Section 3.1
Aesthetics

Visual or aesthetic resources are generally defined as the natural and built features of the landscape that can be seen. The combination of landform, water, and vegetation patterns represents the natural landscape features that define an area's visual character, as opposed to built features such as buildings, roads, utility structures, and ornamental plantings that reflect human or cultural modifications to the landscape. These natural and built landscape features, or visual resources, contribute to the public's experience and appreciation of the environment. Depending on the extent to which a project's presence would alter the perceived visual character and quality of the environment, visual or aesthetic impacts may result.

This section presents a discussion of existing visual resources in the Project vicinity and an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project on those resources. A summary of the potential impacts is presented in **Table 3.1-1**.

Table 3.1-1. Summary of Project Impacts on Aesthetics

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation	Significance After Mitigation
A. Scenic Vistas and Corridors			
AES-A1. The Project could have substantial adverse visual effects on public viewing in or near visually prominent areas identified in the GMPAP or within scenic route corridors, including 17-Mile Drive.	No Impact	None required	--
B. Visual Character			
AES-B1. The Project could degrade the visual character and quality of the Project site.	Significant	AES-B1: Incorporate native infill plantings in areas outside of the development footprint	Less than Significant
C. Light and Glare			
AES-C1. The Project would introduce new sources of light and glare at the Project site, which could affect nighttime views or activities in the area.	Less than Significant	None required	--

-- = Not Applicable

Regulatory Setting

This section describes the federal, state, and local plans, policies, and laws that are relevant to aesthetic resources for the Project.

Federal and State

The Project site is located outside the California Coastal Zone and is not within view of any officially designated state scenic highways, including State Route (SR) 68 and SR 1. Therefore, no federal or state regulations apply with respect to aesthetics or visual resources.

Local

2010 Monterey County General Plan

The 2010 Monterey County General Plan presents goals and policies that guide the general distribution and intensity of land uses, including residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial, public facilities, and open space uses, for lands in the County outside the Coastal Zone (Monterey County 2010). The Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan (GMPAP) provides supplemental policies that apply to the inland areas, including the Project site. According to GMPAP Figure 14, *Scenic Highway Corridors & Visual Sensitivity*, the Project site is not located within view of an existing or proposed scenic route, including 17-Mile Drive, and is not located within a visually sensitive area (Monterey County 2010). The following GMPAP policies are relevant to aesthetics and visual resources.

Policy GMP-1.4. Development proposals shall include compatible open space uses located between other developed areas in order to maintain a rural atmosphere and to protect scenic resources.

Policy GMP-3.1. The County shall encourage creative public and private efforts to restore the scenic beauty of visually impacted common public viewing areas.

Policy GMP-3.4. Plant materials shall be used to integrate manmade and natural environments, to screen or soften the visual impact of new development, and to provide diversity in developed areas.

Pacific Grove General Plan

The Pacific Grove General Plan does not legally apply to the project site but does apply to the neighboring portions of Pacific Grove. The Urban Structure and Design Element includes the Del Monte Neighborhood in the "non-historic residential" area of the City that it describes as follows: "The non-historic residential areas were developed at lower densities than the older historic residential neighborhoods. They offer a rich diversity of housing that is generally well-maintained, landscaped, and attractive. The varying architectural styles tend to be traditional, but contemporary designs are not excluded." This is a general description for large areas of housing in Pacific Grove and is not a specific description of the Del Monte neighborhood adjacent to the project site. The Pacific Grove General Plan does not identify any designated scenic corridors or places in Pacific Grove adjacent to the project site.

Monterey County Zoning Ordinance

Design Control or "D Districts"

Monterey County Code Chapter 21.44, Regulations for Design Control Zoning Districts or "D" Districts, states: "The purpose of this chapter is to provide a district for the regulation of the location, size, configuration, materials, and colors of structures and fences, except agricultural fences, in those areas of Monterey County where the design review of structures is appropriate to assure protection of the public viewshed, neighborhood character, and to assure the visual integrity

of certain developments without imposing undue restrictions on private property." This ordinance requires design review and approval to ensure project compliance with this code.

Medium Density Residential Zoning Districts

Section 21.12.060G, *Site development standards – Landscaping Requirements*, states: "For development of more than two residential units on a lot, a minimum of ten (10) percent of the developed lot area shall be landscaped prior to occupancy, pursuant to a landscaping plan approved by the Director of Planning." Section 21.12.060H, *Site development standards – Lighting Plan Requirements*, states: "For developments of more than two residential units on a lot, all exterior lighting shall be unobtrusive, harmonious with the local area and constructed or located so that only the area intended is illuminated and offsite glare is fully controlled. The location, type and wattage of the exterior lighting must be approved by the Director of Planning prior to the issuance of building permits or the establishment of the use."

Resource Conservation Zoning Districts

Sections 21.36.060G, *Site development standards – Landscaping Requirements*, and 21.36.060H, *Site development standards – Lighting Plan Requirements*, both state that there are no requirements "except as may be required by condition of approval of an Administrative Permit or Use Permit."

Monterey County Standard Conditions of Approval

The Project would be required to comply with Monterey County's Standard Conditions of Approval which include, but may not be limited to, the following applicable conditions (Monterey County 2014). Refer to Chapter 2, *Project Description*, for the full text of the conditions of approval.

PD012(G): Landscape Plan and Maintenance (Other than Single Family Dwelling)

PD014(A): Lighting - Exterior Lighting Plan

Environmental Setting

Pebble Beach

The Project site is located in Pebble Beach. Pebble Beach is an unincorporated community situated along the southwestern edge of the Monterey Peninsula between the cities of Carmel, Pacific Grove and Monterey (**Figure 2-1**). Bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west, Monterey Bay to the north, and Carmel Bay to the south, the Monterey Peninsula consists of approximately 10 square miles of coastal lands and forested hills. The Monterey Peninsula is known for its coastal scenery and has long been a tourist and visitor destination. To the south and east, coastal mountain peaks reaching approximately 3,000 feet in elevation provide a backdrop for the Monterey Peninsula landscape. The area's natural features include varied and rugged topography, coastal panoramas, and forested slopes and ridgelines. Although much of the Peninsula is urbanized, its coastline is devoted primarily to open space and recreational uses. Several scenic routes extend through the Monterey Peninsula, including SR 68, SR 1 and 17-Mile Drive.

The public gains access to Pebble Beach at one of the gates by paying an entry fee. In addition to golf resorts and associated commercial uses, there is substantial medium- and low-density residential

development within Pebble Beach. The existing development pattern is found amid stands of pine, cypress, and oak trees, as well as near riparian corridors, open meadows, and dunes. In wooded areas, understory vegetation and tree cover vary from fairly sparse to quite dense. Large undeveloped portions near the Project site include the SFB Morse Botanical Preserve and the Huckleberry Hill Natural Habitat Area.

Del Monte Neighborhood (Pacific Grove)

The Project site is adjacent to the Del Monte Neighborhood which is within the City of Pacific Grove. The neighborhood consists of single-family residential development. Houses are a mix of single-story and two-story homes including several two-story houses adjacent to the project site. The streets within the neighborhood are relatively narrow and usually tree-lined without sidewalks. Many backyards and some side yards also contain mature trees. Houses are relatively close together and the street blocks adjacent to the project site have approximately 5 to 7 housing units per acre.

Project Site Visual Character

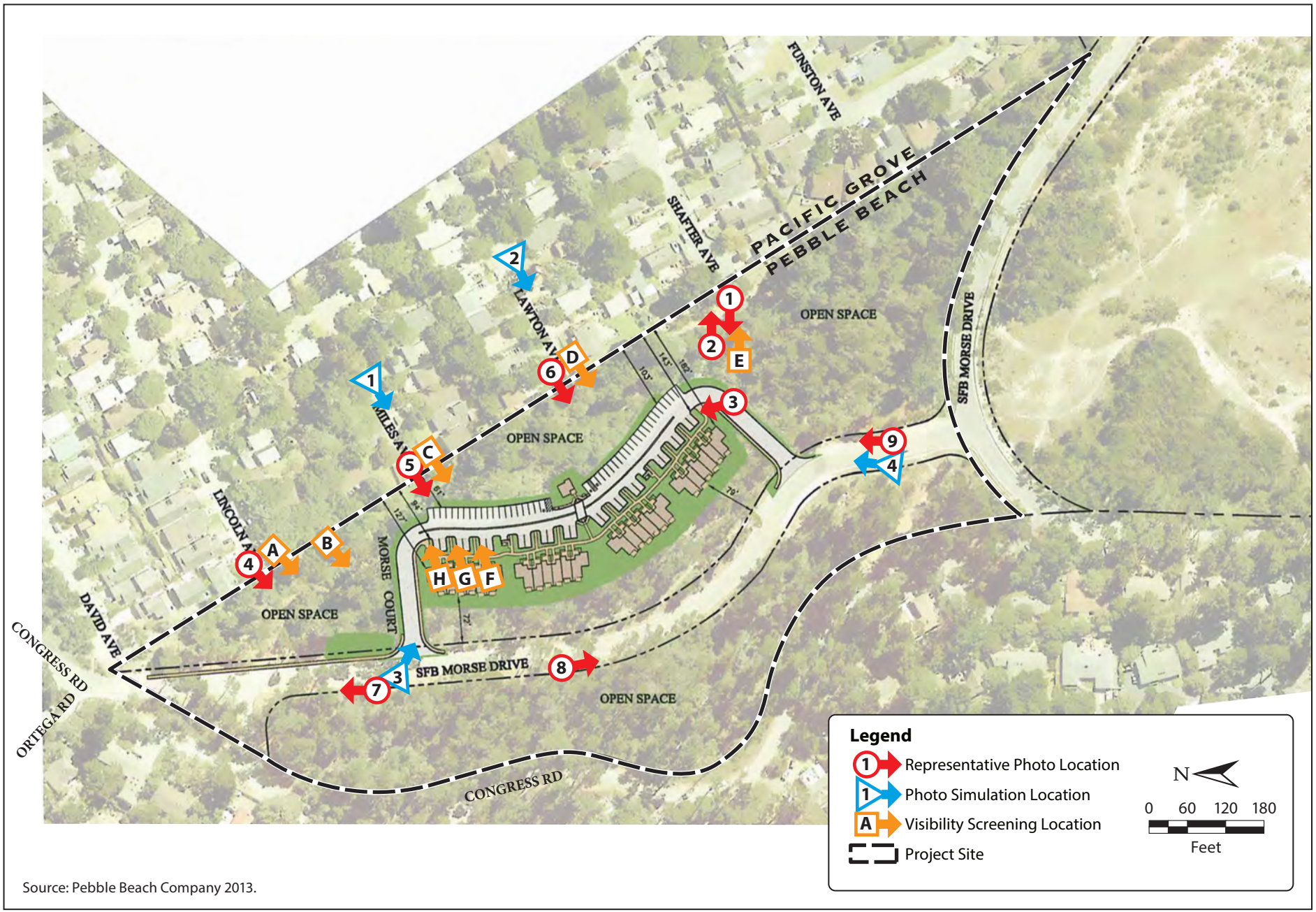
The Project site is located on the northeastern edge of Pebble Beach, adjacent to the City of Pacific Grove. SFB Morse Drive bisects the Project site (**Figures 2-2** and **2-3**). As indicated in the representative photographs (**Figures 3.1-1** through **3.1-4**), substantial portions of the Project vicinity are forested. As described in the *Regulatory Setting* section, the Project site is not located in or directly adjacent to any designated visually sensitive areas in local, state, or federal plans (Monterey County 2010).

This section references eight photographs that provide a general sense of the existing visual conditions of the Project site and vicinity. **Figure 3.1-1** identifies the photo viewpoint and simulation locations in relation to the Project site. Numbers on the map in **Figure 3.1-1** correspond with the photographs and simulations shown in **Figures 3.1-2** through **3.1-11**, which are described in this *Environmental Setting* and in the *Impact Analysis*.

The Project site is forested with Monterey pine and coast live oak. As indicated in **Appendix B,** *Tree Resource Assessment/Arborist Report*, the forest here is considered to be degraded. The forested site has a fairly open canopy that allows for sunlight to penetrate through the canopy to the forest floor, patterning the forest floor with light and shadow. The forest floor does not have a dense understory and is sandy, vegetated with ruderal grasses, and scattered with tree litter (e.g., leaf litter, cones, and bark). Trees ranging in health are readily visible within the forest interior and along the forest edges. Thus, viewers see healthy trees, declining and dying trees, snags, and fallen trees (see **Figure 3.1-2**, Photo 1).

Views of the forest interior are available from unofficial "social" trails traversing the Project site. Other features along the unofficial trails include a dirt bike trail with ramps and a teepee fort made of tree logs and branches (see **Figure 3.1-2**, Photos 2 and 3).

Edge views of the forest are available from the ends of David, Lincoln, Miles, Lawton, and Shafter Avenues that border the Project site to the east; to residents located at the west end of these street; and to roadway users on SFB Morse Drive. Views of the interior of the site are filtered through the forest, and viewers have to focus past the forest's edge and through the stand of trees for interior views (see **Figure 3.1-2**, Photo 4). Even closer views and views that are a short distance up from the west end of David, Lincoln, Miles, Lawton, and Shafter Avenues can become obscured because tree



Source: Pebble Beach Company 2013.

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-25-2015)

Figure 3.1-1
Photo Locations

1. Looking west from a trail near Shafter Avenue toward the forest and Project.

2. Looking east from the forest interior toward the dirt bike trail.

3. Looking north from an interior trail toward the log teepee and Project.

4. Looking west from the end of Lincoln Avenue toward the forest.

Graphics ... 00384.14 (10-8-2014)

Figure 3.1-2
Representative Photographs

5. Looking west from the end of Miles Avenue toward the forest and Project.

6. Looking west from the end of Lawton Avenue toward the forest and Project.

7. Looking north from SFB Morse Drive toward the roadway curve and forest buffer area.

8. Looking south from SFB Morse Drive toward the roadway curve and forest buffer area.

Graphics ... 00384.14 (10-8-2014)

Figure 3.1-3
Representative Photographs

9. Looking north from SFB Morse Drive toward the Project's south entrance.

Graphics … 00384.14 (2-25-2015)

Figure 3.1-4
Representative Photographs

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-25-15) tm

Figure 3.1-5
Simulation 1: Existing View and Simulated Conditions from Miles Avenue

A. Looking west from the end of Lincoln Avenue toward the car on SFB Morse Drive.

B. Looking west between the ends of Lincoln and Miles Avenues toward the car on SFB Morse Drive.

C. Looking west from the end of Miles Avenue toward the car on SFB Morse Drive.

D. Looking west from the end of Lawton Avenue toward SFB Morse Drive (car not visible).

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-25-2015)

Figure 3.1-6
Visibility Screening Evaluation

E. Looking east from the forest interior toward a residence at the end of Shafter Avenue.

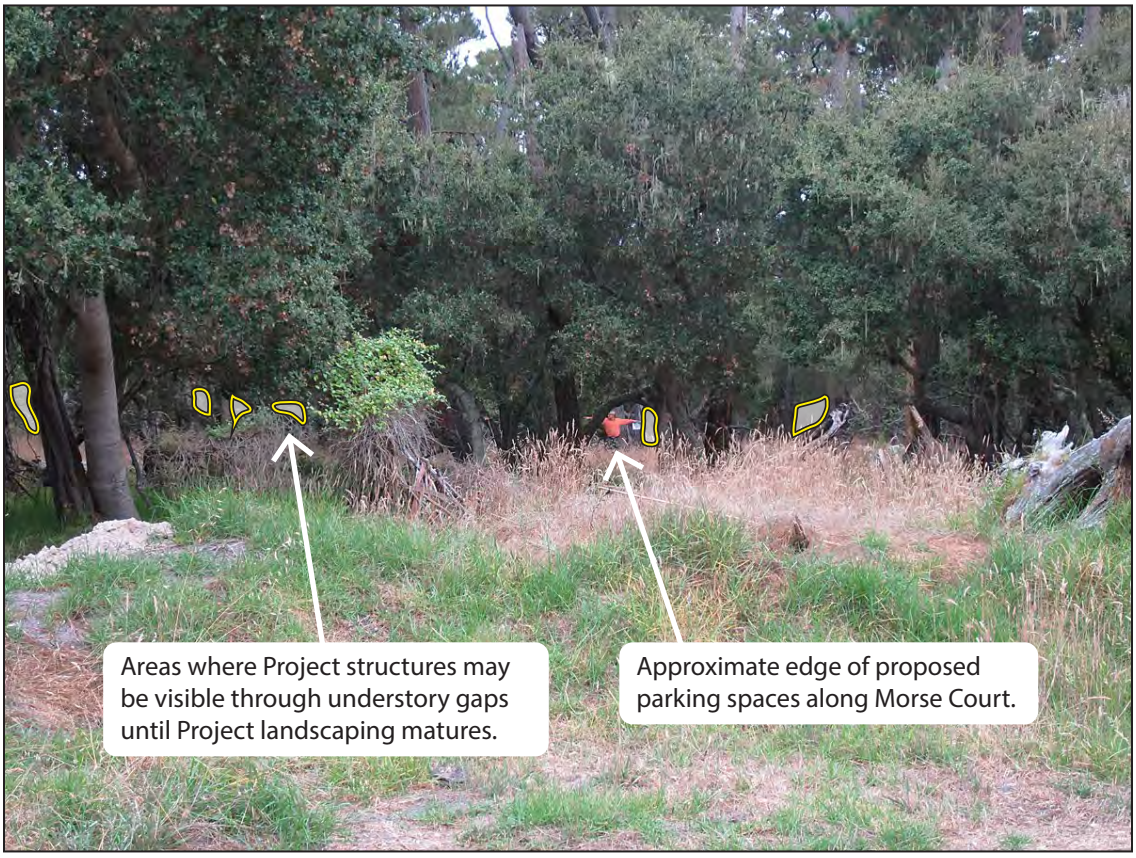
F. Looking east from the forest interior toward residences at the end of Miles Avenue.

G. Looking east from the forest interior toward residences at the end of Miles Avenue.

H. Looking east from the forest interior toward residences at the end of Miles Avenue.

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-25-2015)

Figure 3.1-7
Visibility Screening Evaluation



Graphics . . . 00384.14 (2-25-15)

Figure 3.1-8
Project Boundary Approximation

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-25-15) tm

Figure 3.1-9
Simulation 2: Existing View and Simulated Conditions from Lawton Avenue

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-26-15) tm

Figure 3.1-10
Simulation 3: Existing View and Simulated Conditions from SFB Morse Drive at North Entrance

Graphics ... 00384.14 (2-26-15) tm

Figure 3.1-11
Simulation 4: Existing View and Simulated Conditions from SFB Morse Drive at South Entrance

trunks and canopy create dark shadows that limit views beyond the outermost forest edge (see **Figure 3.1-3**, Photos 5 and 6).

Views of the forested Project site are available to roadway users on SFB Morse Drive, which extends north-south through the Project site. SFB Morse Drive curves and has a slight decline as it travels from north to south (see **Figure 3.1-3**, Photos 7 and 8). On the east side of SFB Morse Drive where the proposed residential development would be located, the Project site slopes upward from the edge of the roadway near where the decline starts, creating a berm that gradually gets taller and then meets existing grade again near the last bend before the SFB Morse Drive/Congress Road intersection (see **Figure 3.1-4**, Photo 9). Where taller, this berm limits views of the Project site from SFB Morse Drive. Extremely limited views of the Project site are available from Congress Road and from the portion of SFB Morse Drive that travels east-west, near the Project site. These views are filtered through existing forested lands along these roadways, and views of the Project site are primarily seen with a focused effort to locate such views. Views that can be seen consist of slither views of SFB Morse Drive and the western edge of the forested Project site along this roadway. Interior views of the Project site are not available from vantages along Congress Road and the portion of SFB Morse Drive that travels east-west.

Views of the Project site are not available to the public outside of the immediate Project vicinity because existing intervening vegetation, topography, and development screen and preclude such views. This intervening vegetation, topography, and development also preclude views of the Project site in any vistas or visually sensitive views. The Project site is not visible from the coast or scenic roadways such as SR 1, SR 68, and 17-Mile Drive.

The visual character of the Project site is defined by the Monterey pine forest that dominates the visual experience for people located adjacent to the Project site, using the unofficial trails within the Project site, and traveling on SFB Morse Drive through the Project site. The vividness of the site is moderate because, although the forest is a visual amenity, it is declining in health and is visually degraded compared with other portions of the forest on the Monterey Peninsula (refer to the *Tree Resource Assessment/Arborist Report* in **Appendix B)**. Because of the predominance of dead, dying and fallen trees, the forested land on the Project site is less unified and intact than are healthier portions of the forest on the Peninsula. Also, although the forest exhibits human manipulation (e.g., unofficial trails, bike jumps, debris), it lacks anthropogenic features that are made of resources found outside of the forest. Therefore, the intactness and unity are also moderate. The overall existing visual quality of the Project site is considered moderate.

Viewers

While the forest on the Project site can be considered degraded when compared with healthier forests elsewhere, it provides a visual amenity for nearby residents and provides a visual buffer from SFB Morse Drive. In addition, residents use the unofficial trails extending through and along the perimeter of the privately owned Project site. Residents are also likely to use local streets for recreational activities such as walking, biking, and running. Therefore, both residential and recreational viewers would have a high sense of ownership of views associated with the Project site and would be highly sensitive to visual changes at the Project site. Roadway users within the Project vicinity would have moderately low sensitivity to visual changes at the Project site because, although these viewers are focused on the roadway and on driving, they are likely local to the area and very familiar with existing conditions along SFB Morse Drive and at the ends of David, Lincoln, Miles, Lawton, and Shafter Avenues.

Impacts Analysis

Methodology

Approach

To document the visual changes that would be caused by the Project, computer-generated visual simulations were produced using digitized photographs, and computer modeling and rendering techniques. The simulations illustrate the Project from four locations. Simulation vantage points were selected to provide representative public views from which specific Project elements would be most visible, particularly from the adjacent residential area. Simulations from adjacent streets in the Del Monte neighborhood include both mid-block views (which show more of the canopy removal but don't show any visible elements through the understory) and a view from the end of Miles Avenue (which shows visible elements through the understory but does not show the canopy removal effects). Refer to **Figure 3.1-5** and **Figures 3.1-9 through 3.1-11**.

Table 3.1-2 summarizes the visual simulation viewpoints. The simulations are the result of an analytical and computer modeling process and are accurate within the constraints of the available site and Project data.

The visual impact assessment is based on evaluation of the changes to the existing visual resources that would result from construction and operation of the Project. These changes were assessed, in part, by evaluating the "after" views provided by the visual simulations and comparing them with the existing visual environment. The following factors were considered in determining the extent and implications of the visual changes.

- The specific changes in the affected visual environment's composition, its character, and any specially valued qualities.
- The affected visual environment's context.
- The extent to which the affected environment contains places or features that have been designated in plans and policies for protection or special consideration.
- The relative numbers of viewers, their activities, and the extent to which these activities are related to the aesthetic qualities affected by the expected changes.

Table 3.1-2. Summary of Project Visual Simulation Viewpoints

Figure	Simulation	Viewing Location
3.1-5	1	Approximately 185 feet east of the Miles Avenue terminus, looking west toward the Project
3.1-9	2	Approximately 275 feet east of the Lawton Avenue terminus, looking west toward the Project
3.1-10	3	SFB Morse Drive, 650 feet south of Congress Road, looking east toward the Project north entrance
3.1-11	4	SFB Morse Drive, 150 feet north of the portion of Morse Drive that travels east-west, looking north toward the Project south entrance

Criteria for Determining Significance

In accordance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, Monterey County plans and policies, and agency and professional standards, a project impact would be considered significant if the Project would result in any of the following conditions.

A. Scenic Vistas and Corridors

- Substantial adverse effects on a scenic vista, public viewing area, or view corridor, including obstructing, obscuring, or affecting any of the following:
  - Public vista views.
  - "Visually sensitive" areas (as identified in the GMPAP, Figure 14).
  - Scenic resources, including trees, rock outcrops, or historic buildings along a scenic highway or county-designated scenic roadway, such as the SR1, SR 68, and 17-Mile Drive roadway corridors.

B. Visual Character

- Substantial degradation of the existing visual character, or quality, of the site or surrounding area, new ridgeline development, or incompatibility with the development scale and style of the surrounding area.
- Result in long-term (that is, persisting for 2 years or more) adverse visual changes or contrasts to the existing landscape as viewed from areas with high visual sensitivity.

C. Light and Glare

- Creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would affect daytime or nighttime views or activities in the area, or pose a nuisance, including ambient nighttime illumination levels that would be increased beyond the property line, or use of highly reflective building materials.

Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

A. Scenic Vistas and Corridors

Impact AES-A1: The Project could have substantial adverse visual effects on public viewing in or near "visually prominent" areas identified in the GMPAP or within scenic route corridors, including 17-Mile Drive. (No Impact)

Scenic routes extending through or adjacent to Pebble Beach include SR 1 located 2 miles southeast of the Project site, SR 68 located 0.4 mile east of the Project site, and 17-Mile Drive located 0.5 mile northwest of the Project site. The Project site does not fall within any scenic vistas or scenic highway corridors identified by the County in Figure 14 of the GMPAP. Views to the Project site are not available from any of these nearby roadways because distance and existing intervening vegetation, topography, and development prevent views of the Project site and Project features. This intervening vegetation, topography, and development also ensure that views of the Project would not be visible in or alter any vistas or visually sensitive views. As noted above, there are no designated scenic vistas or corridors in the adjacent portions of the City of Pacific Grove in the City's

General Plan. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on existing designated scenic vistas and corridors.

B. Visual Character

Impact AES-B1: The Project could degrade the visual character and quality of the Project site. (Less than significant with mitigation)

Construction

Construction traffic would access the site via SFB Morse Drive and would be visible to roadway users on that roadway near the Project site. Construction activities would occur from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, with no construction on Sundays or national holidays. It is estimated that construction would take approximately 15 months to complete.

Construction activities would introduce heavy equipment and associated vehicles into the viewshed of residential and recreational viewers, in addition to roadways users. While these viewers are accustomed to seeing heavy machinery related with construction associated with roadway improvements and development projects in the larger vicinity and region, they are likely not accustomed to seeing construction near this location.

Construction of the Project would create temporary changes in views of and from the Project site over the course of development. However, many construction activities would be obscured by the remaining existing trees located on the Project site's edges and in areas outside of the Project site. Topography would also obscure some portions of the development site for roadway users on SFB Morse Drive. Construction activities would also be shielded by a chain-link fence with attached green screening.

Temporary visual impacts from construction would be less than significant because existing trees along the development site's edge would provide a visual buffer between many construction activities and residents, trees and terrain would provide a visual buffer between many construction activities and roadway users, and construction would be temporary, lasting approximately 15 months.

Operation

Once built, views of the Project would be distant or mostly obscured by intervening vegetation. Many locations within the Project vicinity do not have views of the Project site because existing intervening vegetation, topography, and development prevent and screen views of the Project site.

Views of the completed Project would be primarily visible within the immediate Project vicinity, potentially from the western ends of David, Lincoln, Miles, Lawton, and Shafter Avenues that border the site; from residences located at the very ends of these streets; and to roadway users on SFB Morse Drive. Views would also be present from the interior of the Project site. Project features that have the potential to be visible from public vantages include: four, two-story buildings that would be up to 22 feet and 11 inches high; the 431-square-foot, one-story manager's office building; 24 covered parking spaces under 12 freestanding carports; 43 uncovered parking spaces; ingress and egress driveways from SFB Morse Drive; and proposed landscaping. Tree removal would also be visible and would create gaps where buildings and the carports could be more visible. Refer to **Table 2-1** and **Figures 2-4** and **2-5** for the site plan and elevation plan.

The buildings would be located in the interior portion of the Project site and set back from the site boundaries (**Figure 3.1-1**). The closest new building would be approximately 126 feet from the eastern boundary (where the residences in Pacific Grove are located) and approximately 71 feet from SFB Morse Drive (**Figure 2-3**). The parking spaces would be located between the residential buildings and the forested setback and residences to the east. The forest located within these setback areas would remain largely untouched, except for hazard tree removal and defensive space pruning directly west of the new residential units, and would screen the Project.

The Project would remove 135 Monterey pine trees and 590 oak trees, largely within and around the edges of the development site. Tree removal would open up the forest canopy and increase the potential for available views of the Project. Locating the residential structures in the interior of the site, away from existing residential viewers, would provide distance between existing viewers and the buildings. As shown in **Figure 2-6**, landscaping that includes trees, grasses, and shrubs around the perimeter of the development and within the areas between the residential buildings would provide visual buffers and screening for the Project, reducing the potential for and limiting the amount of visible Project features to be seen by existing viewers. Many of the trees planted would be evergreen, allowing for year-round shade and visual screening of the Project. Other trees would be broadleaf canopy trees or ornamental accent trees that would also help to provide visual screening.

Miles and Lawton Avenues are the roadways that align with the development site, whereas Lincoln and Shafter Avenues align past the edges of the development site (see **Figure 3.1-1**). Therefore, it is more likely that there would be public and private views of the new residential development site from Miles and Lawton Avenues, whereas public and private views from Lincoln and Shafter Avenues would be of the forest buffer outside of the development site.

As seen in **Figure 3.1-5**, *Simulation 1*, mid-block views from Miles Avenue would not be greatly affected. The forest buffer area and landscape plantings around the edges of the new development would screen views of the project buildings. The simulations reflect landscape plantings around the Project site that are 2 to 3 years old, consistent with long-term project impacts; however, portions of the building façades and roofs could be visible through gaps in the forest when the Project is first constructed.

The potential visibility of building façades and roofs through gaps in the forest is illustrated by the photo examples shown in **Figures 3.1-6** and **3.1-7** that were used to facilitate a screening evaluation of visibility associated with the Project site. Photos A through D in these figures show how the understory of the existing forest varies from being more open to denser, and how this allows for a varying degree of visibility through the understory.

These photos also help to establish how coloring of objects can affect the visibility of a feature in this particular landscape. In Photos A and B (**Figure 3.1-6**), the understory is not as dense; and while tree trunks screen portions of the car on SFB Morse Drive, the car is still quite visible because the white color draws attention toward it. Similarly, lighter colored portions of the buildings associated with the Project would be more visible against the darker coloring of the forest and thus allow views through the gaps to be more apparent. Photo C (**Figure 3.1-6**) shows that even a white or light colored car or object would be barely visible the denser the understory becomes, to not being visible at all, as seen in Photo D (**Figure 3.1-6**). Photo E (**Figure 3.1-7**) shows that buildings can be seen where gaps exist, but the understory can limit visible features to a high degree from even a short distance away. It also shows that lighter colored buildings are more apparent against more natural greens, browns, and grays. Photos F, G, and H (**Figure 3.1-7**) are in very close proximity to one

another and show slightly different angles looking towards the same general area near the end of Miles Street. These three pictures show how tree trunks act to obscure large portions of the fences and homes, even though the understory is somewhat open. They also show how lighter or brighter colored materials (e.g., the newer wood fence in Photo F) do not recede into the visual landscape as much as darker colors (e.g., the weathered wood fence in Photo H).

Additionally, **Figure 3.1-8** illustrates a view from the end of Miles Avenue that is in close proximity to the location of Photo C (**Figure 3.1-6**). The photo in **Figure 3.1-8** was taken in August 2014, and the person in orange indicates the approximate edge of the proposed parking spaces along Morse Court. This photo shows how visibility through the understory can vary during different weather conditions (sunny versus overcast) and during different times of day because the sun is at different angles, changing the amount of shade and shadows present. In addition, while gaps are present that would allow for the buildings to be visible until landscaping matures, this photo also shows that the understory still effectively creates screening to more interior views of the site and prevents views of SFB Morse Drive at this location.

Tree removal associated with the Project would open up the understory within the development footprint. However, only a few residences directly border the forest, and the majority are set back from the forest edge and are surrounded by wood fencing that prevents eye level views beyond back and side yards. In addition, the Project's residential buildings would not be visible over the forest canopy because they would be shorter than the surrounding tree line that is generally at least 30 feet high.

Figure 2-5 illustrates that large portions of the buildings' exterior surfaces include areas of sided façades and shingled roofs. As described in Chapter 2, *Project Descriptio*n, proposed coloring for the Project includes medium gray siding and dark gray shingles. Metal deck railings and aluminum trim associated with windows and sliding doors would also be medium to dark gray, and portions of the patio fencing would be sided to match the buildings' façade. The medium to dark coloring used on these features would help these elements to somewhat blend with the natural setting and recede into views compared to very light colors. Portions of the façade and patio fencing would receive plaster cement that would be light to medium gray. Sand or beige colored accents would be used for smaller design details like exterior fascia, trim, gutters, downspouts, and roof eaves. While lighter, these elements would receive partial shading from eaves, building extrusions (e.g., deck storage areas and kitchens), and from the buildings because of the staggered layout (refer to **Figures 2-5** and **2-6**).

Glare could also make light colored surfaces appear brighter. Glare from exposed surfaces is generally highest during the morning and evening when lower sun angles more directly hit exposed surfaces that face east (morning exposure) and west (evening exposure). The surrounding existing tree canopy would cast longer shadows on the buildings in the morning and evening when sun angles are lower, shading lighter colored areas, making them appear to be darker in color, and reduce the reflectivity and brightness - thus the visibility - of these surfaces. However, while the dark gray roofs complement the dark grays of the forest, as seen in **Figure 3.1-5**, *Simulation 1,* and **Figure 3.1-9**, *Simulation 2*, the medium gray and sandy-toned colors in the palette would still stand out against the forest canopy that is predominantly comprised of green tones. Therefore, portions of the buildings with medium gray and sandy-toned colors would be more visible where gaps are present, as earlier illustrated in **Figure 3.1-8**, even if these surfaces are shaded.

Mitigation Measure BIO-A1, *Develop and implement one site-specific resource management plan for the Project's open space preservation area*, is required to reduce impacts to biological resources, but it also would reduce visual impacts by closing and revegetating some of the unofficial trails created by human disturbance. This would provide additional visual screening for the Project by filling in open gaps that these trails create (refer to Section 3.3, *Biological Resources*). **Mitigation Measure AES-B1** would supplement Mitigation Measure BIO-A1 by further infilling forest gaps with native shrubs to place visual buffers in closer proximity to affected viewers and to better screen views of the Project until Project landscaping matures, greatly reducing project impacts.

After 2 to 3 years of growth, when the landscape plantings are more mature, the primary visual change that would be evident from Miles Avenue would be a reduced height in the forest tree line from tree removal that would reveal more sky, as seen in **Figure 3.1-5**, *Simulation 1*. Views of the new buildings from the end of Miles Avenue and from residences would also be greatly obscured once landscape plantings mature. Therefore, the visual character of this view would not be substantially altered by these visual changes compared to existing conditions, once plantings mature within 2-3 years.

Visual changes resulting from tree removal and alterations in the tree line would be less apparent from mid-block locations along Lawton Avenue, as seen in **Figure 3.1-9**, *Simulation 2*. From this vantage point, the forest canopy would be slightly thinned, but tree line height changes would not be very noticeable because the tall tree at the end of the street screens these changes. The Project's residential buildings could be more visually apparent through gaps in the forest after Project completion, depending on the viewing location, but such views would become obscured once landscape plantings surrounding the new development mature.

Visual changes resulting from the Project would be most apparent from SFB Morse Drive. Although SFB Morse Drive and other roads within the Pebble Beach gates are privately owned and maintained, they are open to the public with a fee at the gates. As seen in **Figure 3.1-10**, *Simulation 3*, the development's north entrance provides an open view corridor to the Project. The open forest canopy would be much more noticeable, and the buildings would be clearly visible. However, only a portion (about half) of Building 1 would be readily visible, and the roof of the rest of the building would be barely visible. Buildings 2 through 4 would not be visible from this location.

The landscape plantings, also shown to be 2 to 3 years old in Simulations 3 and 4, would partially screen views of lower portions of Building 1. The building would prevent views of the parking areas and manager's office, beyond. The lighter coloring would make the building stand out more, whereas the darker roofs would blend better with the colors of the surrounding forest. Implementing **Mitigation Measure AES-B1** would create interim screening until Project landscaping matures.

The Project would change views from this location from forested to developed, which could be perceived as a negative change. Public views of the development near the south entrance would be less pronounced, as seen in **Figure 3.1-11**, *Simulation 4*. From this vantage point, the upper portions and roofline of Building 4 would be most visible. The roof of the southernmost unit in Building 3 would be slightly visible, but would appear to be a continuation of Building 4's roofline. Tree removal would also open up the tree canopy and allow for more visible sky in this view.

The views presented in Simulations 3 and 4 (**Figures 3.1-10** and **3.1-11**, respectively) would be visible to roadway users passing by the development entrances, allowing for brief interior views of the development and views of the edges of the Project that are in passing. There are no fixed viewing locations opposite these entrances, and views of the Project from the rest of SFB Morse Drive would

be similar to those described for Miles and Lawton Avenues. Lighter colored buildings would be visible against the darker coloring of the forest, making the buildings more visually apparent through gaps in the forest after Project completion, depending on the viewing location along SFB Morse Drive. Such views would become mostly obscured once landscape plantings surrounding the new development mature. In addition, the incline along SFB Morse Drive would act to screen views of the Project seen by roadway users. Residents along Congress Road would not likely see the development because the Project site's forested buffer along SFB Morse Drive and the existing forest between SFB Morse Drive and Congress Road would screen views.

New infrastructure on the Project site would include water and sewer lines, storm drains, and telecommunication lines. These all would be installed underground, and the surface would be paved, repaved, revegetated, or incorporated into the proposed development. Because they would be located underground, these infrastructure improvements would result in no impact on existing visual character. The stormwater retention basin, located north of Morse Court, would require some tree removal, altering views from SFB Morse. However, as described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the basin would be vegetated with grasses (not paved), landscaping would be installed along the perimeter between the roadway and driveway, and there would be no fencing around the basin). Landscaping along SFB Morse Drive would screen views of the basin from roadway users.

Surrounding development consists of one- and two-story single family housing. While the project would include multi-family housing at a higher density than surrounding areas, the project would nominally have 9 units per acre, compared to the adjacent Pacific Grove neighborhood with 5 to 7 housing units per acre and nearby Pebble Beach neighborhoods with lower densities. As discussed above, views of the project would be mostly obscured from adjacent neighborhoods in Pacific Grove and not visible from neighborhoods in Pebble Beach, and thus would not introduce an inconsistent intensity of development wherein one would view the new housing directly adjacent to areas of lesser density. In addition, the project would only be up to two stories high, which is consistent in terms of height with surrounding areas where two story houses are a common element. Although more dense than surrounding areas, given the visual buffering of intervening vegetation and new landscaping, the different development scale and massing is considered a less than significant visual aesthetic impact.

The visual character and the quality of the Project site would be degraded slightly because it would alter a portion of the site from a forest to residential development. Roadway users would have moderately low sensitivity to visual changes at the Project site, because they would pass quickly by the site and only have limited glimpses of the Project. Therefore, roadway users would not be greatly affected. While private residential viewers and recreational viewers on roadways would be more sensitive to visual changes, existing vegetation and project landscaping around the development site would help screen views of the Project. Therefore, sensitive viewers would have a very limited view of the Project, and it would not result in a substantial degradation of the site's visual character and quality.

This impact would be less than significant with implementation of **Mitigation Measure AES-B1**.

Mitigation Measure AES-B1: Incorporate native infill plantings in areas outside of the development footprint.

Prior to Project construction, the applicant shall incorporate native infill plantings into the Project landscaping plans around the development footprint to maximize screening of public views from roadways. Additional native shrubs shall be placed in the following areas: 1) west of the development site, between SFB Morse Drive and the new buildings (but not in a manner that blocks vehicular line of site at the driveways), and 2) east of the development site, between the Pacific Grove/Pebble Beach boundary and the development footprint where gaps allow for infill plantings. Evergreen species such as shaggy-barked manzanita (*Arctostaphylos tomentosa* subsp. *tomentosa*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), California coffeeberry (*Frangula californica* subsp. *californica*), and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) shall be used. Plants shall be spaced irregularly so that the plantings appear compatible with the existing vegetation in this area, yet at a density that shall ensure effective understory screening. The specific plant species, location and distance apart will be determined in coordination with and approved by the Project biologist and landscape architect analyst, who will sign the plans or approve in memorandum format. It is estimated that there could be 20-50 new native shrubs placed 5 to 10 feet apart depending on the species. Under no circumstances shall any invasive plant species be used at any location. In addition, this measure shall conform to the standards set forth for the 30-foot Lean, Clean and Green Zone and the 70-foot Reduced Fuel Zone established in the Preliminary Fuel Management Plan.

The applicant shall be responsible for maintaining and monitoring the infill plantings during the plant establishment period set forth in the resource management plan developed for the Project (refer to **Mitigation Measure BIO-A1**, Develop and implement one site-specific resource management plan for the Project's open space preservation area). For a minimum of 20 years after Project construction, the applicant shall submit an annual monitoring report documenting the implementation of this measure.

Mitigation Monitoring: Prior to issuing the first construction permit, Monterey County RMA-Planning will review and approve the final landscape plans. After construction and prior to occupancy, the Monterey County RMA-Planning or a qualified landscape architect on the County's behalf will visit the site to ensure the landscaping has been planted in accordance with the approved landscape plans. After occupancy, Monterey County RMA-Planning will review the applicant's annual monitoring report documenting the implementation of this measure for 20 years.

C. Light and Glare

Impact AES-C1: The Project would introduce new sources of light and glare at the Project site, which could adversely affect nighttime views or activities in the area. (Less than significant)

Construction of the Project would occur from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Therefore, nighttime lighting would not be required during construction.

Once constructed, lighter colored portions of the buildings would increase reflective glare associated with the Project site. However, as described in the discussion for Impact AES-B1, these elements would receive partial shading from eaves, building extrusions (e.g., deck storage areas and kitchens), and from the buildings because of the staggered layout (refer to **Figures 2-5** and **2-6**). Glare off of exposed surfaces is generally highest during the morning and evening when lower sun angles more

directly hit exposed surfaces that face east (morning exposure) and west (evening exposure). However, the surrounding existing tree canopy would cast longer shadows on the buildings in the morning and evening when sun angles are lower, shading lighter colored areas, making them appear to be darker in color and reducing the reflectivity and brightness of these surfaces. In addition, Project landscaping would grow within 2 to 3 years to help further reduce glare, preventing long-term impacts. Therefore, it is expected that the proposed medium gray and sandy-toned color palette would be sufficient in helping to reduce glare associated with the buildings to a less than significant level.

Although not required to reduce this impact to a less than significant level, Mitigation Measure AES-B1 (described above) would aid in further reducing incidental reflective daytime glare by providing additional screening that would serve to buffer and screen any incidental glare resulting from building surfaces.

The medium-density residential development would introduce nighttime light sources. The primary sources of light and glare would be outdoor lighting in parking areas, security lighting around buildings, and internal light from new residences. These sources have the potential to increase ambient nighttime illumination levels beyond property lines, adversely affecting nighttime views for adjacent residents and roadway users. The Project would be required to implement the County's Condition of Approval for Lighting. PD014(A), *Lighting – Exterior Lighting Plan*, states that all exterior lighting shall be down-lit to light only the intended area and to further help control offsite glare. Refer to Chapter 2, *Project Description*, for the full text of PD014(A). Additionally, Project landscaping around the edges of the Project site and replacement tree plantings would help to infill forest gaps and reduce the potential for visible glare and offsite light spill. Therefore, new sources of light and reflective surfaces would be minimized, and the potential for nuisance light pollution and glare would be minimized.

This impact would be less than significant.