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Archaeological Services

**Archaeological Attendance and
Recording during Groundworks on land
at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston,
Leicestershire,
CV13 0DR**

NGR: SK 42573 04417

Susan Henderson



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S. K. Henderson

For: Mr D. Bloor

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Archaeological Attendance and Recording on land at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire. NGR: SK 42573 04417

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Summary

An archaeological attendance and recording (watching brief) was undertaken on land at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire on the 15th of January 2020 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). The work took place during groundworks for the construction of a swimming pool and associated outbuilding. The property lies within both the conservation area and the historic settlement core of Osbaston and there are a number of known archaeological sites within the vicinity of the development site. There are recorded Iron Age, Roman and medieval find spots close to the development area, as well as the potential site of a medieval chapel, suggesting the potential for archaeological deposits to be revealed during any groundworks.

The work was undertaken within the grounds of Home Farm, between formal gardens and a paddock. Excavation of the footprints of both the outbuilding and the pool revealed some evidence of recent, prior landscaping.

No archaeological features or deposits were seen during the groundworks.

The report will be archived under the accession number X.A103.2019

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*, this document forms the report for archaeological attendance and recording (watching brief) on land at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire. NGR: SK 42573 04417. Under planning application reference 19/00810/FUL planning permission has been granted for the construction of a swimming pool and associated timber outbuilding. The groundworks for the swimming pool will involve the excavation of an area 12m x 6m and to a depth of 1.5m below present level. The timber outbuilding covers a 5m x 6m area and the footprint of this was to be stripped of topsoil in preparation for the laying of a concrete base on which the building will sit. As this work would have had an impact upon any buried archaeological remains if present, the Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council recommended that the groundworks be monitored in order to fully record any archaeological features or deposits which may be present.

Background

Osbaston is a small village in the Hinckley and Bosworth district of Leicestershire, lying approximately 17km to the west of Leicester and 11km to the south of Hinckley (Fig. 1). The village lies in an undulating landscape of both arable and pasture fields, the site itself being on high ground falling away to the north towards a wooded stream.

Home Farm is a complex of recently renovated farm buildings, now domestic dwellings, standing on the corner of Hall Lane and Osbaston Lane. The current entrance to the site is from Hall Lane, the former farmyard now given over to garaging and hardstanding. Land to the north of the buildings has been landscaped as gravel paths, flower beds and lawn, bordered by low hedges. This area exists as a small terrace, beyond which the ground falls away towards a sloping paddock. The area to be developed lies immediately below this terrace in an area of hedged lawn.

The area to be developed covers approximately 0.03ha and lies at a height of 119aOD. The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying bedrock geology of the area is Gunthorpe Member mudstone. Superficial deposits consist of Oadby Member Diamicton with additional bands of alluvial deposits.

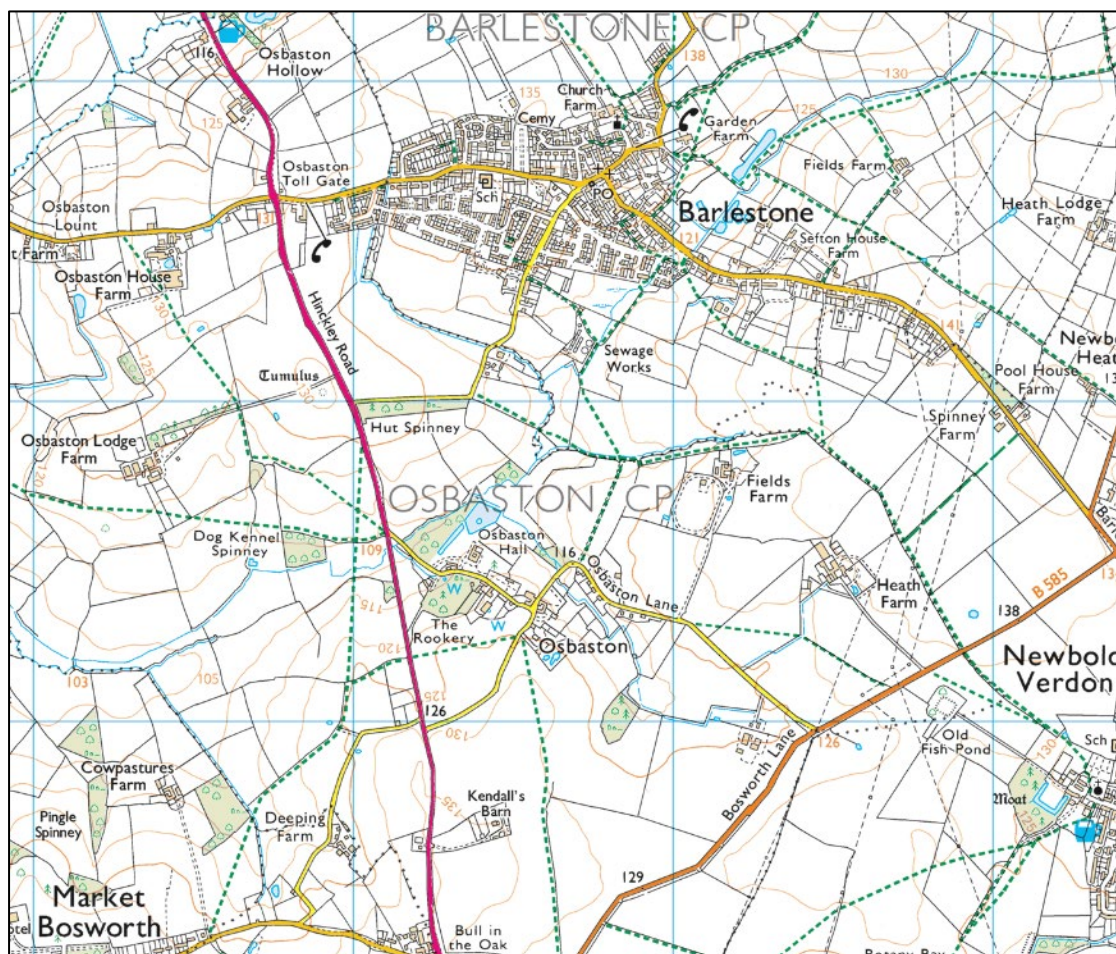


Figure 1: Site location

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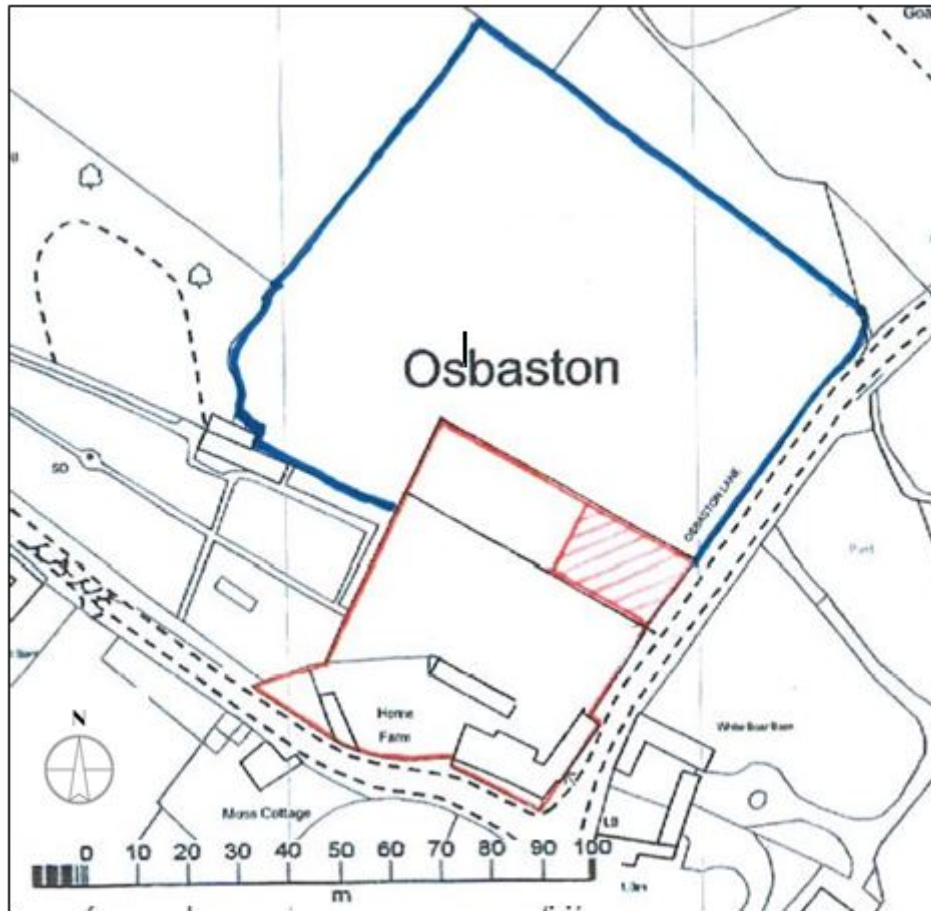


Figure 2: Location of development area (shaded red). Paddock outlined in blue. Plan provided by client.

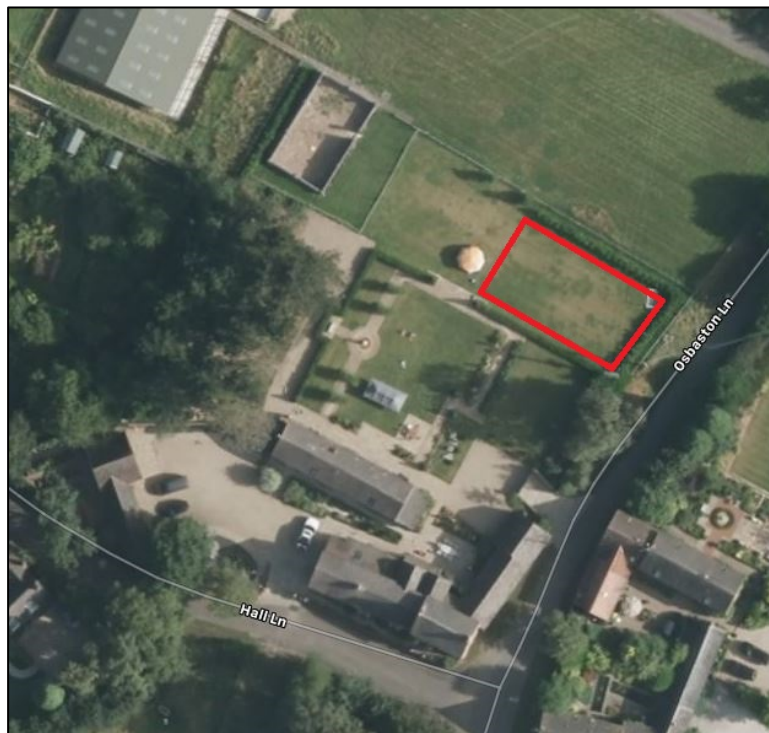


Figure 3: Aerial photograph showing location of development area. (Google Earth)

The ULAS *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)* for a programme of archaeological mitigation at Home Farm, Hall Farm, Osbaston, Leicestershire, discusses the range of archaeological sites and find spots within a 500m radius of the site. The document suggests that there is potential for prehistoric and Roman archaeology within the vicinity. There is also potential, given the location of the site, for information relating to the origins and development of the medieval village.

Osbaston was known as Sbernestun in 1086 (Domesday Book) meaning the ‘settlement associated with Asbjorn’ (Bourne 2003), the name having both Scandanavian and Old English origins Whilst many of the recorded finds, according to the Historic Environment Record (HER), relate to the Medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of the village (**MLE3005**), there are also recorded finds from both Iron Age and Roman periods. Approximately 100m to the north west of the site, in 1975, a quern was discovered in during deep ploughing, as well as Roman pottery during fieldwalking in the same area in 1977 (**MLE6544**). This same fieldwalking identified Medieval pottery approximately 200m to the north west (**MLE21237**).

The references to fieldwalking identify the land to the north of the site as having been ploughed arable land in the later 20th century, although it is currently pasture. The aerial photograph (Fig. 3) also shows signs of ridge and furrow in this field, although not in the development area.

An Historic Buildings Appraisal undertaken in 2010 (Bradwell 2010) prior to the renovation of the Home Farm complex, traced the development of the buildings from the earliest Ordnance Survey and Tithe Map through to the present day. There appeared to be a considerable expansion of the farm in the first half of the 19th century, attributed to the purchase of neighbouring Osbaston Hall by Thomas Cope in 1827 (White 1846). The last building to be added was a large, steel framed, Dutch barn visible in both the photograph prior to the renovations in 2010 (Fig.4) and the 1958 Ordnance Survey Map (Fig. 5).



Figure 4: Home Farm renovations in 2010, looking east, Dutch barn to north (Bradwell 2010).



Figure 5: The 1958 Ordnance Survey Map taken from Bradwell (2010) showing the field boundaries and Dutch barn to the north of the main complex.

Notably, in proximity to the development area and in recent times, the Dutch barn has been removed and the field boundaries have changed. The area of the barn is now landscaped and terraced and the development area lies inside the field boundary to the north.

Objectives

The overall objectives and research agenda are detailed in the ULAS Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) *for a programme of archaeological mitigation at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire* (ULAS 2019).

The specific objectives for this programme of work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of the results.

Methodology

The project involved the observation of groundworks associated with the construction of a swimming pool and associated timber pool house (Fig.6) on the 15th January 2020. The proposed pool dimensions were 12m x 6m and the pool house 6m x 6m. The soil in the area of the pool was to be stripped in level spits under constant archaeological supervision until the archaeological horizon or undisturbed natural geology was revealed. In the area of the pool house observation was to be to formation depths.

The excavation and recording methodology used throughout the groundworks is discussed in detail in the ULAS WSI. All excavation work was carried out by the client's contractor with a tracked 8 tonne 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m toothless ditching bucket.

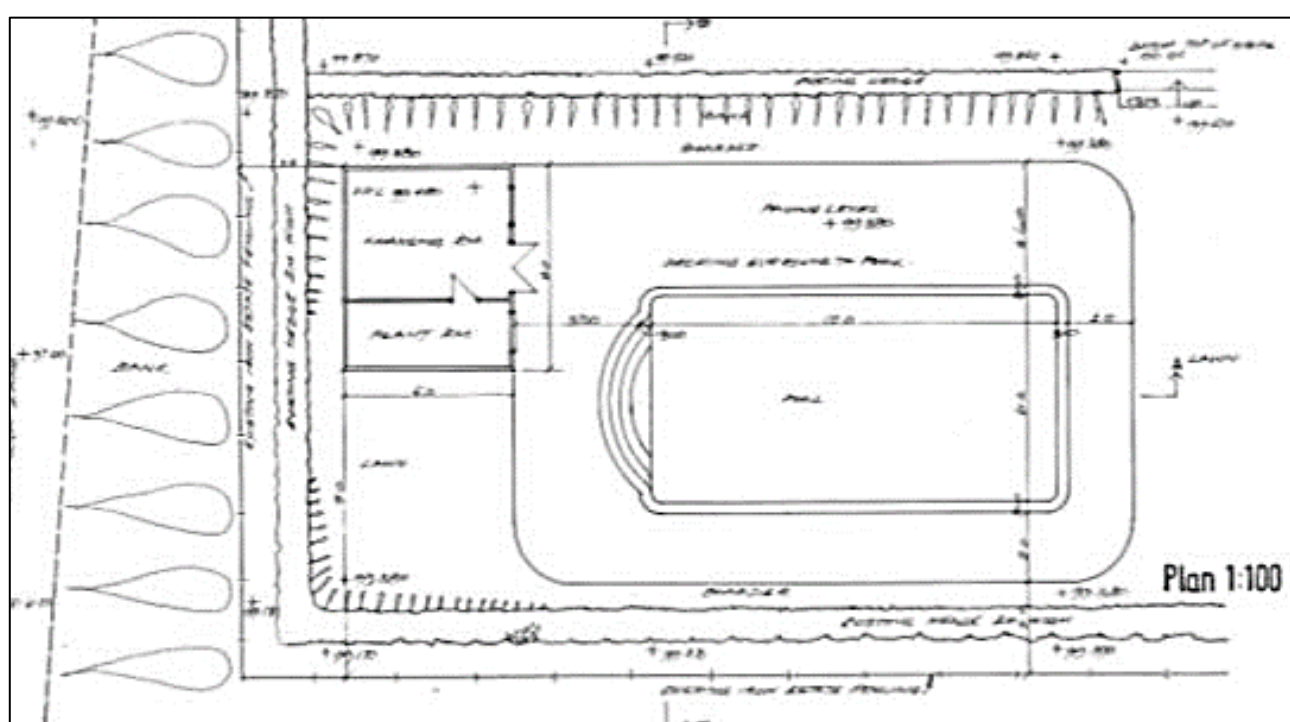


Figure 6: Plan of proposed swimming pool and outbuilding, north to bottom. Plan supplied by client,

Results

The ground for the pool house was being prepared to hold a concrete slab. The ground topography slopes towards the north and varying depths of excavation were required to obtain a flat surface. Final depths of excavation were 0.25m in the north western corner and 0.70m in the south western corner. Undisturbed natural geology was revealed at the southern end (Fig.7), whilst only a small depth of topsoil was removed from the northern end. A dump of modern material including brick waste was visible in the north-east corner, either simply a dump of waste or used to level the area (Fig. 8). No other features were noted in this area. The final platform dimensions were 13.7m x 5.2m.



Figure 7: Northern end of pool house excavation, looking east.



Figure 8: Southern end of pool house excavation, looking east.

An area joining the pool house and pool was also stripped for ease of access and the preparation of ground for service trenches. This and excavation of the footprint of the pool were observed and the total dimensions of this length were 15.0m x 4.75m. A shallow feature (Fig. 9) was observed and cross sectioned. The feature was amorphous in plan and reached a maximum depth of 0.07m. No dateable finds were recovered, but

the presence of modern brick fragments suggested that it may also relate to recent landscaping. On completion of the groundworks, the area was planned and photographed (Figs 10- 11).



Figure 9: Shallow feature containing modern brick fragments

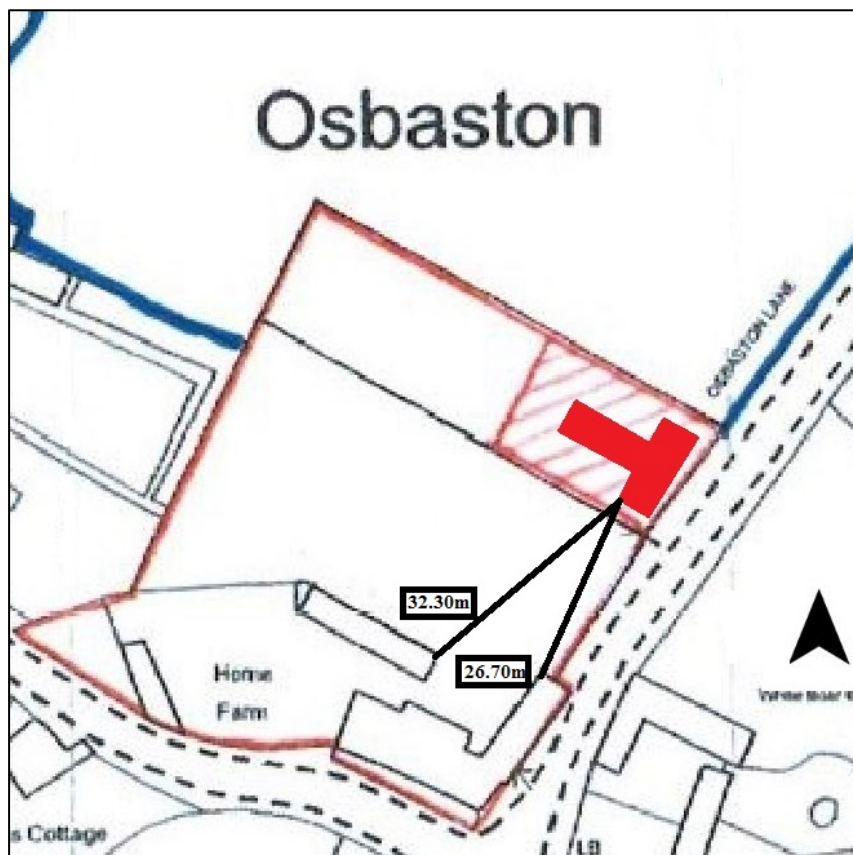


Figure 10: Location of excavations. Measurements taken to nearest building points.



Figure 11: Completed excavations looking east.

Discussion

Despite the potential for exposing archaeological features and deposits during this work, the only feature was a shallow irregular pit containing modern brick. No other archaeological deposits were observed. The results suggests an amount of landscaping in this area during the evolution of the farm buildings and their surroundings.

Archive

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums under the accession X.A103.2019 and consists of:

- 1 x unbound copy of this report
- 3 x A4 contact sheets of digital photographs
- 1 x CD containing the digital photographs
- 1 x A4 pro-forma watching brief recording form
- 1 x permatrace plan with notes
- 3 x A4 photo record sheets

Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the appropriate local archaeological and historical journal in due course. A record of the project will also be

submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the clients Mr and Mrs D. Bloor for their assistance and interest throughout the project.

Fieldwork was undertaken by the author Sue Henderson, assisted by Tess Even and the project was managed for ULAS by Vicki Score.

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16th January 2020

Appendix: OASIS information

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1- 417258		
	Project Name	Archaeological Attendance and Recording during Groundworks on land at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire.		
	Start/end dates	15/01/2020		
	Previous/Future Work	Level 2 Historic Buildings Appraisal 2010		
	Project Type	Archaeological Attendance/watching brief		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Residential property		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	19/00810/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire, CV13 0DR		
	Study Area	0.03 ha		
	Site Coordinates	SK 42573 04417		
	Height OD	119m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Planning Archaeologist		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Susan Henderson		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Mr Derek Bloor		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	None	LCC Museum service	LCC Museum service
	ID (Acc. No.)	None	X.A103.2019	X.A103.2019
	Contents	None	Photographs, report	Report, watching brief form, drawing sheet, photo index
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		
	Title	Archaeological Attendance and Recording during Groundworks on land at Home Farm, Hall Lane, Osbaston, Leicestershire, CV13 0DR		
	Author	Henderson, S. K.		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No. 2020-011		
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