



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning & Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3006885 (applied for under 2407770)

Applicant Name: Stacie Netherby, ARC Architects
For the University of Washington

Address of Proposal: 2501 NE 45th St (Golf Driving Range expansion)

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Land Use Application for construction of three driving range buildings (clubhouse, maintenance, covered hitting platform) and installation of 337,590 sq. ft. of synthetic golf turf and replacement of 410 lineal feet of north fence. Project includes 16,400 cubic yards of grading and demolition of existing buildings, all accessories to existing major institution (University of Washington). Environmental documents prepared by U of W.

The following approval is required:

SEPA - to approve, condition or deny pursuant to [25.05.660](#) – Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter [25.05](#)

SEPA DETERMINATION: Exempt DNS MDNS EIS¹

DNS with conditions

DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

¹ The University of Washington Capital Projects Office prepared a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS), published August 18, 2005. The University issued the final Fact Sheet on December 12, 2005.

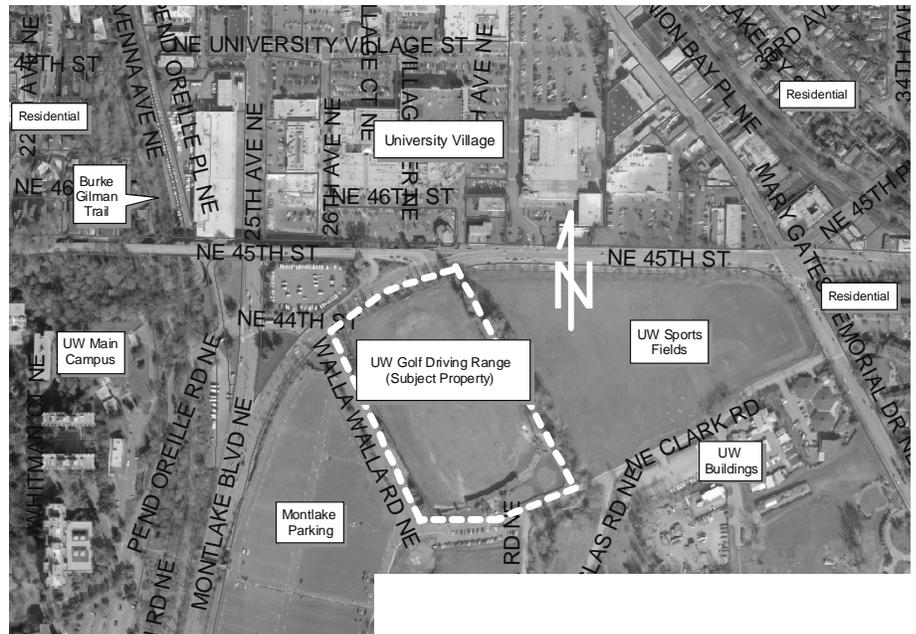
BACKGROUND DATA

Existing Conditions

The project site is located on the grounds of the University of Washington (UW), in an area referred to as the East campus, and listed as one of the campus Open Spaces. This particular site is bounded by Montlake Blvd NE on the north, Walla Walla Road NE on the west, and NE Clark Road on the south.

Surrounding land uses consist of the UW sports fields and Horticultural building to the east,

University Village retail and parking to the north, UW Montlake surface parking area to the south, and UW operations buildings and the Burke Gilman Trail to the west, across Montlake Blvd NE. The overall area includes a mix of Institutional, Commercial, Office, and Residential uses.



The University's [Campus Master Plan](#) (2003) identifies the site as #57E in Illustrative Development Area E-3 and depicts the project site as continued use of Golf Driving Range, with a second story addition to the driving range, an expansion of the fence up to 80' in height, possible increased parking, and retention and expansion of trees and vegetation.

The site is currently occupied by the Golf Driving Range with surface parking to the southwest. The Campus Master Plan (CMP) notes that the building was constructed in 1965 and is 5,094 square feet in size. The CMP notes that the maximum height for this site is 80' for fences associated with the driving range, and 37' for all other structures. The City of Seattle zoning lists this site as Major Institution Overlay in an L-1 zone, with a maximum height of 37 feet (MIO-37-L-1).

Adjacent rights of way are improved with hard surface roadways, curbs, gutters and sidewalks. There are existing trees at the north, west, and east sides of the site, which the applicant proposes to retain and protect in place.

Proposal

The project includes demolition and replacement of the 1965 clubhouse and covered tee structure, replacement of tees, regrading of the driving range, installation of synthetic golf turf, and replacement of chain link fencing on the east side of the subject property.

The existing 1,275 square foot clubhouse would be demolished, to be replaced with a new 2,900 square foot clubhouse. The 9,940 square foot covered and uncovered tee line would be replaced with a 9,056 square foot one story covered tee line and a 1,680 square foot uncovered tee line. The existing 200 square foot storage sheds would be demolished and replaced with a 670 square foot ancillary building. The existing driving range would be regraded to include target greens and synthetic turf. New practice greens would be located between the tee line structure and NE Clark Road. New 80' tall light poles would be placed at the east and west perimeters of the site, with additional 60' tall light poles near the tee line. The perimeter fencing and netting would be replaced with chain link fencing and range net above, to a maximum height of 72' on the north perimeter. Range poles would remain, with replacement netting on the perimeter. There are no proposed changes to existing parking nearby. Additional trees and vegetation would be added to the north, west, and south sides of the site to improve screening.

Public Comment

DPD received two comment letters from the public prior to preparation of this decision. One letter is from the Laurelhurst Community Club (sent from UW with an updated Fact Sheet), who expressed support for the modified proposal; the other letter is from a private citizen who expressed concern about the use of synthetic turf.

ANALYSIS – STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)

On August 18, 2005, the University of Washington issued its Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the University of Washington Golf Driving Range Improvements, incorporating by reference the University of Washington Master Plan Seattle Campus 2002-2012 Final EIS. Project specific environmental impacts of the Golf Driving Range Improvements have been disclosed and analyzed in the FSEIS prepared by the University of Washington, acting as Lead Agency. The University only received one comment letter on the DSEIS; therefore, the University issued an updated Fact Sheet instead of a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS). The Fact Sheet was sent out on December 12, 2005.

The Seattle SEPA Ordinance provides substantive authority to require mitigation of adverse environmental impacts resulting from a proposed project (SMC 25.05.655 and 25.05.660). Mitigation, when required, must be related to specific environmental impacts identified in an environmental document and may only be imposed to the extent that a given impact is attributable to a proposal, and to the extent that the mitigation is reasonable and capable of being accomplished. Additionally, mitigation may be imposed only when based on policies, plans and regulations as enunciated in SMC 25.05.665 to SMC 25.05.675 inclusive (SEPA Overview Policy, SEPA Cumulative Impacts Policy, SEPA Specific Environmental Policies). In some instances, local, state or federal regulatory requirements will provide sufficient mitigation of an impact and additional mitigation imposed through SEPA may not be necessary.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Elements of the environment considered in the Draft SEIS include: earth, air quality, water, plants and animals, light and glare, land use, aesthetics, environmental health, transportation and

parking, and public utilities. Please refer to the DSEIS and fact sheet for a complete description of effects of the proposed alternative.

The information provided by the University and its consultants, public comment, and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar proposals form the basis for review of this proposal. The potential environmental impacts disclosed in the Draft and FSEIS are discussed below.

Short-Term Impacts

Construction activities described in the preferred alternative could result in the following adverse impacts: construction dust and stormwater runoff, erosion, emissions from construction machinery and vehicles, decreased air quality, increased noise levels, occasional disruption of adjacent vehicular and pedestrian traffic, disruption to public utilities; and a small temporary increase in traffic and parking impacts due to construction workers' vehicles. Many of these impacts are limited in scope and are addressed by existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project, such as the Noise Ordinance, SMC 25.08, the Stormwater, Drainage, and Erosion Control Code, SMC 22.802, the Street Use Ordinance, SMC Title 15, and the Building and Construction Codes, SMC Title 22. In addition to these existing codes and policies, the University has incorporated several measures into its proposal to further mitigate construction-related impacts noted in each section. Among these, DPD identifies various mitigations that are appropriately applied as conditions of the Master Use Permit.

Earth

The applicant indicates that the excavation and export of soil material off-site and import of structural fill material would result in approximately 16,400 cubic yards of material being trucked to and from the site. The geotechnical discussion included in the DSEIS (pg 1-11) indicates that the proposed development would seek to balance the amount of cut and fill, with a likely small net increase from fill.

Due to the existing landfill and peat layers under the golf driving range, some settling is expected. Settling of up to several feet could occur in the first year, with less than one foot of settlement in the following 30-60 years.

Mitigation to reduce settling and disturbance of the landfill areas below the golf driving range include supporting the teaching center on piles, supporting the tee line on shallow foundations on a series of post-tension concrete slabs, supporting the heavier structures of the net poles and clubhouse on deep pipe pile foundations, limit excavation to dry weather conditions and employ Best Management Practices, install a drainage system to reduce groundwater to the landfill strata, implement a fertilizer application plan, and maintain a minimum of 3 feet of soil cover.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, the Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675B), Earth Policy (SMC 25.05.675D), compliance with the Stormwater, Drainage, and Erosion Control Code as it relates to best management practices during construction above will be sufficient to mitigate construction related earth impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Air Quality

The subject property is located on an abandoned landfill, which emits releases of methane. The DSEIS (page 1-13) notes that the current levels of methane released at the site do not appear to exceed regulatory standards and have been decreasing over the past 40 years of monitoring.

The soil disturbance during construction and first year settling could result in a temporary increase in methane discharge rates. The University explains that the proposed fill is not near structures that have enclosed spaces where methane could accumulate and therefore the increased discharge should not have an effect.

Proposed mitigation includes complying with the requirements of the Washington State Department of Ecology regulations, installation of a drainage system to reduce the amount of water entering the landfill strata, and installation of synthetic turf surface with a vapor-permeable barrier. Long term, the methane release is expected to decrease beyond current levels.

Construction activities would also contribute to a temporary reduction in air quality from particulates and vehicle emissions, including excavation, grading, soil compaction, and operation of heavy trucks and smaller equipment (i.e., generators and compressors). Construction activities will result in an increase in suspended particulates, which could affect the air quality of in the vicinity. Several of the erosion control measures noted above will also serve to decrease potential impacts to air quality resulting from dust.

During construction, on-site activity and periodic traffic delays on adjacent streets could contribute to slight increases in localized vehicle emissions but it is not expected that these emissions would result in a violation of any local ambient air quality standards.

The DSEIS notes various mitigating measures on page 1-14, which DPD considers to be feasible standard practices commensurate with this scale of development. Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Construction Impacts Policy, SMC 25.05.675B, in order to limit the amount of dust associated with grading, excavation and stockpiling of soil, further mitigation in the form of washing construction equipment and haul trucks as needed, before exiting the site to minimize dust impacts will be required.

Noise

The site is located near arterial streets. Automobile traffic results in high ambient noise levels in the area. Residential neighborhoods are located at least 1200' from the site to the east and further than 1200' away to the north. Nearby residential receptors include single and multifamily properties located to the east across Mary Gates Memorial Drive NE and north of NE 45th St. These residential uses experience similar high ambient noise levels from existing traffic.

Short-term noise and vibration from construction equipment and construction activity (e.g., backhoes, trucks, concrete mixers, generators, and pneumatic hand tools) would occur as a result of construction and construction-related traffic.

In accordance with City of Seattle regulations (SMC 25.08.425) construction activities would be limited to applicable noise levels during nighttime (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM and 10 PM to 9 AM on weekends).

DPD determines that few, if any, residents are near enough to the site that they would be adversely impacted by construction noise. The existing limitations on evening and weekend construction noise should be adequate to mitigate noise impacts resulting from construction.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Noise Policy, SMC 25.05.675L, compliance with existing codes will be sufficient to mitigate noise related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Construction Traffic

The applicant indicates that the excavation and export of soil material off-site and import of structural fill material would result in approximately 16,400 cubic yards of material being trucked to and from the site. Approximately 800 truck trips would be needed to haul this material.

The DSEIS did not indicate closure of any nearby City pedestrian or vehicle routes. If requested, temporary closure of sidewalks and/or traffic lane(s) would be addressed through Seattle Department of Transportation permits. The applicant would be required to submit a pedestrian circulation plan for review and approval by DPD, showing how existing City routes will be altered during construction and proposed notification/signage regarding alternative routes.

It is the City's policy to minimize temporary adverse impacts associated with construction activities. Pursuant to the Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665) and the Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675B), project approval will be conditioned upon the University and/or responsible party(s) securing timely approval of a Truck Trip Plan. To ensure that construction related truck traffic does not adversely affect traffic operations, one element of this plan shall be a requirement that truck trips be scheduled to avoid peak periods of 7:00-9:00 AM and 3:00-6:00 PM, Monday through Friday and shall avoid coinciding with Husky football games (before and after the games).

Long-Term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are anticipated from the proposal such as increased bulk and scale on the site, increased demand on public services and utilities; increased light, glare and shadow; changes to the storm water runoff quality, and potential impacts to birds flying through the site. Many of these impacts are limited in scope and not considered significant. Some of these impacts are also addressed by other codes and policies such as the Stormwater, Drainage, and Erosion Control Code (SMC 22.802) (storm water runoff from new impervious surfaces); the Utilities section of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC 21), the Campus Master Plan (height; setbacks; parking); and the Seattle Energy Code (long-term energy consumption). Some additional discussion is warranted.

Environmental Health

The DSEIS (page 1-20) noted that the increased safety net will decrease the amount of golf balls that are hit beyond the current safety fence at the north perimeter. This will increase safety of pedestrians and motorists in this area.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Environmental Health Policy, SMC 25.05.675F, compliance with the mitigation proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate environmental health related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Height Bulk and Scale

Seattle's SEPA Policy on Height, Bulk and Scale provides that development should be reasonably compatible with applicable goals, policies, plans and regulations. Further, development should provide for a reasonable transition between areas of less and more intensive zoning.

The area is generally flat and the proposed development consists of one story buildings with transparent chain link fencing topped with range nets up to 72 feet high. An aesthetic analysis was completed in Appendix D of the CMP FEIS which analyzed the potential view blockage from higher nets at the Golf Driving Range. Proposed mitigation measures included sculpting the safety net to closely correspond to ball flight patterns, installing a safety net that doesn't exceed the height of the tallest existing trees on each side, planting additional trees at the perimeter to screen the safety net, installing smaller diameter support poles (24" diameter instead of the existing 30" diameter poles), and painting the steel poles a light neutral color.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Height Bulk and Scale Policy, SMC 25.05.675G, compliance with the mitigation proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate height, bulk, and scale related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Light and Glare

An aesthetic analysis was completed in Appendix D of the CMP FEIS which included analysis of the potential impacts of light fixtures on nearby properties. On page 3 of Appendix D, the FEIS described the proposed light fixtures as similar to Musco Lighting's Total Light Control Reflector System, which reduces offsite "spillage." Light fixtures would be directed in front of the tee line and on the target greens instead of the entire driving range. The overall lighting would be reduced to minimize glare. No additional mitigation measures were proposed.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Light and Glare Policy, SMC 25.05.675K, compliance with lighting methods proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate light and glare related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Plants and Animals

The DSEIS noted that public comment included concerns about impacts to the nearby bird populations. The taller safety netting (originally proposed at 100') could trap birds in flight, particularly if they were attracted by the natural turf areas of the driving range.

The DSEIS discussed project revisions in order to address these concerns, including a reduction in fence height from 100' to 72' at the highest point, ribbon tied to the tallest netting areas to detract birds, and replacement of natural turf with synthetic turf to reduce the attraction of birds to the driving range. Planting of trees will result in eventual screening of the netting, further increasing flight safety for birds. Newly planted tree species would not include trees that attract birds such as cottonwood and alder, which attract heron nesting colonies. The Laurelhurst Community Club Board of Trustees submitted a letter to the University responding positively to these changes.

The nearby wetland buffer currently includes an existing gravel driveway. The DSEIS proposes removal of this driveway to reduce net intrusion into the wetland buffer.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Plants and Animals Policy, SMC 25.05.675N, compliance with the mitigation proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate plant and animal related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Public Views

The Campus Master Plan (2003) identifies significant views and vistas. In the vicinity of the East Campus, such views are predominantly to the south and east, toward Lake Washington. There are no primary vistas or views from this site in the CMP. An aesthetic analysis including analysis of impacts on views was completed in Appendix D of the CMP FEIS which analyzed the potential view blockage from higher nets at the Golf Driving Range. Proposed mitigation measures included reducing the original proposed height of 100' to 72' or less, replacing the 30" diameter poles with 24" diameter poles, sculpting the safety net to closely correspond to ball flight patterns, planting additional trees at the perimeter to screen the safety net, and painting the steel poles a light neutral color.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Public View Protection Policy, SMC 25.05.675P, compliance with the mitigation proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate view related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Traffic and transportation

The proposed development does not include changes to existing parking or traffic regulation patterns. The increase in size of the driving range tees would be a total of 1,680 square feet and an increase of 4 tee stations beyond the existing conditions. The increase in clubhouse size would be 1,625 square feet. Given the high level of traffic in the area and the plethora of existing surface parking adjacent to and nearby the site, the increase in vehicle trips and parking demand would be negligible.

The subject property is also located adjacent to a heliport for the University. The height of the proposed fencing could interfere with the air travel patterns for helicopters using this site. The DSEIS discusses temporary impacts to the heliport, such as avoiding disruption of radio frequencies and review by the heliport for safety measures.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, and the Traffic and Transportation Policy, SMC 25.05.675R, compliance with mitigation methods proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate traffic related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

Water Quality and Drainage

The proposed development is located on top of a landfill that was used in the early 20th century. The DSEIS noted that the existing golf driving range is composed of natural turf, which allows storm water to drain through to the landfill substrata. The water leaches through the landfill material, carrying potential contaminants to the nearby wetland areas and Lake Washington.

The proposed development would include replacement of most of the natural turf with synthetic turf, combined with a storm water collection system to collect runoff before it reaches the landfill substrata. The storm water would be run through sheetflow spreaders for infiltration into the slough along the east edge of the site. This would allow storm water to bypass the potentially contaminated landfill areas and would improve storm water quality beyond current conditions.

Pursuant to the Overview Policy, SMC 25.05.665, the Drainage Policy, SMC 25.05.675.C, and the Water Quality Policy, SMC 25.05.675S, compliance with drainage and water quality improvement methods proposed in the DSEIS will be sufficient to mitigate water quality related impacts and no additional conditions are warranted.

DECISION – SEPA

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, Master Use Permit plans submitted for the project, public comment, and responses to requests for information all comprise DPD's record. Pursuant to SMC 25.05.600 D, DPD relies on the environmental documents and technical reports prepared by the University of Washington in their role as lead agency. DPD has determined that the DSEIS (August 18, 2005) and Final Fact Sheet (issued December 12, 2005) utilized for the environmental analysis of the University of Washington Golf Driving Range Improvements are adequate. The SEPA conditions listed below are imposed based on Master Use Permit (MUP) plans as well as on all environmental documentation submitted to date.

SEPA CONDITIONS

Prior to Issuance of a Construction Permit

1. Submit to DPD for review and approval a Truck Trip Plan which delineates the routes and the travel hours that trucks carrying project-related materials will employ to minimize negative traffic impacts. Scheduled truck traffic shall avoid peak periods of 7:00 - 9:00 am and 3:00 - 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, and shall avoid coinciding with Husky football games (before and after the games).

2. If City pedestrian or vehicular routes are proposed for closure during construction, submit to DPD for review and approval a pedestrian/vehicle circulation plan showing how existing routes will be altered during construction and how users will be notified of changes to existing routes and alternative routes in the immediate area.

Signature: _____ (signature on file) _____ Date: September 24, 2007
Shelley Bolser, AICP, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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