Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3

20 November 2008

RESIDENTIAL PARKING

Kent Highway Services

KentDesign

INTRODUCTION

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing (Communities & Local Government (CLG), November 2006) requires that "Local Planning Authorities should, with stakeholders and communities, develop residential parking policies for their areas, taking account of expected levels of car ownership, the importance of promoting good design and the need to use land efficiently" (PPS3, Section 51). A subsequent report published by Communities and Local Government ("**Residential Car Parking Research**" (CLG, May 2007)) considers the various influences on levels of residential parking, pointing to data from the 2001 Census as a starting point for estimating "expected levels of car ownership".

The wording in PPS3 suggests that there may be reasons why not all guidance on levels of residential car parking needs to be expressed as 'maximum standards'. On the other hand, in certain locations it may be appropriate to limit car parking to achieve the most efficient use of land, usually in situations where there are also vehicular constraint policies. It is no longer acceptable for those involved in the development control process to cite residential parking 'standards'; rather, it is important that a range of factors should be considered before determining the appropriate levels of parking.

Travel Plans will often include maximum vehicular trip generation rates which, if exceeded, will trigger 'penalty' funding for mitigation measures. Such rates may be used in relation to reduced parking provision in appropriate locations, albeit the use of vehicles, especially at peak times, rather than ownership of them is the intended constraint. "Car Clubs" are a particularly useful feature of residential travel plans where travel flexibility without high car ownership is sought.

The previously adopted standards for residential parking in Kent, found in Supplementary Policy Guidance SPG4 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan, are a reasonably accurate guide to the upper levels of expected ownership in the county. Further guidance in the SPG allowed interpretation of the standards down to levels appropriate in more constrained situations. However, the SPG needed to be used with proper interpretation. This Guidance Note is offered as the basis for residential parking policies in Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) across Kent, with the principles to be adopted for development control purposes as soon as possible. Adopted guidance in respect of **Cycle Parking** is not affected by the Note.

A Guidance Table is included towards the end of this Note. It suggests appropriate levels of parking for a range of situations. Local Planning Authorities may adopt this table and identify the areas within which particular levels will apply. Maps will help to support this approach. "The Census approach" is quite complicated, and is most relevant to large amounts of unallocated parking. Furthermore, it is not necessarily robust and needs to be the subject of **validation surveys**.

Kent Highway Services, in liaison with the Kent Design Initiative and Kent's district councils, is undertaking surveys of recent residential developments. Quality and quantity outputs from these surveys will assist with addressing the requirements of PPS3. At Appendices A and B, relevant results to date are tabulated, with additional comments to aid interpretation. These results represent a growing evidence base for this Guidance Note and the Guidance Table.

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

Location has a significant influence on vehicle ownership. Where effectively enforced **on-street parking controls (or positively managed covenants/agreements)** limit the opportunities for residents to own cars that they cannot accommodate in dedicated parking areas, lower levels provision will not cause problems. Care needs to be taken in these situations to ensure that the reasonable needs of **visitors** are catered for, even if only in nearby public car parks. Similar considerations apply to the relevance of **garages** (as opposed to car ports and car barns without gates) as part of the parking provision. In areas without on-street controls, many people do not use garages, even if they have to park on the street as a result (see Appendices for evidence).

If on-street controls are needed to support the chosen approach to parking provision, these must be considered in relation to any potential for parking in neighbouring streets. Controls within the development can be imposed without public consultation (albeit purchasers must be advised of the intention to introduce them), but residents in streets affected by wider controls need to be involved in framing controls for inclusion in any traffic regulation orders. Section 106 Agreements can be used to secure funding for such orders, along with any additional enforcement.

Tenure is also relevant, albeit only where retention in perpetuity of tenancy controls is anticipated should the effect be considered. Census data indicates that privately owned dwellings have higher overall ownership levels than the social sector, albeit longer term high occupancy levels may undermine this in some cases. Similarly, **houses** have higher vehicle ownership levels than **flats.**

TERLINGHAM VILLAGE PHASE 1, HAWKINGE
Car barns figure in residents' appreciation of the parking provision and represent a positive aspect of the built form.

The **size** of properties is a key factor. Census data is expressed against the number of **habitable rooms**, whereas standards have normally been related to the number of **bedrooms**. Given the ranges involved, it is not difficult to move between the two approaches. Bedrooms are used in the Guidance Table.

Growth is considered in the CLG Report. Should a 25 year horizon be used with Census data? Such a precise approach to prediction may warrant the use of such a factor. The influence of **regeneration** has not yet been understood. If new development is bringing about socio-economic

improvement to an area the expectations for car ownership among its residents may be higher than exists within that area, hence the need for validation surveys of recent developments. Such surveys have already produced examples of ownership levels almost 0.9 vehicles per unit above the average Census figures for the wards in question, although there are also examples of close Census/survey correlation and some 'sub-Census' values. As such, a proper understanding of the various factors is essential if expected levels of car ownership are to be predicted with confidence.

Allocation of parking to individual units increases the amount of parking needed. **Non-allocated parking** makes use of different levels of ownership, including those without vehicles, to use the land given over to parking in the most efficient way. It can also satisfy the reasonable needs of **visitor parking** because of the occupancy patterns across the day. In Kent, few developers are currently pursuing schemes with non-allocated parking, especially for houses. However, a design-led allowance for on-street parking will normally be the best way to cater for visitors, and additional vehicles owned by residents, where there are no on-street restrictions in place.

Vans are an increasingly common sight in residential areas. Although covenants are often put in place in new developments to prevent such vans from being parked, they are seldom enforced. Modern working patterns often necessitate the parking of vans at home, hence there is a need to design with them in mind. Parking bay dimensions should be modelled on vans rather than cars.

PPS3 puts **good design** at the heart of parking provision in requiring "a design-led approach to the provision of car-parking space, that is well-integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly" (Section 16). English Partnerships' **Car Parking: What Works Where** (May 2006) offers detailed guidance on how to provide well-designed parking across a range of development scenarios. **Manual for Streets** (Department for Transport etc., March 2007) reinforces the need to consider a range of solutions, encouraging on-street provision in line with Section 16 of PPS3, and endorsing the guidance contained in the **Kent Design Guide** (Kent Design Initiative, December 2005) (Section 2.2.4).

It is clear from Appendices A and B that parking is a major cause of dissatisfaction, and sometimes even serious neighbour disputes, in otherwise good developments. Safety concerns are often associated with parking problems. In some cases there is enough parking but it isn't being used. A design-led approach to the provision of realistic amounts of parking will address these issues.

Residential parking is not just a 'numbers game'. On the negative side, refusals made without consideration of current guidance are likely to be criticised and may be inappropriate. On a more positive note, recent guidance offers all those involved the opportunity to get the amount, location and design of residential parking 'right' for the benefit of future residents, thus ending many years of dissatisfaction with ill-conceived approaches.

QUALITY AUDITS

Quality Audits bring together the various assessments of public realm. The Development Team, and not individual professionals, decides on the balance to be struck between the outcomes. As such, Road Safety Audits have no superior status. Many Development

Planning Engineers have been making value judgements on attractiveness, functionality and safety for years. Increasingly, their role will be one of 'placemakers', hence they will become adept at interpreting Road Safety Audits and understanding the risks to which the findings direct the Project Team's attention. They will also develop the skills necessary to contribute positively and creatively to the placemaking agenda, not restricting themselves to the application of standards.

MILTON LANE, LACUNA, KINGS HILL
Inconsiderate parking obstructs pedestrians and engenders safety concerns.

The Local Planning Authority's Case Officer will keep a record of the Quality Audit inputs and decisions. This will be sufficient to deal with enquiries in the very unlikely event of an incident being attributed to the design of the public realm. A copy of the Quality Audit should be kept on the planning file(s) and any subsequent adoption agreement file.

The following information should be included in the Quality Audit, preferably in a standard format:

- Site
- Developer
- Case Officer
- Development Team members
- Key meeting dates and venues
- Main issues discussed and decisions made at the meetings
- Dates of Road Safety Audits, and summaries of issues raised and responses made to them
- Date of Development Team "approval" of scheme
- "Approved" drawing numbers
- Date of planning consent
- Kent Highway Services' Agreement Engineer, where appropriate (if not a member of the Development Team)
- Record of construction phase issues affecting consented scheme
- Record of construction phase and completed scheme site visits
- Date of commencement and closure of Quality Audit process

An enhancement of the service offered to the occupiers of new developments would be for the developer to give them a copy of, or a web link to, the Design and Access Statement in the Welcome Pack, explaining the background to where they live. Such a package could also include a summary of, or link to, the Quality Audit.

MINOR DEVELOPMENTS

This Guidance Note relates primarily to development proposals involving new streets and places. The Guidance Table can be applied to minor (often infill) developments, but regard needs to be had for the severity of concerns about safety and/or amenity before recommendations of refusal are made in respect of numerically "inadequate" parking. Unless demonstrable harm is likely to be caused, it may be inappropriate to make such recommendations. Streets with existing parking problems (usually in the evenings and at weekends) may be identified for inclusion in Development Control and/or Local Development Framework policies.

FINCH CLOSE, FAVERSHAM
All residents who responded to a satisfaction survey feel that there are parking problems in the street.

CONCLUSIONS

Residential parking has frequently been the greatest source of dissatisfaction among the residents of new developments. This has often been because of ill-conceived experiments with the amount and/or location of spaces. Otherwise good developments have been blighted by inconsiderate, and sometimes dangerous, parking. Current guidance addresses the complex issues and leaves no excuses for poor layouts. It also encourages Local Planning Authorities to develop parking policies which take account of these factors, offering the opportunity to provide a range of sustainable solutions, including developments with low or even zero parking provision.

All parties involved in the design and assessment of new developments should be following current guidance by identifying parking provision that satisfies reasonable demand, is well-designed and makes the best use of the land available. The Checklist that follows will help practitioners to give full and proper consideration to all relevant factors.

NOTE: Retirement and other residential developments with particular occupancy controls are not covered by this Note. While some of the principles are applicable, specialist providers have tended to develop their own evidence base for such accommodation.

TERLINGHAM VILLAGE PHASE 1, HAWKINGE
Street trees provide visual interest in public realm that readily absorbs necessary on-street parking.

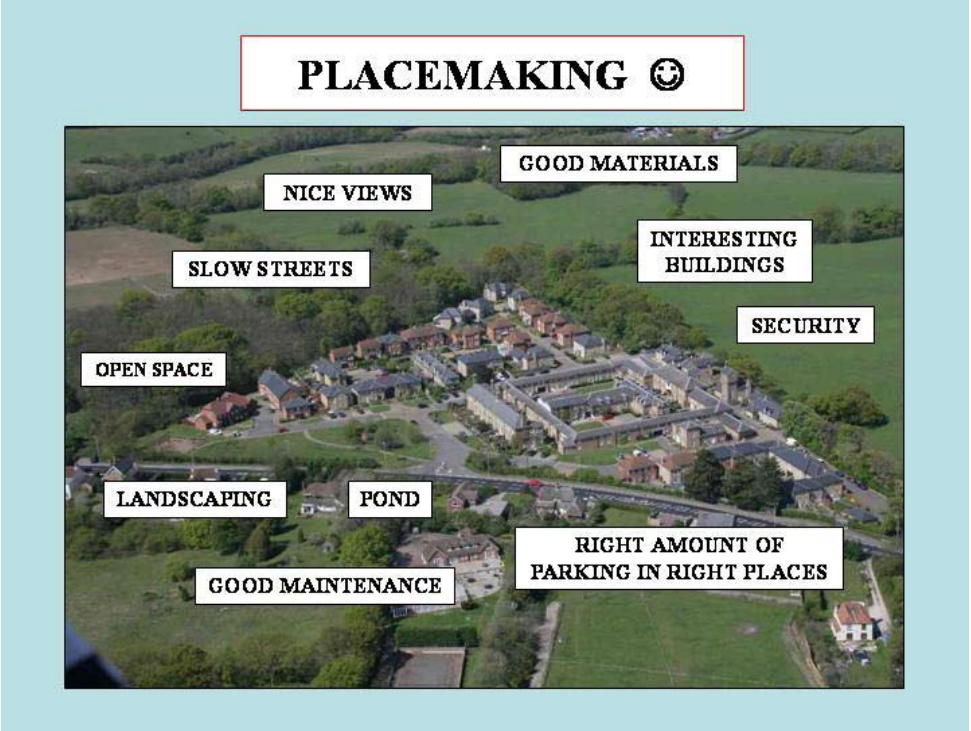
CONCLUSIONS

Quality Audits are not new. If the Kent Design Guide is followed, Quality Audits will be carried out. Manual for Streets confirms that Road Safety Audits will inform Quality Audits, but they are only one aspect that should be considered.

Development Planning Engineers, and, where appropriate, Agreement Engineers, will be part of the Development Team that undertakes the Quality Audit. These engineers will have a responsibility to ensure that the Quality Audit process is not undermined when the development is constructed.

Many planners and engineers already possess the experience and skills needed to participate in Quality Audits. However, training and skills sharing will be required to help raise standards and bring about consistency of approach. In time, some form of placemaking accreditation should be developed.

A positive approach to Quality Audits will help to deliver attractive, safe and friendly developments that are good places to live. The Checklists that follow will help those involved in the Quality Audit process to identify relevant steps and to ensure that they understand their responsibilities.



Parking is the most complained about aspect of recently completed developments.

CHECKLISTS

- Has the applicant demonstrated an understanding of current guidance on residential parking in the submission?
- Are there local parking policies for which the proposal must have regard? If not, are such policies in the course of preparation?
- If on-street controls are needed, are all necessary mechanisms for introducing these understood and funding agreed?
- Does the submission take account of location, tenure, size and type of accommodation?
- Is there a Travel Plan which includes maximum vehicular trip rates? If so, are these linked to reduced parking provision?
- Does the developer intend to establish a Car Club?
- Is the layout design-led in relation to parking provision, including on-street parking where appropriate?
- Has regard been had for expected levels of ownership?
- Should growth be considered, and are there regeneration influences to be taken account of?
- Has non-allocation of parking been considered?
- If garages are included, are they likely to be used?
- What allowance has been made for visitor parking, and are the habits of visitors understood?
- Are there any 'risks' associated with the layout, such as indiscriminate parking, commercial vehicle parking and hindrance to emergency service access?
- Would you be happy to live with the amount and design of the parking shown?

SCOTT AVENUE, CANTERBURY
A design-led approach to parking, achieved through close co-operation, has resulted in good streets and few problems

GUIDANCE TABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL PARKING

LOCATION	CITY/TOWN CENTRE	EDGE OF CENTRE	SUBURBAN	SUBURBAN EDGE/VILLAGE/RURAL
ON-STREET CONTROLS	On-street controls preventing all (or all long stay) parking	On-street controls, residents' scheme and/or existing saturation (Note 3)	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No on-street controls, but possibly a tight street layout
NATURE OF GUIDANCE	MAXIMUM (Note 1)	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM (Note 6)	MINIMUM (Note 6)
1 & 2 BED FLATS	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
FORM	Controlled (Note 2)	Not allocated	Not allocated	Not allocated
1 & 2 BED HOUSES	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1.5 spaces per unit
FORM	Controlled (Note 2)	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible
3 BED HOUSES	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1.5 spaces per unit	2 independently accessible spaces per unit
FORM	Controlled (Note 2)	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one or both spaces possible
4+ BED HOUSES	1 space per unit	1.5 spaces per unit	2 independently accessible spaces per unit	2 independently accessible spaces per unit
FORM	Controlled (Note 2)	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of both spaces possible (Note 7)	Allocation of both spaces possible (Note 7)
ARE GARAGES ACCEPTABLE? (Note 4)	Yes, but with areas of communal space for washing etc.	Yes, but not as a significant proportion of overall provision	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only
ADDITIONAL VISITOR PARKING (Note 5)	Public car parks	Communal areas, 0.2 per unit maximum	On-street areas, 0.2 per unit	On-street areas, 0.2 per unit

NOTES

1. Reduced, or even nil provision is encouraged in support of demand management and the most efficient use of land.
2. Parking/garage courts, probably with controlled entry.
3. Reduced, or even nil provision acceptable for rented properties, subject to effective tenancy controls.
4. Open car ports or car barns acceptable at all locations, subject to good design.
5. May be reduced where main provision is not allocated. Not always needed for flats.
6. Lower provision may be considered if vehicular trip rate constraints are to be applied in connection with a binding and enforceable Travel Plan.
7. Best provided side by side, or in another independently accessible form. Tandem parking arrangements are often under-utilised.

DISTRICT Development	**PARKING RATING** (Note 1)	**PARKING PROBLEMS** (Note 2)	**VEHICLES PER UNIT**	2001 CENSUS VEHICLES PER UNIT	**GARAGE USED FOR PARKING**	**COMMENTS**
ASHFORD						
Highland Park (part)*	-76%	+79%	1.40	1.36	59%	Need to check for covenants/agreements re parking
Mill Court	-26%	+14%	1.26	1.26	45%	Close to town centre and station
Miller Close	+50%	-60%	1.00	1.26	n/a	Off Mill Court
Orlestone View	-57%	+52%	1.38	1.73	43%	Near village centre
Sir John Fogge Avenue*	-43%	+30%	1.61	1.40	53%	In regeneration area
CANTERBURY						
Aurelie Way	+15%	-54%	1.46	1.35	25%	Close to Tesco and secondary school
Barnes Way	-40%	+28%	1.56	1.39	33%	Suburban edge
Blackberry Way	+60%	-60%	1.75	1.39	33%	Suburban edge
Canterbury Fields	+15%	-10%	1.48	1.49	50%	On frequent bus route
Charollais Close	+17%	0%	1.16	1.25	n/a	Housing association development fairly close to major facilities
Chartham Heights (SE)	+14%	-14%	1.43	1.65	18%	Development has convenience store and bus service
Chartham Heights (V Core)*	+12%	-8%	1.68	1.65	51%	Development has convenience store and bus service
Cordingham Close*	0%	-11%	1.00	1.44	n/a	Housing association development on suburban edge
Dextor Close	-13%	+50%	1.13	1.25	n/a	Close to major facilities
Eider Close	-18%	+27%	2.27	1.38	50%	Close to secondary school
Eversleigh Rise	+16%	-18%	1.50	1.35	37%	Close to Tesco and secondary school
Gilbert Way	+10%	+14%	1.33	1.21	45%	Close to retail park and Park & Ride
Great Stour Place*	+18%	+9%	1.00	1.25	(100%)	Fairly close to City centre, station etc.
Mallard Close/Muscovy Way	+60%	-33%	1.87	1.38	38%	Suburban edge, fairly close to station
Pochard Crescent	-13%	+13%	1.73	1.38	58%	Fairly close to station
Quinneys Place*	-50%	+100%	1.50	1.27	(66%)	Very close to station, shops and frequent bus route
Ruskins View	-22%	+33%	1.67	1.49	n/a	Village centre, close to frequent bus route
Scott Ave & Birch Rd	+45%	-27%	1.27	1.21	50%	Design led approach to parking, including on-street areas
Speedwell Road	+56%	-48%	1.89	1.44	44%	Suburban edge
Walden Court*	+31%	-23%	1.46	1.25	n/a	Fairly close to major facilities
Wallis Court	-63%	+75%	1.63	1.39	(0%)	Parking problems relate primarily to nearby school
West of Hersden	-21%	+29%	1.51	1.62	42%	Village extension in mainly rural ward
Willow Farm Way	+9%	+3%	2.21	1.49	48%	Neighbour problems over parking in two parts
DARTFORD						
Bexley Park (part)	-21%	+26%	2.08	1.56	56%	Shops at entrance to development
Palladian Circus*	-29%	+43%	1.52	1.50	50%	Fastrack frequent bus service runs past Ingress Park
Stonechat Mews*	-67%	+78%	1.11	1.50	(100%)	Fastrack runs nearby

Waterstone Park (part)*	-39%	+50%	1.41	1.50	47%	Fastrack runs nearby
DOVER						
Miller Close, Wingham	+54%	+8%	1.00	1.62	n/a	Village edge
Sandwich Road, Ash	-44%	+31%	1.78	1.35	41%	Village edge
GRAVESHAM						
Fenners Marsh*	+13%	-7%	1.33	1.11	67%	Suburban edge
Kendall Gardens	+7%	+29%	1.14	1.25	(50%)	Close to shops
Rosherville Way (part)	+9%	-6%	1.72	1.25	62%	In former quarry, fairly close to shops
*Admirals Way***	n/a	+22%	1.09	0.78	n/a	In regeneration area
*Baltic Wharf***	n/a	+90%	1.05	0.84	n/a	Close to town centre
*Covesfield**	n/a	-42%	1.33	1.25	n/a	Close to shops

(For Key see Maidstone – Tunbridge Wells)

APPENDIX B - **RESIDENTS' SURVEYS: PARKING: MAIDSTONE – TUNBRIDGE WELLS**

DISTRICT Development	**PARKING RATING (Note 1)**	**PARKING PROBLEMS (Note 2)**	**VEHICLES PER UNIT**	2001 CENSUS VEHICLES PER UNIT	**GARAGE USED FOR PARKING**	**COMMENTS**
MAIDSTONE						
Edelin Road*	-85%	+85%	1.46	1.51	(25%)	25% of properties not occupied at time of survey
Shaw Close	-76%	+76%	1.97	1.43	45%	Close to Park & Ride
SEVENOAKS						
Bentleys Meadow (H Zone)*	-18%	+27%	1.45	1.90	n/a	Housing association development in mainly rural ward
Parsonage Bank	0%	+50%	1.63	1.61	n/a	Close to village centre
The Beeches	+18%	-12%	1.64	1.61	51%	Close to two railway stations, edge of town
The Sidings*	-31%	+50%	1.19	1.52	(17%)	Adjoins railway station on edge of settlement
SHEPWAY						
Terlingham Village Phase 1	+67%	-78%	1.71	1.60	50%	Part of major expansion of village
SWALE						
Finch Close	-83%	+100%	1.45	1.34	10%	Fairly close to town centre and station
Hilton Close	-28%	+44%	1.59	1.34	58%	Fairly close to own centre and station
Mallard Crescent*	-45%	+66%	1.72	1.76	25%	Connects with Sanderling Way
Orchard Edge	-75%	+81%	1.62	1.76	36%	Need to check for covenants/agreements re parking
Sanderling Way	-23%	+18%	1.85	1.76	41%	Connects with Mallard Crescent
THANET						
Brindle Grove	+14%	+43%	1.79	1.13	31%	Fairly close to station and bus routes
Chantry Park	-44%	+44%	2.11	1.54	45%	Village location
College Gardens	0%	-9%	1.73	1.18	78%	Moderate walk to shops & station; bus route passes site
TONBRIDGE & MALLING						

Anisa Close*	-50%	+60%	2.00	1.89	90%	Close to commercial centre of Kings Hill
Busbridge Close	+17%	-33%	2.08	1.58	58%	Fairly close to station
Friars View	-50%	+40%	1.85	1.71	42%	On-street problems blamed on flat occupiers; very close to station
Lacuna (part) (1) & (2)*	-67%	+81%	1.39	1.89	76%	Need to check for covenants/agreements re parking
Milton Lane	-81%	+62%	1.67	1.89	68%	Need to check for covenants/agreements re parking
McArthur Drive	-23%	+44%	1.57	1.89	69%	Need to check for covenants/agreements re parking
Perch Close*	-39%	+65%	1.57	1.69	(80%)	Need to check for covenants/agreements re parking
The Gables, Friars View**	-89%	+33%	1.22	n/a	n/a	On-street problems blamed on house occupiers
Upper Mill	0%	-12%	1.44	1.58	n/a	Fairly close to station
TUNBRIDGE WELLS						
Blackberry Way	+22%	-56%	1.44	1.51	58%	Off Green Lane
Green Lane	+50%	-85%	1.68	1.51	51%	Edge of town

CENSUS data is the average for owner-occupied houses except those in italics, which is the average for owner-occupied flats.

* Developments with a significant proportion (20% or more) of flats, for which Census data suggests that average vehicle ownership rates are lower.

** Developments with flats only.

Note 1 ("GOOD" + "VERY GOOD") – ("POOR" + "VERY POOR") expressed as a percentage of the overall response

Note 2 "YES" – "NO" expressed as a percentage

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