed (pers.com.).

In terms of other housing facilities to accommodate newcomers to the island, persons interviewed indicate that there are many new planned and in progress rooming facilities. It was also noted that many the individuals who come to seek employment on the island actually stay and live on the island; however, after a time, many return to the mainland.

### ***Culture***

In addition to the original Mestizo villagers, other ethnic groups include Creoles, Garinagu, East Indian (“Coolie”) and Maya (Yucatec, Mopan and Kekchi). More recent immigrants are represented by Chinese, Salvadoraneans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, North Americans and Europeans.

### **13.2.3 Social Infrastructure Services**

The highest levels of all infrastructural services are found in Belize City, some twenty-five miles away on the mainland. Based on the analysis of current population growth and inward migration to the island, the village of Caye Caulker has experienced a major gap in all of its social services. For example, there is only one primary school and one preschool, one public health clinic and one private doctor on the island to serve both the local and tourists alike.

It is not expected that visitors to the proposed development will have any major impacts on existing social facilities as visitors to the resort development will be temporary. It is also proposed that the developer will have an emergency preparedness plan in place in the event any emergency arises.

### ***Employment Services – Industry and Population***

Over the past few decades, because of the growth of tourism, many related spin off employment have been associated with this sector. Fishing, also a major industry, continues to be a mainstay; however, because of the various open and close seasons, many of the fishermen are also trained as tour guides, etc.

Unlike tourism growth and activities on Ambergris Caye, where two of the main non-basic employment sectors include commercial and administrative services, and construction, Caye Caulker accounts for far less of this economic activity, and on a much smaller scale.

Many job opportunities have been created by tourism and related activities and services which have attracted many individuals from throughout Belize including immigrants from Central America who continue to mix with the local and island population. It was noted that many of the islanders are self employed which indicate a high level of entrepreneurship.

Available skilled worker populations on the island will be utilized in various employment activities such as hotel personnel and managers, restaurateurs, tour guides, boat operators, construction workers, etc, during and after construction phases of the project. However, skilled laborers not available on the island will be brought in to assist with development activities.

New and/or temporary skilled worker populations not found on the island will not be encouraged to remain on the island after project completion as it will put a strain on existing social facilities as well as marginalize existing worker populations on Caye Caulker. In terms of overall social facilities, the likelihood of greater population growth on the island will depend on political will to construct additional and/or upgrade existing social facilities.

### ***Emergency Services***

The one clinic on the island includes one doctor which does not satisfy the daily population and/or emergency needs. The one doctor is also the only doctor on call on the island. There is no overnight hospitalization. All emergencies are treated on the mainland in Belize City for emergency and hospitalization services.

### ***Communication and Services***

Communication and services in Caye Caulker is similar to that of many towns and villages in Belize. Fax machines, fixed regular land line telephones and cellular, Belize Direct and internet and email services exist. Communication services are available at the current site.

### ***Regional Demographics***

Immediately south of the proposed development site, separated by an existing canal, is the local Caye Caulker municipal airstrip. This canal was originally dredged in the 1970's by the Government of Belize (GOB) to obtain fill for the airstrip. The area directly in front of or directly west of the airstrip was also dredged by the GOB to finish fill the airstrip in 2005.

Additional fill was also obtained from the site which is now utilized as the ‘village dump’ to fill the side of the runway and the runway itself, which was sinking due to landing aircrafts impacts. The area of land immediately north of the runway is the property of the Developer.

There is an existing wooden bridge which connects the site to the local airstrip and to other areas south of the airstrip. The original purpose of the wooden bridge was special permission granted to the Developer to utilize the side of the runway between flights. Though not legal, site visits to the area indicate that many locals and tourist alike utilize the airstrip to access the site or the southern areas of the island. It was noted that there have been at least three near fatal accidents on the airstrip over the last year (pers. com.). The airstrip at Caye Caulker is now vested under the control of the Belize Airports Authority (SI 175 of 2004).

The area in front of the proposed development site is said to be utilized by at least one fisherman from the village of Caye Caulker. During the lobster season, lobster traps are said to be laid out at least two hundred feet directly in front of the proposed development site (pers. com.). No lobster traps were noted during site visits as the lobster season was closed at the time the assessment was being carried out.

The area immediately east of the subdivision is the site of the village dump. The site is used by the residences and developers alike to dump solid and liquid waste materials. On any given day depending on wind direction, the smell from the dump can be noted as far as up to half a mile away from either direction. The site is opened daily, and a small fee is levied for the dumping of waste materials.

The dump site is located on the periphery of the Developers subdivision; the dump at its current location will have a huge impact on resort and marina development activities being proposed. The Developer is proposing various alternative solutions to the Caye Caulker Village Council to alleviate this problem, one of which is to purchase and/or donate an incinerator to assist in handling the garbage problem on Caye Caulker.

#### **13.2.4 Transportation/Traffic**

Caye Caulker is accessible via both sea and air. There are six regular water taxi departures per day from Belize City, and up to eight daily (hourly) flights depart from Belize City Municipal and/or Belize International Airport daily.

The Caye Caulker Water Taxi Association was formed in 1993 to improve and provide services for residents and tourists traveling to and from Caye Caulker. The Association currently has 23 boats tendering daily, Water Taxi service between the Marine Terminal in Belize City, Caye Caulker, St. George’s Caye and San Pedro. Many other independent boat tenders also travel to Caye Caulker along the way to San Pedro and Belize City and vice versa.

A Traffic Committee has been set up in Caye Caulker to manage and control traffic operations on the island. In 1998 the “Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Caye Caulker) Regulations was enacted (SI 30 of 1998) which established the Caye Caulker Traffic Control Committee. The functions of the Committee include but are not limited to: i) receiving application permits for

bringing in vehicles into the Caye; ii) promoting and encouraging the use of small vehicles to the island with a view of controlling traffic, and enhancing and improving the environments and the surrounding amenities.

### ***Access to the site***

The proposed development site can be accessed either by land or water. On land, the site itself can also be accessed from a public road and through a proposed road which forms the southeastern part of the subdivision component of the property. Many of the locals utilize this access or the airstrip, to purchase diesel, gas, etc. at the site.

The site is accessible by sea at its western point along the coast. One of the main concerns by residents is the 66 foot high-water mark on all beach areas which is said to be beach reserve or public property. It is noted however, that because two canals have been constructed within the development site itself, public access in this area is prohibitive.

### ***Marine Traffic and Traditional User Activities***

Over half of the boating traffic to the island utilizes the eastern front of the island to access Caye Caulker and its environs. Many of the local fishermen, commercial traffic as well as local boat owners who live along the western coastline of Caye Caulker utilize the western area behind the caye to access properties and the local cooperative and public dock.

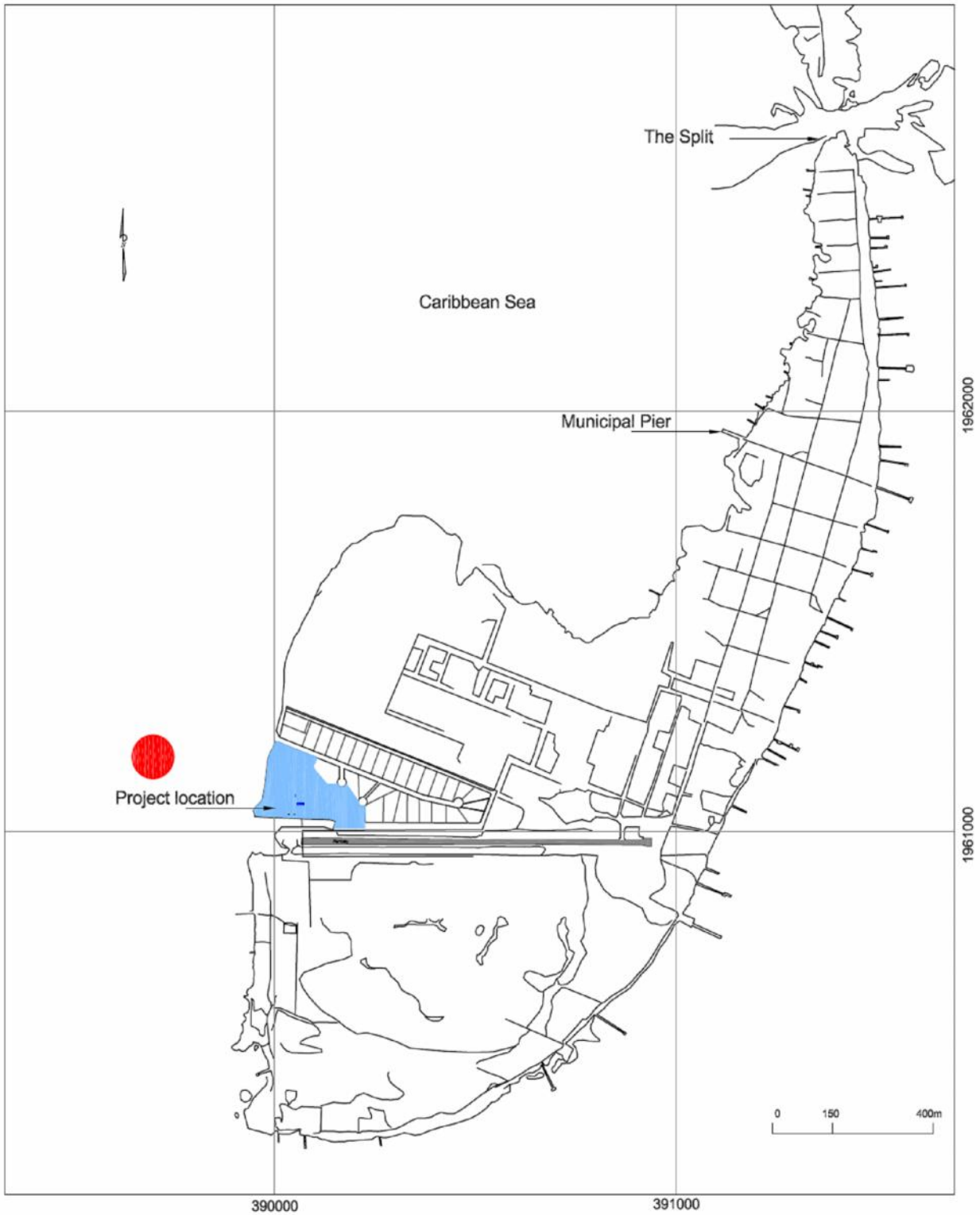
In terms of marine traffic in the area and the region of the proposed development, this area does not see very large movements of boat traffic in or through the area; however, a number of boats do travel daily to the proposed development site to purchase diesel, fuel etc.

The public dock is located about a quarter of a mile north of the proposed development site. Local cargo, fuel and ice are sold at the public dock. During site visit, at least 15 sail boats, 10 fishing boats, a number of charter vessels and one commercial barge were noted. The bay at the back of the village provides some shelter for many fishing and other vessels.

### **13.2.5 Fishing Activities**

Though tourism has gradually taken over as a primary industry, Caye Caulker is known for its spiny lobster harvest. Currently, harvest is taken to the local Fishing Cooperative in Caye Caulker and then shipped to Belize City; other harvests are also sold on the local in Caye Caulker. Many of the local fishermen belong to one of the Cooperatives. Most of the fishing grounds in close proximity to Caye Caulker have been in place for many years: these grounds are worked seasonally depending on the various conch, lobster and fishery seasons. Though the seabed is national lands, it cannot be owned by any individual.

Traditionally, fishing grounds and traps are often passed on to a family member, are sold to aspiring fishermen or other 'bordering' fishermen looking to expand fishing grounds. Reef habitats are also worked by traditional diving fishermen, either from Caye Caulker or the northern village of Sarteneja.



● Fishing Site

**Figure 13.1** Traditional Fishing Grounds in the area of Proposed Development

The area in front of the proposed development site is utilized by at least one fisherman from Caye Caulker. This fisherman indicates that his fishing grounds will be affected by the proposed marina to be constructed immediately west of the property. Albeit, this fisherman has claimed that his fishing ground have already been affected by the existing canal which was constructed for the subdivision component of the development. Over the past few years, storm-water runoff from the land and purported sewerage thrown in the canal has also caused fishing grounds at this location to see yearly decreases in lobster production.

### 13.2.6 Tourism

Belize in general is a popular destination because of the variety of diving and fishing opportunities. Because of Caye Caulker’s proximity to the reef, and one of the less expensive destinations in Belize, the island provides easy access to fishing, diving and snorkeling areas. Recent statistics indicate that Caye Caulker ranked fourth in tourism related operatives in the country in terms of hotel statistics. In mid – 2006, there were 70 registered hotels with 555 rooms and 903 beds (Table 13.1).

As shown in table, this is a marked 10 year increase since 1996. The proposed development will add and additional 864 tourist accommodations to the islands growing tourism destination.

In terms of employment, 2006 marked the fifth straight year there have been more males than females working in the hotel industry. In terms of male-female distribution, there were 2,342 males and 2,005 females employed in the hotel industry. Of this number, 4,128 were Belizeans while 219 were foreigners. In Caye Caulker, 161 persons were employed in this sector; however, this is only a representative of the total number of spin-off employment within the tourism sector.

**Table 13.1** Caye Caulker Hotel Statistics

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
No. of Hotels	33	37	37	37	38	37	50	54	62	67	70
No. of Rooms	316	373	352	354	383	356	453	480	509	546	555
No. of Beds	490	522	527	555	630	622	749	764	840	895	903
Hotel employment	46	46	34	71	78	75	108	120	135	145	161

BTB 2006, Unpubl.

On Caye Caulker, fishing has been a long-standing tradition and income earner for the village. However, since the village was primarily a fishing community, many of the experienced fishermen are also trained as fishing guides. In mid – 2006, there were 76 registered and licensed tour guides, an increase of 20 since 1999 (table 13.2). It is noted that there was a drop in licensed tour guides in 2005 for reasons unknown.

The proposed condominium facilities at its current site will not affect existing hotels and rooming facilities on the island, as the development will cater to different clientele. At completion of the project, the development will also offer 30 additional employment opportunities in its resort and marina facilities.

**Table 13.2** Travel Trade Statistics

<b>AREA</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Tour Guides</b>	56	69	64	84	87	92	69	76
<b>Tour Operators</b>	1	10	11	15	23	21	21	21

BTB 2006, Unpubl.

In mid – 2006, there were 21 registered tour operators, an increase of 20 since 1999 (Table 13.2). It is noted, that the island’s three main attractions include fishing, diving and the laid back culture of Caye Caulker. It is noted that other documented sources indicate that there may be at least 110 licensed tour guides living on Caye Caulker (CCTGA records).

### ***Recreational and Sports Fishing***

Recreational and sports fishing is one of the main activities for the locals and tourists alike; however, this activity is not carried out within the region of the proposed development site.

## **13.3 Planning**

The following sections briefly describe the proposed development guidelines and management plans for Caye Caulker in conjunction with the marine/forest reserve, tourism, and GoB influences.

### **13.3.1 Proposed Caye Caulker Development Guidelines**

Caye Caulker is facing mounting development pressures and the caye was selected as the first of eight coastal sites for the formation of a Coastal Advisory Committee (CAC) and the production of development guidelines through wide community participation. Development guidelines have been developed for the island, however, limited information was obtained to determine the current status of these guidelines or if it has been completed or approved by Cabinet.

### **13.3.2 Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserve Management Plan**

The Caye Caulker Forest Reserve, the northernmost 100 acres of the island, was declared in May of 1998 and co-management agreement signed between the Forest Department and FAMRACC (Forest and Marine Reserves Association of Caye Caulker) on May 14, 2001. A Reserve Headquarters building was built during July and August of 2001. The building serves as a visitor center, staff residence and research center for both the Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserves.

A management plan has been developed and the Marine Reserve is zoned to include areas that are completely preserved, as well as those in which fishing, snorkeling or diving are allowed within specific regulations. The Caye Caulker Marine Reserve includes the turtle grass lagoon adjacent to the Caye Caulker Forest Reserve and the Belize Barrier Reef that runs parallel to the entire Caye, extending approximately a mile beyond the reef. This area has been used for snorkeling, scuba diving and sport fishing for some time.

The land component making up CCFR was part of an inheritance of an American, Harry Dole, from his father. The total inheritance was 206 acres. Mr. Dole opted to donate slightly over 100 acres of littoral forest and mangroves for use as a protected area. This was worked out between Mr. Dole, the Caye Caulker Village Council, and the Conservation Division of the Forestry Department. Currently the land has been remanded to the Government of Belize for the purpose of conservation, and is under enactment as a Forest Reserve since 1998. The littoral forest on Caye Caulker has three kinds of mangrove, red, white and black, as well as a number of other trees.

### **13.3.3 Forest and Marine Reserve Association of Caye Caulker (FAMRACC)**

Under a grant from the Protected Areas Conservation Trust, CCBTIA facilitated the formation of FAMRACC, a community association for the co-management of the Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserves. FAMRACC is registered as a non-governmental organization and has agreements with the Fisheries and Forest Departments to co-manage both of these reserves. The CCBTIA continues to participate as a member and provide support to FAMRACC.

#### ***Belize Tourism Policy 2005***

In 1998, the first National tourism Strategy Plan was developed for Belize. The plan was prepared with the goal of developing a strategy and action plan to stimulate economic growth while protecting the country environmental and natural resources and ensuring benefits to locals. The policy adopted focused on ecological-cultural tourism (ecotourism).

In 2005, a new tourism strategy was developed. The new 2005 strategy built on the 1998 tourism policy, refined to fit today's global tourism market realities and potential. The guiding principles of the 2005 Strategy which include policies to be adopted was designed to improve the quality of life for locals and communities, coordinated government and industry sector participation, integrated national economic, social and cultural benefits, a meaningful balance between the main tourism (stay over and cruise) sectors, and ensuring that Belize destination position in the global tourism sector is not compromised.

#### ***The Coastal Zone Management Act***

The coastal zone of Belize as described in the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Act includes "the area bounded by the shoreline up to the mean high water-mark on its landward side and by the outer limit of the territorial sea on its seaward side, including all coastal waters." The wider purpose of the strategy is to facilitate improved management of coastal resources at a national level, to ensure economic growth is balanced with sound environmental management.

The CZM Act passed in 1998 provides for the institutional arrangements for CZM in Belize through the establishment of a Coastal Zone Management Authority and its technical arm, the CZM Institute. Unfortunately the authority is nonfunctional at present.

### **13.3.4 Pier Development Guidelines**

The Physical Planning Section of the Lands and Survey Department produced a set of guidelines in 1999, following the number of requests for construction or reconstruction of piers after Hurricane Mitch. The guidelines, seek to promote consistent design criteria for piers. Provisions of the guidelines include: i) Length limited to 350 feet; ii) Proper illumination; iii) Minimum recommended separation of 1000 feet between piers in rural settings; iv) 'Proper' architectural design, and use of 'safe' construction materials; v) No enclosures and: vi) Public access to be allowed.

The pier guidelines also seek to reduce shoreline congestion and increase public safety and pier management. All pier and seawall applications should be sent to the Physical Planning Authority for approval.

The 2000 Coastal Zone Report recommended that the CZMA along with the Physical Planning Section of the Lands and Survey Department undertake to develop comprehensive guidelines for construction on beaches, incorporating a revision of the pier guidelines, but taking into account seawalls, groins, jetties and harbor arms.

## **13.4 Protected Areas**

### ***The Caye Caulker Nature Reserve***

The Caye Caulker Nature Reserve established in 1989 by a Gift of Land from Ozzie Cheek and Dane Dingerson, is managed by the by the Caye Caulker Conservancy. The nature reserve is located directly east along the coastline of Caye Caulker and the site of the proposed condominium development.

Through the efforts of the community, two successful expansion projects have been undertaken. The Wetlands Environmental Trail has been extended with a right of way to the east, donated by Mr. Lilienthal. The Eden Isles Corp. also offered a twenty acre parcel of land to the north, and an acre of land for a Nature Center, which will serves also as a hurricane shelter.

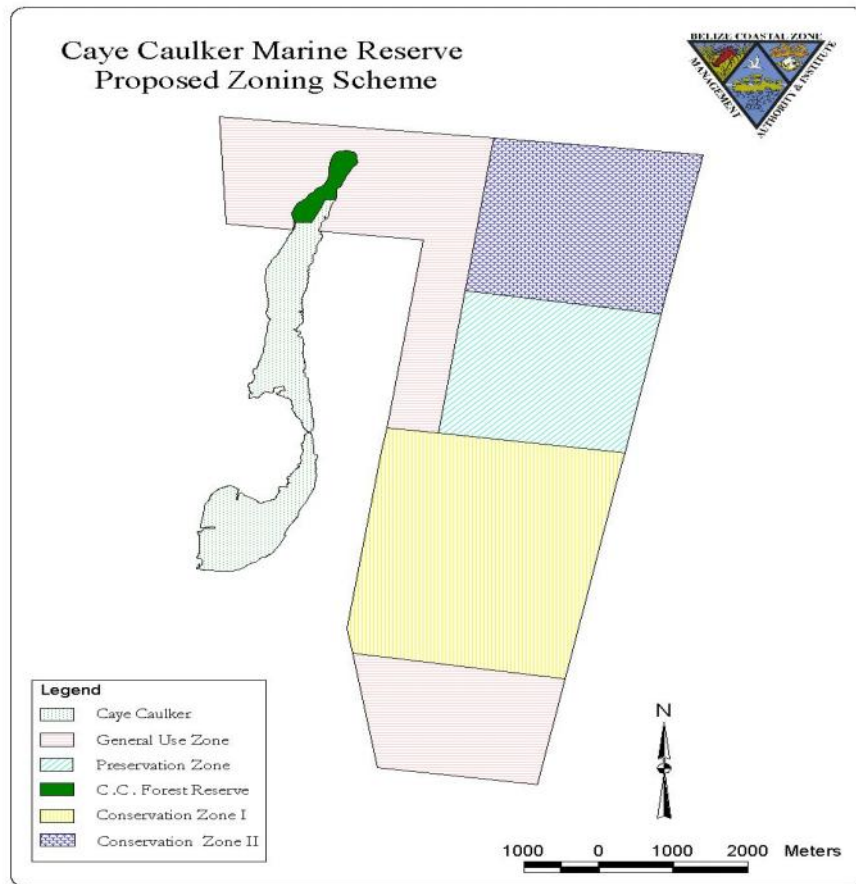
The Reserve provides protected habitat for many species of wetland creatures like the iguana and the American Crocodile. Numerous species of birds and small lizards reside here. The Wetlands Environmental Trail has been extended with a right of way to the east.

### **13.4.1 Caye Caulker Marine and Forest Reserve**

The Caye Caulker Marine Reserve was declared under Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 35 of 1998, first gazetted on the 25th of April 1998. The Forest Reserve was gazetted on the 4th of April 1998, in Statutory Instruments No. 28 of 1998. The Fisheries Regulation of 1977 and its

various Amendments also apply within the boundaries of the Zones where fishing is permitted. The Marine Reserve covers only the marine area, while the Forest Reserve encompasses land ecosystems.

Caye Caulker Marine and Forest Reserves are located at and in the surrounding waters of the island of Caye Caulker, in the Northern Shelf Lagoon off the coast, 21 miles north-northeast of Belize City. The Caye Caulker Forest Reserve (CCFR) contains approximately 100 acres and forms the northern portion of Caye Caulker (Fig. 13.2).



**Figure 13.2** Caye Caulker Marine Reserve Management Zones

The Marine Reserve forms roughly some 11.1 km in length, with the top portion crossing the cayes' north point and extending into lagoon waters to the west. The area of the marine reserve is 391,133,460 m<sup>2</sup>, or 39,113.346 ha. The Forest Reserve, located at the northern tip of Caye Caulker, meets the Marine Reserve on three sides in addition to a 100-m buffer zone along the jagged southern-southeastern border.

### **13.4.2 Management Zones**

Five management zones have been proposed for the Caye Caulker Marine Reserve. These include: i) General Use Zones; ii) the Conservation I Zone which zoned for Controlled Visitation; iii) Conservation II Zone zoned for controlled visitation (Shark/Ray interaction); iv) Limited Extraction Zone and; v) Preservation Zone.

### **13.5 Local NGOs and Institutions**

#### *Friends of Swallow Caye*

Swallow Caye Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the nearby protected areas managed by the Friends of Swallow Caye. Friends of Swallow Caye are a community based non-profit conservation organization, focused on protecting the manatees in the Swallow Caye area. The group was organized to promote the protection and designation of the Swallow Caye Wildlife Sanctuary. Swallow Caye Wildlife Sanctuary was signed into legislation on 10th July 2002. The Sanctuary is approximately 9,000 acres of sea and mangrove around the Northern Drowned Cayes and Swallow Caye.

#### *Forest and Marine Reserves Association of Caye Caulker (FAMRACC)*

Representatives from various local organizations on Caye Caulker including the Village Council, the CCBTIA, the Caye Caulker Tour Guide Association, the Water Taxi Association, the Northern Fishermen Cooperative, churches and schools formed the Marine Reserves Association of Caye Caulker (FAMRACC). FAMRACC was formed to co-manage the Reserves along with the Government of Belize.

With volunteer efforts of Trekforce, technical support from the Forest and Fisheries Departments and with financial support from Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute, a Reserve Headquarters building was built during July and August of 2001. The building serves as a visitor center, staff residence and research center for both the Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserves.

It is noted that the Caye Caulker Advisory Committee is now defunct.

### **13.6 Community Consultation**

A series of community consultations were held with the surrounding community members as part of the social assessment. This consultation is important considering the proposed development design and its related impact to the receiving environment. The following sections summarize the consultation process.

#### **13.6.1 Public Interests**

In view of the community consultation process and the general interest for the proposed Pelican Point Marina & Yacht Club, the following questions were asked:

1. Do you happen to know about the proposed Pelican Point Marina and Yacht Club?
2. From your perspective, how do you view this project?
3. Will the proposed project benefit the residents of Caye Caulker?
4. What negative impacts do you foresee from the project?
5. Will locals be hired for construction and operation of the project?
6. What will be the fate of the present solid waste dumpsite?

Because of the location of the proposed development, consultations were carried out with various individuals in the region of the proposed development site, as well as with select individuals from Caye Caulker. Discussions were also held with at least one individual from the outgoing Caye Caulker Town Council and two members of the new Council. Other attempts were made to meet with other community leaders, but they were not available during site visit.

Informal interview were carried out with up to ten individuals including the new village council members. Four of these individuals were noted as against the proposed development. In most of the other cases, development or non-development was not an issue; the location of the development was the main factor. The following include issues of concerns regarding the proposed resort and marine facility.

- That a plan for hurricane, fire, flood, evacuation, threats be prepared and be in place at the site
- That the proposed development consider existing traditional uses in the area where in the area the pier will be constructed
- Concerns that Belizean labor employed will only be for menial labor
- Increase of crime rate in the area and the community
- Increase of people and traffic to and through the area will mean additional security for residential properties
- That access to the region be restricted to foot paths only
- That a notice(s) be published to indicate proposed extent of pier facility
- Concern that the channel already constructed for the proposed subdivision will cause the island to split at this area

- That during small storms or long rainy periods, the whole region is flooded which also impacts the adjacent properties (the housing development project)
- Dredging in the area in front of the development will have an impact on traditional established fishing grounds
- That prior to the construction of the canal, the marine environment used to be utilized for snorkeling where crocodiles and seahorses were once seen are no longer seen
- During high tides, the water backs up from the canal unto the adjacent lands thereby flooding these areas
- Because of the canal, water from the swamp runs off or flows into fishing grounds thereby depleting fishery resources
- That grey water from the dump also runs off into the marine environment thereby depleting marine environment in traditional fishing grounds
- If a floating marina/pier is constructed, a clear plan should be developed to educate users of about what will happen in the event of bad weather – i.e. often times Caye Caulker experiences hail stones and very westerly windy conditions
- That the site is too low for this type of development
- That the whole area (on land) gets inundated with water during hurricanes
- That the marina and resort development is too near to the airstrip
- That the development and new visitors to the development do not utilize the airstrip to access the development site
- That money earned from tourism in Caye Caulker does not stay in Caye Caulker

The persons interviewed in regards to the consultation process include the following:

Mr. Outgoing Caye Caulker Village Chairman  
 Mr. Ralph Humes- Present Village Chairman  
 Mr. Robert Blease-Present Vice Chairman/Fisherman  
 Ms. Ellen McRae – SIWABAN  
 Mr. Tony Aguilar-CCBTIA  
 Mr. Raymond Reyes Jr.CCWTA  
 Mr. Gilberto Torres- Civil Aviation Department  
 Mr. Russel Manzanero- Civil Aviation Department  
 Ms. Sheryln Jones – Archaeology  
 Ms. Melissa Badillo- Archaeology

### **13.6.2 Archaeology Report**

Due to the nature of the project and considering that the project site is only a section of a larger sub-division [See Plate: 1.1], which has already been cleared and partially reclaimed, the EIA Preparers applied to the NICH for an Archeological Clearance.

Subsequently, an archaeological survey was carried out by members of the Archaeology Department (NICH) as recommended by Section 11.2 of the EIA TOR. With this in mind, a site visit was conducted by Ms. Sherilyne Jones and Melissa Badillo of NICH on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008. A subsequent archaeological clearance was granted in principle to the project developer in regards to the proposed project and area to be developed as stated in the EIA. A letter to the above is forthcoming and the request can be viewed in Annex VIII.