



Planning

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client:

Darren Hamblin

Willow Bend,

The Warren, Reading, RG4 7TQ

*Demolition of existing shed and erection of a new
hobby unit.*

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CIL | Enforcement | Land Promotion | Planning | Sequential Tests | Viability

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the demolition of the existing shed and the erection of a new hobby unit.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents prepared by TCB Architecture, Earth Environmental, Luscinia Ecology and LandArb:
 - Site Location Plan
 - Existing Plans and Elevations
 - Proposed Plans and Elevations
 - Preliminary Ecology Assessment
 - Biodiversity (BNG) Assessment and Metric
 - Drainage Information
 - Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is a small rectangular piece land which is currently used for leisure purposes.
- 2.2 The site has an existing boathouse immediately fronting the River Thames and an existing ancillary shed building located close to the roadside.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is predominately residential in nature.
- 2.4 Reading Train Station is located 1.8 KM to the south west, which provides onward train journeys to London and the wider south east. Henley-On-Thames is located c. 9.59 KM to the north east, Bracknell is located c. 17 KM to the east, the M4 to the south (c. 5.68 KM) and Pangbourne to the west (6.89 KM).
- 2.5 Access to the site is taken from The Warren.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Ref: 970290 - Two storey house - Withdrawn – 01.04.1997
- 3.2 Ref: 020675 - Application for a certificate of lawful existing use as a dwelling - Refused – 16.01.2003
- 3.3 Ref: 041373 - Application to determine that the use of a property as a dwellinghouse is lawful - Withdrawn – 07.02.05
- 3.4 Ref: 101823 - Retrospective application for the retention of raised timber wheelchair ramp and ancillary works replacing original stepped ramp (re-submission of 10/00842/FUL) - Refused – 10.03.11
- 3.5 Ref: 110461 - Retrospective application for retention of raised timber wheelchair ramp and ancillary works replacing original stepped

timber ramp. Amendment to application 10/01864/FUL. - Approved
– 05.09.11

- 3.6 Ref: 220530 - Certificate of Lawfulness for existing shed, ancillary to the boathouse – Withdrawn – 19.07.2022

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The existing use of the site is for recreational/leisure purposes, and this would remain the use of the site.
- 4.4 The use of the site would be for an individual’s own use and not to be used as a commercial business.
- 4.5 As such, permission is solely sought for the replacement of the built form as the use of the site is already established.
- 4.6 The proposed hobby unit would take the form of a new build shed used in connection with the existing recreational use of the site.

- 4.7 **Layout and Scale:** As part of the application, the existing shed and walkway will be demolished. In place, a new hobby unit will be erected in association with the existing leisure use of the site.
- 4.8 **Landscaping:** Existing landscaping measures would be preserved as part of the proposal. Additional measures can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 4.9 **Appearance:** The proposed hobby unit utilised a pitched roof with a glazed rear elevation that looks towards the river. The proposal would utilise sympathetic materials to the surrounding area – details of which can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 4.10 **Access & Parking:** Parking is provided by an existing driveway with space for 2 no. cars. A keypad-controlled gate then provides access into the site itself.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way” and “at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.

- 5.3 Paragraph 131 identifies that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”
- 5.4 **Principle of Development (including drainage, SuDS and Sustainable Development):** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material planning consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents are:
- Reading Borough Local Plan (**RLP**) (2019)
- 5.5 The site is located within the defined settlement boundary where the principle of new development is considered acceptable subject to accordance with other policies in the plan. In addition to this, the current use of the plot is for leisure purposes as confirmed in the officer report for application ref. 10/10864/FUL.
- 5.6 RLP Policy EN11 is of relevance to the proposal. The policy states that development in the vicinity of water-spaces will be acceptable where it is subject to a number of different requirements which will be detailed further below.
- 5.7 Point 1 says that development should look to provide appropriate, attractive uses and buildings that enhance the relationship of buildings, spaces and routes to the watercourse. The proposed development will create a high-quality hobby unit which will open the

site up for different water sports such as kayaking, paddleboarding etc through the creation of a high quality building that is purpose built for 21st Century leisure activities.

- 5.8 Point 2 states that proposals should have a positive impact on the character of waterside spaces. The existing building is limited in architectural design and the proposed building would introduce a high-quality building which is considered to have a positive impact on the character of the waterside.
- 5.9 Point 3 details the waterside proposals should feed into the important role that watercourses play including as landscape features and recreational spaces. Landscaping features can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.10 Research undertaken by VisitThames.co.uk shows that paddleboarding is one of the fastest growing recreational activities in the UK and how the River Thames is a key environment for this.
- 5.11 Alongside this activity, people are likely to require suitable equipment such as the paddleboard themselves, oars and other related items. Water recreational activities are naturally wide ranging including open water swimming, boating (including powered board, rafts, rowing etc) and others.
- 5.12 Many of these activities are informal, hobby activities whereby people undertake them on their own rather than in large groups. The proposed hobby room will provide a high-quality space in association with these activities – providing a secure space for the storage of items such as canoes, boat supplies, spare clothing etc.
- 5.13 The existing boat house would continue to be utilised as ancillary space to existing use of the site but would benefit from regular maintenance from the applicant – providing somewhere where

individuals using the space relax on the waterside whilst taking part in the activities. In the event of a grant of planning permission, a suitably worded condition to ensure the boat house and hobby unit are retained for leisure use can be imposed.

- 5.14 The site has an existing boat dock allowing individuals to moor their boat without any additional development being required, further emphasising the suitability of this site for continued leisure usage.
- 5.15 Point 4 states that proposals should be set back at least 10 metres from the watercourse wherever practicable and be appropriate to the biodiversity significance of the proposal site. The proposed development is located over 10 m away from the watercourse. A Biodiversity Net Gain Report is submitted alongside this application and proposes a number of measures to ensure the site respect the ecological qualities of the site. This also allows the proposal to accord with Point 5 of the policy.
- 5.16 Point 6 is not of relevance to this proposal.
- 5.17 Given the location of the site, drainage is a key consideration in the proposal. It is noted that the site is located in Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) and Flood Zone 3 (highest risk) of flooding – drainage documentation is submitted in support of this application and will be discussed further below. Notwithstanding this, Annex 3: Flood Risk vulnerability classification of the NPPF is considered a starting point when looking at this application.
- 5.18 This classifies various development types into their respective categories. The relevant category for this proposal is 'water compatible development' – this outlines that water-based recreation (excluding sleeping accommodation) falls within the is category.

- 5.19 Given the site is already in leisure use as evidenced from its planning history and is used by the applicant and their family to engage in such activities – the proposed development is considered to accord with the definition of water compatible development, further highlighting its acceptability.
- 5.20 Notwithstanding this, drainage remains a key consideration within the determination of this application. A drainage assessment by Earth Environmental is submitted in support of this application. The report details a number of mitigation measures that can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.21 The reports also details a comprehensive assessment of the site including the vulnerability of the site to flooding with the probability from flooding from all sources being low. These points are a key nexus through which **RLP Policy EN18** is viewed.
- 5.22 The policy states that development will be directed to areas that are at the lowest risk of flooding in the first instance following the sequential and exception test criteria set out in National policy.
- 5.23 Due to the proposed development being a water compatible use and being minor development, it is considered that neither a sequential or exception test are required as part of the proposal.
- 5.24 The policy goes on to detail that when development is located in an area of high risk it should seeks to incorporate flood resilience measures and use mitigation measures such as SuDS – as is detailed above and in the supporting drainage documentation – the proposal is considered to achieve this.
- 5.25 NPPF Paragraph 8 outlines the three interdependent aims of the planning system. NPPF Paragraph 8.a) outlines the economic objectives of the planning system. The applicant intends to use local

building firms in order to carry out the work. Given the importance of construction to the wider UK economy – ensuring local construction firms have sufficient pre-scheduled work in the face of difficult economic headwinds has the potential to lay the course for prosperity when economic difficulties subside.

- 5.26 NPPF Paragraph 8.b) outlines the social objectives of the planning system and that the planning system should seek to support factors such as the present and future health of communities. The proposed development would further enhance the leisure use of the plot and feed into this aim.
- 5.27 NPPF Paragraph 8.c) outlines the environmental objectives of the planning system. This outlines how proposal should utilise effective use of land. Given the plot is in existing leisure use, the proposal is considered to accord with this aim.
- 5.28 For the reasons detailed above, the proposed development is considered acceptable.
- 5.29 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** Some character matters with regard to the waterside nature of the development have been discussed above.
- 5.30 Notwithstanding, this **RLP Policy CC7** is of relevance to this proposal. This states that all development should be of high design quality, maintain and enhance the character of the area.
- 5.31 When assessing this, proposed development should seek to respond to a number of design principles including layout, scale, architectural detail etc. The proposed development has been sensitively designed in order to respect the character of the area.
- 5.32 Design cues from other structures on site such as the boathouse have been utilised in order to ensure the proposal assimilates in with the

existing design language of both the plot itself and the surrounding area which is character by structures that follow this design vernacular.

- 5.33 The existing structure is relatively limited in terms of its architectural contribution to the wider area whereas the proposed development is considered to provide a character betterment. In addition to this, the proposed unit is small scale and sits comfortably within the plot.
- 5.34 **Residential Amenity – Impact on Prospective Users:** The proposed development would create a new building that would support the applicant’s use of the site for leisure purposes.
- 5.35 The existing store on site is dilapidated and insecure – the new property would allow them to keep their leisure equipment on site without the anxiety that it could be stolen.
- 5.36 With improved security and a reduced need to take their leisure equipment back and forth to the site, the applicant would be able to more easily engage in their past times on the site as all the equipment would already be there – opening up further recreational opportunities on weekends or evenings, further benefitting both their physical and mental health.
- 5.37 **Residential Amenity – Impact on Prospective Neighbours:** The proposed development only relates to the built form. The site’s use for leisure purposes is already established. Notwithstanding this, the site would not be for a leisure/water recreation business – it would solely be for use by the applicant and their family.
- 5.38 As such, it is not considered that the proposed development would harmfully impact neighbouring residential amenity through the generation of noise etc over and above what could take place on the site at present.

- 5.39 **Trees and Landscaping:** A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment by LandArb is submitted alongside this application.
- 5.40 This discusses the impact of the proposal on the trees that line the site. A number of key points are detailed in the report which include points such as no trees will need to be removed in order to demolish the existing shed or walkway and that some canopies will need to be lifted/reduced as part of the proposal.
- 5.41 A number of other mitigation measures are proposed as part of the development which can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission. For the reasons detailed above, the proposed development is considered to accord with **RLP Policy EN14**.
- 5.42 **Transport and Parking:** The site has existing parking which is unlikely to be impacted by the proposed development. As such, this is likely to be acceptable.
- 5.43 **Cycle Provision:** Secure cycle stores can be secured via condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.44 **Refuse Provision:** A refuse store can be secured by condition in the event of grant of planning permission.
- 5.45 **Contamination:** The site is not known to be contaminated. If any concerns are raised, these can be dealt with via condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.46 **Archaeology:** The site is not known to lie in an area of archaeological potential. Any concerns can be addressed by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.

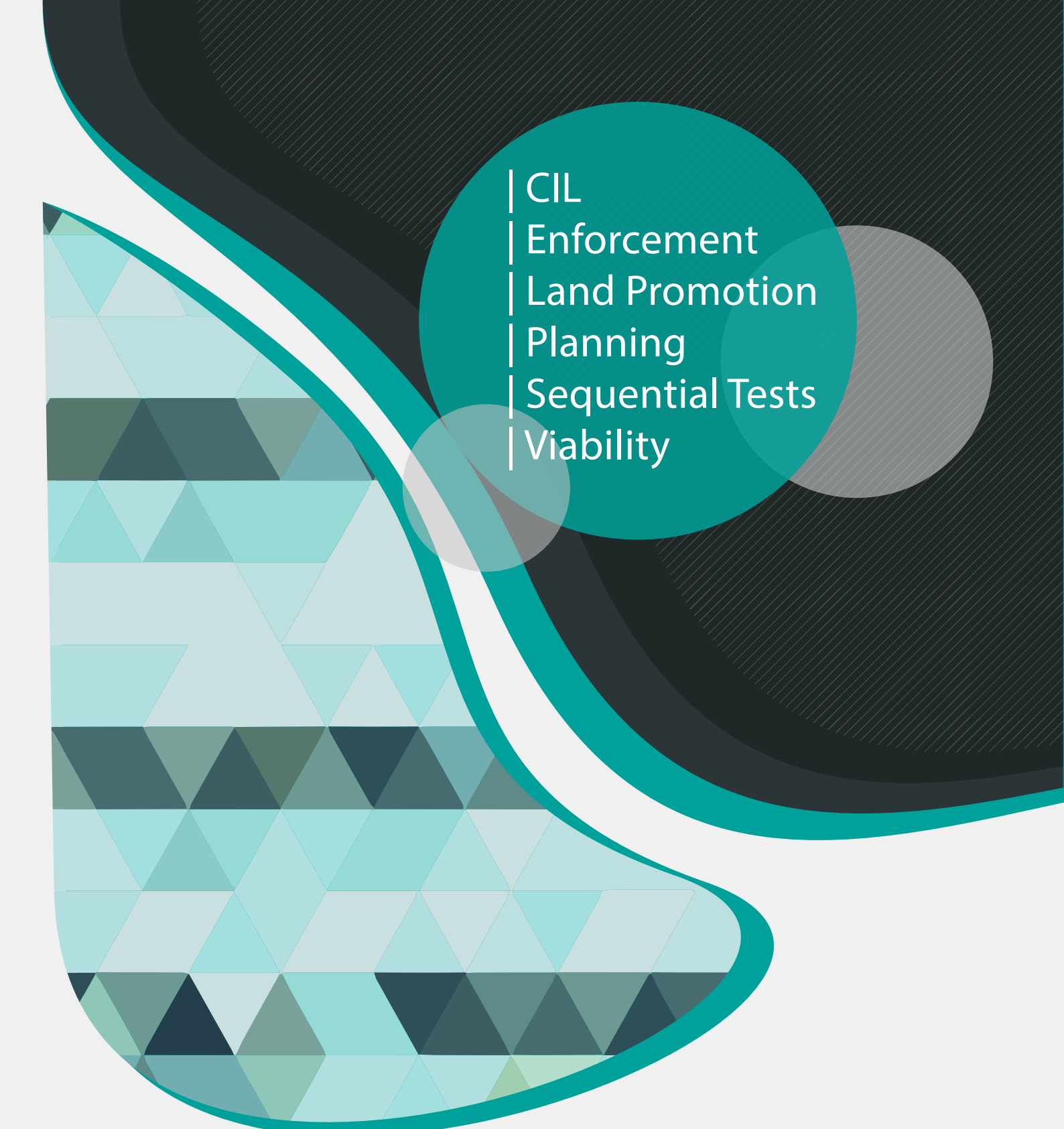
- 5.47 **Ecology:** A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG) by Luscinia Ecology are submitted in support of this application.
- 5.48 Considering the PEA firstly, this report sets out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the Proposed Development at the Site. A data search and ecological surveys have been completed to determine the proposed development's impact and inform the Proposed Development's iterative design, (including implementation of the Mitigation Hierarchy and the Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy), and to ensure the required ecological mitigation and compensation is embedded into the proposed development's design, or can be delivered via suitably worded planning conditions as part of this.
- 5.49 The Proposed Development avoids the loss of habitats of ecological importance as the Site is of negligible ecological importance, habitat loss is minimised, and offsite trees will be retained. The ecological impacts, and associated mitigation and compensation, associated with the Proposed Development are as follows:
- Mitigation measures to protect the nearby Local Wildlife Site and River Thames.
 - Mitigation measures to avoid pollution.
 - Pre-cautionary mitigation measures to avoid harm to protected and priority species, including bats, badgers, birds, hazel dormouse, hedgehog, and slow worms.
- 5.50 Enhancement measures have been set out within the PEA and can be secured via condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.51 The report concludes that no further survey work or assessment is required. A planning condition, securing the details set out within this report, should be imposed on any grant of planning permission.

- 5.52 A BNG Assessment and associated metric have also been submitted as part of this application. This shows that a 10.39% BNG is achieved on site but that the trading rules are not met due to the loss of bramble scrub which cannot be replaced within the proposed development.
- 5.53 As there are no hedgerows or watercourse units in the baseline, there is no requirement to provide a net gain in these units.
- 5.54 The required offset can be secured by condition or legal agreement through the purchase of credits in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.55 For the reasons detailed above, the proposed development is considered to accord with **RLP Policy EN12**.
- 5.56 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant forms have been submitted in support of this application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would constitute a high quality, water-compatible development that enhances the leisure use of the plot without detriment to other factors such as residential amenity or character of the area.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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