



Bird College

Public Consultation

February 2021

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1. Introduction

1.1 Preamble

The purpose of this document is to discuss the public consultation methods and feedback received for the proposed Bird College development.

The proposal seeks approval for the construction of a new Accommodation and Dance Studio Block, that shall overlook the existing courtyard located at the heart the Bird College campus, Alma Road. The proposal includes the construction of a new EB3 Block located beside the current EB1 to the back of the Bird College campus and the construction of a new Theatre Block to the left of the existing South Block.

1.2 Public Consultation

Preparation for the consultation included:

- Brochure Distribution
- Website preparation

Public engagement included:

- Phone Call consultations
- Email correspondence

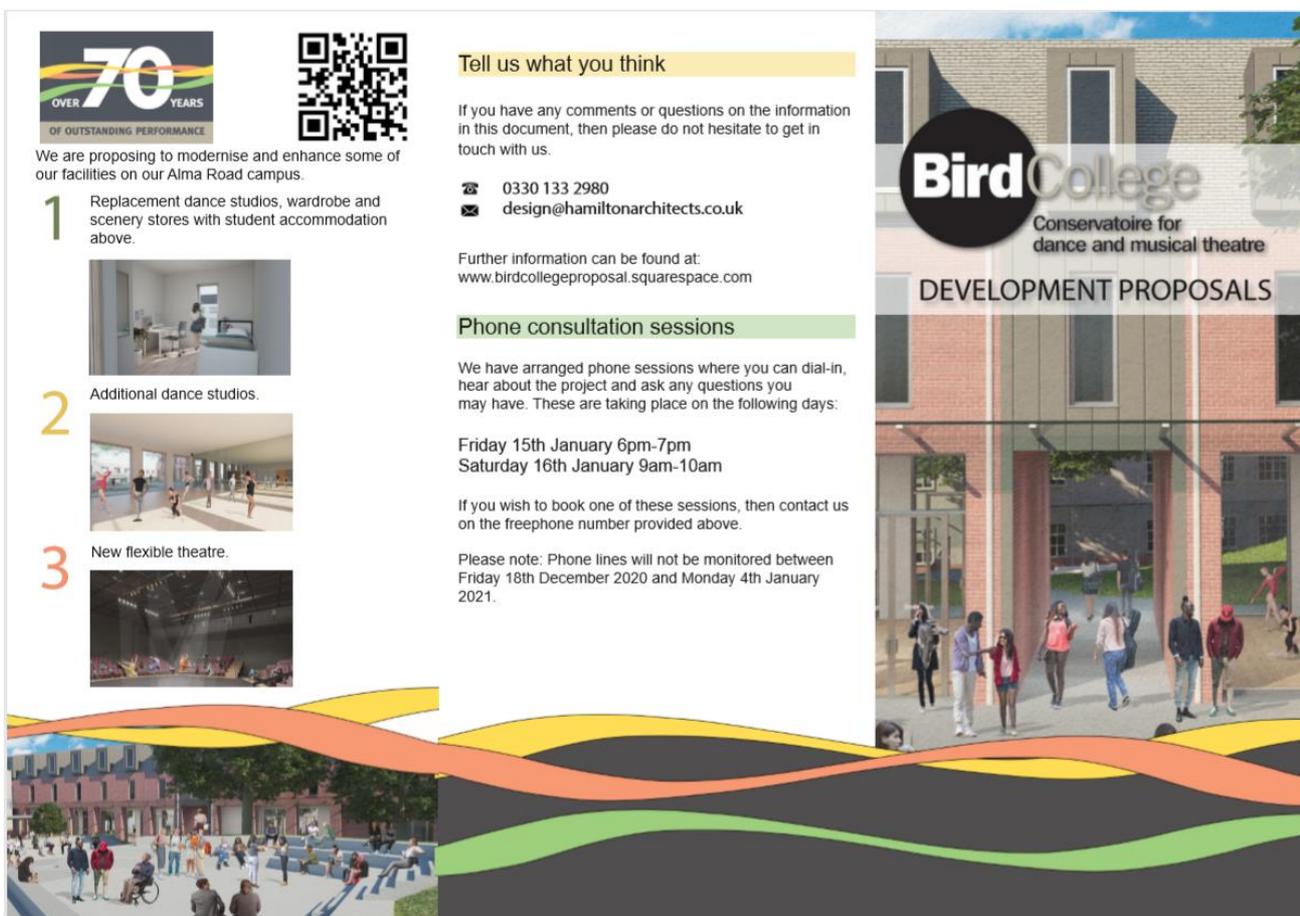


2. Brochure and Website

2.1 Brochure

On the 4th of January 2021, 4648 brochures were distributed using the Royal Mail Door to Door Delivery service. They were distributed to both residential and business addresses falling under the DA14 4 postcode.

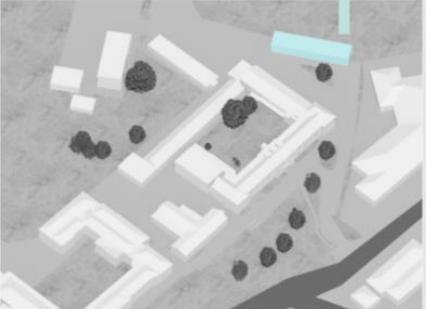
The brochure summarised the proposed scheme both visually and through simple bullet points, also referring to the website created to further describe the proposal. Contact information was included encouraging feedback. Details regarding the phone call consultation sessions was also included.



Brochure



Development Plans
We would like to know your thoughts on our proposals before we make a formal planning application. This leaflet explains the background and content to the proposals.



Community Benefits

- 1. Enhanced acoustics**
A new state-of-the-art soundproofed building which significantly reduces noise pollution.
- 2. Less traffic**
Students will no longer be driving from accommodation in Greenwich daily and parking on local roads. The college will adopt a Green Travel Plan where students will be actively encouraged to use public transport.
- 3. Economic Benefit**
By living on-campus students will use local shops and facilities in Sidcup thereby benefiting local businesses and helping make the High Street a vibrant place.
- 4. Environmentally Sustainable Campus**
- 5. Theatre For Community Use**

1 Replacement dance studios, wardrobe and scenery stores with student accommodation above
The proposed 3 storey block will replace the existing single-storey buildings on the site. Student accommodation will be located above the new dance studios providing single occupancy bedrooms each with an en-suite bathroom. Currently, our students stay in halls of residence in Greenwich and travel to and from college. This will provide more secure accommodation for our youngest students and reduce traffic.

2 Additional dance studios
This is a two storey extension to the recently constructed two storey dance studios block to the rear of the site.

3 New flexible theatre
Although primarily designed for college / educational use, the new theatre will also be available to the community.



Temporary Block Store Building
An existing single storey building will be temporarily located in the side car park. Windows will be treated to ensure there are no privacy issues. The building will contain stores only.

Brochure

2.2 Website

A website was created to supplement the brochure and provide more in-depth information on the proposal.

The website is simple to navigate with four tabs:

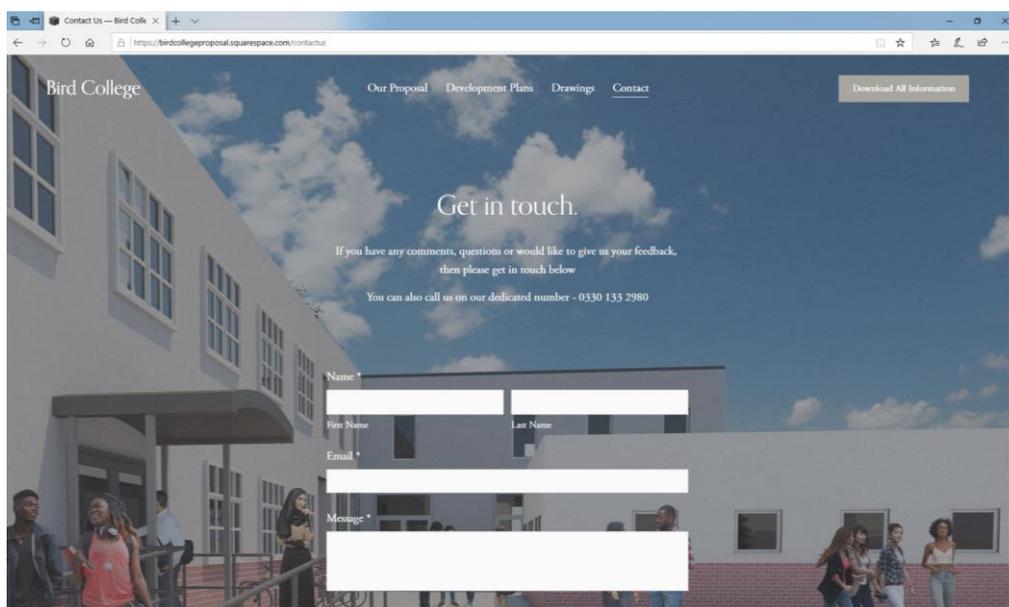
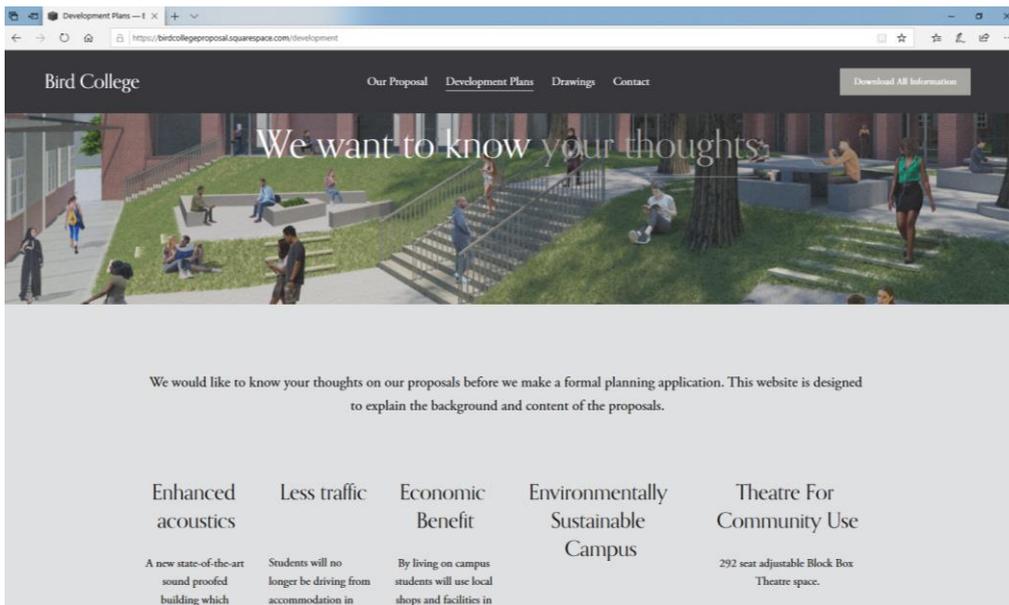
- Our Proposal
- Development Plans
- Drawings
- Contact

Technical Drawings showing the detailed proposal, diagrams and 3D visuals were all included to communicate the scheme to all.

Please look at screenshots from the website on the next page, or visit the website using this link:

<https://birdcollegeproposal.squarespace.com/>





3. Response

3.1 Phone Call Consultations

Phone call consultations were offered on the following days:

- Friday 15th January, 6pm-7pm
- Saturday 16th January, 9am-10am

Two of these took place with Mrs V and Mr W. Overall, both parties supported and welcome the proposed development. Please see details and a summary of the calls below:

Mrs V

6:30pm Friday 15th January 2021

- Present on the Call:
 - Adam Granger (PDS)
 - Mrs V (Community Member)
 - Luis De Abreu (Joint Principal and Artistic Director of Bird College)
 - Mark Haslett (Hamilton Architects)
- Call Summary:

Mrs V had concerns over the impact of the construction on the neighbourhood. We stated that a CEMP would be provided indicating operating hours and mitigating measures for noise, dust and deliveries etc. We also stated that we would examine the possibility of getting access from the rear of the site (Faraday Avenue, as the School had done previously). Mrs V also had concerns over any potential increase on the number of students. We assured her that student numbers would not increase as a result of the development.

Mrs V asked how the community use of the proposed theatre would work. Mr De Abreu explained that the college would only be using it during term time and that it would be made available to local amateur dramatic, operatic groups, youth orchestras or other local organisations.

Mrs V stated that she lived two roads away from the College and had never had an invite to a performance. Mr De Abreu explained that the existing theatre was not a licenced venue and that this is one of the reasons Bird College wanted to develop the new theatre. This was viewed as a positive reason for the proposals by Mrs V. It was also pointed out that an agreement had been made with neighbouring primary school that their carpark could be used in the evenings for busier performances, and that the theatre could also be used by the school.

Not relating to the proposals, but while the opportunity was available to talk to Mr De Abreu, Mrs V expressed a dissatisfaction over the manners of some of the students while walking to the College and that her calls to the college about this had been ignored. Mr De Abreu apologised and his contact details including mobile phone number were passed into Mrs Martin by email. Mrs Martin stated that she welcomed the opportunity to engage with the College and the development in general and looked forward to developing a closer relationship in the future.



Mr W

9:45am Saturday 16th January 2021

- Present on the Call:
 - Adam Granger (PDS)
 - Luis De Abreu (Joint Principal and Artistic Director of Bird College)
 - Mark Haslett (Hamilton Architects)
 - Mr and Mrs W (Community Members)

- Call Summary:

Mr W (who was on the call with his wife) was given a description of the proposals with particular emphasis on the sound protection issues, (as he lives adjacent the rear carpark in Hemmings Close) including the fact that no windows to the outer facing walls would be openable and that the new heavier masonry construction would offer greater acoustic performance compared to the existing lightweight buildings being replaced. The proposed pedestrian routes to access the rear courtyard and the fact that all of the entrances to the residential accommodation were from the courtyard were also pointed out to minimise the potential of any disruption to neighbours.

It was confirmed that student numbers would not increase as a result of the proposals. The visual impact of the development viewed from the rear of Mr and Mrs W's house was discussed. It was agreed the College and the design team would review the trees between Mr and Mrs W's property and the nearest new Block and send a tree proposal to them. Based on the benefits new construction would have over the existing buildings in terms of noise breakout and the offer of potential new planting to screen the nearest new building, Mr and Mrs W's generally supported the proposals.

3.2 Email Responses

Mr X

Received: 5th January 2021

"I have been looking at your flyer for proposed development at Alma Rd. I think it looks great and I hope it goes ahead. I particularly like the theatre. Until recently I was part of BOATE (British open arts theatre events). We performed street theatre at Greenwich in the 2012 Olympics and went on to put on theatre restaurant events at local venues. Our biggest problem was that we had a strong local following but there was difficulty finding a suitable venue near to our audience.

*This space would have been just the thing for us.
I wish you good luck with it.*

Mr X."

Mrs V



Received: 12th January 2021

“I have received a leaflet through my door regarding a development that you are proposing at Bird College Sidcup. I have tried to ring, on the number given in the leaflet to get a few more answers to questions but no reply – I did leave my telephone number on the voicemail. I have tried your phone number but your office is not manned and there was no voicemail facility and hence this email. Perhaps someone could contact me regarding this proposal, obviously it is not possible to put all the details in such a leaflet and I do not think that two one hour slots will necessarily cover everyone’s questions.”

Following the phone call consultation with Mrs V, she requested Luis De Abreu (Joint Principal and Artistic Director of Bird College) contact details and responded with the below email:

“Dear Mark,

I have just realised that I did not reply to your email below, giving me Luis’ details, for which I apologise and thank you for the same. I thought the conference call was most interesting and informative and I look forward to seeing the development plan in due course and following the development as it goes on.

Should it live up to expectations it will be an asset to Sidcup and I am sure that Doreen Bird would have approved.

*Kind regards,
Mrs V”*

Mr Y

Received: 14th January 2021

“Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find attached comments on the proposed development on the Bird College site from residents of Denberry Drive DA14 4LB

*Regards
Mr Y”*

The attached document contained the comments listed below:

“We refer to the leaflet posted through our doors asking for comments on the proposed development on the Bird College site.

We have no particular view on the teaching component of the proposals, nor on the architectural form of the development.



In principle we applaud the provision of student accommodation within the development but the leaflet is not clear if the development is designed to increase the numbers of students attending the site and if so if the accommodation will match the increased numbers. In addition we would challenge the assertion that the accommodation element of the development will reduce the pressure of students parking cars in the local area.

*Prior to the occupation of the former Adult Education Institute by Bird College we had no problem at all with non residential or commuter parking in Denberry Drive. However since that time this small, narrow residential cul-de-sac of just 18 properties is routinely jammed with student's parked cars. Talking to these students has revealed that most if not all are **not** travelling from student accommodation in Greenwich but are living at home and travelling a significant distance to attend Bird College – for example Orpington and even Tonbridge Wells have been cited. It should be noted however that outside of term time and particularly during the Covid19 pandemic, while the college has been largely closed we have experienced almost total relief from the problem of parked cars in Denberry Drive.*

Quite apart from the nuisance the student parking causes residents (leaving nowhere for visitors to park for example) the solid line of parked cars in this narrow street means any large vehicle such as the refuse cart or delivery vehicle often has to drive with one wheel on the pavement with the result that the pavement is now in a terrible condition. In addition cars are routinely parked in the turning head at the end of the cul-de-sac which inevitably causes problems for vehicles trying to turn around and results in further damage to the pavements.

The residents have lobbied Bexley Council to introduce parking controls in Denberry Drive but have been told that if a scheme were to be introduced the residents of Denberry Drive would have to pay for it. This would be expensive for the residents as that there are only 18 properties in the street and seems grossly unfair given it is the students of Bird College who have caused the problem. The problem is not confined to Denberry Drive however; The Drive, Lansdown Road, Alma Road and other local roads are now inundated with parked student cars (often on both sides of the road) making movement in the area particularly difficult – the B14 bus route experiences significant problems in The Drive for example.

The leaflet also states that the college will adopt a “Green Travel Plan” for the students but unless the encouragement to use alternative modes of transport is backed up with effective disincentives to use cars we are sceptical that the plan will have any effect.

*Consequently we feel that the development proposal **must** include the design and implementation of on-street parking controls not just in Denberry Drive but in the wider area which has been affected by the problem of student parking.*



In short it is our view that for this development to proceed the college must undertake steps to ensure that local residents are no longer plagued with the indiscriminate parking of student cars in the local roads.”

Hamilton Architects responded 19th January 2021 with the below email:

“Dear Mr Y

Many thanks for your email, your queries and indeed your support. Please find attached your original email with our responses highlighted in red after each point. If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

More detail can be found on the following website:

[Bird College \(squarespace.com\)](http://Bird College (squarespace.com))

*Kind regards
Mark”*

The attached document contained the comments listed below:

“We refer to the leaflet posted through our doors asking for comments on the proposed development on the Bird College site.

We have no particular view on the teaching component of the proposals, nor on the architectural form of the development.

In principle we applaud the provision of student accommodation within the development but the leaflet is not clear if the development is designed to increase the numbers of students attending the site and if so if the accommodation will match the increased numbers. In addition we would challenge the assertion that the accommodation element of the development will reduce the pressure of students parking cars in the local area.

The proposed development is designed to enhance the outdated existing facilities and there is no intention to increase student numbers. Currently there are approximately 100 students of the college who reside in Greenwich university halls of residence and travel each day. Evidently this movement will cease when the development is complete and reduce the need for these students to travel by car across the Borough.

*Prior to the occupation of the former Adult Education Institute by Bird College we had no problem at all with non residential or commuter parking in Denberry Drive. However since that time this small, narrow residential cul-de-sac of just 18 properties is routinely jammed with student’s parked cars. Talking to these students has revealed that most if not all are **not** travelling from student accommodation in Greenwich but are living at home and travelling a significant distance to attend Bird*



College – for example Orpington and even Tonbridge Wells have been cited. It should be noted however that outside of term time and particularly during the Covid19 pandemic, while the college has been largely closed we have experienced almost total relief from the problem of parked cars in Denberry Drive.

As part of the development the car parking is being rationalised on site which increases car parking by approx. 25 spaces. Currently it is College policy that students are not given access to on site parking. However, the College will be changing their approach particularly in relation to these students who do commute. They will be able to be accommodated on site when the development is complete. In addition the music service has been replicated to the centre of the borough which eases pressure on site parking.

Quite apart from the nuisance the student parking causes residents (leaving nowhere for visitors to park for example) the solid line of parked cars in this narrow street means any large vehicle such as the refuse cart or delivery vehicle often has to drive with one wheel on the pavement with the result that the pavement is now in a terrible condition. In addition cars are routinely parked in the turning head at the end of the cul-de-sac which inevitably causes problems for vehicles trying to turn around and results in further damage to the pavements.

The residents have lobbied Bexley Council to introduce parking controls in Denberry Drive but have been told that if a scheme were to be introduced the residents of Denberry Drive would have to pay for it. This would be expensive for the residents as that there are only 18 properties in the street and seems grossly unfair given it is the students of Bird College who have caused the problem.

The problem is not confined to Denberry Drive however; The Drive, Lansdown Road, Alma Road and other local roads are now inundated with parked student cars (often on both sides of the road) making movement in the area particularly difficult – the B14 bus route experiences significant problems in The Drive for example.

The leaflet also states that the college will adopt a “Green Travel Plan” for the students but unless the encouragement to use alternative modes of transport is backed up with effective disincentives to use cars we are sceptical that the plan will have any effect.

Consequently we feel that the development proposal **must** include the design and implementation of on-street parking controls not just in Denberry Drive but in the wider area which has been affected by the problem of student parking.

In short it is our view that for this development to proceed the college must undertake steps to ensure that local residents are no longer plagued with the indiscriminate parking of student cars in the local roads.

As part of the planning application we will be summarising our consultation queries and responses so this will be raised with the council. Only the Council have the authority to introduce parking restrictions on public streets. We would reiterate that additional spaces are being provided within the site, that demand should be reduced



and that commuting students will be allowed to park on site, all of which should mitigate the existing issues.

Mr Z

Received: 16th January 2021

"I have rung you twice and was awaiting a phone number to ring at 6pm yesterday but this did not happen.maybe I misunderstood.

Irrespective,I have the following questions to which I would appreciate an answer:

- 1.how many accommodation rooms will there be*
- 2.if the college is expanding can you say by how many students*
- 3.will the college still be using the dance studio across the road*
- 4.how do they propose to use the theatre to benefit Sidcup residents*
- 5.usually a development like that proposed would be submitted to the council as part of a ten or more year plan.if that is the case is this available to see please.*
- 6.I really welcome the development and see the advantages of an all embracing campus .however I feel the college do not promote itself enough locally.for instance rose Bruford advertise themselves at Sidcup station and I think they say that Sidcup is the home of rose bruford.I just feel that Sidcup as a whole would benefit if Doreen bird did the same and put Sidcup and the bexley borough on the map by saying that it is existed.I have not articulated this well but we need Sidcup known as the home of two internationally acclaimed colleges.*

I support the development and many thanks for giving me an opportunity to comment.

*Regards
Mr Z"*

Hamilton Architects responded 19th January 2021 with the below email:

"Dear Mr Z

Our sincere apologies over the evident miscommunication. I have answered your queries below - they are highlighted in red.

*1.how many accommodation rooms will there be **There are 94 student rooms on the upper floors. In addition there is an accessible flat on the ground floor and a 2 bed flat for supervisory staff members.***

*2.if the college is expanding can you say by how many students. **There is no proposed increase in the student numbers. This project is about enhancing the standard of facilities not increasing capacity.***



3. will the college still be using the dance studio across the road Upon completion of this project **No they will not require this.**

4. how do they propose to use the theatre to benefit Sidcup residents. **The theatre will be made available to local amateur operatic and drama societies etc. Evidently College use will be limited to term time so there will be plenty of availability.**

5. usually a development like that proposed would be submitted to the council as part of a ten or more year plan. if that is the case is this available to see please. **This isn't the case.**

6. I really welcome the development and see the advantages of an all embracing campus .however I feel the college do not promote itself enough locally. for instance rose Bruford advertise themselves at Sidcup station and I think they say that Sidcup is the home of rose bruford. I just feel that Sidcup as a whole would benefit if Doreen bird did the same and put Sidcup and the bexley borough on the map by saying that it is existed. I have not articulated this well but we need Sidcup known as the home of two internationally acclaimed colleges. **By all accounts Rose Bruford College spend a considerable amount of money on this advertising and Bird College don't feel it as the most efficient use of their funds when as a college they are vastly oversubscribed. They have assured me that they will look into this however and have noted your comments.**

More detail is available on the following website
[Bird College \(squarespace.com\)](http://Bird College (squarespace.com))

Kind regards
Mark”



4. Summary

The proposed scheme has received positive reaction from the local public with support welcomed towards the development.



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