

LAND AT SOUTHVIEW FARM

Construction Ecological Management Plan

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Client: Coulston Estates
Ref: eg230014

29 June 2023

REVISION HISTORY

Document history and status

Rev.	Date	Purpose/ Status	File Ref	Author	Check	Review
01	29/06/23	For issue	eg230014.02	SR	MD	MD

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ABBREVIATIONS

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CEMP	Construction Ecological Management Plan
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
EcIA	Ecological Impact Assessment
ECoW	Ecological Clerk of Works
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MAGIC	Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Engain has been instructed by Coulston Estates (‘hereafter referred to as the ‘client’) to prepare a Construction Environmental Management Plan ‘Biodiversity’ (CEMP) for the Land at Southview Farm (hereafter referred to as the ‘site’).

1.2. The purpose of this document is to set out how wildlife will be protected during the site clearance and construction phase of the development.

1.3. The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing redundant stone buildings, the conversion of the existing Southview Farm building, and the construction of new offices and a shop.

1.4. The document will be updated once the programme of works has been finalised.

Site Description

1.5. The site is located at the south-eastern edge of Trowbridge, Wiltshire (**Figure 1**). The ordnance survey grid reference for the centre of the site is ST 85979 56814.

1.6. The site is 0.42 hectares (ha) in area and comprises the Grade II listed Southview Farmhouse building, a domestic garage, two redundant stone stables, unmanaged grassland, and a mix of bramble and scrub.

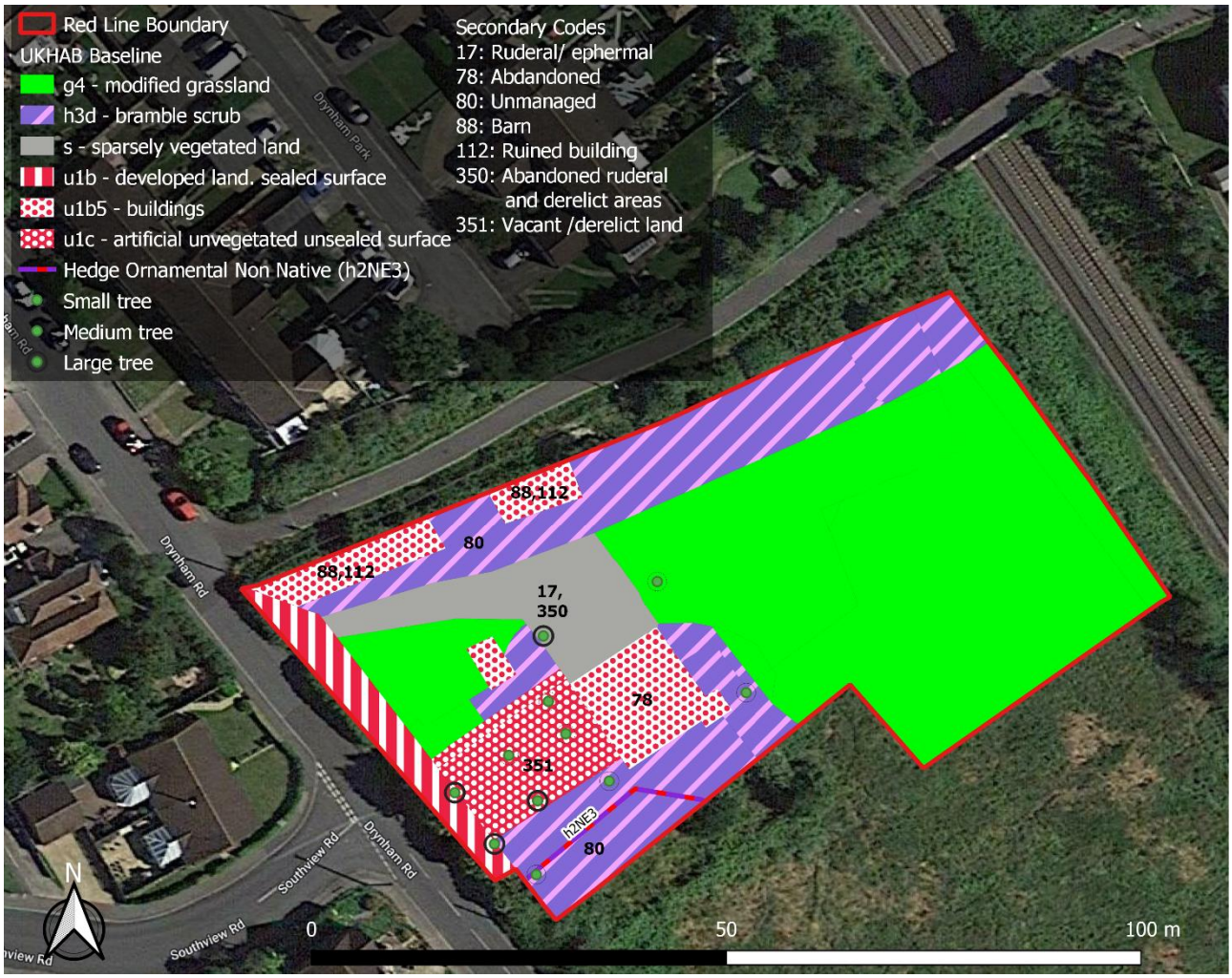
1.7. The site is bordered by Drynham Road to the west, suburban residential development and an associated public footpath to the north and west, the Cardiff-Portsmouth railway line to the east, and an arable field associated with Southview Farm to the south.

1.8. A Habitat Map can be found in **Figure 2**.

Figure 1, "Land at Southview Farm Site Location Plan"



Figure 2, "Habitats Map"



Content of the CEMP

1.9. This CEMP aims to satisfy regulatory and legislative requirements and specifies the management measures that the Principal Contractor will implement to avoid or mitigate potential ecological impacts. It sets out:

- the role and responsibilities on site of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) or similarly competent person(s);
- a risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities (**Table 2**);
- identification of 'biodiversity protection zones' to be retained and protected during the site clearance and construction phase;

- method statements detailing practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction;
- the location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features;
- the times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works (e.g. vegetation clearance in suitable reptile habitat);
- responsible persons and lines of communication;
- use of protective fences, exclusion barriers, and warning signs (e.g. for trees); and
- ongoing monitoring, including compliance checks by a competent person(s) during construction and immediately post-completion of construction works.

1.10. The site has potential to support the following ecological features that may be impacted during the site preparation and construction phases of the development:

- Badgers
- Bats (roosting and commuting);
- Breeding birds
- Dormice
- Hedgehogs; and
- Reptiles.

1.11. Adhering to the measures outlined in this CEMP will facilitate compliance with legislation protecting wildlife including The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Furthermore, it sets out the best practice principals as per Section 10 of BS 42020:2013 ‘Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

1.12. The principles of this CEMP are based on the information captured in ecological surveys undertaken by Engain and the subsequent Ecological Impact Assessment produced (document reference: eg230014_EcIA_REV02).

2. ECOLOGICAL CLERK OF WORKS

2.1. An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be appointed prior to commencement of construction. The ECoW will be familiar with the site and will have relevant experience with the species concerned, with experience of working on construction sites.

2.2. The primary role of the ECoW will be to ensure that this CEMP is implemented and that the relevant method statements during the site work are adhered to.

2.3. They will provide on-site briefings to relevant construction staff prior to works and provide advice and guidance during and up to the completion of the work. This will include advising on practical measures to avoid, reduce and mitigate adverse impacts. The ECoW will be the primary point of contact for the Principal Contractor on matters relating to ecology.

2.4. To assist with the implementation of this CEMP, an ECoW will visit the site at the following key stages:

- Once a quarter to monitor performance and compliance (refer to Section 5 below);
- A walkover survey prior to the start of any site mobilisation to establish if there has been a change in ecological baseline conditions such as new badger setts.
- Once the site compound is set up to brief/train the Principal Contractor and / or Site Manager with the method statements (refer to **Appendices 2-5**).
- Inspection of the tree with potential roosting features prior to its removal;
- When the tree with potential roosting features is soft-felled;
- During the destruction of the roost at Southview Farmhouse;
- Whenever vegetation needs to be cleared at the following points:
    - Within nesting bird season (March to August inclusive);
    - Direct supervision of habitat manipulation relating to dormice;
    - Direct supervision of habitat manipulation relating to reptiles; and
    - Direct supervision of destructive search relating to reptiles.

2.5. Further details can be found in the method statements (refer to **Appendices 2-5**).

3. TIMING OF SENSITIVE WORKS

3.1. **Table 1** sets out the seasonal constraints relating to the works and activities described in this CEMP.

3.2. Green hatching is the time period in which the works can be undertaken without an ECoW.

3.3. Blue hatching represents when works may only be undertaken with further environmental control measures, namely under a watching brief of an ECoW and no hatching means the work cannot be undertaken at any time.

3.4. This information is also provided species specific in each method statement (**Appendices 2-5**).

3.5. Note, weather conditions may influence this timetable of works. Refer to each method statement for full details.

Table 1, "Timing Constraints"

Task	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Breeding birds												
Vegetation clearance suitable for nesting birds												
Reptiles												
Clearance of a suitable hibernation/refugia habitat (rubble / log piles etc)												
Habitat manipulation												
Hedgerow or tree removal												
Topsoil strip (after habitat manipulation)												
Dormouse												
Winter hedgerow / scrub removal (not roots)												
Post winter hedgerow / scrub removal: Grub out roots												
Summer hedgerow/scrub removal: Remove hedgerow/scrub												
Bats												
Removal of tree with bat roosting potential (soft felling)												
Demolition of the roost located in Southview Farmhouse												

4. ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1. **Table 2** provides the following information which will be considered throughout the construction of the consented scheme:

- a risk assessment of potentially damaging construction-type activities on biodiversity features;
- identification of practical measures, both physical and sensitive working practices to protect and avoid negative impacts on biodiversity, including the identification of ecological buffer zones e.g. the dark corridor to be implemented along the eastern boundary (refer to **Appendix 1**);
- where applicable, reference to relevant method statements to achieve targeted biodiversity outcomes including mitigation measures;
- the location and timing of works to avoid harm to ecological features; and
- detail on when an ECoW is required to supervise works.

4.2. **Table 2** should be read in conjunction with the method statements presented in **Appendices 2-5**.

Table 2, "Ecological Risk Assessment"

Activity	Issues (s) and Potential Impacts (s)	Ecological Receptor	Control Measures
Site preparation and vegetation clearance	Spills of fuels & oils or other potential pollutants (e.g. whilst refuelling plant and machinery)	Reptiles Hedgehogs	Pollution prevention measures: spill kits, bunds etc. for all tools and vehicles; avoidance of storage and works in or close to sensitive habitats. Precautions will include: • Materials with potential to cause harm to the environment will be securely stored in appropriate containers. • Secondary containment will be provided if required: this will include bunds around storage areas designed to accommodate the potential incident with a suitable overage. • All plant and machinery will be inspected and maintained to the appropriate standards, repaired where necessary and wear and tear will be monitored to mitigate the risk of accidental spills. • Deliveries to the site will be supervised.
	Damage to retained trees and habitats leading to permanent loss of habitat	Retained habitats	In advance of construction work, the root protection zones of all retained trees and hedgerows will be plotted and fencing erected in accordance with the standards set out in BS5837:2012 as set out in the project's Landscape Strategy
	Noise and vibration causing disturbance to wildlife	Reptiles Bats Dormice	Implementation of ecological receptor specific method statements (**Appendices 2 – 5**) The following general precautions will be taken during site work: • The selection of tools and machinery will take account of noise levels;

Activity	Issues (s) and Potential Impacts (s)	Ecological Receptor	Control Measures
			• Vehicles and mechanical plant will be maintained in a good and effective working order and operated in a manner to minimise noise emissions; • The contractor will ensure that all plant complies with the relevant statutory requirements; • Deliveries of plant and materials by HGV to site will only take place by designated routes and within times agreed in the planning process • HGV and site vehicles will be equipped with broadband, non-tonal reversing alarms; • Compressor, generator and engine compartment doors will be kept closed and plant turned off when not in use; • Care will be taken when unloading vehicles to avoid un-necessary noise; • Drop heights will be minimised when loading vehicles with materials;
	Killing or injury of animals during vegetation clearance and ground works	Breeding birds Roosting bats Reptiles Dormice	Implementation of Method Statements (**Appendices 2-5**) for each relevant ecological receptor (breeding birds, roosting bats, reptiles and dormice). The following general good practice should also be applied: • Any excavations should be covered when not being worked on • Excavations should include a ramp to allow any animals which fall in to escape • Wheels should be checked on machinery before works to ensure no animals have refuged under them • An ecologist to be contacted at any point during works if uncertainty or concern arises, or evidence of animal activity is identified

Activity	Issues (s) and Potential Impacts (s)	Ecological Receptor	Control Measures
Lighting	Site and task lighting illuminating vegetation corridors, which disrupts the movement of wildlife	Commuting bats	Working hours during construction will generally be during daylight, however in winter there may be a need for some task lighting. There may also be some security lighting. Lighting will be kept away from the 'dark corridor' for bats (refer to the Biodiversity Protection Zone Map).
Construction	Killing / injuring during construction	Roosting bats Badgers Reptiles Hedgehogs Dormice	Implementation of Method Statements (**Appendices 2-5**) for each relevant ecological receptor The following general good practice should also be applied: • Should excavations need to be left open overnight, provide a means of escape e.g. ramped ends or scaffold plank should be provided. • Any open pipework with an outside diameter of greater than 120 mm must be covered at the end of each workday to prevent animals entering/becoming trapped.
	Dust falling onto vegetation and leading to reduced plant health of death	Adjacent or retained vegetation	Dust control measures will include: • Minimising the extent of topsoil removal to retain the binding effects of the existing vegetation. • Minimising the duration over which ground is left exposed and re-instating vegetation as soon as practicable after works are completed in that location. • Using water bowsers to provide a water source for the localised control of dust when required. • Precautions when handling and transporting materials e.g. when tipping and loading • A site speed limit of 5mph • Covering of loads or stockpiles of materials that may generate dust and appropriate storage of dusty materials (such as bags of concrete) within containers where appropriate

Activity	Issues (s) and Potential Impacts (s)	Ecological Receptor	Control Measures
			• Wheel washing facilities at the site entrance / exit
	Storage and movement of materials that become colonised by wildlife	Reptiles	Topsoil and materials to be stored away from boundary vegetation and kept weed free. If topsoil or materials need to be stored outside of the main construction working area and will need to be fenced.

5. PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

5.1. Performance will be monitored to assess compliance and action will be taken if compliance is not achieved.

5.2. The appointed ECoW will visit quarterly periodically during construction, to meet the site manager.

5.3. The ECoW will maintain a site visit report for each visit, documenting the activities that are taking place and any advice given or implemented. This will provide a record from one visit to the next to ensure that matters raised are appropriately dealt with. This information will be provided to the local authority ecologist.

5.4. Should a non-conformance be identified, corrective action will be implemented immediately.

APPENDICES

eg230014.02 Southview Farm
Biodiversity Protection Zone Map



APPENDIX 2 – BREEDING BIRD METHOD STATEMENT

Vegetation on site to be removed may support breeding birds.

Legislation

Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it's 'an offence intentionally to kill, injure or take any wild bird, or take or destroy their eggs or nest, or damage a nest, while that nest is in use or being built'.

Methodologies During Site Clearance and Construction

Vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the nesting bird season. The nesting bird season is weather dependent but generally extends between March and August inclusive.

If this is not possible then any vegetation that is to be removed or disturbed should be checked by an experienced ecologist for nesting birds 24 hours prior to works commencing. If birds are found to be nesting, it will be necessary for a suitable sized buffer zone in which no works occur to be put in place and any works which may affect the nest delayed until the young have fledged, and the nest has been abandoned naturally.

Task	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Breeding birds												
Vegetation clearance suitable for nesting birds												

APPENDIX 3 – REPTILE METHOD STATEMENT

It is likely common species of reptile are present on site.

Legislation

Reptile

The four widespread species of reptiles in the UK, comprising adders (*Vipera berus*), slow-worms (*Anguis fragilis*), grass snakes (*Natrix helvetica*) and common lizards (*Zootoca vivipara*), are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Damage or destroy any structure or place used for shelter or protection;
- Disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

The legislation therefore requires that, before destroying or removing habitat where reptiles are likely to be present, suitable precautions are taken to ensure that no reptiles are harmed, either through the habitat destruction itself or through the consequences of habitat removal (i.e., the loss of habitat sustaining that population).

Methodologies During Site Clearance and Construction

The following methodologies are to ensure no contravention of legislation and adhering to planning policy relating to reptiles and amphibians.

Toolbox Talk

A toolbox talk will be provided by the ECoW to relevant contractors prior to any vegetation clearance taking place to provide information on the legislative requirements associated with reptiles as well as setting out the methodologies detailed in this method statement.

Habitat Manipulation/Vegetation Clearance

To encourage reptile dispersal off-site via reducing the available suitable reptile habitat under the supervision of the ECoW, habitat manipulation/vegetation clearance will be undertaken.

This will involve a phased approach (with a period of 48 hours in between each phase) taking place during periods of fine and warm weather (above 10°C with little rain), during the main reptile/amphibian activity season (April to September inclusive):

- *Phase 1* - cutting any areas of rough grass to 150-200 mm with arisings removed.
- *Phase 2* – Cut vegetation to ground level and remove arisings; and
- *Phase 3* – Soil scrape.

Should a dismantling of suitable refugia be required (such as rubble or debris piles), it should be untaken outside the gravid period (May to July) and will be supervised by the ECoW.

Receptor Site

Should any reptiles be found during the mitigation works, they will be translocated to the receptor site (refer to **Biodiversity Protection Zone Map, Appendix 1** for the location).

Results of the supervision works including dates, times and details of any reptiles translocated will be submitted to the Local Authority.

Task	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Reptiles												
Clearance of a suitable hibernation/refugia habitat (rubble / log piles etc)												
Habitat manipulation												
Hedgerow or tree removal												
Topsoil strip (after habitat manipulation)												

APPENDIX 4 – DORMOUSE METHOD STATEMENT

This method statement sets out how the construction process will avoid any risk of harm to dormice. It is complemented by an arboricultural method statement and a construction method statement also prepared for the project.

Legislation

Dormice and their nests are fully protected in UK by *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* and by *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). It is an offence to deliberately, intentionally or recklessly:

- Kill, injure or capture a dormouse;
- Damage or destroy any breeding or resting place used by dormice;
- Disturb dormice while it is in a structure or place of shelter/protection; and
- Block access to structures or places of shelter or protection

Toolbox Talk

A toolbox talk will be provided by the ECoW to relevant contractors prior to any vegetation clearance taking place to provide information on the legislative requirements associated with dormice as well as setting out the methodologies detailed in this method statement.

Precautionary Working Methods

Persuasion - Habitat Manipulation/Vegetation Clearance

Dormice are generally active and above-ground in the period between April and October to early November (dependent on the prevailing weather conditions). Outside of this period they will generally hibernate at or below ground level, in piles of leaves, at the bases of coppice stools, inside cracks in trees etc. Timing the clearance of vegetation to coincide with the time of year when dormice are not likely to be present therefore provides a means of avoiding any harm to them.

Under supervision of a licenced ECoW, the following approach should be followed for vegetation clearance.

- Winter Vegetation Clearance (November to March inclusive):

- The scrub and hedgerow should be removed by hand or with hand-held machinery and should avoid disturbance to the base of the hedge, where dormice may hibernate.
- The roots of the coppiced stools in the cleared areas should then be dug up, no earlier than May of the following season

- Summer Vegetation Clearance (May or late September):

  - This may be done by taking out small amounts of vegetation (including removing the roots) on successive days at a time of year when the animals are active and able to respond immediately.
  - Clearance should be done by hand and should be combined with searches for nests by an ECoW.

Task	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Dormouse												
Winter hedgerow / scrub removal (not roots)												
Post winter hedgerow / scrub removal: Grub out roots												
Summer hedgerow/scrub removal: Remove hedgerow/scrub												

APPENDIX 5 – ROOSTING BATS METHOD STATEMENT

The farmhouse supports a roost of **low conservation value**, with low numbers of common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats using the building as a transitional roost.

Furthermore, one of the trees on site to be low (refer to the Biodiversity Protection Zone Map) is of moderate bat roosting potential. Albeit, no bats have been recorded emerging / re-entering the tree during the emergence surveys.

Legislation

Bats and their roosts are fully protected in UK by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to deliberately, intentionally or recklessly:

- Kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Damage or destroy any breeding or resting place used by bat;
- Disturb bats while it is in a structure or place of shelter/protection; and
- Block access to structures or places of shelter or protection

Southview Farmhouse

Any works undertaken at the farmhouse relating to the areas of the building suitable for roosting bats, i.e. the roof/tiles and soffits/facias, precautionary methods of works is required.

Low Impact Bat Licence

Due to the type and species the roost supports, a Low Impact Bat Licence (LIBL) from Natural England is required to undertake works at the farmhouse. Prior to the works commencing on the building, a bat box suitable for crevice dwelling species must be erected in a suitable location.

Toolbox Talk

A toolbox talk will be provided by the ECoW to relevant contractors prior to any works on the building taking place to provide information on the legislative requirements associated with bats as well as setting out the methodologies detailed in this method statement.

Precautionary methods of works

Any works undertaken at the farmhouse relating to the areas of the building suitable for roosting bats, i.e. the roof/tiles and soffits/facias will follow the following methods:

- Works will be supervised by a ECoW.
- Works will be undertaken by hand tools.
- Should a bat be found, it will be moved to the bat box by the ECoW.

Tree with bat roosting potential

There is a bat with the potential for roosting bats which is to be removed. However, no evidence of bats has been found during the survey work. As such, no licence is required to remove the tree however, precautionary methods of works are to be implemented. It is recommended that the tree is felled in September/October.

Toolbox Talk

A toolbox talk will be provided by the ECoW to relevant contractors prior to the tree removal to provide information on the legislative requirements associated with bats as well as setting out the methodologies detailed in this method statement.

Pre-commencement check

Prior to the removal of the tree, a check using an endoscope by an SQE will be undertaken to confirm likely absence of roosting bats within the tree.

Precautionary methods of works

Once the tree is confirmed to have likely absence of roosting bats by the SQE, the tree will be subject to soft felling, where tree limbs are cut and left grounded over night to allow any bats to make their way out.

Task	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bats												
Removal of tree with bat roosting potential (soft felling)												
Demolition of the roost located in Southview Farmhouse												



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