

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
of Cable Trench Excavation at Standen House, East Grinstead, West Sussex**

NGR: 538900 135600

**ASE Project No: 160787
Site Code: STD16**

**ASE Report No: 2016393
OASIS id: archaeo16-267406**

By Tom Munnery

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**By Tom Munnery
With contributions by Susan Chandler and
Karine Le Hegarat
Illustrations by Lauren Gibson**

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|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---|
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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at Standen House, East Grinstead, West Sussex between 3rd and 4th October 2016. The fieldwork was commissioned by National Trust to monitor the installation of a new below-ground cable.

No archaeological features were observed during the watching brief, but a single prehistoric flint flake, fragment of CBM and two iron nails were recovered from the overburden.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the installation of below ground cables at Standen House, East Grinstead, centred on NGR 538900 135600 (Figures 1 and 2)

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping available online the natural geology of the site comprises Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand and Grinstead Clay (BGS 2016). The latter of which was extensively quarried for its Cuckfield Stone.

1.2.2 The site lies within the Standen Estate, located on the northern edge of the High Weald near East Grinstead, West Sussex, situated on rising ground to the north of the Weir Wood Reservoir (see Figure 1). The estate comprises 23.7 hectares (59 acres) in total of mainly deciduous woodland and pasture centred around an important Arts and Crafts house and its associated gardens. The centre of the estate is designated by English Heritage as a Registered Historic Park and Garden (Ref. 5309) and Standen House itself is a Grade I Listed Building (Ref. 430872), located adjacent to a Grade II Listed cottage (Ref. 430873) and farm buildings (Ref. 430874).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by The National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Standen, East Grinstead, West Sussex (NGR 538900 135600). The location is shown on Figures 1 and 2.

1.3.2 The installation of underground ducts was required to enable connectivity between the various buildings at Standen. The trenching extended from the Visitor Kiosk/Ticket Office eastwards along the north side of the existing road for 24m to a cable box at each end, before turning to run southwest for c. 33m across Goose Green (see Figure 2). The trenching was undertaken with a toothless bucket and reached a general width of 0.35m and depth of 0.60m.

1.3.3 The trenching route falls within the historic core of Standen and in the area of the original farm, traversing the original farmyard at Goose Green. As such, it was recommended that an archaeological watching brief accompany the excavations to ensure any buried archaeological features encountered were appropriately recorded.

1.3.4 A brief for the required archaeological works (watching brief) was issued by The National Trust (NT 2016).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aim of the works was to record any archaeological features, deposits and artefacts that might be present in the area and impacted upon by the development, especially that associated with the medieval origins of Standen, and report any subsequent findings.

1.4.2 The watching brief has the potential to address the following research objectives set out in the South-East Research Framework:

- *The chronology and typology of farm buildings and lesser noticed post-medieval agricultural features (SERF post-medieval themes Part 1 Para 3)*
- *The impact of houses of the royalty/gentry had on the local landscape, economy, and social structure (SERF post-medieval themes Part 1 Para 4)*

1.4.3 A final aim is to make public the results of the archaeological watching brief subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5 This report details the results of the watching brief carried out between 3rd and 4th October 2016 by Tom Munnery.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The following is a summary taken from the brief provided by National Trust (NT 2016; with due acknowledgement), which provided a precis of the known archaeological resource in the vicinity of Standen.
- 2.2 There is limited evidence for Prehistoric land use at the property (a single findspot of flint tools at MWS4480). Evidence for Romano-British occupation around the site is similarly limited, although the presence of a bloomery site (MWS3184) to the south suggests a degree of localised industrial activity.
- 2.3 There is no evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement in the area. The name 'Standen' does have pre-Conquest origins, though its meaning ('a stony swine pasture') suggests a marginal landscape (ASE 2011, 15).
- 2.4 The settlement site now known as Standen was until the late 18th century known as Homewood (and subsequently Great Hollybush Farm), with the earliest reference occurring in 1120 (ASE 2011, 16-17).
- 2.5 From the 13th century onwards the High Weald began to see more intensive exploitation, particularly in the management of the woodland for timber and fuel. A number of wood banks (MWS12460; MWS12456; MWS12354; MWS12353; MWS12295), a sawpit (MWS12458; MWS12459) and a charcoal platform (MWS12457) bear testament to this land use, though these particular sites may date to the medieval or post-medieval period.
- 2.6 A number of well-established trackways likely date to the medieval or post-medieval period, and also attest to this increasing activity within the landscape.
- 2.7 The original farmhouse (surviving as 5 & 6 Standen Cottages) may have been built c.1450 as a detached kitchen accompanying a farmhouse that stood to the north (ASE 2011, 17). Former farm buildings were converted into the restaurant by the National Trust.
- 2.8 The remaining known archaeological sites in the area relate to the post-medieval designed landscape features of Standen House and associated water management features. The garden design incorporated earlier features, including Goose Green (MWS11961), the original farmyard of Hollybush Farm (ASE 2011, 18).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 The cable trench was excavated in accordance with the preceding brief (NT 2016) and *Written Scheme of Investigation* (ASE 2016). Excavation was undertaken by both machine and hand. The machine was fitted with a 0.30m wide toothless bucket and excavated in spits of up to 0.10m.

3.1.2 The excavations were monitored throughout the 3rd and 4th October 2016. Due to the lack of archaeological evidence encountered during this time monitoring of the remainder of the proposed trench was curtailed with the approval of Tom Dommett (National Trust Regional Archaeologist; Figure 2). Access was facilitated by the groundworks contractor at all times during the course of the watching brief for the inspection and retrieval of any archaeological deposits or artefacts.

3.1.3 Spoil from the excavations were visually inspected for the recovery of archaeological artefacts.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

3.2.1 The narrow width of the trench and often bright sunshine hindered monitoring, but it is considered that no data was lost because of this.

3.3 The Site Archive

3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at a suitable local repository in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Context sheets | 3 |
| Section sheets | 0 |
| Plans sheets | 0 |
| Colour photographs | 0 |
| B&W photos | 0 |
| Digital photos | 49 |
| Context register | 0 |
| Drawing register | 0 |
| Watching brief forms | 2 |
| Trench Record forms | 0 |

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

| | |
|--|-------|
| Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box) | 1 bag |
| Registered finds (number of) | 0 |
| Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |
| Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides) | 0 |

| | |
|--|---|
| Waterlogged wood | 0 |
| Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

- 3.3.2 The finds ultimately deposited as part of the archive are dependent on specialist recommendations and regional archive requirements.

4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 The trench was monitored on both the 3rd and 4th October 2016, with the cable boxes monitored on the 4th October.
- 4.2 The trenches were excavated to a depth of approximately 0.60m, with a width of about 0.35m and had a stratigraphy comprising 0.05m to 0.10m mid brown-grey loamy topsoil and between 0.10m and 0.20m orange-brown sand-clay subsoil. Alongside the building called the Potting Shed and the Café little or no subsoil was observed, but a slightly greater amount of topsoil was present. The natural [103] comprised mid-yellow brown clay sand of the Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand formation.
- 4.3 A single flint flake, fragment of tile and two iron nails were recovered from the subsoil. No archaeological features were encountered.

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Max. Length m | Max. Width m | Deposit Thickness m |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 101 | Layer | Topsoil | Trench | Trench | 0.05-0.10 |
| 102 | Layer | Subsoil | Trench | Trench | 0.10-0.20 |
| 103 | Layer | Natural | Trench | Trench | - |

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief at Standen, East Grinstead. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 4). All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014).

| Context | Lithics | Weight (g) | Pottery | Weight (g) | CBM | Weight (g) | Iron | Weight (g) |
|---------|---------|------------|---------|------------|-----|------------|------|------------|
| 102 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 16 | 1 | 93 | 2 | 54 |
| Total | 1 | 3 | 1 | 16 | 1 | 93 | 2 | 54 |

Table 4: Finds quantification

5.2 The Flintwork by Karine Le Hegarat

5.2.1 A single piece of struck flint weighing 3g was recovered from the subsoil (context [102]). The flake, the distal end of which is absent, is manufactured on a light grey flint. It displays a plain platform but is otherwise chronologically undiagnostic.

5.3 The Post-Medieval Pottery by Susan Chandler

5.3.1 A single sherd of pottery was recovered from context [102]. It weighs 15g and is a sherd of blue and white patterned transfer ware, featuring part of a pagoda typically seen in this type of ware and is of a relatively modern date. The print is not perfect, being slightly blurry when examined closely. The fabric of the pottery is pale, 5mm thick with glaze on both sides.

5.4 The Ceramic Building Material by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

5.4.1 A single fragment of roof tile weighing 95g was found in context [102]. No peg hole was in evidence although it is very likely that this tile fragment was originally part of a peg tile. Roof tile cannot be dated with particular accuracy as it varies little in form between the 14th and 18th centuries, but based on the neatness of the tile a mid-late post-medieval date is suggested, c.17th-18th century.

5.5 The Bulk Metalwork by Susan Chandler

5.5.1 Two iron nails, weighing a total of 53g were recovered, from context [102], during the works on site. Both of these nails are of a hand forged type, with square heads and stems. Nails of this form are common; it is likely these examples are post medieval.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Topsoil was present across all the monitored area and overlay subsoil across the majority of the site. Beneath this was the natural geology (Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand).
- 6.2 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the monitoring works.
- 6.3 A single flint flake, fragment of tile and two iron nails were recovered.
- 6.4 The reason for the paucity of archaeological remains is unclear. Such a location would usually be expected to yield CBM or pottery relating to the farmhouse and its environs. It could be that the farmyard was kept clean and any detritus relocated elsewhere.

6.5 Consideration of research aims

- 6.5.1 The watching brief was successful in determining the presence, extent and quality of any potential archaeological deposits on site.
- 6.5.2 The negative archaeological result of the watching brief meant that the more specific aims could not be achieved.

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HER Summary

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|----|--|--|
| HER enquiry no. | | | | | |
| Site code | STD16 | | | | |
| Project code | 160787 | | | | |
| Planning reference | - | | | | |
| Site address | Standen Estate, East Grinstead, West Sussex | | | | |
| District/Borough | East Grinstead | | | | |
| NGR (12 figures) | 538900 135600 | | | | |
| Geology | Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand | | | | |
| Fieldwork type | | | WB | | |
| Date of fieldwork | 3-4 October 2016 | | | | |
| Sponsor/client | National Trust | | | | |
| Project manager | Jon Sygrave | | | | |
| Project supervisor | Tom Munnery | | | | |
| Period summary | Prehistoric | Post-medieval | | | |
| Project summary (100 word max) | <p><i>This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at Standen House, East Grinstead, West Sussex between 3rd and 4th October 2016. The fieldwork was commissioned by the National Trust to monitor the installation of a new below-ground cable.</i></p> <p><i>No archaeological features were observed during the watching brief, but a single prehistoric flint flake, fragment of CBM and two iron nails were recovered from the overburden.</i></p> | | | | |
| Museum/Accession No. | | | | | |

Finds summary

| Find type | Material | Period | Quantity |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Flint flake | Flint | Prehist | 1 |
| CBM | Tile | Post-medieval | 1 |
| Fe | Nails | Post-medieval | 2 |

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-267406

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief at Standen House, East Grinstead

Short description of the project An archaeological watching brief was conducted at Standen House, East Grinstead, West Sussex, NGR 538900 135600, between the 3rd 4th and October 2016. No archaeological features were observed, but a single flint flake and CBM were recovered from the overburden.

Project dates Start: 03-10-2016 End: 04-10-2016

Previous/future work Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference codes STD16 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes 160787 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Current Land use Other 15 - Other

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Voluntary/self-interest

Project location

Country England

Site location WEST SUSSEX MID SUSSEX EAST GRINSTEAD Standen House

Postcode RH19 4NE

Study area 0 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 389000 356000 51.10230504373 - 0.015869149687 51 06 08 N 000 00 57 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project originator brief National Trust

Project originator design National Trust

Project director/manager Jon Sygrave

Project supervisor Tom Munnery

Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Name of sponsor/funding body National Trust

Project archives

Physical recipient Archive Local Museum

Physical Contents "Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"

Digital recipient Archive Local Museum

Digital available Media "Images raster / digital photography"

Paper recipient Archive Local Museum

Paper available Media "Context sheet", "Plan"

Project bibliography
1

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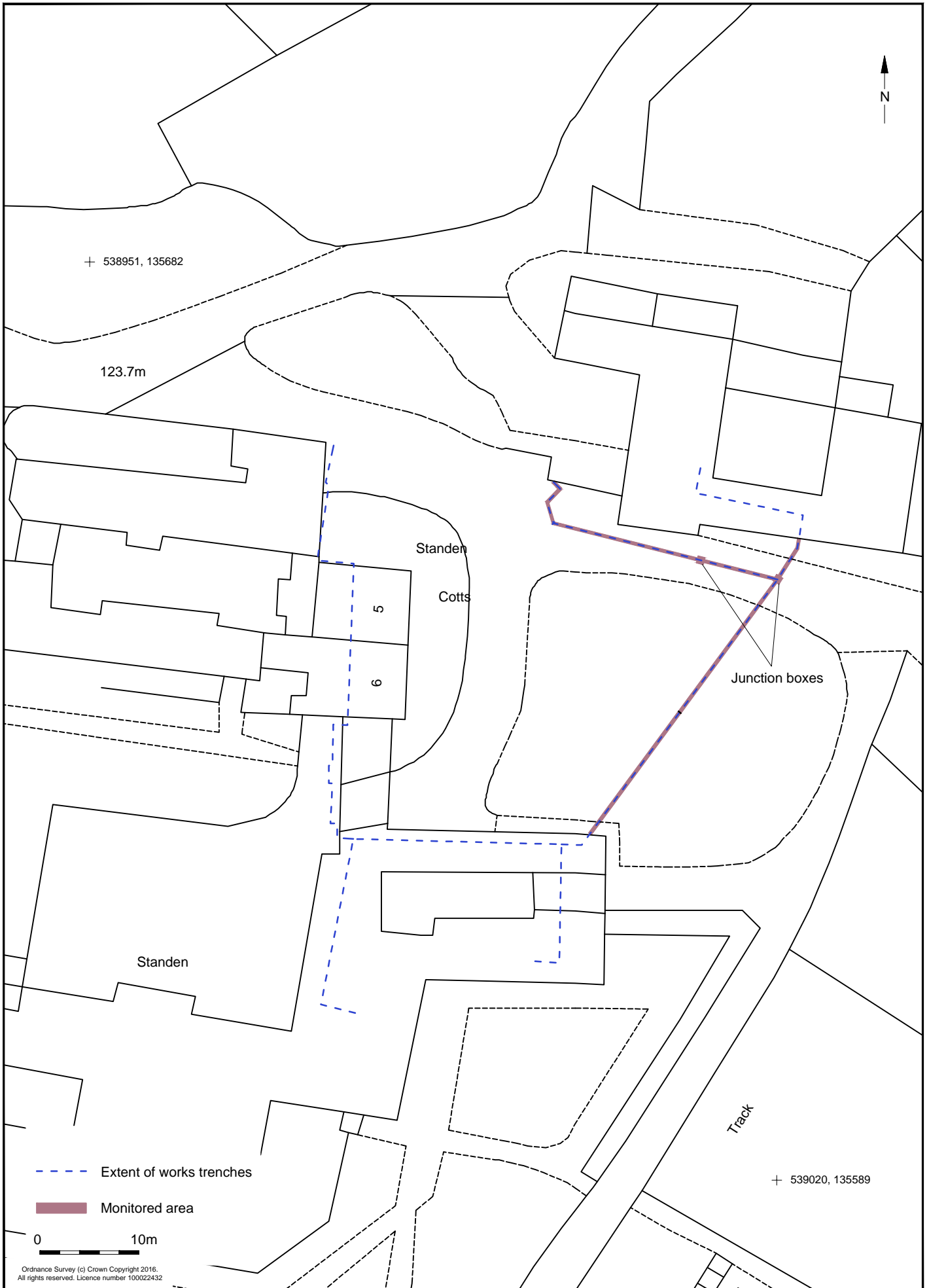
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|--------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Standen, East Grinstead | Fig. 2 |
| Project Ref: 160787 | November 2016 | Site plan and monitored area | |
| Report Ref: 2016393 | Drawn by: LG | | |



View of trench excavation through Goose Green



View of works with Standen House in background



View of junction box pit beside potting shed

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | Standen, East Grinstead | Fig. 3 |
| Project Ref: 160787 | November 2016 | Selected photographs | |
| Report Ref: 2016393 | Drawn by: LG | | |

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