

A New Centre in the Bahamas

A LARGE area of land, known as Freeport, is now being developed in the British colony of the Bahamas. It is situated on the Grand Bahama, one of the largest of the islands,



This aerial view of Green Turtle Bay, on the Island of Abaco, is typical of the first sight tourists have of the Bahamas. Great Abaco Island lies to the east of the Grand Bahama Island

the mouth of Hawksbill Creek. Within Hawksbill Creek, the minimum dimensions are 200 ft in width and 27 ft deep at average low tide. There must also be a turning basin with a radius of not less than 600 ft; in fact, the harbour which is being constructed will have a turning radius of 1,250 ft.

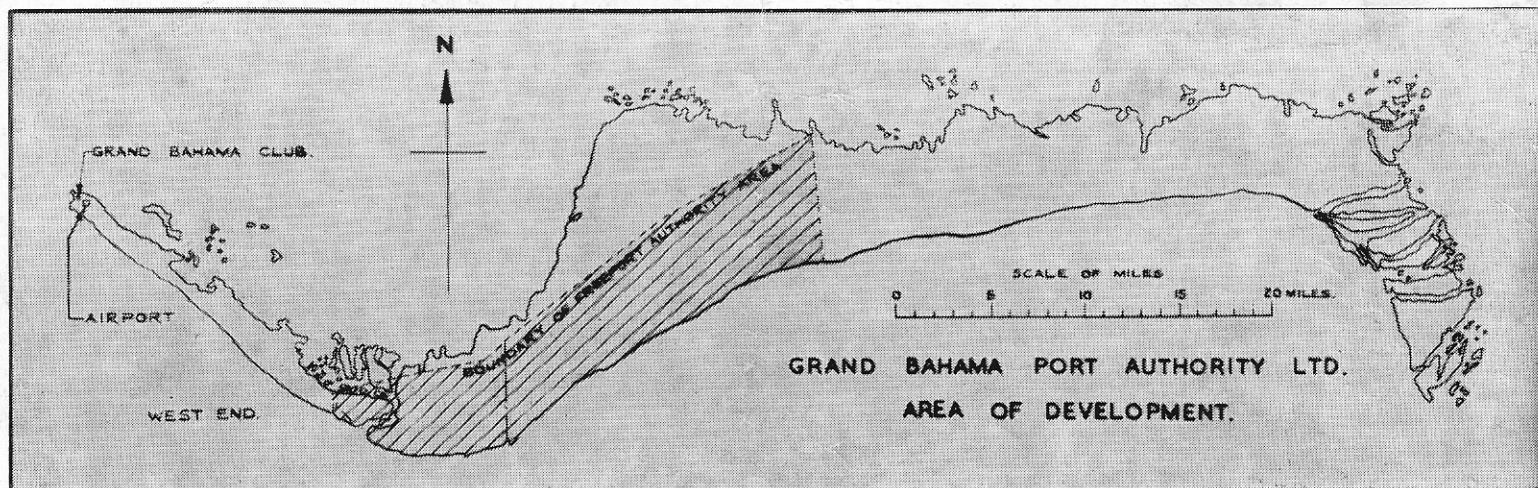
Inside Hawksbill Creek a wharf 600 ft long is being built to accommodate cargo vessels using the port, and there will be an apron 10 ft wide along the harbour side for vehicles.

Housing and Industry

Some housing construction has already been undertaken in the city, but this is mainly to accommodate the workers on the harbour and road sites. Some 300 to 400 houses have been erected. Present power and lighting is supplied by field sets and diesel engines but eventually power stations will be erected according to the needs of the community.

In addition to the extensive port area, separate zones are allotted to heavy and light industries, to commercial centres and to residential districts. What are called special, or noxious, industries will be placed in a zone away from the main city area. There will also be factories, warehouses, assembly shops and schools and all municipality facilities. Twenty miles of beach will be laid out with seaside amenities. It is anticipated that the city will be in some sort of operation within 12 months.

One airstrip exists in close proximity to Freeport and another is planned. Freight and passenger aircraft services are in operation, and these will be extended to meet developments.



The Grand Bahama Island, with the shaded portion showing the area of development

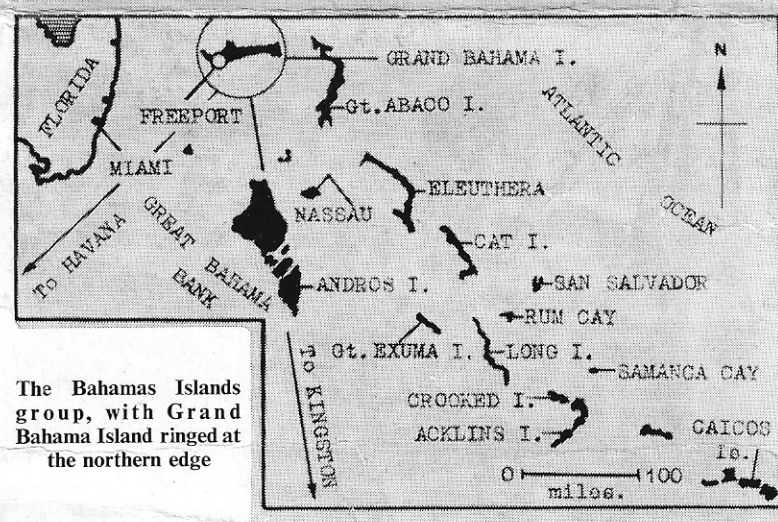
and that nearest to the United States. Miami is only about 100 miles away, a journey that can be made in 40 minutes by air.

The development is being carried out by the Grand Bahama Port Authority, Ltd., under an agreement authorized by an Act passed by the Bahama Legislature. The Authority hold a 99 years' lease of 50,000 acres, with provision for purchase of this land, and for the acquisition of a further 50,000 acres.

The New Port and Harbour

As a first step in the scheme, the construction of a port and harbour has been undertaken by the American shipping firm of Daniel K. Ludwig. Work commenced on this project some 12 months ago, and is now well under way. It is hoped to have the port and harbour completed by August, 1958. A dredger, believed to be the largest in the world, with an 8 ft cutting head, is being used to make the channel through the limestone rock of the harbour and 3,000 to 5,000 cu.yd/day is being removed. The spoil is going towards making the roads of the new city, which are also well under way.

The specifications laid down in the Act for the construction of the port were that the channel should be not less than 200 ft in width and at least 30 ft deep at average low tide from the sea to



The Bahamas Islands group, with Grand Bahama Island ringed at the northern edge

Consulting Engineers connected with the development of the centre are Sir Bruce White, Wolfe Barry and Partners, of London, and Ibasco, of New York. The resident engineer is Mr. Jan Porel.