

Section 3.2

AESTHETICS / LIGHT & GLARE

3.2.1 Affected Environment

2020 / 2021 SEIS & Revised Proposal

The SEIS described the existing aesthetics and light and glare conditions on and in the vicinity of the 47° North site at that time (see Draft SEIS Section 3.8 for details). Selected information from the Draft SEIS is provided and compared in context below; please consult the SEIS document for more detailed information.

The 47° North site is largely vacant and undeveloped, and comprised of vegetated/forested land. Some dirt roads and a few equestrian trails and facilities, such as a small building, parking area, and load/unload areas, are also located onsite. Two PSE electrical transmission lines/easements traverse the site.

Although some development in the site vicinity and growth in vegetation onsite has occurred over the ensuing years, existing views of and from the 47° North site are generally the same as described in the SEIS.

3.2.2 Impacts

2020 / 2021 SEIS

As described in the SEIS, development of the 47° North site with any of the SEIS Alternatives would change the existing visual character of the site, potentially impact view opportunities to and from the site, and add new sources of light and glare to the area. SEIS Alternatives 5 and 6 would change the visual character of the site from a mostly second growth forest to a more urban environment consisting of a community with a mix of residential and recreational uses, business park and/or commercial development and open space in various proportions. Vegetated buffer areas would surround the perimeter of the site. Some of the more intensive uses of SEIS Alternative 6 (multi-family and potential commercial development) would be located in the northeastern and eastern portions of the site, near SR 903. RV resort uses would be situated in the central portion of the site, buffered from surrounding uses.

The primary visual change associated with proposed development under SEIS Alternative 6 or Alternative 5 would be the conversion of a large, forested area to urban density residential and recreational buildings and neighborhoods onsite, and to business park use in SEIS Alternative 5, or possible commercial development on the adjacent property with SEIS Alternative 6.

Visual simulations were prepared to illustrate potential views of the site under SEIS Alternative 6 from surrounding areas. Large portions of the site would be preserved in open space, and forested buffers would be retained along the perimeter of the site, including along Bullfrog Road, which would largely block views of proposed development on the 47° North site from immediately surrounding areas. The greatest potential to see the development would be from higher elevation vantage points such as from Peoh Point. As noted in the SEIS, individual residential, recreational, and smaller future commercial buildings in 47° North would be barely visible from Peoh Point.

The anticipated aesthetic impacts under SEIS Alternative 6 are discussed further below in comparison to the Revised Proposal.

Revised Proposal

Overall, visual impacts would be substantially similar to those identified for SEIS Alternative 6. The Revised Proposal would incrementally change the visual character of the site from a mostly second growth forest to a more urban environment consisting of a residential, recreational, and commercial development (the commercial area is now part of the proposal) and open space. Vegetated buffer areas would surround the perimeter of the site. The slight change in the location of the access road to the commercial center from SR 903 is not anticipated to result in any significant change in visual impact. Similar to SEIS Alternative 6, site development would be guided by architectural and design guidelines established by the Applicant for residential and other structures; these guidelines would be specifically tailored for the 47° North project site to achieve a consistent visual quality. As with SEIS Alternative 6, the greatest potential to see development on the site would be from higher elevation vantage points such as Peoh Point. And while development under the Revised Proposal would be visible at a distance in the mid-ground, the proposed development would appear as a continuation of the existing nearby grey/tan-colored development in the area and would likely be seen as a grey/tan shaded mass as well. Individual residential, recreational, and smaller commercial buildings in 47° North would be barely visible from Peoh Point. Impacts would be virtually the same as for SEIS Alternative 6.

The Revised Proposal would include up to 553 acres of open space areas – compared to 477 acres under SEIS Alternative 6 – which equates to 62% of the site (see **Table 2-1** in **Chapter 2** for details), compared to 48% of the site for SEIS Alternative 5. This open space would provide visual separation among uses within the site, and between the site and surrounding uses. Perimeter buffer areas at least 100 feet in width would be provided adjacent to Bullfrog Road and to contiguous properties to the south that are not owned or controlled by the Applicant (e.g., the Horse Park). Buffers would consist of existing trees and other vegetation and would provide visual separation between the site and adjacent uses and would screen and minimize potential visual impacts. The 50-foot-wide platted buffer

adjacent to the SR 903 right-of-way would be maintained as part of proposed commercial development, and could help maintain a natural, forested entry to the City of Cle Elum.

Landscaping would be provided throughout the site and would create transitions and buffers between various land uses on and adjacent to the site. Specific landscape plans have not been developed to date but will be included in the Master Site Plan amendment application. Conceptually, the Revised Proposal would include landscaping along both sides of the connector and internal roads, in pockets in the private community/recreation open space areas, and in the residential neighborhoods.

Light and glare impacts would also be similar to SEIS Alternative 6 or Alternative 5. The primary sources of light and glare from development associated with the Revised Proposal would include street, building, and landscape lighting. The Applicant has committed to adopting standards/ recommendations for roadway lighting intensity consistent with the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America; these standards would minimize impacts from development on adjacent land uses and include lighting standards for roadways. Light and glare would also be generated by RVs in the RV resort, particularly during the peak season.

Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

Similar to SEIS Alternative 6, indirect visual impacts associated with the Revised Proposal could result from induced growth and changes in surrounding land uses, such as a potential increase in commercial activity along the SR 903 corridor and within the City of Cle Elum. Any such impacts would be comparable to those identified for SEIS Alternative 6, would be less than with Alternative 5, and are assumed to occur, if at all, consistent with applicable land use and zoning designations.

Cumulatively, development of the Revised Proposal in conjunction with other known projects (i.e., Suncadia, City Heights, and Cle Elum Pines) would contribute to urbanization and continuing changes in the visual/aesthetic character of the site vicinity. Cumulative changes in the visual landscape would be most evident from higher elevation vantage points. Cumulative development would also contribute to existing skyglow effects created by Cle Elum, South Cle Elum, Roslyn, Suncadia, and I-90. However, the increase in skyglow would be mitigated through implementation of International Dark Sky Association lighting designs.

3.2.3 Mitigation Measures

No new significant adverse impacts to aesthetics / light and glare would occur from the Revised Proposal and no additional mitigation measures are recommended. The mitigation measures identified below include those measures that have been updated for the Revised Proposal from those listed in the Final SEIS. See **Appendix F** for a complete list of the mitigation measures under the Revised Proposal. See the Introduction to **Chapter 3** for a

description of the different categories of mitigation (e.g., proposed, required, other possible).

Proposed Mitigation Measures (Included in the Project)

- ~~Approximately 477 acres of the site would be preserved as open space, including natural open space, Managed Open Space, River Corridor Open Space, wetlands and their buffers, and power line easements. A total of approximately 553 acres of open space, including undeveloped open space (including community/ recreation open space, stormwater open space, and steep slope areas and their buffers), wetlands and their buffers, and the powerline right-of-way, would be included in the amended Master Site Plan.~~

Required Mitigation Measures

- The 50-foot-wide platted buffer adjacent to the SR 903 right-of-way would be maintained in conjunction with proposed commercial development ~~on the adjacent 25-acre property.~~ As feasible, and accounting for the need for signage, entry visibility, and similar design considerations, the existing forested vegetation in this area could be retained to partially screen the development and help maintain a natural, forested entry to the City of Cle Elum.