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CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

South Coast Area Office
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Filed: 4/7/97
49th Day: 5/26/97
180th Day: 10/4/97
Staff: A. Padilla
Staff Report: 5/19/97
Hearing Date: 6/10-13/97
Commission Action:



STAFF REPORT: REGULAR CALENDAR

APPLICATION NO.: 5-96-255

APPLICANT: City of Los Angeles County of Los Angeles
Bureau of Engineering Dept. of Beaches and Harbors

PROJECT LOCATION: 12001 Vista del Mar, Los Angeles

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Construction of a 2-story, 4,505 square foot restroom/concession stand structure; hang glider training slope; picnic area; realignment of existing public bicycle path; refurbishment of an existing parking lot; landscaping and a total of 32,000 cubic yards of grading (cut and fill).

Lot area: State Beach
Building coverage: approximately 2,400 square feet
Zoning: Open Space/Recreation
Ht abv fin grade: 32 feet

LOCAL APPROVALS RECEIVED: Approval in Concept, City of Los Angeles; State Department of Parks and Recreation.

SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval with a special condition to ensure that future development will not adversely impact beach access.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following resolution:

I. Approval with Conditions

The Commission hereby grants, subject to the conditions below, a permit for the proposed development on the grounds that the development, as conditioned, will be in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act of 1976, will not prejudice the ability of the local government having jurisdiction over the area to prepare a Local Coastal Program conforming to the provisions of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, is located between the sea and first public road nearest the shoreline and is in conformance with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act, and will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act.

II. Standard Conditions.

1. Notice of Receipt and Acknowledgment. The permit is not valid and development shall not commence until a copy of the permit, signed by the permittee or authorized agent, acknowledging receipt of the permit and acceptance of the terms and conditions, is returned to the Commission office.
2. Expiration. If development has not commenced, the permit will expire two years from the date this permit is reported to the Commission. Development shall be pursued in a diligent manner and completed in a reasonable period of time. Application for extension of the permit must be made prior to the expiration date.
3. Compliance. All development must occur in strict compliance with the proposal as set forth in the application for permit, subject to any special conditions set forth below. Any deviation from the approved plans must be reviewed and approved by the staff and may require Commission approval.
4. Interpretation. Any questions of intent or interpretation of any condition will be resolved by the Executive Director or the Commission.
5. Inspections. The Commission staff shall be allowed to inspect the site and the project during its development, subject to 24-hour advance notice.
6. Assignment. The permit may be assigned to any qualified person, provided assignee files with the Commission an affidavit accepting all terms and conditions of the permit.
7. Terms and Conditions Run with the Land. These terms and conditions shall be perpetual, and it is the intention of the Commission and the permittee to bind all future owners and possessors of the subject property to the terms and conditions.

III. Special Conditions:

1. Future Development

With the acceptance of this permit the applicant acknowledges that the purpose of the concession stand is for take-out, pay prior to consumption of food, food service with short period seating for beach visitors and will not be operated as a sit-down restaurant. Any change in use of the concession stand, including converting to a restaurant use, will require an amendment to this permit.

2. Storm wave protection

With the acceptance of this permit the applicant agrees that in the event the development is threatened or damaged by wave uprush that any measures considered to protect the development the applicant shall consider relocation of the structure or placement of temporary non-structural protective measures before considering permanent structural beach armoring.

3. Department of Parks and Recreation Landscaping/Plant list Approval

Prior to the issuance of the permit the applicant shall submit landscaping and a plant list, for review and approval by the Executive Director. The landscaping plans and plant list shall be limited to California native coastal vegetation that has been reviewed and approved by the State Department of Parks and Recreation and shall be compatible with the El Segundo Blue recovery effort.

IV. Findings and Declarations.

A. Project Description and Background

The applicants propose to construct a 32 foot high, 4,505 square foot restroom/concession stand structure; hang glider training slope; picnic area; realignment of existing public bicycle path; refurbishment of an existing parking lot; landscaping; and a total of 32,000 cubic yards of grading (cut and fill) within a 5 acre area of Dockweiler State Beach.

The Hyperion parking lot will be used to provide 423 parking spaces. The lot, located on County property, was built in 1990 under an agreement with the City of Los Angeles as a temporary 593 space parking lot for use by Hyperion Treatment Plant (HTP) employees during construction of the plant. The parking lot included a pedestrian bridge over Vista del Mar from the parking lot to the plant located on the east side of Vista del Mar. The County will assume ownership and management of the parking lot. After the County refurbishes (resite chain link fence along the west side of the lot; new entrance gates; and resurfacing) the parking lot will be used for public beach parking. However, the City will continue to use 170 parking spaces during weekdays and winter weekends through 1999, when additional parking on the HTP site is expected to be completed. The City will prohibit HTP employees from parking within the parking lot during all weekends between May 30 and September 1, and during the summer holiday extended weekends.

The proposed project is located on Dockweiler State Beach, west of Vista del Mar, in the City of Los Angeles. The beach is administered by the County of

Los Angeles Department of Beaches and Harbors. Dockweiler State Beach is situated between Venice City Beach to the north and Manhattan State Beach to the south. Dockweiler Beach is approximately 5 miles long and covers an area of approximately 288 acres. The northern portion of the beach is interrupted by the Marina del Rey entrance channel. Dockweiler is a wide beach measuring approximately 300 to 400 feet in width.

Existing development in the area includes the Scattergood Power Generating Station to the southeast, a parking lot for construction workers/employees of the Hyperion Wastewater Treatment Plant (HTP) immediately east of the site and the Hyperion Wastewater Treatment Plant on the east side of Vista del Mar.

The proposed project site is situated on a portion of bluff created by the prior deposition of excavation spoil from previous HTP construction activity. The bluff rises approximately 25 feet to an elevation of +35 Mean Sea Level (MSL). The site is located approximately 500 feet from the existing high water tidal zone.

B. Parking

Section 30210 of the Coastal Act states:

In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

Section 30252 of the Coastal Act states:

The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by (1) facilitating the provision or extension of transit service, (2) providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads, (3) providing nonautomobile circulation within the development, (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation, (5) assuring the potential for public transit for high intensity uses such as high-rise office buildings, and by (6) assuring that the recreational needs of new residents will not overload nearby coastal recreation areas by correlating the amount of development with local park acquisition and development plans with the provision of on-site recreational facilities to serve the new development.

Dockweiler State Beach has a relatively small number of paid parking spaces (approximately 1,384 spaces) for its size. The Department of Beaches and Harbors maintains two Dockweiler State Beach pay parking lots to the north and south of the project site. The main parking lot for Dockweiler State Beach is located approximately one-half mile to the north of the project site. The second parking lot is located just south of the proposed project site at Grand Street. Unrestricted parking is available along portions of Vista del Mar.

According to parking figures the parking lots are underutilized throughout

most of the year except during summer weekends. The lots reach near or full capacity during summer holiday weekends.

The County of Los Angeles, Department of Beaches and Harbors, has estimated that the proposed project, when in operation, would generate approximately 84,000 additional private vehicle trips per year, with approximately 56,000 of these trips occurring between the dates of June 1 and September 1. Daily peak demand, which will be during the weekend, is estimated at 2,872 additional vehicle trips.

To support the parking demand generated by the proposed project the County will make available 423 of the 593 parking spaces within the existing Parking lot currently used by HTP. Furthermore, to mitigate any parking impacts that may occur during summer peak use, the County and City will make available for public beach parking the remaining 170 parking spaces that are reserved for HTP during weekends between May 1 and September 1, and on the extended summer holiday weekends of Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day.

The proposed concession stand (food service) is a typical beach concession stand providing food and drink for visitors to the beach. A typical beach concession food service is where customers purchase food at a walk-up window or counter, pay for food prior to consumption, and either consume the food on the premises within a short period of time or take the food off the premises. As such, the concession stand will be subordinate to the beach and will not act as a destination or public attraction such as the case with a full service restaurant. The concession stand, as proposed, will not generate a parking demand. However, if converted to a restaurant where customers are served at tables, it will become a destination in and by itself and will generate a parking demand that will usurp public beach parking. Therefore, to ensure that public beach access is not adversely impacted this permit is conditioned placing the applicants on notice that any change in the type of food service, i.e. from beach concession to restaurant, will require an amendment to this permit.

The provision of 423 parking spaces to support the proposed project plus 170 additional spaces for a total of 593 spaces during peak summer use is sufficient parking to support the proposed use and any parking impacts caused by the proposed project will be insignificant. The Commission finds, that only as conditioned will the proposed project be consistent with Section 30210 and 30252 of the Coastal Act.

C. Recreation

Section 30213 of the Coastal Act states in part:

Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged, and, where feasible, provided. Developments providing public recreational opportunities are preferred.

According to the County Dockweiler State Beach has been traditionally used for hang gliding. The gentle, constant south-west to westerly coastal winds and sandy touch down area make it one of the best hang glider training sites on the west coast. However, hang gliding has been prohibited over the past few years because of safety concerns with the bicycle path located directly below

the bluffs, which were used as a launching site for hang gliders. The relocation of the bicycle path will remove any potential safety hazard of hang gliders landing on or near the bicycle path.

The County proposes to regrade the area and relocate a portion of the bicycle path atop the bluff to eliminate any potential safety problems. The County proposes to form two low and gentle slopes by regrading and compacting 16,000 cubic yards of previously deposited fill material. The slopes will be approximately 20 feet above beach level and range from 4:1 to 6:1. The toe of the slopes will extend approximately 50 to 130 feet to the east and southeast from the toe of the existing bluff. Because of the broad width (400 to 500 feet) of the beach in this area the proposed extension of the bluff will not adversely impact other beach related uses that take place on the flat sandy beach area and along the surf area.

The Dockweiler beach bike path is a segment of the regional beach bike path that extends approximately 23 miles from Malibu to the Palos Verdes Peninsula. The County proposes to relocate approximately 1,300 linear feet of the bicycle path to the top of the bluff along the seaward side of the existing HTP parking lot. There is currently an existing unused 14-foot wide concrete bicycle path at the top of the bluff directly seaward of the HTP parking lot. The County will extend this section approximately 900 feet north and 670 feet south, descending the bluffs, to connect with the currently used path.

The regrading and extending of the slope and realignment of the bicycle path will not adversely impact public beach access and recreation. The proposed project will improve access and recreation by providing amenities, such as, picnic areas, concession stand and restrooms and showers to a beach that currently has very limited public support facilities. Moreover, the proposed project will provide a new recreational facility, i.e. hang gliding. Although this site has historically been used for hang gliding, conflicts with the more popular activities such as bike riding, jogging and roller skating along the bicycle path created safety hazards. With the proposed realignment of the bicycle path hang gliding will be allowed to coexist with other beach uses.

The Commission, therefore, finds that, as conditioned, the proposed project will increase beach access and recreational opportunities along this beach area and is consistent with Section 30213 of the Coastal Act.

D. Visual

Section 30251 of the Coastal Act states:

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

Along Dockweiler State Beach Ocean views are available from atop the bluff along Vista del Mar and from down on the sandy beach. Views are generally unobstructed along this flat, wide beach. However, to the south of the project site is the Department of Water and Power's Scattergood Generating Station and immediately to the east and adjacent to the project site is the existing 593 space HTP parking lot. The lot, which is situated along Vista del Mar, is approximately 1,500 feet long and 200 feet wide.

The proposed concession stand structure will extend approximately 12 feet above the top of the ocean bluff and cover a maximum area of 30 x 60 feet. The restrooms/shower facility will be located below the bluff on the ground floor. The proposed project will also alter the existing topography of the beach bluff. The top of the bluff, rising approximately 35 feet above mean sea level, will be extended to the west and south by regrading the area with 16,00 cubic yards of previously deposited fill.

The visual impact of the proposed structure will be insignificant due to the location of the structure adjacent to a large developed parking lot and the availability of unobstructed public views to and along the beach from other portions along Vista del Mar. Furthermore, grading and extending the bluff will not adversely impact the visual quality of the area since the bluff was artificially created with the construction of the parking lot and its location adjacent to the large paved parking lot. Moreover, the extension of the bluff will create an open bluff top area that will provide additional bluff top viewing areas for the public. Therefore, the Commission finds, as conditioned, that the project will be consistent with Section 30251 of the Coastal Act.

E. Environmentally Sensitive Resources

Section 30240 of the Coastal Act.

(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.

(b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

As stated, the bluffs within the project site were created by the deposition of fill material for the construction of the HTP parking lot in 1990-1991. The proposed site does not provide habitat for any rare or endangered species. The bluffs contain natural vegetation and invasive plants. The applicants propose to relandscape the slopes with California Coastal flora (*Rhus Integrifolia*, *Elymus Condensatus*, *Eriogonium Parvifolium*, and *Lupinus Chamissonis*).

The Airport/El Segundo Dunes are located approximately one-half mile north east of the proposed project site. The dunes contain the El Segundo Blue Butterfly Preserve and is the largest and most important of the three known habitats of the El Segundo Blue Butterfly (*Euphilotes battoides allyni*), which is listed as a federally endangered species.

Although the bluff within the project site is not part of the Airport/EI Segundo Dunes restoration project, plant seeds and viable vegetation material from the site may be carried by wind, birds, and animals to the restoration area. Such an event would interfere with efforts to eradicate non-native flora and the re-establishment of native habitat. To mitigate this potential impact all proposed landscaping will consist of flora native to the California coast. The Department of Parks and Recreation, in a correspondence to the applicants, has expressed the same concern and has requested that the plant list be reviewed by their department's staff. To ensure that the proposed planting will not have any adverse impacts a special condition is necessary requiring that the proposed plant list and landscape plans are reviewed and approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation. The Commission finds, therefore, that only as conditioned will the proposed project not adversely impact environmentally sensitive habitat areas on or adjacent to the site and be consistent with Section 30240 of the Coastal Act.

F. Geologic Hazards

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act states in part that:

New development shall:

(1) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.

(2) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs....

According to the Dockweiler State Beach General Plan Dockweiler State Beach components of:

...sandy dune beach sand and low but steep bluff areas. The beach bluffs represent the unit's single significant topographic natural resource.... Despite their apparent permanence as a natural feature of the unit, the bluffs can also be susceptible to sliding during heavy rains; particularly those areas that has not been stabilized with vegetation or have been eroded over time by pedestrians climbing the slopes.

The proposed project will include grading and compacting the area for the restroom/concession stand, hang glider, training slope and bicycle path to ensure stability and integrity of the structures.

The bluffs within the proposed site were artificially extended seaward in 1990-1991 for the construction of the HTP parking lot. For the construction of the HTP excavated material from the HTP site was placed along eastern side of Vista del Mar to create a flat surface for the parking lot. The thickness of the fill material ranged from 21 to 32 feet. The previously deposited fill material will be regraded to create a flat bluff area for the proposed project.

The bluff face in the area of proposed project will be landscaped with native California coastal flora (*Rhus Integrifolia*, *Elymus Condensatus*, *Eriogonium Parvifolium*, *Lupinus Chamissonis*) and footpaths will be constructed to further stabilize the slope and minimize erosion caused by foot traffic.

According to the City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering, Geotechnical Services report, dated May 1994, the proposed site presents no risk of liquefaction or subsidence. The report states that there are no known or potentially active faults existing on or nearby the site. The site is not within a currently designated Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone.

Because the project site is located on the beach the project may be subject to storm uprush. However, the concession stand will encroach no further than the toe of the existing bluff and will be approximately 450 feet from mean high tide. The hang gliding slope will encroach approximately 100 feet seaward from the toe of the existing slope which may increase the potential impacts from wave action. However, although the hang gliding slope encroaches further seaward than the existing slope, the new slope will still be approximately 400 feet from mean high tide. Such a wide beach will act as a buffer for the development during storm events. Furthermore, since the slope will be created by using previously deposited fill material (sand) on the site, if the area is subject to storm wave action, the material will become part of the natural shoreline process of sand movement and act as source of sand replenishment.

Section 30253 of the Coastal Act states in part that new development shall not require the construction of protective devices. To ensure that the project is consistent with Section 30253 a special condition is required that places the applicant on notice that if the project is threatened or damaged by wave action the applicant shall consider relocation of the structures or temporary non-structural shoreline protective alternatives before considering structural armament. The Commission, therefore, finds that, only as conditioned, will the proposed project be consistent with Section 30253 of the Coastal Act.

G. Local Coastal Program

(a) Prior to certification of the Local Coastal Program, a Coastal Development Permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the Commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a Local Coastal Program that is in conformity with the provisions of Chapter 3.

The proposed project site is located in the Playa del Rey LCP planning area of the City of Los Angeles. There is currently no certified LCP for this area. The site is included under the Dockweiler State Beach General Plan, published May, 1992. The Beach General Plan designates the beach to be used for general recreational and nature activities. The State Department of Parks and Recreation has reviewed the proposed project and has found the the proposed use consistent with the Beach General Plan.

As proposed the project will not adversely impact coastal resources or access. The Commission, therefore, finds that the proposed project will be consistent with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act and will not

prejudice the ability of the City to prepare a Local Coastal Program consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as required by Section 30604(a).

H. CEQA

Section 13096(a) of the Commission's administrative regulations requires Commission approval of Coastal Development Permit applications to be supported by a finding showing the application, as conditioned by any conditions of approval, to be consistent with any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 21080.5(d)(2)(i) of CEQA prohibits a proposed development from being approved if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact which the activity may have on the environment.

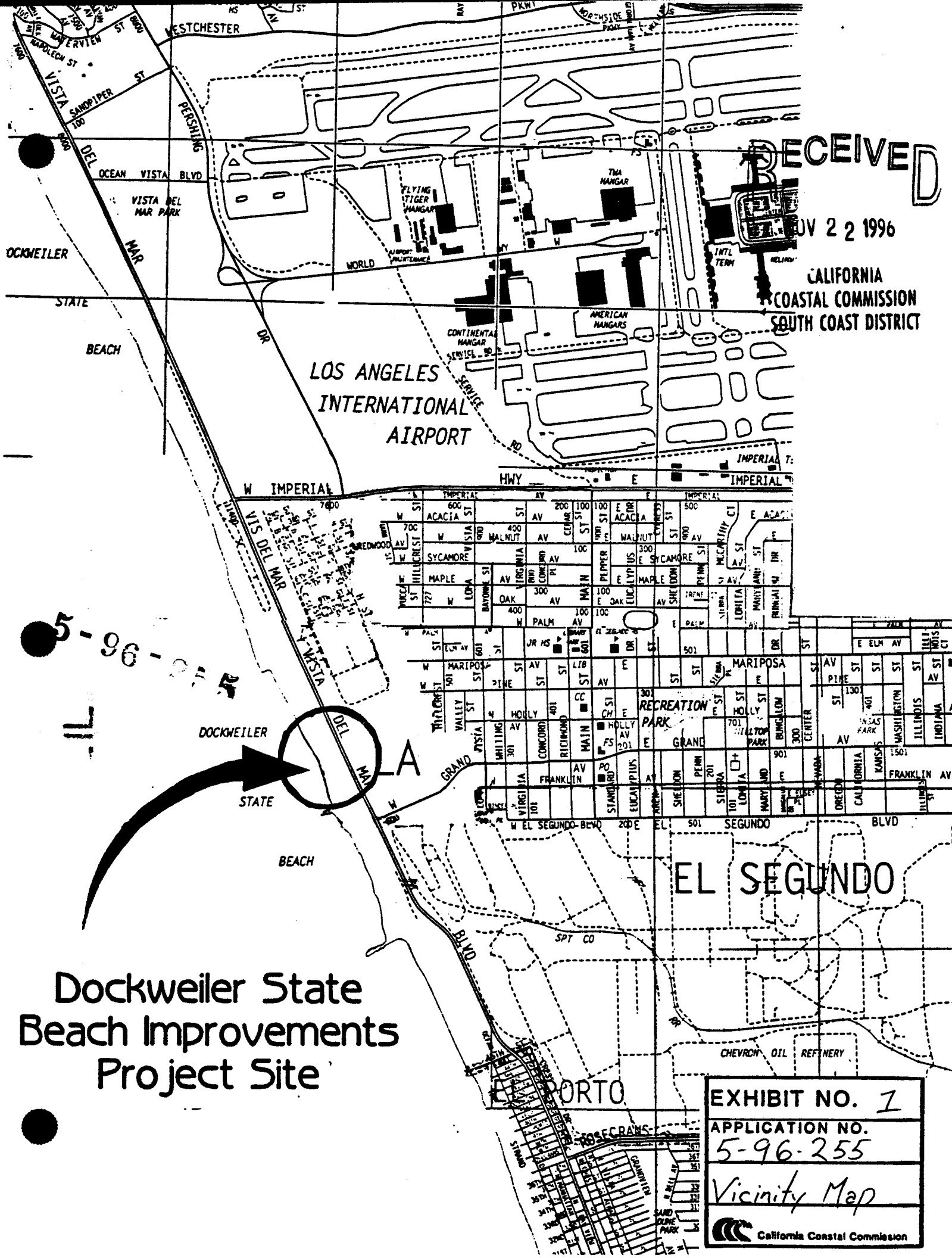
There are no negative impacts caused by the proposed development which have not been adequately mitigated. Therefore, the proposed project is found consistent with CEQA and the policies of the Coastal Act.

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CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
SOUTH COAST DISTRICT



LOS ANGELES
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT


EL SEGUNDO

Dockweiler State
Beach Improvements
Project Site

EXHIBIT NO. 1

APPLICATION NO.
5-96-255

Vicinity Map



California Coastal Commission

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CALIFORNIA
COASTAL COMMISSION
SOUTH COAST DISTRICT

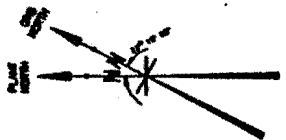
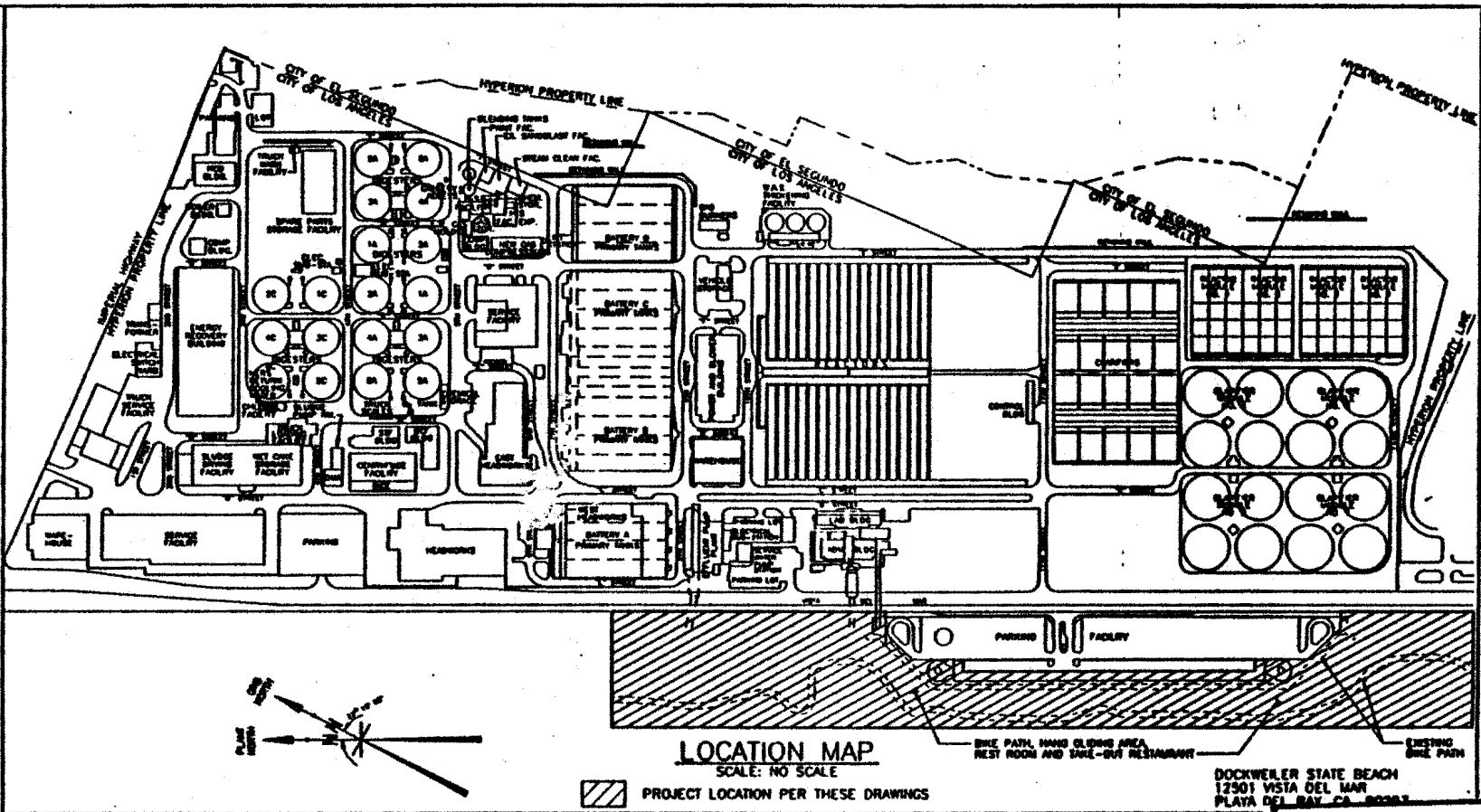
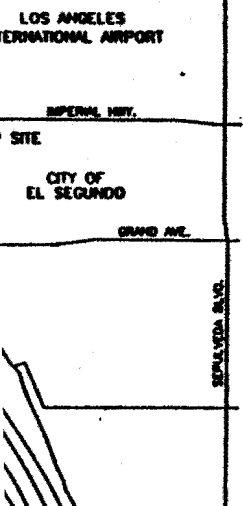
HYPERION FULL SECONDARY (HFS) C132 DOCKWEILER BEACH IMPROVEMENTS

South Coast

APPROVED 5 -
Permit No.

By:

EFFECTIVE
Date:



LOCATION MAP
SCALE: NO SCALE

PROJECT LOCATION PER THESE DRAWINGS

DOCKWEILER STATE BEACH
12301 VISTA DEL MAR
PLAYA DEL MAR, CA 90295

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- A ARCHITECTURE
- S STRUCTURE
- L LANDSCAPE
- P PLUMBING
- M MECHANICAL
- E ELECTRICAL

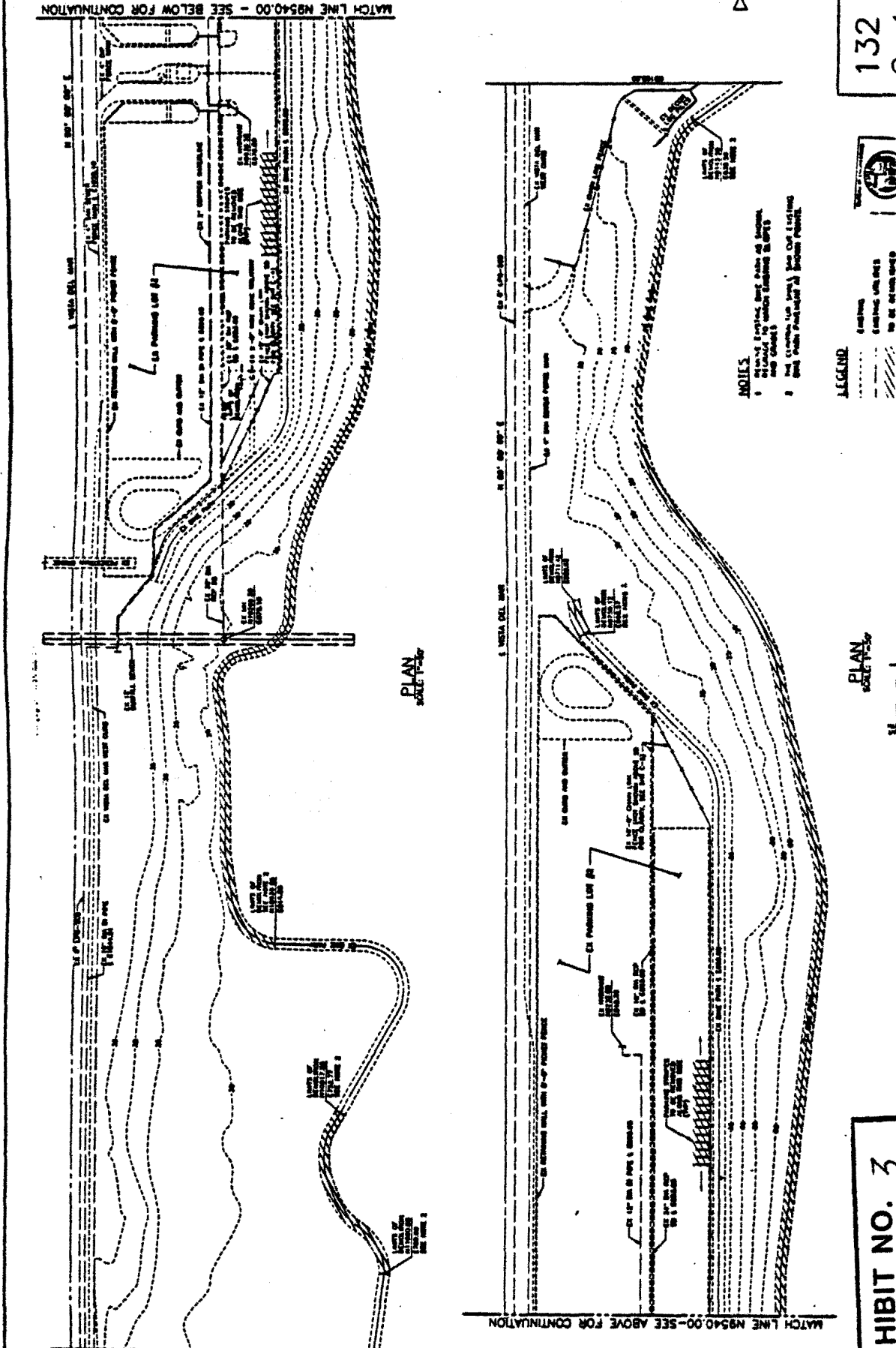
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EXHIBIT NO. 2
APPLICATION NO.
 5-96-255

Location Map

NO.	REVISION DESCRIPTION	BY/CHK	DATE	CITY ENGINEER	DATE



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LEGEND:
 - - - - - EXISTING STRUCTURES
 - - - - - EXISTING UTILITIES
 - - - - - TO BE DEMOLISHED

PLAN
 SCALE 1/8"

EXHIBIT NO. 3
 APPLICATION NO.
 5-96-255
 Existing Site and
 Demolition Plan
 Coastal Commission

EXISTING SITE AND
 DEMOLITION PLAN

NO. 1	EXISTING STRUCTURES
NO. 2	EXISTING UTILITIES
NO. 3	TO BE DEMOLISHED

EXISTING SITE AND
 DEMOLITION PLAN

NO. 1	EXISTING STRUCTURES
NO. 2	EXISTING UTILITIES
NO. 3	TO BE DEMOLISHED

OF LOS ANGELES
 COUNTY ENGINEER
 125