

**Medway Council**  
**Planning Committee**  
**Wednesday, 29 July 2026**  
**6.30pm to 9.36pm**

**Record of the meeting**

**Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee**

**Present:** Councillors: Stamp (Chairperson), Jones (Vice-Chairperson), Bowen, Etheridge, Field, Gilbourne, Gulvin, Hamilton, Myton, Peake and Vye

**Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Campbell (Substitute for Nestorov)  
Sands (Substitute for Pearce)

**In Attendance:** Councillor Coombs (agenda item 6)  
Councillor McDonald (agenda items 5,7 and 9)  
Councillor Wildey (agenda item 8)

Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer  
Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer  
Peter Hockney, Service Manager, Development Management  
Amandeep Khroud, Legal Advisor  
Madeline Mead, Principal Planner  
Sam Pilbeam, Senior Planner  
Amy Shardlow, Senior Planner  
Steven Ward, Highways Consultant

**157 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anang, Barrett, Nestorov and Pearce.

**158 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 1 July 2026 was agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairperson as correct.

The Committee were advised of the following, as set out in the supplementary agenda advice sheet.

**Minute 710 Planning Committee 11 February: Planning application  
MC/25/0241 Land At 320-346 High Street, Rochester, Medway ME1 1BT**

Demolition of existing buildings and structures retaining 340 and 346 Rochester High Street and construction of 28 residential dwellings together with provision of vehicular access, cycle and pedestrian access, public open space, sustainable drainage systems, landscaping, infrastructure, earthworks and all other associated works.

Members had resolved to approve the application subject to a S106, which, following a viability assessment (which was independently assessed) was to secure the following:

- (i) A contribution of £9,449.72. towards bird mitigation
- (ii) Amendments to the CPZ in relation to 3 parking spaces
- (iii) A Clawback clause in relation to viability

Following the resolution, work had been on going to complete the S106 to allow the decision to be issued with the conditions as agreed. During this time, the applicants/agents had done some soft market testing, recognising that this site was one that the Council had been seeking to bring forward for some time, and that the viability of the scheme was marginal. With the recommended clawback clause there had been no interest in the site. The applicants were, therefore, requesting the removal of the clawback clause.

While the use of such clawback clauses was supported within the NPPF, this was a site that had been allocated for development in the 2003 Local Plan and the scheme which was resolved to be approved was a very sensitive and high-quality scheme that would enhance the conservation area and area generally while providing much needed homes on a brownfield sustainable site.

If development was to be undertaken in accordance with the approved plans, there were some very detailed conditions that needed to be complied with, some prior to commencement, and then development needs to commence within 3 years for the permission to remain valid. It was highly unlikely that the viability of this site would fundamentally improve within this timescale and therefore, in this instance, we were recommending removal of the clawback clause to give the development of this site the best possible opportunity to commence and be taken forward.

Members voted on the approval of removing the clawback clause.

**Minute No. 117 Planning Committee 1 July 2026:**

Planning application - MC/25/2538 Land to the south of Moor Street and east of Meresborough Road, Rainham

Following referral to the Secretary of State a response had been received that the Secretary of State had decided not to call in this application. He was content that it should be determined by the local planning authority.

**159 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances**

There were none.

**160 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

Councillor Etheridge stated that he often attended meetings of Frindsbury and Cliffe Woods Parish Councils and explained that if any planning applications were ever discussed there, which were due to be considered by the Medway Council Planning Committee meeting, he would not take part in the discussion at the Parish Council meetings.

Dave Harris, Chief Planning Officer, referred to planning application MC/26/0407 23 Pump Lane, Rainham, Medway ME8 7AB and stated that he had known the applicant socially more than 10 years ago. He advised that, in his capacity as Chief Planning Officer, he had reviewed the report but had made no fundamental changes to it and had no further involvement in the planning application.

Councillor Stamp referred to planning applications MC/26/0358 15 Paget Street, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5ER and stated that the applicant was a relative of a friend. However, she did not socialise with him and had no involvement in the planning application, therefore, she would remain in the meeting and participate in the consideration and determination of the planning application.

**161 Planning application - MC/26/0549 101 Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4QG**

**Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from a C3 dwelling house to C4 6-bedroom 6-person house of multiple occupation (HMO).

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which included an additional map and figures produced to identify the surrounding land-uses along an approximate 200-metre stretch of Balmoral Road.

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The Senior Planner confirmed that, within a 500-metre radius, there were 49 HMOs which represented 1.3% of the housing stock, which was not considered an overconcentration of HMOs in the area.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor McDonald addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- He confirmed he was speaking against this planning application, however, he acknowledged the important role HMOs played in meeting the housing need but considered that a balance must be maintained.
- He reminded Members that an Article 4 Direction had been introduced to protect family housing and local amenity and expressed concern regarding the loss of another family home.
- Referring to the information requested following the previous planning application deferral, he noted that a survey of 88 properties had identified 7 HMOs (7.9%) based on planning records. However, he questioned whether this provided a complete picture, stating that, as a Ward Councillor familiar with the area, he was aware of additional properties that were not occupied as single-family dwellings.
- He also queried the methodology used, including the data sources relied upon and the geographical area surveyed, suggesting that a wider assessment may have identified further non-single-family accommodation.
- He further raised concerns regarding the impact of the proposal on local amenities, which included increased parking pressures, additional waste generation and existing street scene issues.
- In conclusion, he referred to the demand for permanent family housing in Medway, especially with over 1,000 children living in temporary accommodation in Medway and urged the Committee to give significant weight to the retention of family homes when determining the application.

The Committee discussed the planning application in detail, having regard to the points raised by the Ward Councillor and the officers' advice. Members expressed concern regarding the loss of another family home and the concentration of HMOs in the locality. While acknowledging the need for HMOs, a number of Members considered that an appropriate balance needed to be maintained and that there were already significant numbers of HMOs within the area.

The Senior Planner confirmed that a survey had been undertaken within a 220-metre radius of the site and had identified 49 HMOs within 88 properties. He confirmed that only properties within Gillingham South Ward had been included, drawing on a range of information which included public records, licensing information, online sources and council tax records.

Some Members questioned the consistency of the survey methodology, including the area surveyed and whether a different survey boundary may have identified additional HMOs. Reference was also made to individual properties that Members believed should have been included within the assessment.

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Reference was made to 161 Balmoral Road, which Members understood to be a HMO and which, if included within the assessment, would have increased the concentration to 10.23%.

The Chief Planning Officer advised that a balance needed to be struck between meeting the demand for HMOs and managing their concentration within communities. He explained that HMOs were often located in more sustainable areas which were close to universities, hospitals and local services, reflecting the need of occupants who may not have access to a private vehicle.

The Senior Planner confirmed that the HMO density data used in the presentation, was the same as that used to support the Article 4 Direction. He advised that a range of sources had been used to identify HMOs, which included planning and licensing records, publicly available information, online data and changes in council tax.

The Chief Planning Officer informed the Committee that work was being undertaken on guidance to support the application of Policy T8, which would include consideration of approaches adopted by other local authorities in assessing HMO concentrations.

The Service Manager - Development Management advised that no letters of objection had been received in respect of the planning application.

During the discussion, Members noted that Gillingham South contained the highest concentration of HMOs in Medway and discussed the need to maintain a balanced and cohesive community.

The Committee then voted on the officers' recommendation to approve the planning application, which was lost. Members then discussed refusing the application on the grounds that the proposal would result in an overconcentration of HMOs in the area, harming the balance and cohesion of the local area through the loss of a family dwelling.

### **Decision:**

**Refused** on the grounds that the proposed conversion of the property from a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) into a six-person House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4) would result in the further loss of a family property where there is already a significant concentration of HMOs. The proposal would, therefore, contribute to an overconcentration such uses and proliferation of HMOs within the locality, subsequently, contributing to an imbalance in the local housing stock and loss of properties suitable for family accommodation. Contrary to Policy BNE2 and H7 of the Medway Local Plan 2003, Policy T8 of the Submitted (Regulation 22) Medway Local Plan 2041 (December 2025) and paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

**162 Planning application - MC/26/0767 49 Priestfield Road, Gillingham, Medway ME7 4RE**

**Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use of six bed house to six-person house of multiple occupation (HMO) (C4); loft conversion with dormer with 1 rooflight to the rear and 3 roof light to the front.

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet, which clarified that the recommendation should be a refusal rather than approval, as stated in the report.

A further representation received from a Member of Parliament had also been included within the supplementary agenda. This was accompanied by a map and supporting figure which identified the surrounding land uses along an approximate 200-metre stretch of Priestfield Road.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Coombs addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- She acknowledged that HMOs played an important role in meeting housing needs but considered there was already an overconcentration within the Ward, resulting in harm to local amenity and community balance.
- She advised that Priestfield Road was a popular residential cul-de-sac which contained a number of affordable 3-bedroom family homes and expressed concern at the continued loss of a family dwelling.
- Suggested that the clustering of HMOs indicated that developers were targeting the area for the conversion of residential properties.
- It was noted that the proposal had generated local opposition, including objections from the local Member of Parliament, residents, Ward Councillors and a petition.
- It was questioned whether all HMOs in the area had been captured within the Council's official records.
- Concerns were raised regarding existing parking pressures within the controlled parking zone and suggested that, if approved, occupants should not be eligible for residents' parking permits.
- It was considered that the proposed refuse storage area appeared insufficient to accommodate the necessary waste and recycling bins.

The Service Manager - Development Management confirmed that the applicant had not yet paid the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) mitigation contribution referred to in the report.

**Decision:**

**Refused** for the reasons 1 and 2 as set out in the report.

**163 Planning application - MC/26/0358 15 Paget Street, Gillingham, Medway ME7 5ER**

**Discussion:**

The Senior Planner outlined the application in detail for the change of use from a C3 dwellinghouse to a 7-person sui generis house of multiple occupation (HMO).

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which included a map and supporting figures which identified surrounding land-uses along an approximate 150-metre stretch of Paget Street.

He also advised that, within a 500-metre radius, there were 57 HMOs which represented approximately 3% of the housing stock, which was not considered an overconcentration of HMOs in the area.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor McDonald addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- He stated that he was speaking against this application, whilst recognising the need for HMOs but believed that Paget Street had reached a point where the cumulative impact and number of HMOs in the street was becoming excessive.
- The original proposal had reduced incrementally from 9 bedrooms (refused in December 2025), to 8 bedrooms (refused in June 2026) and was now proposed for 7 bedrooms arguing that reducing the number of occupants one at a time did not address the suitability of the property or location.
- Referring to the supplementary agenda advice sheet, he noted that 3 of 23 properties within 150 metres were identified as non-family dwellings (13%) and questioned how this could be considered acceptable if 10% was regarded as the point of which saturation became a concern.
- Concerns were raised about the consistency of methodology used between applications and questioned why a 150-metre survey area had been used in this case when a 200-metre had been used elsewhere.
- He stated that the proposal would result in the loss of another family home and that a 7-person HMO, occupied by unrelated adults with different lifestyles and working patterns, could have a greater impact on neighbouring residents than a traditional family dwelling.
- He expressed concern that existing parking pressures on Paget Street could be intensified by the development.
- He concluded that, whilst Gillingham required family homes, Members should consider whether this represented the right property, in the right location, and at the appropriate intensity of use.

The Committee discussed the planning application, noting the officer's presentation and the concerns raised by the Ward Councillor. Members acknowledged that previous proposals for a 9-person HMO and an 8-person HMO had both been refused, and expressed concern that, despite the



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reduction to a 7-person HMO, the development would still result in increased parking demand, additional waste generation and further pressure on local infrastructure.

The Committee then voted on the officers' recommendation to approve the planning application, which was lost. Members then considered reasons for refusal and expressed concerns regarding the intensified use of the property, including increased comings and goings associated with a large HMO, together with the loss of a family home with the area.

The Senior Planner advised Members that the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) mitigation contribution referred to in the report had not yet been paid.

### **Decision:**

**Refused** on the grounds of the scale and intensity of the proposed use, together with the site's location within a closely-knit residential terrace with shared party walls, the proposal would result in increased noise, disturbance, comings and goings and general activity that would erode the existing conditions of adjoining residential amenity and nearby occupiers. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policies BNE2 and H7 of the Medway Local Plan (2003), Policy T8 of the Submitted (Regulation 22) Medway Local Plan 2041 (December 2025), and paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

The application failed to address the impact of the proposal on the Special Protection Areas of the Thames Estuary and Marshes and the Medway Estuary and Marshes through either the submission of details to allow the undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment or via a contribution towards strategic mitigation measures. In the absence of such information or contribution, the proposal failed to comply with the requirement of the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 and was contrary to Policies S6 and BNE35 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraphs 193 and 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

### **164 Planning application - MC/20/0347 Land south of Ham Lane (formerly Gibraltar Farm), Hempstead, Gillingham Medway**

#### **Discussion:**

The Principal Planner outlined the application in detail for approval of reserved matters being appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission MC/18/0556 (Outline application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout, scale) for construction of up to 450 market and affordable dwellings with associated access, estate roads and residential open space (renewal of planning permission MC/14/2395) together with application to discharge conditions 27 (drainage) and 29 (air quality)).



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The Principal Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which included amendments to Condition 1, the inclusion of an additional condition, and a new Air Quality section (Condition 29) to be inserted after the Flood and Drainage section. Members were also advised that an additional paragraph had been added under "Conclusions and Reasons for Approval". In addition, the Principal Planner provided a verbal update advising that all drawings dated 30 June 2026 should be removed from the list of approved plans and that Drawing No. 104 Rev 4 be replaced with Drawing No. 104 Rev F received on 16 July 2026.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor Wildey and raised the following concerns:

- He advised that when this whole development was first submitted, it was only for 450 homes and was approved by the Secretary of State. This specific part of the development would be for 450 homes with a potential of up to 3,000 homes being constructed on the whole site.
- He requested that the application be deferred, stating that further information should be reported and considered before a decision was made.
- He highlighted the significance of public opposition, referring to 328 objections and a petition against the development, which was signed by over 10,000 people, being one of the largest petitions Medway had received.
- Concerns were raised regarding the former landfill site in close proximity to the development, which he stated operated between the 1970s and 1990s. He questioned whether sufficient information had been provided about its location, contents and any potential risks. He suggested that prospective buyers should be made aware of the former landfill existence, history and potential risks.
- He raised concerns that some of the proposed dwellings did not meet expected space standards and considered this issue should be addressed before the application proceeded.
- He expressed concern about the suitability of the development as a whole and urged the Committee to either refuse the application or defer it pending further investigation into the landfill site and other outstanding matters.

The Chief Planning Officer reminded Members that the application related to reserved matters only and that the principle of up to 450 dwellings on the site had already been approved by the Secretary of State.

The Committee discussed the application in detail and concerns were raised regarding the design and appearance of the development, including the differing house types proposed by Barratt Homes and Redrow Homes, which some felt appeared sub-standard, out of character and lacked a cohesive design approach.

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The Chief Planning Officer advised that he would contact the owners of Elm Court Village to explore whether the pedestrian route could be opened to provide future residents with pedestrian access to Elm Court Village.

He also informed Members that discussions with Barratt Homes had confirmed agreement for relevant sport S106 contributions to be directed towards sports facilities in Lordswood in recognition of the increased local population arising from the development subject to the necessary variation to the Section 106 outside of this application.

The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the landowners associated with the Lidsing development were the same parties selling land to Redrow and Barratt Homes and advised that the North Dane Way extension would require the provision of a roundabout.

### **Decision:**

**Approved** with conditions 1 to 10 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report. Condition 1 being amended as set out in the supplementary agenda advice sheet and a verbal confirmation from the officer to remove all drawings dated 30 June 2026 and amend drawing number 104 Rev E to 104 Rev F received 16 July 2026. An additional condition to be added:

### **Condition 11:**

- 11 Notwithstanding the submitted materials plan, no development above slab level within a construction phase shall take place until details of the materials to be used on all of the residential units within that phase have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details submitted should include the manufacturer and name of the material sample. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and without prejudice to conditions of visual amenity in the locality, in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

### **165 Planning application - MC/26/0815 130 High Street, Gillingham, Medway, ME7 1AS**

### **Discussion:**

The Service Manager - Development Management outlined the application in detail for the change of use from shop (Class E) to betting office (Sui Generis).

The Senior Planner brought Members' attention to the supplementary agenda advice sheet which informed the Committee that the reason for recommendation should be a refusal and not approval as stated in the report and additional information was received from the applicant's agent.

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The Service Manager – Development Management confirmed that, within a 100-metre radius, there were 45 retail units, of which four of these were occupied by either betting shops or amusement arcades, which represented 9% of the retail units.

With the agreement of the Committee, Councillor McDonald addressed the Committee as Ward Councillor and raised the following concerns:

- He supported the refusal of the application, stating that the decision was about the future of Gillingham Town Centre rather than a single shop.
- He highlighted ongoing issues in the town centre, including deprivation, health inequalities, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour and referred to work being undertaken through the Gillingham Task Force, local businesses and Kent Police.
- He argued the approving another betting shop would send the wrong message and undermine wider regeneration efforts aimed at improving the town centre.
- He referred to local opposition, including objections, a petition and representations from the local Member of Parliament, and expressed concern about the growing concentration of gambling-related uses.
- He considered that an additional betting shop could have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents and could contribute to social issues already experienced within the area.
- He suggested that the vacant unit provided an opportunity for alternative uses, particular small businesses that could positively contribute to the vitality and attractiveness of the high street.
- He concluded that there were clear planning grounds for refusal based on the concentration of gambling uses and urged the Committee to reject the application.

The Committee discussed the planning application in detail and acknowledged the importance of investment and regeneration within Gillingham Town Centre. However, Members were of the view that regeneration should not be pursued at any cost.

### **Decision:**

**Refused** for the reason set out in the report.

### **166 Planning application - MC/26/0407 23 Pump Lane, Rainham, Medway ME8 7AB**

### **Discussion:**

The Service Manager - Development Management outlined the application in detail for the construction of a detached, self-build chalet bungalow with associated parking and landscaping - demolition of existing.

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### **Decision:**

#### **Approved** subject to:

- 1) To secure the dwelling to be delivered as self-build.
- 2) Conditions 1 to 11 as set out in the report for the reasons stated in the report.

### **167 Performance Report 1 April to 30 June 2026**

#### **Discussion:**

The Committee received a report setting out performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2026.

Members were informed that, under the Planning and Infrastructure Act, local authorities would be able to set their own planning application fees. However, in light of Local Government Reorganisation, discussions with Gravesham Borough Council and Dartford Borough Council indicated that this would likely be deferred until the establishment of the new authority.

The Chief Planning Officer advised that reform of Planning Committees would take effect on 31 October 2026. A report would be submitted to the September 2026 Planning Committee outlining changes, including a reduction in committee size from 15 to 13 members and the introduction of a National Scheme of Delegation.

He also advised that, under the proposed National Scheme of Delegation, Schedule 1 applications would always be determined under delegated powers and would not be considered by the Planning Committee. Schedule 2 applications be subject to a presumption that they should also be determined under delegated powers. However, a gateway process would allow the Chief Planning Officer and the Chairperson to decide whether an application should instead be referred to the Planning Committee for determination.

Members were informed that the Chief Planning Officer was working closely with Gravesham Borough Council and Dartford Borough Council to prepare for the transition to the new authority and the implementation of the new arrangements.

Members were informed that the draft Medway Local Plan continued to progress through examination, with hearings schedule for September and November 2026. Further work was being undertaken on Green Belt matters and a new call for sites regarding Gypsy and Travellers site provision.

The Chief Planning Officer drew Members' attention to the number of compliments which had been received and were set out on page 130 of the report.

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In response to questions, the Chief Planning Officer confirmed that Members would receive a presentation on the revised NPPF and that weekly planning lists with delegated planning decision would continue to be circulated.

In response to a Member's question regarding the apparent felling of five oak trees in Christmas Lane, the Chief Planning Officer advised that he had not been made aware that any protected trees had been felled and would investigate the matter and report back, as appropriate.

Members extended their thanks to the Chief Planning Officer and his team for all their hard worked and acknowledged the amount of work that went into producing the results shown in the report.

### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the report and requested that the Chief Planning Officer express the Committee's appreciation for the levels of achievement to staff within the Planning Service.

## **168 Appeal Decisions 1 April to 30 June 2026**

### **Discussion:**

The Chief Planning Officer gave a summary of the appeal decisions referred to in appendices A and B to the report.

The Chief Planning Officer provided an update on the three recent public inquiries. The appeal by Richborough Estates for 800 dwellings, the Inspector gave significant weight to our emerging Local Plan, despite it not yet being adopted, and agreed with the Council's planning, landscape and highways consultants that the site was not an appropriate or a sustainable site for development.

The Chief Planning Officer also updated Members on the Gladman appeal for 240 dwellings to the west of Hoo. Although the Planning Committee did not object to this planning application, in principle, Members wanted to be sure that S106 agreement and infrastructure and affordable homes were delivered. The Inspector accepted that the Council could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. While all parties accepted that the loss of green fields would be harmful but that harm was outweighed by the housing need.

Furthermore, the Inspector concluded that significant weight should be attached to the Policy HOO8 of the Neighbourhood Plan in order to maintain the strategic gap between Hoo and Chattenden. This was important in relation to the third appeal, a Wimpey scheme, that in the Council's view did not propose a wide enough gap between the two settlements. The Council are awaiting the Inspector's decision.

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Members extended their thanks to the Chief Planning Officer and his team for all their hard worked and acknowledged the amount of work that went into producing the results shown in the report.

### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the report.

## **169 Section 106 Agreement April to June 2026**

### **Discussion:**

The Chief Planning Officer gave a summary of the S106 agreements referred to in appendices 1 to 3 to the report.

### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the report.

## **Chairperson**

### **Date:**

## **Julie Francis-Beard, Democratic Services Officer**

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