

Wycombe District Local Plan

Princes Risborough Area Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Jacobs are framework consultants to the Transport for Buckinghamshire Alliance between Ringway Jacobs and Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC). Under the terms of this contract, Jacobs are commissioned to undertake transport planning, modelling and assessment studies on behalf of BCC, working in partnership with District Councils.

Jacobs was commissioned by BCC and Wycombe District Council (WDC) in November 2012 to undertake a transport study to support and inform the development of the new Wycombe District Local Plan. WDC is currently developing a new Local Plan for the District. The Plan will replace the adopted Core Strategy (2008) as well as the saved policies from the existing Local Plan (2004). The new Local Plan will sit alongside the Delivery and Site Allocations (DSA) Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development document, once this is adopted. WDC state that the new Wycombe District Local Plan will:

- Set housing targets for the district and address strategic housing issues including housing and mixed use allocations;
- Include policies and proposals for the protection and provision of employment land;
- Include site specific proposals for local communities; and
- Set detailed policies to manage development.

The new Local Plan will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and will incorporate a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). These will meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) respectively. The scoping stage of this process was produced in October 2013¹ by WDC.

1.2 Project Objectives

The overall objective of this project is to manage a series of traffic assessment studies relating to potential land use development and transportation infrastructure requirements in Wycombe District. The project will inform future land use scenarios across the District by assessing the future performance of the transport network, creating an evidence base that assists and supports the development of the Plan.

1.3 Purpose of Report

This document is the Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report for the Princes Risborough land use and strategic infrastructure concepts (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme'). This document is one of a package of feasibility documents associated with the transport study commissioned by BCC and WDC. The environmental objectives at this stage are to undertake a high level environmental study to:

¹ Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment: The Wycombe District Local Plan - Scoping Report, October 2013

- Identify the environmental risks and issues that would need to be considered in any future environmental assessment;
- Recommend further environmental surveys and assessment work that may be required; and
- To inform the traffic and transport assessment and subsequent design of the associated Scheme options.

1.4 Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

The proposed works fall within the administrative areas of WDC as Planning Authority and BCC as Highways Authority. The development comprises a Schedule 2 project under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011/1824 (the EIA Regulations).

At this stage the options have not been fully developed and the alignment of the route is not set. However it is anticipated from the nature and scale of the development that significant environmental effects could potentially result and hence a statutory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would be required. A screening submission would be required to confirm this.

2 Background to the Scheme

2.1 Study Area

The Scheme is situated in Princes Risborough which is within Wycombe District in Buckinghamshire. The study area consists of a mixture of agricultural and residential land use as well as local roads.

The key features in the study area are shown in the Environmental Constraints Plan in Appendix A.

2.2 The Scheme

The Scheme is in its very early stages; hence the options have not been developed in detail and traffic volumes have not been considered as part of this environmental assessment. A new road Scheme (approximate location SP801027 to SP806015) is being considered associated with potential new land use development to provide an alternative route linking the A4010 to the north (Risborough Road) and south (Wycombe Road) of Princes Risborough.

Currently there are two transport options under consideration to provide an alternative route for traffic around Princes Risborough and these would depend on the scale of development proposed in each scenario. At this stage, the options are high level indicative designs developed purely for the purpose of testing the role of a route of this type. There is a vision for potential development of commercial and housing areas in the vicinity of the Scheme; however the new land use is outside of the scope of this preliminary environmental assessment. A high level description of the two Scheme options is given below:

Option A: A new link starting south of Princes Risborough at the A4010 (Wycombe Road) running north along Shootacre Lane and Picts Lane before crossing an industrial estate and onto Station Road/Summerleys Road. From Summerleys Road, the link is proposed to pass through agricultural fields before crossing Longwick Road and continuing to a junction with Mill Lane and Lower Icknield Way. The link would then continue along the existing Lower Icknield Way and Grove Lane, before eventually rejoining the A4010 (Risborough Road) where an existing railway bridge would be replaced. This strategic infrastructure option is associated with WDC's option to provide a development scenario of 2,500 homes.

Option B: A new link beginning south of Princes Risborough at the A4010 (Wycombe Road) running north up Shootacre Lane. The route would cross an upgraded railway bridge and continue along Horsenden Lane. The route would then cross agricultural fields connecting to the junction with Summerleys Road and Lower Icknield Way. This route would then follow the existing Lower Icknield Way and Grove Lane, before eventually rejoining the A4010 (Risborough Road) where an existing railway bridge would be replaced. This route would involve two additional railway crossings compared to Option A. This strategic infrastructure option is also associated with WDC's option to provide a development scenario of 2,500 homes.

The locations of the proposed routes for each of the options are shown on the Environmental Constraints Plan in Appendix A. The options are proposed to be developed further through technical work and liaison with stakeholders if pursued further.

3.1 Data sources

The primary data sources included desk studies of publicly available information such as OS mapping, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) database, Local Development Plan documents, the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and Environment Agency website. An environmental walkover survey of the study area was undertaken on 20th November 2013. No consultation with statutory consultees has been undertaken at this stage. The main environmental constraints collated in the desktop studies and on the walkover survey were mapped onto the Environmental Constraints Plan in Appendix A.

3.2 Air Quality

The proposed Scheme is not located near or within any designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). There are expected to be local impacts on air quality especially for properties along Shootacre Lane, Picts Lane, Station Road and Summerleys Road (for Option A); and Shootacre Lane, Horsenden Lane, and the residential area west of Lower Icknield Way where it meets Chestnut Way and Thame Road (for Option B). For both options, there are also expected to be local air quality impacts for the properties along Lower Icknield Way near Bridge Street; and Grove Lane close to the junction with Marsh Road and the A4010 (Risborough Road). This is due to the expected additional vehicular traffic that would use the route close to these residential areas. There would also be potential for significant air quality impacts during the construction period due to emissions and dust.

Significant air quality improvements would be expected through Princes Risborough town due to a reduction in traffic, and in particular a reduction in congestion and standing traffic. Further surveys would be needed to determine the impacts of the Scheme on local air quality once the preferred option has been identified and a transport model has been developed.

3.3 Noise and Vibration

The existing noise climate is dominated by road traffic emanating from the A4010 (Wycombe/Aylesbury/Risborough Road) and the railway running along the westernmost edge of the town. Local noise is expected to increase during construction and operation for properties along Shootacre Lane, Picts Lane, Station Road and Summerleys Road (for Option A); and Shootacre Lane, Horsenden Lane, and the residential area west of Lower Icknield Way where it meets Chestnut Way and Thame Road (for Option B). For both options, local noise is also expected to increase during construction and operation for the properties along Lower Icknield Way near Bridge Street; and Grove Lane close to the junction with Marsh Road and the A4010. This is due to the expected additional vehicular traffic that would use the route close to these residential areas. However there would be significantly reduced traffic noise through Princes Risborough town itself.

At this stage, data on current noise levels in the surrounding area are not available. Further surveys would be needed to determine the impacts of the Scheme on the noise environment once the preferred option has been identified and a transport model has been developed.

The assessment should also identify any vibration impacts on the sensitive receptors in the area.

3.4 Cultural Heritage

Princes Risborough and the neighbouring parish of Monks Risborough have a historic nature with 7 built conservation areas within 1km of the town centre². Monks Risborough in particular contains historic 18th and 19th Century buildings of varying architecture and picturesque street scenes.

According to English Heritage³ and MAGIC⁴, there are several listed buildings close to the proposed route options. There are also some Scheduled Monuments in the Princes Risborough area, the nearest of these being an Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill which is approximately 50m west of Shootacre Lane (Option A and B). Associated vibration could impact on this Scheduled Monument and others close by.

For both options, there is a cluster of Grade II listed buildings within the Monks Risborough Conservation Area⁵ approximately 400m to the south-east of the junction between Lower Icknield Way and Cadsdean Road. There are 10 listed buildings within this Conservation Area, 8 of which are Grade II, plus the Grade I listed St Dunstan's Parish Church and the Grade II* Dovecoat. Meadle Conservation Area is located approximately 300m north-west of the junction between Lower Icknield Way and Cadsdean Road and contains a total of 15 listed buildings. There is also a Grade II listed building called Flint Cottage approximately 100m north of the proposed junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road). Associated vibration could impact on Conservation Areas and listed buildings nearby.

For Option A, there is a Grade II listed building (signal box) close to the railway line just west of Station Road, and a group of Grade II listed buildings within the Alscot Conservation Area (associated with Alscot Lodge and Alscot farmhouse) along Longwick Road. The road alignment should have no direct impact on this Conservation Area, but any associated housing development planned for the area would need to take this into consideration.

For Option B, there is a group of Grade II listed buildings at the end of Horsenden Lane (Gate Cottage, Dovecote at Gate Cottage and a barn at Gate Cottage) which is within Horsenden Conservation Area, and two Grade II listed buildings close to Lower Icknield Way (Longwick Mill and Woodbine Cottage), just north of Summerleys Road. Impacts on these would need to be considered further if this option is progressed.

Chequers Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 500m to the east of the proposed junction of Grove Lane with the A4010 for both options. This is not expected to be impacted by the proposed options.

According to BCC, several prehistoric artefacts and Roman and Medieval materials exist in Princes Risborough. It would be recommended that a programme of further

² Wycombe District Council – My Wycombe, <http://mywycombe.wycombe.gov.uk/>

³ English Heritage – Listed Buildings, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>

⁴ MAGIC – Princes Risborough Historic Statutory Designations, <http://natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk>

⁵ Wycombe District Council – Monks Risborough Conservation Area Character Survey, <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/>

studies and field-based investigation is undertaken to provide further detail on the presence or absence of heritage and archaeological assets.

The nearest listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments are shown on the Environmental Constraints Plan in Appendix A.

3.5 Landscape and Visual

Princes Risborough is a picturesque town located at the foot of the Chiltern Hills. It has a historic setting consisting of several listed buildings and associated Conservation Areas.

The Scheme falls within the Chilterns National Character Area⁶ which is characterised by waterways, hills, agricultural lands and woodlands. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) is also contiguous with Green Belt land and is located directly to the east of the railway and Princes Risborough town centre. It is important that this AONB is not impacted by the Scheme. The designation borders Picts Lane (for Option A) so the alignment of the carriageway and replacement of the railway bridge (for Option B) here would need to take this into account.

The proposed Options A and B are proposed to run along Shootacre Lane to the south of Princes Risborough, which is within the Chilterns AONB boundary and Green Belt land. The proposed routes could have significant effects in relation to this designation. Shootacre Lane would need to be widened as part of the development and there do not appear to be any other feasible options that involve a shorter length of widening of existing roads within the AONB. At this stage, the degree of widening required is not known. A detailed landscape and visual assessment would be essential to determine the character of the environment within the AONB along Shootacre Lane, the likely impacts of the proposed route and appropriate mitigation.

Chequers Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 500m to the east of the proposed junction of Grove Lane with the A4010 for both options. This is not expected to be impacted by the proposed options.

Both options involve routes through agricultural land directly to the west of Princes Risborough, some of which would be lost to accommodate the proposed new housing development. This would affect the views across these fields from local roads, footpaths and individual properties, and from the AONB to the east. The existing rural setting of these areas (shown in Plate 1) would be significantly affected, not only by the Scheme, but by the proposed associated land use development. For both options, the proposed new junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road) would create some visual impacts for individual properties especially to the south of Little Kimble. There may also be visual impacts for individual properties along Shootacre Lane for both options.

For Option A, the distance of new road through agricultural fields compared to existing roads is approximately 2km and 4km respectively. For Option B, this ratio is approximately 1km and 6km respectively. Option B is likely to require more work in terms upgrading of existing roads e.g. the narrow Horsenden Lane. There may be the loss of hedgerows for Option B along Horsenden Lane; and along Shootacre Lane for both options. Overall impacts on landscape are likely to be similar for both options.

⁶ Natural England – Chilterns National Character Area, <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

There are several small areas of deciduous woodland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat close to the proposed options, for example to the east of Summerleys Road and the railway close to the proposed Option A route through agricultural land.

Within the centre of Princes Risborough, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) apply mainly to single trees. For the proposed Option A, there is a single TPO along Station Road and several single TPOs along Picts Lane which would need to be taken into consideration in the development of the route. For Option B, there are a few isolated TPOs along Lower Icknield Way between Summerleys Road and Longwick Road that would need to be protected as part of the development.

The landscape designations and areas of interest including the Chilterns AONB and TPOs are identified on the Environmental Constraints Plan in Appendix A.



Plate 1: Existing view looking south across agricultural fields from Longwick Road

3.6 Ecology and Nature Conservation

Neither of the proposed road routes impinges directly on designated nature conservation sites; however there are several designated sites within close proximity.

Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is present in two separate units approximately 1.5km and 0.75km east of the proposed options respectively. It is designated due to its semi-natural grasslands and scrubland situated on chalk and limestone which support beech forests and stag beetle⁷. In view of the close proximity, a Habitats Regulations Assessment would be required to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on the interest features of the site.

⁷ Natural England – European Site Conservation Objectives for Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation, <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

This would need to include potential air quality impacts and deposition of pollutants on the flora and fauna of the site. Any increase in traffic due to the Scheme and associated land use development would be offset to some degree by a reduction in congestion and standing traffic in Princes Risborough town.

There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)⁸ to the east of Princes Risborough. Windsor Hill SSSI is approximately 1.5km east of Option A (contiguous with the SAC) and is designated due to its lowland calcareous grassland, and lowland broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland. Grangelands and Pulpit Hill SSSI, and Ellesborough and Kimble Warrens SSSI are located adjacent to each other, and are within 1km of the proposed options to the north-east. These also comprise lowland calcareous grassland, and lowland broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland. Lodge Hill SSSI is within 2km of the proposed Option B to the south-west and contains a mosaic of habitats such as semi-natural woodland, dense scrub and neutral grassland.

There are several areas of designated Ancient Woodland in close proximity to the Scheme, especially to the east of Princes Risborough. The nearest of these areas to the proposed options is Whorley Wood, which is located approximately 1km from the proposed Grove Lane junction with the A4010 (Risborough Road) for both options. The Scheme should not have any direct impacts on Ancient Woodlands; however increased air pollution and noise disturbance could result in indirect effects to ecology.

Brush Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR)⁹ and Whiteleaf Hill LNR are situated adjacent to each other, approximately 1.5km from the proposed options. Brush Hill LNR is designated due to its recreational and study opportunities and comprises chalk grassland and woodland. Whiteleaf Hill LNR is notable for its spectacular views of the Chiltern Hills and for its butterflies, wildflowers and woodlands.

There is the potential for legally protected and notable species to be active within, or in close proximity to, the proposed working area. There are some isolated ponds within 500m of the proposed options, for example just to the north of Summerleys Road close to Summerleys bungalows, and where Alscot Lane meets Longwick Road. Therefore there is potential for Great Crested Newts within the study area. A Phase 1 habitat survey by a qualified ecologist would be required to be undertaken to determine the likely presence of all protected species.

3.7 Geology and Soils

Princes Risborough lies within the 'Thame and South Chilterns' (surface and groundwater) water body, within Thames River Basin District¹⁰. The town is situated in Water Resource Management Unit 2 of the Thame and South Chilterns Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS). This unit is made up of two unconfined groundwater management units of chalk and upper greensand, and the water availability is classed as 'overlicensed' at low flows¹¹.

⁸ Natural England – Windsor Hill SSSI, Grangelands and Pulpit Hill SSSI, Ellesborough and Kimble Warrens SSSI and Lodge Hill SSSI, <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

⁹ Wycombe District Council – Brush Hill LNR and Whiteleaf Hill LNR, <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/>

¹⁰ Environment Agency Website – Water Framework Directive, <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

¹¹ The Thame and South Chilterns Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy, <https://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

According to the British Geological Society (BGS), the superficial deposits of the local area include predominantly alluvium and head i.e. clays, silts, sands and gravels¹². The bedrock geology also includes bands of mudstone and chalk which is characteristic of the Chilterns. Princes Risborough is not within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ)¹³ and the proposed options do not cross any SPZs.

The agricultural land that the options are proposed to pass through mostly comprise Grade 3 land¹⁴. Both options would also pass through small pockets of Grade 2 agricultural land. Due to the agricultural land use adjacent to the site, and the presence of a historic landfill facility just south of Longwick Road (A4129), it is possible that chemicals such as fertilisers may have been used in the area. Therefore a detailed contaminated land assessment would be recommended in the next stage.

3.8 Effects on All Travellers

The A4010 Wycombe/Aylesbury/Risborough Road is a main arterial road running through the centre of Princes Risborough. A transport network assessment is being undertaken as part of the wider evidence base for the new Local Plan. At the next stage, a transport model would be developed to refine the assessment of the number and distribution of vehicles on the local roads with and without the Scheme. The proposed Scheme would be expected to improve traffic congestion at peak times in the centre of Princes Risborough, providing significant benefits to pedestrians and cyclists. Fewer vehicles in the centre of Princes Risborough would likely improve the local air quality and reduce the noise and vibration impacts for the nearest residents, especially along the A4010.

In terms of Public Rights of Way (PROW), in the immediate vicinity of the Scheme there are several small footpaths present¹⁵. The alignment of Option A is proposed to cross footpaths PRR/2/2, PRR/41/1 and PRR/37B/1 and Bridleway PRR/42A/1. These PROW all run through the agricultural land to the east of Lower Icknield Way. Option B is proposed to cross footpaths PRR/45/1 and PRR/44/1.

In terms of cycle routes, according to Sustrans¹⁶, National Cycle Route 57 runs along Station Road, Picts Lane and Horsenden Lane so would be impacted in the development of both Options A and B. A potential opportunity for Options A and B would be the provision of improved walk and cycle access across the A4010 Wycombe/Aylesbury Road.

The nearest PROW are shown on the Environmental Constraints Plan in Appendix A.

3.9 Road Drainage and the Water Environment

The Kingsey Cuttle Brook and its tributaries flow through Princes Risborough. The proposed Scheme would cross these watercourses at several locations (three crossings for Option A and three different crossings for Option B) which could have implications for flooding, drainage, geomorphology and water quality impacts due to road run-off.

¹² British Geological Society – Geology of Britain Map Viewer, <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/data/>

¹³ Environment Agency Website – Groundwater, <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

¹⁴ MAGIC – Post 1988 Agricultural Land Classification (England), <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>

¹⁵ Wycombe District Council – My Wycombe, <http://mywycombe.wycombe.gov.uk/mywycombe.aspx>

¹⁶ Sustrans – High Wycombe Map, <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map>

These water bodies are located within the Thames river basin district¹⁷ and Water Resource Management Unit 2 of the 'Thame and South Chilterns' CAMS. This unit is made up of two unconfined groundwater management units of chalk and upper greensand, and the water availability is classed as 'overlicensed' at low flows¹⁸.

There are some isolated ponds within 500m of the proposed options, for example just to the north of Summerleys Road close to Summerleys bungalows, and where Alscot Lane meets Longwick Road.

The Environment Agency flood risk mapping tool¹⁹ indicates that the tributary of the Kingsey Cuttle Brook that runs alongside the B444 (Summerleys Road) to the east, has a Medium risk of flooding (1% or 1 in 100 chance of flooding each year), with some isolated stretches that have a High risk of flooding (greater than 3.3% or 1 in 30 chance of flooding each year). This has implications for both options, but for Option A in particular. Another tributary of the Kingsey Cuttle Brook that is prone to flooding includes a stretch towards the end of Horsenden Lane which has a Medium risk of flooding and a small area with a High risk of flooding. This would be an issue for the proposed Option B. Therefore, there is a similar risk of flooding for both options.

In terms of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Kingsey Cuttle Brook is a designated Heavily Modified Waterbody with moderate potential for ecological quality and predicted moderate potential by 2015²⁰. The Scheme would cross this watercourse and its tributaries at three locations for Option A (east of Summerleys Road and twice within the agricultural area to the west of Longwick Road). It would also cross at three locations for Option B (Horsenden Lane, approximately 200m west of Summerleys Road and Lower Icknield Way). A WFD assessment would be required in both cases as the proposed options could have implications for the ecological status of this watercourse.

3.10 Materials

The nearest historic landfill facility is Birkett Electric²¹ which is located just to the south of Longwick Road (A4129) and directly west of the railway, which is relatively close to Option A. This landfill facility has evidence of inert, commercial and household waste.

The nearest waste management facility is Wycombe Trade Waste and Skip Hire Ltd which is on Perry Lane, which is approximately 2km to the west of the centre of Princes Risborough.

In terms of the amount of material that would be required to develop the options, and hence the amount of waste that would be created, Options A and B are expected to have similar impacts. The area of open agricultural land that Option A runs through (approximately 2km) is greater than Option B (approximately 1km). However, Option B would likely require more improvements to existing roads than

¹⁷ Environment Agency Website – Current Ecological Quality

¹⁸ The Thame and South Chilterns Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy, <https://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

¹⁹ Environment Agency – Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Sea, <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>

²⁰ Environment Agency – Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans, <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>

²¹ Environment Agency – Waste, <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

Option A, e.g. the existing Horsenden Lane, and hence might generate more waste in this respect.

3.11 Community and Private Assets

Princes Risborough is a busy market town. The environment in the town centre would benefit significantly from reduced traffic congestion that would be afforded by a Scheme. However the route could potentially reduce passing trade for some commercial establishments within the town, although the retail vacancy rate is currently low²².

A high proportion of the land take for the proposed housing development and route options is agricultural land which would affect the rural setting of the town and impact on agricultural land holdings. Further assessment is required in relation to the size and management of these land holdings in order to assess the impacts on farming resource, severance and farm viability.

The Scheme is proposed to cross the railway line at two locations for Option A, and four locations for Option B. For both options, the railway crosses the roads by existing bridges which would need to be replaced or upgraded as part of the Scheme. Option B includes a railway crossing south of Summerleys Road which has no existing bridge. These present significant constraints for progression of the scheme and therefore favour Option A. For both options, the Scheme is proposed to meet the railway again at the junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road) to the north of Princes Risborough. Therefore, there could be disruptions associated with running of train services in the construction period as this bridge would need to be upgraded.

At this stage, as the alignment of the route options are high level and conceptual, an assessment of specific properties and businesses that may potentially be affected by the Scheme has not been conducted. This assessment would take place at the next stage of the project.

²² Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment: The Wycombe District Local Plan - Scoping Report, October 2013

Table 1 below summarises the advantages and disadvantages of the two options based on some of the key observations outlined in Section 3. The information displayed in this summary table is high level and based on assumptions as the options are at an early stage of development. Therefore, for some environmental disciplines e.g. Air Quality and Noise and Vibration, general statements have been made for all options due to the absence of specific information.

Category	Option A	Option B
Air Quality	The potential air quality implications would be considered further once a transport model has been developed and the schemes have been assessed in greater detail	
Noise and Vibration	The potential noise and vibration implications would be considered further once a transport model has been developed and the schemes have been assessed in greater detail	
Cultural Heritage	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> Monks Risborough and Meadle Conservation Areas and their associated listed buildings lie close to the proposed route along Lower Icknield Way. There is also a Grade II listed building close to the railway line just west of Station Road. Alscot Conservation Area and associated listed buildings lie just north of Longwick Road around 200m from the road alignment.</p> <p>Flint Cottage Grade II listed building is approximately 100m north of the proposed junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road).</p> <p>There is an Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill which is a Scheduled Monument approximately 50m to the west of Shootacre Lane.</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> Monks Risborough and Meadle Conservation Areas and their associated listed buildings lie close to the proposed route along Lower Icknield Way. There is also a group of Grade II listed buildings at the end of Horsenden Lane (within Horsenden Conservation Area) and two Grade II listed buildings close to Lower Icknield Way, just north of Summerleys Road which would need to be assessed further as part of the development of this option.</p> <p>Flint Cottage Grade II listed building is approximately 100m north of the proposed junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road).</p> <p>There is an Anglo-Saxon cemetery on Hemley Hill which is a Scheduled Monument approximately 50m to the west of Shootacre Lane.</p>
Landscape and Visual	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> The Chilterns AONB lies to the east and south; the road alignment is directly adjacent to this designated boundary where Grove Lane meets the A4010 (Risborough Road) towards the north, and along Picts Lane in the south.</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> The Chilterns AONB lies to the east and south; the road alignment is directly adjacent to this designated boundary where Grove Lane meets the A4010 (Risborough Road). Also, the route runs south along Shootacre Lane into the</p>

	<p>Also, the route runs south along Shootacre Lane into the Chilterns AONB which could have significant impacts in relation to this designation. A full landscape and visual assessment is required for the section of proposed widening along Shootacre Lane.</p> <p>Agricultural land would be lost as part of the proposed new housing development and route Option A, which would affect the views across these fields from local roads, individual properties, and from within the AONB to the east.</p> <p>There is a single TPO along Station Road and several along Picts Lane which would need to be taken into consideration for this option. This option makes less use of existing roads and uses more new greenfield routes than Option B.</p> <p>The proposed new junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road) would create visual impacts for individual properties especially to the south of Little Kimble.</p>	<p>Chilterns AONB which could have significant impacts in relation to this designation. A full landscape and visual assessment is required for the section of proposed widening along Shootacre Lane.</p> <p>Agricultural land would be lost as part of the proposed new housing development and route Option B which would affect the views across these fields from local roads, individual properties and the AONB to the east.</p> <p>There are several TPOs along Lower Icknield Way between Summerleys Road and Longwick Road that would need to be protected.</p> <p>There is likely to be loss of hedgerows for this option and more upgrading to existing roads would be required e.g. along Horsenden Lane.</p> <p>The proposed new junction between Grove Lane and the A4010 (Risborough Road) would create visual impacts for individual properties especially to the south of Little Kimble.</p>
<p>Ecology and Nature Conservation</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> Chilterns Beechwoods SAC is situated approximately 0.75km east of this option at its nearest point.</p> <p>There are a number of SSSIs located within 2km of this option including Windsor Hill SSSI, Grangelands and Pulpit Hill SSSI, and Ellesborough and Kimble Warrens SSSI.</p> <p>Whorley Wood (Ancient Woodland) is located approximately 1km from the proposed Grove Lane junction with the A4010 for this option.</p> <p>Brush Hill LNR and Whiteleaf</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> Chilterns Beechwoods SAC is situated approximately 0.75km east of this option at its nearest point.</p> <p>There are a number of SSSIs located within 2km of this option including Windsor Hill SSSI, Grangelands and Pulpit Hill SSSI, Ellesborough and Kimble Warrens SSSI and Lodge Hill SSSI.</p> <p>Whorley Wood (Ancient Woodland) is located approximately 1km from the proposed Grove Lane junction with the A4010 for this option.</p>

	<p>Hill LNR are situated around 1.5km from this option.</p> <p>There would be a greater loss of greenfield land for this option compared to Option B.</p> <p><u>Advantages:</u> There is expected be less loss of hedgerow for this Option.</p>	<p>Brush Hill LNR and Whiteleaf Hill LNR are situated around 1.5km from this option.</p> <p>There is expected to be more loss of hedgerow for this Option e.g. Horsenden Lane.</p> <p><u>Advantages:</u> There would be less loss of greenfield land for this option.</p>
Geology and Soils	<p>For both options, there would be loss of Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land to the west of Princes Risborough. Field assessments of the site are recommended to determine the possible presence of contaminated land.</p>	
Effects on All Travellers	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> This option is proposed to cross footpaths PRR/2/2, PRR/41/1 and PRR/37B/1 and Bridleway PRR/42A/1. National cycle route 57 would also be impacted by this option.</p> <p><u>Advantages:</u> Potential provision of walk and cycle access across the A4010 Wycombe/Aylesbury Road.</p> <p>The proposed Scheme would likely improve traffic congestion at peak times in the centre of Princes Risborough.</p> <p>Less vehicles in the centre of Princes Risborough (e.g. along the A4010) would likely improve the local air quality and reduce the noise and vibration impacts.</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> This option is proposed to cross footpaths PRR/45/1 and PRR/44/1. National cycle route 57 would also be impacted by this option.</p> <p><u>Advantages:</u> Potential provision of walk and cycle access across the A4010 Wycombe/Aylesbury Road.</p> <p>The proposed Scheme would likely improve traffic congestion at peak times in the centre of Princes Risborough.</p> <p>Less vehicles in the centre of Princes Risborough (e.g. along the A4010) would likely improve the local air quality and reduce the noise and vibration impacts.</p>
Road Drainage and the Water Environment	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> There are areas of Medium and High flood risk to east of Summerleys Road which could be affected by this option, and which could have implications for the development.</p> <p>The Scheme is proposed to cross the Kingsey Cuttle Brook and its tributaries at three locations which would have WFD and drainage implications.</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> There are areas of Medium and High flood risk to east of Summerleys Road which could be affected by this option, and which could have implications for the development. In addition, a tributary of the Kingsey Cuttle Brook flows close to Horsenden Lane which has a Medium risk of flooding and a small area with a High risk of flooding.</p> <p>The Scheme is proposed to cross the Kingsey Cuttle Brook and its tributaries at three</p>

		locations which would have WFD and drainage implications.
Materials	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> This option would run through approximately 2km of open agricultural land.</p> <p>This option is close to Birkett Electric which is a historic landfill facility. Presence of potential contaminated land would therefore need to be assessed.</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> This option would run through approximately 1km of open agricultural land and would require more improvements to existing roads e.g. the narrow Horsenden Lane.</p>
Community and Private Assets	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> This option is proposed to cross the railway line at two locations.</p> <p>An assessment of the individual properties and businesses that may potentially be affected by the Scheme would be conducted in the next stage when the route options have been developed.</p> <p>An assessment of the impact on land holdings and farm viability would need to be undertaken.</p>	<p><u>Disadvantages:</u> This option is proposed to cross the railway line at four locations.</p> <p>An assessment of the individual properties and businesses that may potentially be affected by the Scheme would be conducted in the next stage when the route options have been developed.</p> <p>An assessment of the impact on land holdings and farm viability would need to be undertaken.</p>

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of Options A and B.

5 Scope of the Assessment

5.1 Environmental Assessment Methodology

The environmental assessment identifies, describes and assesses the likely significant effects (including beneficial impacts) which may arise, either directly or indirectly, due to Scheme. This preliminary baseline assessment was based on a desk survey and a site visit in November 2013. More detailed or refined assessments would be developed as the Scheme progresses. In the next stage (scoping stage), once the options have been defined further and there is a preferred option for the Scheme, each receptor (a component of the environment) would be broadly assessed for the sensitivity to the Scheme based on the following criteria:

Importance: *Is it a feature of national, regional or local importance? Is it well preserved / in good condition?*

Sensitivity to change: *Is there a direct or indirect pathway from the source of the impact? Would it recover with time?*

These features would be considered for the two proposed options and would inform the scope of any future assessment. The terminology is defined in Table 2.

Terminology: Sensitivity of the baseline environment	
High	Highly sensitive sites include sites that are designated of national or international importance (e.g. the AONB and SAC); or affect large numbers of people. Generally highly sensitive sites are those of high quality / in good condition or highly regarded by people.
Moderate	Sites of moderate sensitivity can include sites that are of regional or local interest or importance; or affect a small number of people. Generally moderate sensitive sites are in moderate condition or locally regarded in value or quality.
Low	Sites of low sensitivity are unlikely to be designated. They are unlikely to be considered of value by either the local population or stakeholders.

Table 2: Definition of terms

5.2 Uncertainties

The project has a number of uncertainties which could affect the future development and scope of the project:

- The design of the preferred option;
- Further data from surveys affecting the scope of the assessment (e.g. ecological surveys);
- Consultation with statutory consultees, local residents and landowners; and
- Statutory consents and approvals (e.g. planning permission).

This Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report identifies the potential environmental constraints, risks and issues for the Princes Risborough Scheme. The options being assessed provide a new route around Princes Risborough in order to facilitate potential commercial and housing land use developments in the future.

There are currently two main options to link the route from the north to the south of the urban area of Princes Risborough which would connect to the A4010 (Risborough/Wycombe Road). These options are at an early stage of development and would evolve through the project until a preferred route is identified.

The baseline environmental conditions have been briefly described within this Preliminary Environmental Assessment Report, along with some potential impacts and recommendations for further surveys and assessments.

At this initial stage, the most significant impacts are related to the close proximity of the Scheme to this AONB boundary. The route south of Picts Lane along Shootacre Lane is of particular concern in this respect. Shootacre Lane would need to be widened as part of the development and there do not appear to be any other feasible options that involve a shorter length of widening of existing roads within the AONB. A detailed landscape and visual assessment would be essential to determine the character of the environment within the AONB along Shootacre Lane, the likely impacts of the proposed routes and appropriate mitigation.

Other potential impacts include loss of agricultural land; impacts to the water environment through several proposed crossings of the Kingsey Cuttle Brook and its tributaries; potential impacts on Grade II listed buildings (especially at the end of Horsenden Lane for Option B); effects to PROWs through the crossing of footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes; and landscape and visual impacts through loss of agricultural land to the west of Princes Risborough, introduction of new development into the landscape, and the upgrading of existing narrow country lanes. Mitigation would be developed as the project progresses to minimise these environmental impacts and where possible, to provide environmental enhancements.

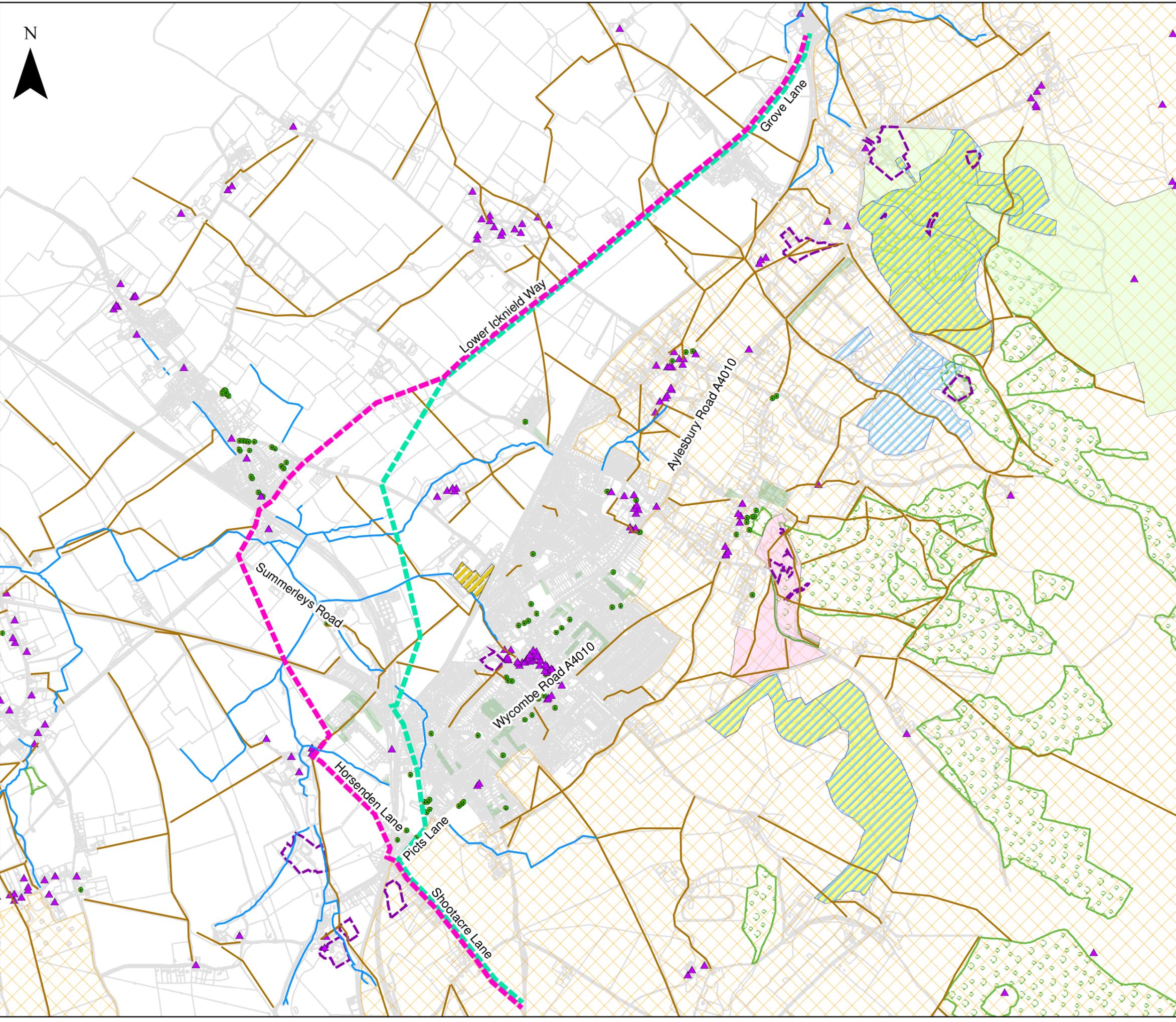
7 Table of Acronyms

Acronyms	
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BGS	British Geological Society
BCC	Buckinghamshire County Council
CPO	Compulsory Purchase Order
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
Defra	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
DSA	Delivery and Site Allocations
EC	European Commission
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MAGIC	Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside
OS	Ordnance Survey
PROW	Public Right of Way
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPZ	Source Protection Zone
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
WDC	Wycombe District Council
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WDLP	Wycombe District Local Plan

Table 3: Acronyms

Appendix A Environmental Constraints Plan





- Key**
- Route Option A
 - Route Option B
 - Rivers
 - Public Rights of Way
 - ▲ Listed Building
 - Scheduled Monuments
 - Tree Preservation Order
 - Tree Preservation Order - Single Tree
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest
 - Special Area of Conservation
 - Local Nature Reserve
 - Ancient Woodland
 - Historic Landfill
 - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty/Greenbelt Land
 - Registered Parks and Gardens



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Rev.	Rev.Date	Purpose of revision	Draw	Chk	Rev'd	Apprv

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Client

Project Title **Wycombe District Local Plan**

**Princes Risborough Area
 Environmental Constraints Plan**

Drawing Status **Final**

Scale 1:19000 DO NOT SCALE

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