

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL
FOR THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource
Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Hearing Stream 14
– Wakatipu Basin
hearing and transferred
Stage 1 submissions
related to Arrowtown
and Lake Hayes

**REPLY OF HELEN JULIET MELLOP
ON BEHALF OF QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

LANDSCAPE

10 August 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 My name is Helen Juliet Mellsop. I prepared a statement of evidence in chief and rebuttal on landscape issues for the Wakatipu Basin Hearing Stream 14. My qualifications and experience are listed in my evidence in chief dated 28 May 2018.

1.2 The purpose of this reply evidence is to specifically respond to matters raised by the Hearing Panel and submitters during the course of the hearing. In particular, I provide responses to the following matters:

(a) Matters raised by the Hearing Panel:

- (i) in relation to the rezoning submission of D Boyd (838) - clarification of the area where I have recommended a 100-metre setback from State Highway 6 (**SH6**);
- (ii) in relation to the rezoning submission of R & R Jones (850) – whether there is any landscape reason not to rezone the Jones’ land outside the Queenstown Country Club to Amenity Zone;
- (iii) in relation to my recommendation to exclude the plateau land on the eastern side of Morven Hill from the Outstanding Natural Landscape (**ONL**) – whether the higher escarpment on the eastern edge of this plateau should be included within the ONL; and
- (iv) in relation to rezoning submissions – comment is requested on how the panel should decide when and where there is an adverse cumulative landscape effect if they are minded to recommend rezoning.

- (b) Matters raised by submitters:
- (i) Michaela Meehan (526) – location of the ONL boundary determined by the Environment Court in C3/2002;
 - (ii) Bridesdale Farm Development Limited (655) – insufficient weight given to the reserve status of parts of the floodplain in my landscape analysis and classification; and
 - (iii) Hogans Gully Farm Limited (2313) – submission of a visual simulation of anticipated development, as viewed from the Crown Range zig zag lookout¹.

MATTERS RAISED BY THE HEARING PANEL

2. D BOYD (838)



Figure 1: Area where a 100-metre rather than a 75-metre setback is recommended, in order to protect the amenity of views from SH6.

1 <https://www.gldc.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Planning/District-Plan/PDP-Stage-2/Stream-14-Evidence-Post-Hearing/S2313-Hogans-Gully-Farm-T14-Baxter-P-Virtual-View.pdf>

2.1 At the hearing, the Panel requested a map showing the extent of the area where I recommended a 100-metre rather than a 75-metre building setback from the Ladies Mile Highway (SH6) in my evidence in chief (at paragraph 7.19). The area is shown in **Figure 1** above. In this area, the upper terrace adjacent to the highway is between 80 and 100 metres in width. A 75-metre setback in this area could result in a row of buildings along the southern crest of the escarpment. In my view, this outcome would have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of views available towards the Remarkables, Peninsula Hill and the more distant mountains of the ONL (refer **Photograph 1** below) from westbound vehicles.



Photograph 1: Google Streetview image of view from SH6 across upper terrace (image date 08/2017)

3. R & R JONES (850)

3.1 The Panel has requested evidence on whether there is any landscape reason not to rezone land subject to submission 850 from notified Rural to Amenity Zone. I assume that this question relates to the land outside the Queenstown Country Club site (refer **Figure 2**

below). I discussed this submission in paragraph 7.10 of my evidence in chief and recommended that the notified Rural zoning be retained for the land.

- 3.2** In response to the Panel's question, I do not consider there is any landscape reason not to rezone the Jones' land and outside the ONL and the Country Club, to Amenity Zone, although I understand that no submission has sought this zoning. In my view the current provisions of the Amenity Zone would adequately protect the visual integrity and perceived naturalness of the roche moutonnée and the adjacent ONL. The strip of Amenity Zone would however form a small isolated area of zoning. Should rezoning to Amenity Zone be contemplated I recommend that those parts of the adjacent site to the west (Lot 403 DP 495767, 1-5 Keble Lane) that are outside the ONL and zoned Rural in the notified Proposed District Plan (**PDP**) be also rezoned to Amenity Zone.

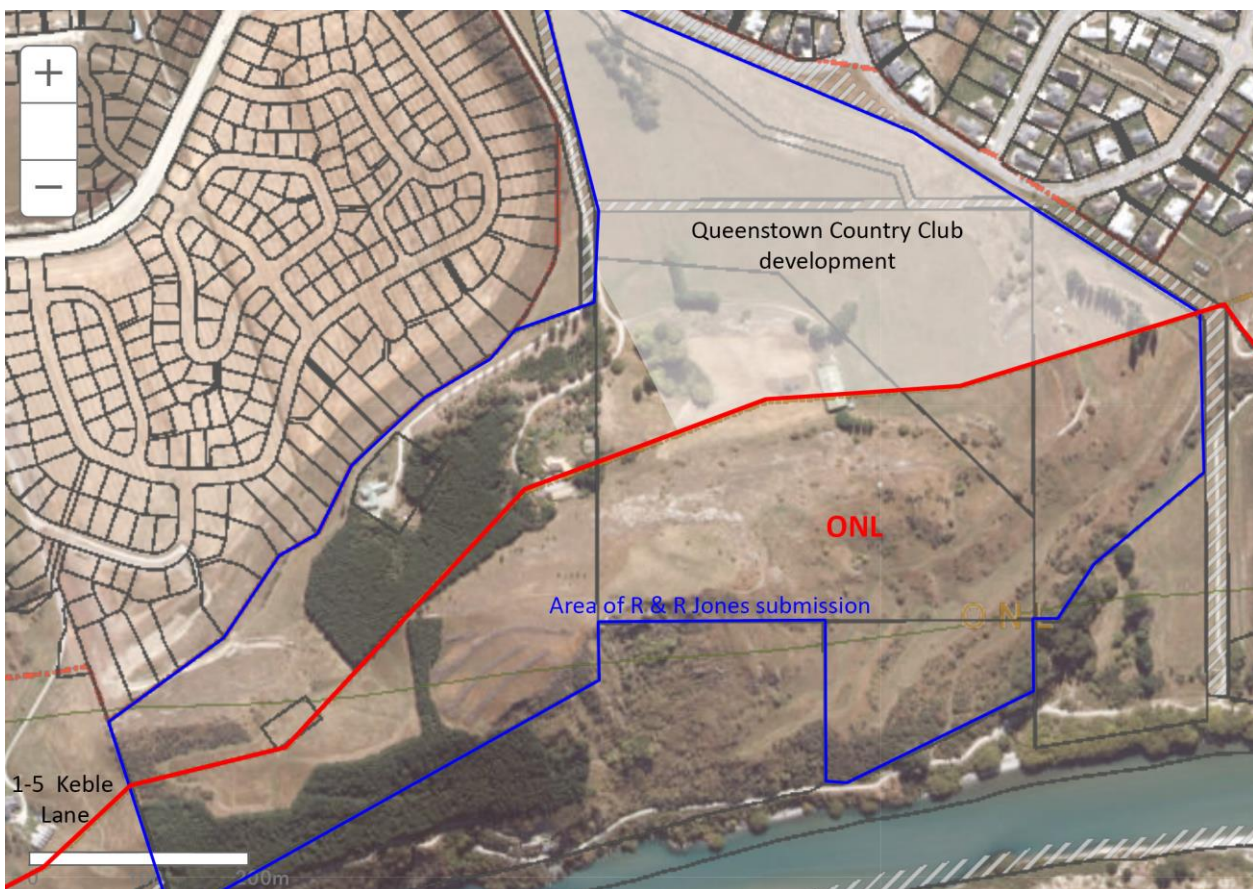


Figure 2: Area of land subject to R & R Jones submission (850), Queenstown Country Club extent and ONL boundary.

4. OUTSTANDING NATURAL LANDSCAPE BOUNDARY EASTERN MORVEN HILL

4.1 In my evidence in chief I recommended that an elevated plateau that adjoins the eastern side of Morven Hill be excluded from the ONL and that the ONL boundary be relocated to a distinct change of gradient at the base of Morven Hill (paragraphs 6.69 to 6.75). During the hearing, members of the Panel requested that I reconsider whether it would be appropriate to include the distinctive schist escarpment on the north-eastern edge of this plateau as an outstanding natural feature (ONF) in its own right, or as part of the ONL. The second option would involve also including the hummocky plateau between the escarpment and Morven Hill within the ONL.



Photograph 2: View west on SH6 towards Morven Hill showing escarpments to the south and north of the highway (source image Google Earth Street View, 08/2017)

4.2 Having reconsidered the attributes and character of the landscape in question, it is my view that the escarpment is not an ONF in its own right. While the escarpment is a relatively unmodified landform and

supports natural patterns of exposed schist and grey shrubland/briar rose vegetation, the presence of the irrigation race and the dwelling and garden planting on the Rogers property at the crest both reduce the naturalness and visual integrity of the landscape feature. In my opinion, the escarpment is similar in form and character to other schist escarpments within the Wakatipu Basin that are not classified as ONF. Examples are the plateau escarpments to the north of SH6 (refer **Photograph 2** above), which are a similar height of about 40 metres, the escarpments on the southern side of Speargrass Flat Road between Lower Shotover Road and Rutherford Road, and those south of Malaghans Road and just west of the Millbrook Resort Zone.

- 4.3** I have also considered whether the escarpment and intervening plateau land should be included in the ONL. While I acknowledge that the escarpment does appear to be part of the slopes of Morven Hill from some vantage points along Morven Ferry Road, I remain of the view that the character of the plateau and escarpment is similar to that of the land to the north of SH6 that is not included in the ONL. There is also no clear topographical marker or landscape character change that would provide a defensible ONL boundary dividing the northern and southern parts of the plateau.
- 4.4** In case the Panel is minded to include the northern part of the plateau and the higher more unmodified parts of the escarpment within the ONL, I have shown a potential boundary location in **Figure 3** below. This boundary follows the irrigation race in the north and then the base of escarpment. The boundary then runs west from the end of the higher section of the escarpment to meet the base of Morven Hill. There is no cogent landscape reasoning for the location of this portion of the line, other than that it follows a defined feature – a water course. The landscape character of the plateau is similar to the north and south of this line. I continue to recommend the relocated boundary shown in turquoise on Figure 3 below.

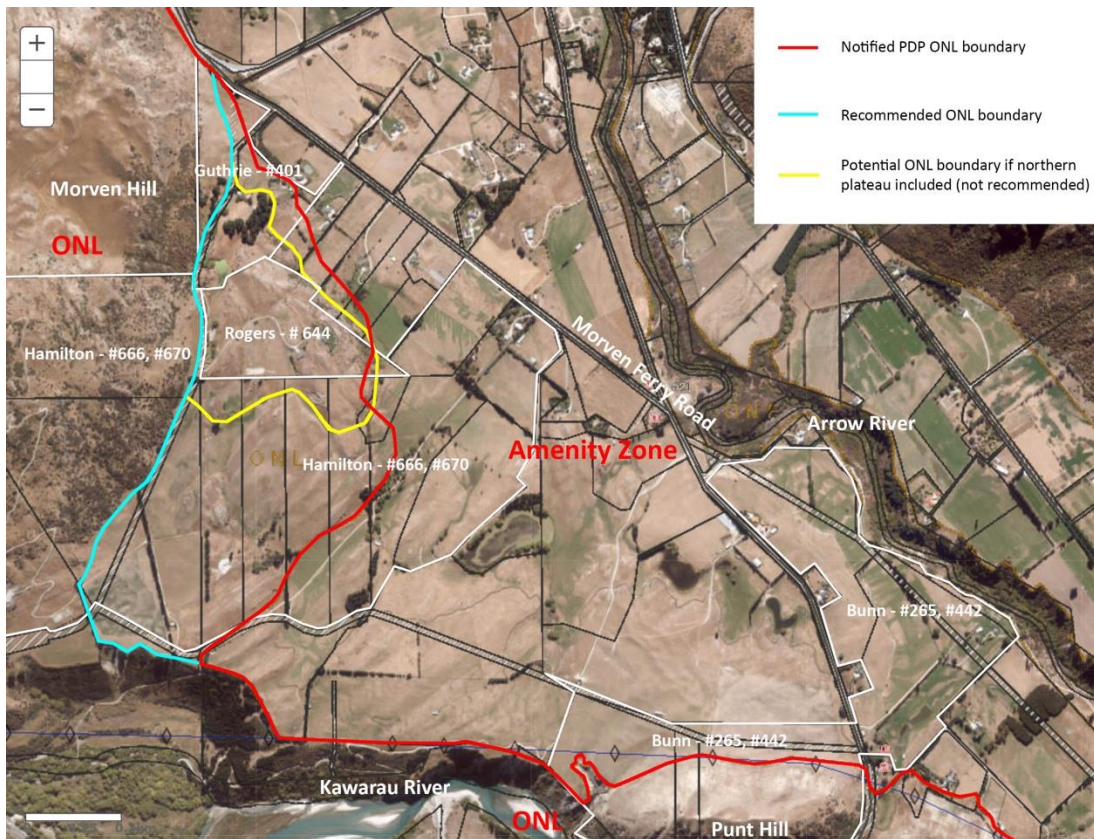


Figure 3: Notified, recommended and potential ONL boundaries on the eastern side of Morven Hill.

5. CUMULATIVE LANDSCAPE EFFECTS OF REZONING

5.1 The Panel's question on how they should assess the cumulative landscape effects of rezonings sought has been addressed in the reply evidence of Ms Bridget Gilbert. I concur with her discussion of cumulative adverse landscape effects in paragraphs 10.1 to 10.20 of her reply evidence. I would add that even where proposed resort zones or additional areas of Precinct are not visible from immediately surrounding public roads, the associated increased activity and traffic movements would still detract from the amenity and associative landscape values of those parts of the basin that are currently relatively tranquil and quiet. These changes would contribute to a cumulative loss of rural character and rural amenity across the basin as a whole.

MATTERS RAISED BY SUBMITTERS

6. MICHAELA MEEHAN (526)

- 6.1** In his legal submissions to the Panel on behalf of M Meehan, Mr Warwick Goldsmith stated that, in the vicinity of the Northridge subdivision, the ONL boundaries in the Operative District Plan (**ODP**), and subsequently the PDP, had been incorrectly transposed from the maps attached to C3/2002.² This was the Environment Court decision that established the landscape classifications in this part of the Wakatipu Basin.
- 6.2** I have compared the ONL boundary in the Figure 3 attached to C3/2002 with the operative and notified PDP lines and confirm that Mr Goldsmith is correct. The Environment Court located the boundary to exclude all rural living lots within the Northridge subdivision (refer turquoise line in **Figure 4** below) while the ODP line excluded the building platforms but not the entire lot area.
- 6.3** The decision also included slightly more of the hill slopes above Littles Stream within the ONL. However I understand that no submission has sought relocation of the ONL boundary to the east in this location, and that amendment of the boundary here would therefore be out of scope. In addition, the differences between the C3/2002 and the notified PDP boundaries above Little Stream are relatively slight and the character of the land is similar between and above the two lines.

² *Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc v Queenstown Lakes District Council* C3/2002 [2002] NZEnvC 11 (22 January 2002).

6.4 I concur with the Court's boundary as it provides a more legible and defensible demarcation between the rural living character of the Northridge subdivision (and the rural living property and 134 Malaghans Road) and the open character and naturalness of the ONL west of the boundary.

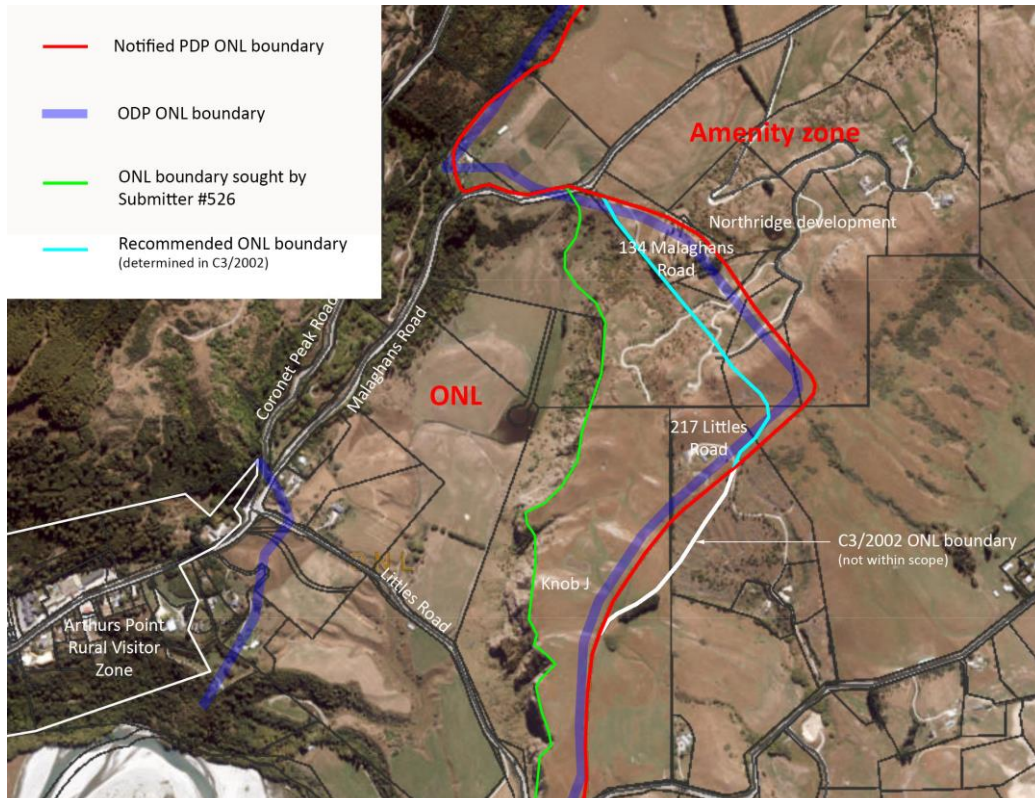


Figure 4: ONL boundaries at Arthurs Point/North Ridge.

7. BRIDESDALE FARM DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED (655)

7.1 Mr Warwick Goldsmith, Counsel for Bridesdale Farm Developments Ltd, gave his opinion at the hearing that the Recreation Reserve Designation of Council-owned land on the Kawarau River floodplain to the south-west of Bridesdale Farm had not been afforded appropriate weight in my evidence on the ONL boundary.

7.2 I addressed the reserve status of the Council-owned land in paragraph 6.30 of my evidence in chief and discussed QLDC Designation 365 in paragraph 9.2 of my rebuttal evidence. Ms Anita Vanstone sets out details of the notified zone, and associated planning provisions for this land in her reply evidence. She points out that only a part of the Council-owned land that has been notified as

Informal Recreation Zone in Stage 2 of the PDP is covered by Designation 365.

- 7.3** Designation 365 is for a Recreation Reserve, part Water Pump Station and Bores, and provides for buildings of up to 10 metres in height and a maximum of 100m² in floor area, with a combined building coverage of 5% and impervious coverage of 20% (where the underlying zoning is Rural). These conditions apply to almost all designated Council-owned Recreation Reserves, irrespective of the underlying landscape classification. The land subject to Designation 365 is zoned Rural General in the ODP, was zoned Rural in Stage 1 of the PDP but was then varied to Informal Recreation in Stage 2.
- 7.4** Under the ODP regime, other undesignated land is zoned Rural General. Any buildings on the undesignated reserve land are discretionary activities and subject to the assessment criteria for the ONL-Wakatipu Basin in Section 5 of the ODP.
- 7.5** I acknowledge that Bridesdale Farm Developments Limited has lodged a submission seeking rezoning of the QLDC reserves and Bridesdale land on the floodplain, from notified Informal Recreation to Active Sport and Recreation Zone (submission 2391). In my view (and appreciating this is an issue for Stream 15), the notified Informal Recreation Zone is the appropriate zoning for the designated land and the adjacent recreation reserve. The anticipated outcomes of this open space zone are consistent with the existing landscape character and the ONL classification. This is in contrast with potential outcomes under the generic Recreation Reserve designation conditions or the Active Sport and Recreation Zone.
- 7.6** The purpose of the Informal Recreation Zone includes the following:³

Buildings and structures located on the Informal Recreation Zone are generally limited to those that support informal recreation and are typically small-scale community buildings and structures.

Much of the Informal Recreation Zone is readily accessible, and are located within and adjacent to areas of high interest, landscape and amenity values. A range of commercial recreation and tourism

3 Pages 38-5 and 38-6 of Proposed Chapter 38 Open Space and Recreation Zones

activities exist in the zone and there is a desire to develop existing and new activities. The scale and intensity of these activities and associated buildings and infrastructure need to be carefully managed.

7.7 Given this notified zoning of land that is owned and managed by Council, and is subject to flood hazard risk, I remain of the opinion that the maximum extent of development anticipated by the conditions of Designation 365 is highly unlikely to occur. In my view, future development on the reserves is likely to maintain the open space character of the floodplain and to involve only limited and small scale structures. I consider that future development within the reserves is likely to maintain the landscape values of the Kawarau River corridor ONL.

7.8 In summary, for the land that the Panel in this hearing is considering, my position remains that the escarpment and floodplain on the Bridesdale Farm land are within an ONL, and that medium density development on the escarpment would be inappropriate from a landscape perspective.

8. HOGANS GULLY FARM LIMITED (2313)

8.1 Mr Patrick Baxter has filed supplementary landscape simulations for Hogans Gully Farm Limited following the Stream 14 hearings. These show the existing view from the Crown Range Road zig zag lookout alongside a simulation of development enabled by the proposed Hogans Gully Special Zone. I note that this simulation should be viewed at A1 size, at the appropriate viewing distance, in order to approximate what is seen in 'real life'. The correct viewing distance has evidently been provided on an A1 printed version supplied to the Panel, but is not stated on the electronic version filed.

8.2 I am unsure whether the assumptions used to generate the simulation have been provided to the Panel. Best practice for visual simulations would involve an accompanying statement outlining the assumptions. For example:

- (a) Whether all built development envisaged by the zone is shown;
- (b) Whether the building coverage on each site conforms to the proposed zone rules;
- (c) What anticipated species mix and growth rates have been used; and
- (d) The number of years since establishment of vegetation shown in the simulation.

8.3 The simulation appears to have been prepared with the assumption that all planting in the proposed Special Zone and all built development would occur at the same time, without staging. In reality planting and development would likely be staged, with differing levels of vegetation maturity in different parts of the zone. In the absence of the information listed above, and in the absence of staging considerations, I recommend that the Panel view the simulation with caution.

8.4 The simulation does however confirm my opinion, set out in paragraphs 7.33, 7.36 and 7.37 of my evidence in chief, that the proposed Special Zone would substantially alter the character of the visible landscape from the lookout and other elevated viewpoints. The density of visible built development, albeit potentially integrated by indigenous vegetation, introduces an urban-type settlement into a rural part of the basin. It would also result in a visible spread of intensive rural living and a pattern of manicured golf course fairways and greens in the eastern corner of the basin. The Hills golf course, the Arrowtown Retirement Village, proposed Precinct zoning north of Lake Hayes and on the Wharehuanui Hill, and Millbrook Resort development are all currently or potentially visible in the same view from the Crown Range zig zag lookout (refer marked up simulation in **Appendix A**).

8.5 I also note that while the majority of development enabled by the Hogans Gully Special Zone would not be visible in close proximity from the surrounding public roads, local residents who travel at any time over the Crown Range and many visitors would certainly be aware of the presence of the golf course and associated

residential/visitor accommodation development. While the resort may not affect the pleasantness and coherence of people's views from roads on the floor of the basin, it would still adversely affect the associative and perceptual values of the wider rural amenity landscape of the basin. This includes the particular sense of place and memorability of the basin, the perceived and remembered level of naturalness, and its shared and recognised values as a rural area.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Mellsop', written in a cursive style.

Helen Juliet Mellsop

10 August 2018

APPENDIX A

Baxter Design Group Virtual View simulation from Crown Range Road
zig zag lookout – annotated by Helen Mellsop

REFER TO A1 PRINT FOR DETAILED RESOLUTION AND CORRECT VIEWING DISTANCE



View Point 01 - 50mm Lens - Proposed

NOTES :

The proposed is a 3D survey accurate photo simulation.
All photos were taken by Jason Blair with a 50mm lens.
Photo positions and reference points surveyed by Clark Fortune McDonald & Associates.



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