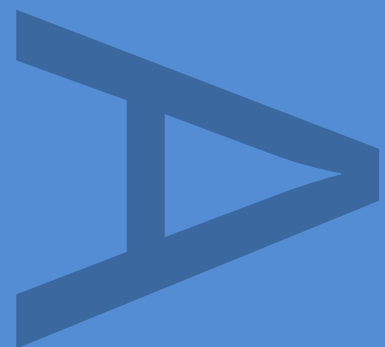


**DIXON'S WHARF
WINGRAVE ROAD
WILSTONE
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

APRIL 2012



**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY
R11212**

**Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation, Dixon's Wharf,
Wingrave Road, Wilstone, Hertfordshire**

Site Code: HDWW12

Central NGR TL 384 232

Report Number: R11212

Written and Researched by Alexander Pullen

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April 2012

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ABSTRACT

This document details the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Dixon's Wharf, Wingrave Road, Wilstone, Hertfordshire. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Property and Equipment Supplies Ltd to assess the archaeological implications of development of land for offices at this site. The work comprised the excavation of 90m of trial trenching. No archaeological finds or features were identified during this evaluation. The ground over site generally consisted of a tarmac and re-enforced concrete slab underlain by a heavily disturbed/redeposited marshy soil which lay on top of a gravel natural.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document details the results of an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Dixon's Wharf, Wingrave Road, Wilstone, Hertfordshire. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Property and Equipment Supplies Ltd to assess the archaeological implications of development of land for offices at this site.
- 1.2 Dixon's Wharf is located immediately southwest of Wingrave Road. The southern boundary of the site is provided by the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal (Fig 1). The site of proposed developed is currently occupied by the footprints of several demolished and partially demolished warehouse buildings and a large area of hard-standing (tarmac overlying re-enforced concrete).
- 1.3 The British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Geological Map (Sheet No. 238 Aylesbury, Drift Edition 1946) shows the drift geology underlying the site is Valley Gravel. Levels within the site fall from the south-eastern corner at c.97m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to the north-western corner of the site at c.94.5m AOD.
- 1.4 The archaeological potential of the site is considered in the Desk Based Assessment (DBA) produced by CgMs Consulting (Dicks, S. 2011a). The DBA posited a low-moderate potential for Iron Age archaeological features. A map regression exercise demonstrates that the land, probably in agricultural use until the Second Worlds War, was then occupied by a number of small buildings, possibly associated with the use of the nearby airfield.
- 1.5 The work was carried out between the 25th and 27th April and 2012 and comprised the excavation and recording of four archaeological evaluation trenches totalling 90m (Fig 2). The trenches were 1.8m wide.

1.6 No archaeological finds or features were identified during this evaluation. The ground over site generally consisted of a tarmac and re-enforced concrete slab underlain by a heavily disturbed/redeposited marshy soil which lay on top of a gravel natural. The disturbed soil contained demolition material which may derive from the destruction of buildings erected during the Second World War. The natural gravels appear to have been subject to significant modern truncation in places. Deposits in Trenches 2 and 4 were heavily contaminated by motor oil and diesel.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The methodology followed during this evaluation is set out in detail in the Written Scheme of Investigation produced by CgMs Consulting (Dicks, S. 2011b).
- 2.2 The trenches were located by eye following a proposed trench layout in the WSI. The trenches were repositioned slightly in the light of ground conditions and the presence of several service runs.
- 2.3 Prior to excavation the trenches were CAT scanned for the presence of live services. The ground reduction was carried out using a JCB fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Tarmac and re-enforced concrete was broken up using a pneumatic breaker. Underlying deposits were removed in spits down to the level of the natural where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded.
- 2.4 OD heights and trench locations were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit.

3 DEPOSIT DESCRIPTIONS

- 3.1 Trench 1 was 25m long (Fig 2). Ground level was recorded at Trench 1 as 95.33m AOD. The natural valley gravel (12) in Trench 1 was 0.76m below ground level. This was overlain by a 0.36m thick subsoil (11) which in turn was overlain by 0.34m thick dark brown topsoil (10) (Plate 3) . Trench 1 was the only trench not overlain by reinforced concrete and tarmac.
- 3.2 Trench 2 was 25m long (Fig 2). Ground level at Trench 2 was recorded as 94.81m AOD. The depth of the Valley Gravel (12) varied in Trench 2 between 1.0m and 0.80m below current ground level. This was overlain by a 0.40 to 0.60m thick disturbed grey-brown silty clay deposit with occasional 20th century bricks and demolition rubble (13). Deposit (13) was overlain by the current re-enforced concrete and tarmac surface (Plate 5). Deposits in Trench 2 smelled strongly of diesel oil and the top of the natural gravels were observed to be contaminated. The intensity of the contamination increased towards the western end of Trench 2.
- 3.3 Trench 3 was 20m long (Fig 2). Ground level at Trench 3 was recorded as 94.58m AOD. The depth of the natural gravel (12) varied considerably in Trench 3 depending on the degree of modern ground disturbance. At the south-western end of the trench underneath the road into the site the natural gravel was 0.40m below ground level. Overlying the natural was the ground making for the road and current concrete and tarmac surface. Away from the road the ground was much disturbed and clean natural deposits were recorded at 1.0m below ground level. Here the natural was overlain by mixed dark grey brown silty clay deposit containing modern brick fragments and bands of redeposited natural (14). Deposit (14) was overlain by the current concrete and tarmac ground surface (Plate 10) .
- 3.4 Trench 4 was 20m long (Fig 2). Ground level was recorded at Trench 4 as 95.34m AOD. Natural gravel (12) was encountered at 0.56m below

ground level in Trench 4. The natural was overlain by a disturbed dark clay-silt soil (15) that contained 20th century brick fragments. Overlying (15) was the re-enforced concrete current ground surface (Plate 12). Deposits in Trench 3 were contaminated with diesel oil and truncated by modern drain ducting. The brick and concrete footing for the recently demolished building were revealed at the south west end of Trench 4 and truncated deposits to a depth of 0.6m below ground current ground level.

4 CONCLUSION

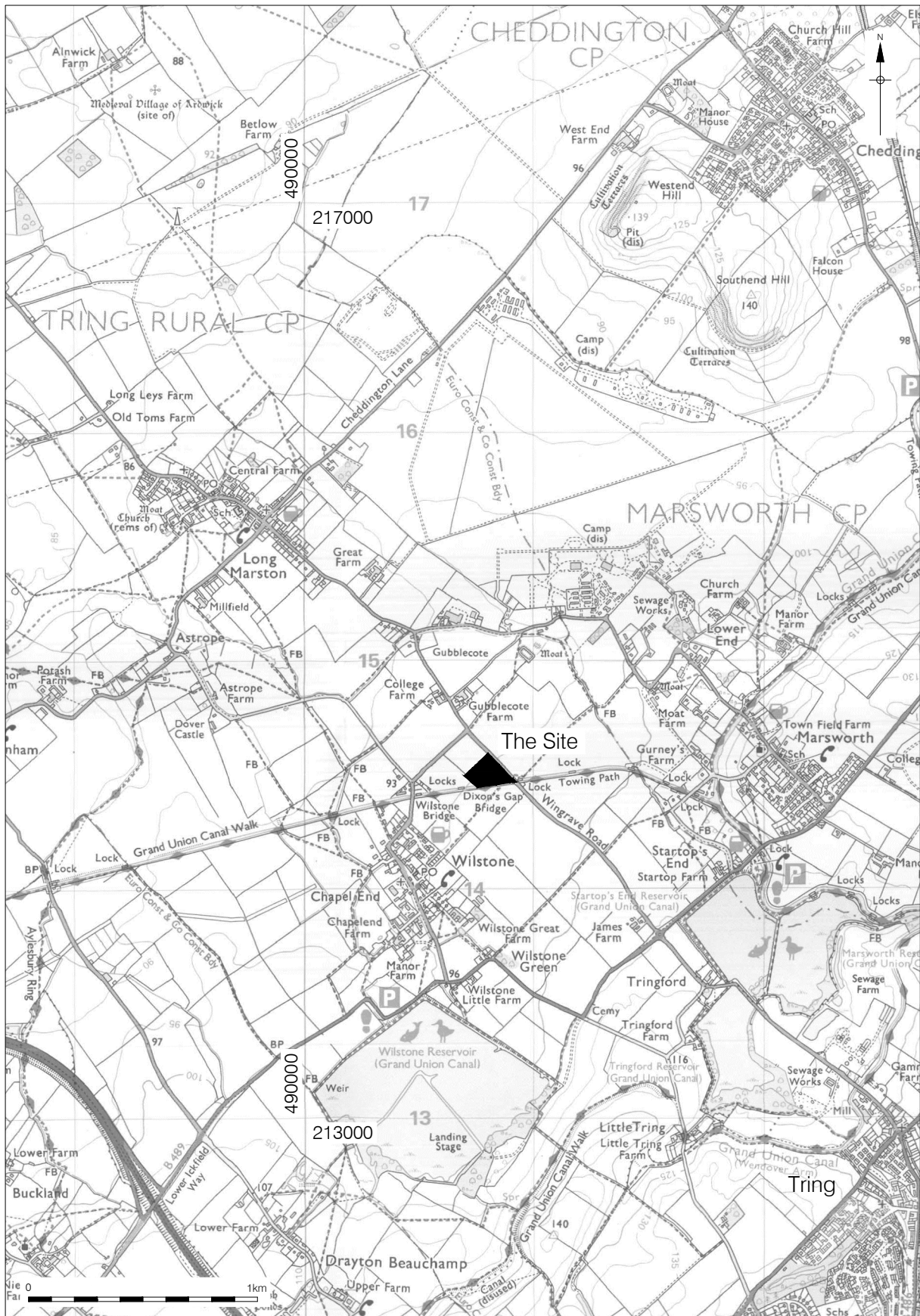
- 4.1 No archaeological finds or features were encountered during this evaluation. Apart from Trench 1, deposits across the site have suffered some degree of modern disturbance or mixing. The natural gravels appear to have been subject to significant modern truncation in places (Trenches 2 and 3). The brick and demolition rubble encountered in deposits (13), (14) and (15) may derive from the demolition of Second World War huts occupying the site or from later buildings known to have occupied the site. Clearance of the site for construction of a council depot sometime between 1960 and 1972 has caused considerable disturbance to the deposits on the site (see Dicks, S 2011a).
- 4.2 The results of this evaluation suggest that due to the high degree of modern truncation the proposed development will have no impact on archaeological deposits.

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 5.1 PCA would like to thank Duncan Hawkins of CgMs Consulting for commissioning this evaluation. Thanks to Josephine Brown and Richard Archer for preparing the figures.

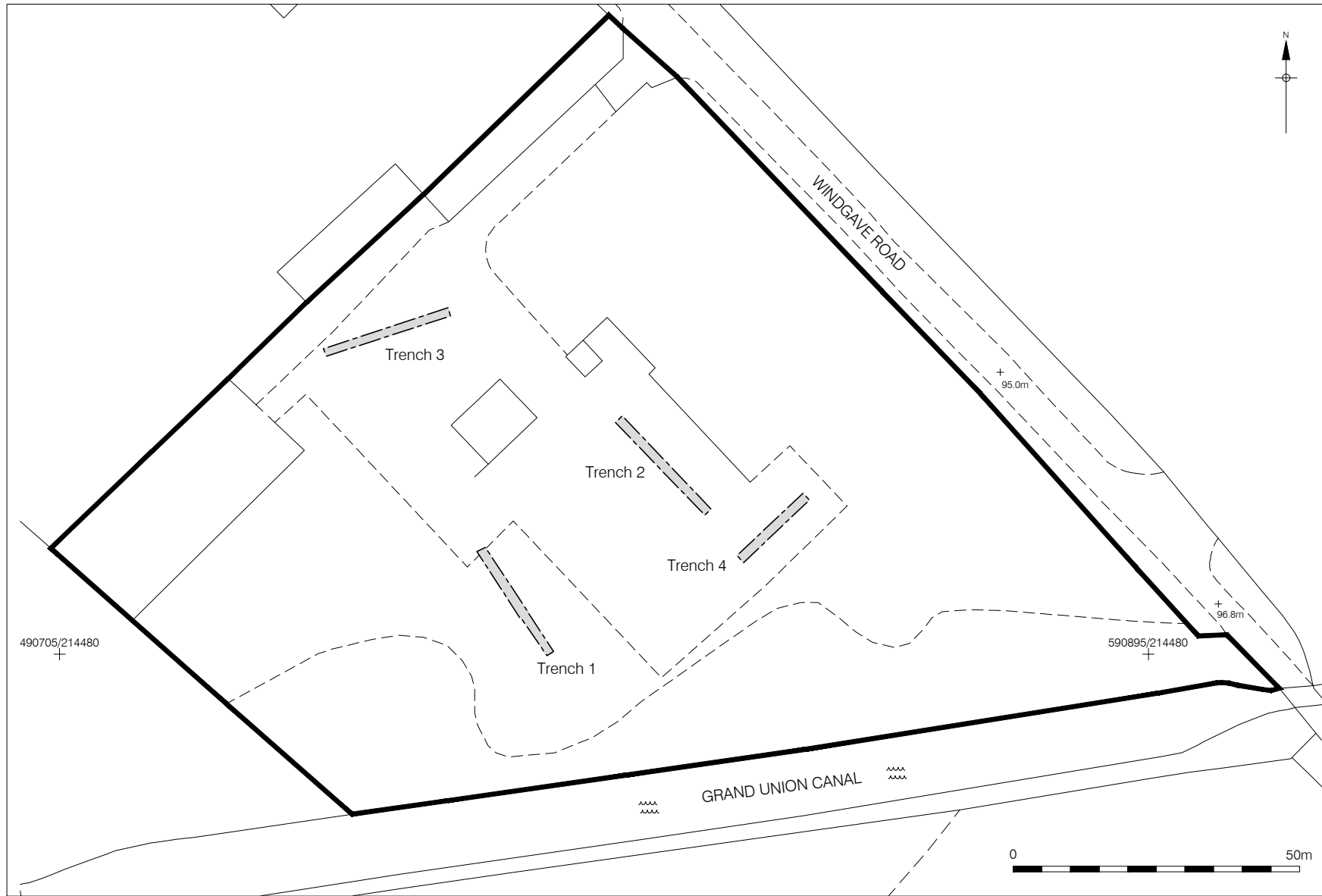
6 REFERENCES

- Dicks, S. 2011a. *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, Dixon's Wharf, Wingrave Road, Wilstone, Hertfordshire*. CgMs Consulting.
- Dicks, S. 2011b. *Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation for a Field Evaluation, Dixon's Wharf, Wingrave Road, Wilstone, Hertfordshire*. CgMs Consulting.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:25,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Detailed Site Location and Trench Location
 1:1,000 at A4

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER

Context	Cut	Type	Comments
1	-	-	Trench 1
2	-	-	Trench 2
3	-	-	Trench 3
4	-	-	Trench 4
10	-	Layer	Topsoil (Trench1)
11	-	Layer	Subsoil (Trench1)
12	-	Layer	Natural (All Trenches)
13	-	Layer	Clay-silt soil
14	-	Layer	Clay-silt soil
15	-	Layer	Clay-silt soil

APPENDIX 2: DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Plate 1. Panoramic view West



Plate 2. Trench 1 View North-West



Plate 3. Trench 1 Section



Plate 4. Trench 2 View South-East



Plate 5. Trench 2 Section



Plate 6. Trench 2 Section



Plate 7. Removal of hard-standing Trench 3 View North-East



Plate 8. Trench 3 Natural gravel (12) immediately under hard-standing



Plate 9. Rapid flooding of Trench 3



Plate 10. Trench 3 Section showing disturbed ground



Plate 11. Trench 4 Looking North-East



Plate 12. Section Trench 4



Plate 13. Trench 4 south west end. Concrete wall foundations for 20th century factory building



APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-124578

Project details

Project name	Evaluation Dixons Wharf, Wilstone, Herts
Short description of the project	Four eval trenches totalling 90m. No finds, no features.
Project dates	Start: 25-04-2012 End: 27-04-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HDWW12 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 4 - Storage and warehousing
Monument type	NONE None
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Industrial Estate
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	HERTFORDSHIRE DACORUM MARKYATE Dixon's

	Wharf
Study area	2267.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 384 232 51.8896913220 0.01136083996590 51 53 22 N 000 00 40 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 94.50m Max: 97.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	PCA
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	Duncan Hawkins
Project director/manager	Gary Brown
Project supervisor	Alexander Pullen

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet'

Project bibliography 1

	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Publication type	
Title	Archaeological Evaluation at Dixon's Wharf, Wingrave Road, Wilstone, Hertfordshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Pullen, A
Date	2012

Issuer or publisher PCA
Place of issue or publication Brockley
Description Grey Literature A4

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Entered on 30 April 2012

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