

Newcastle City Council  
Outer West Pool  
Consultation Summary

A report by

Strategic Leisure limited



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## **Introduction to the appendices**

- 1.1. These appendices accompany the report which presents the findings from the first stage of our consultation with members of the public and stakeholders about what they would like to see at the proposed new Outer West Leisure Facility. This took place during 12 January – 25 March 2022.
- 1.2. The appendices present full details of the main concerns raised by people who responded, and of what they said they would like to see at the new facility.
- 1.3. Within these main themes, we explore here the details of what people said in response to our consultation.
- 1.4. Analysis was carried out by Strategic Leisure Ltd. and Newcastle City Council's City Futures Policy Team, using SurveyMonkey and NVivo analysis tools.

## Appendix 1 – Do you have any concerns about the proposed new leisure centre?

356 people responded to this question, with their main concerns being around opening hours (raised by 65 people), the swimming pool provision (43 people) and parking and transport (24 people commented on this).

Concerns raised	How often mentioned
Opening Hours Concerns	65
Swimming Pool Concerns	48
Parking and Transport Concerns	24
Swimming Lessons and Activities Concerns	21
Project and Cost Concerns	18
No Concerns	15
Community and Local Area Concerns	11
Accessibility	9
Swimming Clubs Concerns	9
Operator Concerns	8
Leisure Centre Concerns	4
Sports and Fitness Activities Concerns	2

Many people commented on more than one aspect of the proposal that they had concerns about, so the number of mentions totals more than 356.

Our analysis, as shown in the table below, indicates that the main themes within these concerns were around having extended opening hours including late and morning opening, sufficient parking, and careful management of how the facility is used by different groups – people who took part in the consultation mentioned issues such as ensuring that both people who want to do lane swimming and training, and families and people who swim more slowly, can use the facility. Similar themes were raised by those attending focus groups to discuss this. The tables on the next few pages explore this in more detail.

Theme	How often mentioned
Facility needs extended hours so that people working and studying can access it	31
Facility will need late opening hours	11
Facility needs to have adequate parking	10
Facility needs to open from 6am	8
Use of pool by different groups needs to be carefully managed	8
A 25m pool is too small	6
Need to have separate training and children's pools	6
Concerned with performance of proposed operator	6
Need to have a small pool for children to use	5
There needs to be three swimming pools included in the design	5

### Opening Hours Concerns

We received 65 comments about people’s concerns in relation to opening hours. The most common theme in their comments were around how the facility would need extended opening hours so that people working and studying can use it. One comment was: “I would be grateful if the centre could be open on weekends and late nights, even if only 2-3 nights a week, as otherwise it will be difficult to access for those of us who work full-time office hours.”

Opening Hours Concerns	How often mentioned
Facility needs extended hours so that people working and studying can access it	31
Facility will need late opening hours	11
Facility needs to open from 6am	8
Need flexible opening hours	3
Needs to be open at weekends	3
General concerns about opening hours	2
Want more information about proposed opening hours	2
Need flexible hours so that a mix of people can use it	2
The old facility did not have good opening hours	1
Needs to open early in the morning	1
Opening hours should be the same as the old facility	1

## Swimming Pool Concerns

We received 43 comments about people’s concerns in relation to the proposals for swimming pools within the facility. The most common themes in these comments were that people felt a 25m pool would be too small. One comment was: “Most leisure centres only offer a 25-metre pool, West Denton was unique in the local area for its 50m pool.”

Swimming Pool Concerns	How often mentioned
A 25m pool is too small	6
Need to have separate training and children's pools	6
Need to have a small pool for children to use	5
There needs to be three swimming pools	5
Would like to see a 50m pool in this area being retained	4
Learn from past experience with old pool design	3
Have had to use another pool due to issues with the existing one	3
Unhappy with design using so many glass panels	2
Would like to see a 10-lane pool being built	1
Pool should be at least 33m long	1
Would like to see an 8-lane pool	1
Would like to see a diving pool	1
Would be good to have a hydrotherapy pool	1
Feel this represents a reduction in local pool facilities	1
Needs to be a fitness pool, not just a fun pool	1
Pool needs to have adequate spectator seating	1
Would like to have a slide	1

## Parking and Transport Concerns

We received 24 comments about people’s concerns in relation to parking and transport. The most common theme was about the need for adequate parking at the facility. One comment was: “It needs good parking, bus routes, safe cycling storage, and infrastructure to make it easier to access from all areas, including Callerton, Kenton Bankfoot, Blakelaw, Cowgate, Throckley, Lemington, etc.”

Parking and Transport Concerns	How often mentioned
Facility needs to have adequate parking	10
Accessible parking for disabled and older people is important	2
Parking facilities need to have good security and lighting	2
Facility needs to have free parking	2
Secure cycle parking is needed	2
Facility will need to have good public transport links	2
Has been difficult to park at the existing facility	2
Needs to have good links with cycle routes	1
Will there be enough space on site to have sufficient parking	1

## Swimming Lessons and Activities Concerns

We received 21 comments about concerns in relation to swimming lessons and activities. The most common themes in comments were around the need to carefully manage the use of the pool by different groups of users. One comment was: “The current pool is used by swimming clubs, exercise classes, mothers and toddlers, schools, etc. It's always crowded when everyone piles in at the same time.”

Swimming Lessons and Activities Concerns	How often mentioned
Use of pool by different groups needs to be carefully managed	8
Local schools need dedicated time for swimming lessons	2
Would like to see swimming competitions in the new facility	2
Children need to be able to swim	2
At present families have to travel elsewhere in the city to teach children to swim	2
Need to reintroduce children's swimming lessons	1
Would like adults-only swim sessions	1
Need to have lane swimming sessions	1
Need to have non-lane swimming sessions	1
Children have missed a lot of swimming due to the pandemic	1

## Project and Cost Concerns

We received 18 comments about their concerns in relation to the project plan and cost. The most common themes were around the need to learn from other local leisure centres. One comment was: “Northumberland have fantastic facilities for children situated within their leisure centres such as soft play equipment and clip and climb, it would be fantastic to see Newcastle follow suit.”

Project and Cost Concerns	How often mentioned
Learn from design of other local leisure centres	5
Do not see why new pool is needed as the old pool is there	3
What will happen to the old buildings	1
Not sure this is the best use of government money	1
The city needs a bigger pool	1
The proposed pool size will not meet the needs of the university	1
Would prefer more investment in Newburn facility	1
Would like a new pool but not a new leisure centre	1
Needs both a gym and a traditional pool	1
Cost of using it must be accessible	1
Unhappy with proposed design	1
This is a long time to wait to get a local facility	1

## No Concerns

We received 15 comments from people saying they had no concerns in relation to these proposals. The most common themes raised were that people had no concerns, and that they wanted the facility to be available as soon as possible. One comment was: “No, it's about time something was brought back over to the West End and make activities accessible for us again.”

No Concerns	How often mentioned
No concerns but want the facility back quickly	4
I have no concerns	4
Look forward to new facility opening	3
Will be nice to swim at lunchtime	1
Would like a new leisure centre	1
This is a big opportunity for the local area and city	1



## Community and Local Area Concerns

We received 11 comments about people’s concerns in relation to how these proposals would fit into the community and local area. The most common themes in these comments were that the new facility would be beneficial for the local area and give people something to do. One comment was: “Some outside space with a small play area or outdoor gym would be good for the warmer weather”.

Community and Local Area Concerns	How often mentioned
Will be beneficial for the local area and give people something to do	3
Would like to see attractive outdoor space with green space included in design	3
Facility needs to accommodate the growing Outer West area	1
Would like a bigger library space	1
Unhappy at the closure of the old facility	1
Cafe needs to have long opening hours	1

## Accessibility Concerns

We received nine comments about concerns in relation to accessibility. One comment was: “[Please include] disabled access to pools with ramps and hoists; take a look at Elswick Pool as an example, the way their pool is walk-in all the way around”.

Accessibility Concerns	How often mentioned
Provide proper support for disabled people to use it	1
Have a Changing Places changing room	1
Facility needs to support women and BAME people to use the facility	1
Cost of use needs to be affordable	1
Would like a quiet swim option for children on the autistic spectrum	1
Provide suitable steps into the pool so that disabled people can access it	1
Need suitable changing facilities for disabled children	1
Provide ramps and hoists for disabled people to access the pool	1

### Swimming Clubs Concerns

We received nine comments about people's concerns in relation to these proposals and how they would work for swimming clubs. The most common themes in their comments were from people concerned that the pool will be too small for swimming clubs to use. One comment was: "I am anxious that the design illustrated in your video will miss a huge opportunity to promote competitive swimming in the Newcastle area."

Swimming Clubs Concerns	How often mentioned
Concerned that pool will be too small for swimming clubs to use	4
Getting the pool design right means that other local swim clubs will be attracted to use it	2
Not having a big enough pool and spectator space means that local swim clubs will not use it	1
Swimming clubs needs separate entrance for out of hours use	1
Swimming clubs using the pool at the same time as others did not work	1

### Operator Concerns

We received eight comments about people's concerns in relation to the operator of the facility. The most common theme related to how this has worked with existing facilities. One comment was: "Who will be in charge of the everyday running of this complex and in particular the management and running of the new swimming pool?"

Operator Concerns	How often mentioned
Concerned with performance of proposed operator	6
Concerns about operator	1
Happy with operator of current facility	1

### Leisure Centre Concerns

We received four comments about concerns in relation to the proposals for the leisure centre. One comment was: “Use internal materials that withstand [foot] traffic and cleaning, unlike the last leisure centre.”

Leisure Centre Concerns	How often mentioned
New design needs to be aspirational	1
Materials used need to be durable and easy to clean	1
Facility should focus on fitness as there are already local community spaces	1
Membership price protection is needed	1

### Sport and Fitness Concerns

We received two comments about people’s concerns in relation to these proposals and sport and fitness. One comment was: “I hope the opening times are long... making sport a leisure and social event with long opening hours for the café, providing much-needed resources for local sports clubs”.

Sport and Fitness Concerns	How often mentioned
Sport and leisure need to be social activities	1
Facility is much needed for local sports clubs	1

## Appendix 2 – is there anything you would like to see us include in our plans for the new leisure centre, such as activities or facilities?

448 people responded to this question, with analysis of what they said they would like to see showing that the swimming pool (215 people mentioned this), aspects of the leisure centre such as its layout, what facilities it has, and so forth (100 people), and services for early years, play and young people (92 people) being the ones most commonly commented on.

What people would like to see	References
Swimming Pool	215
Leisure Centre	100
Early Years, Play and Young People	92
Swimming Classes and Activities	89
Fitness Classes and Activities	77
Gym	54
Library	30
Project Plan and Consultation	28
Local Area and Community	23
Accessibility	11
Parking and Transport	4

Many people commented on more than one thing they would like to see at the new facility, so the number of mentions totals more than 448.

Our analysis, as shown in the table on the next page, indicates that the main themes within these headings were

The tables on the next few pages explore this in more detail.

## Swimming Pool

We received 215 comments about what people would like to see in relation to the swimming pool. The most common themes were that a baby, toddler and children's shallow pool is needed, the facility should have multiple pools to cater for different user groups, and that they wanted to see a sauna and steam room. One comment was: "The old West Denton pool used to have marvellous facilities: a 33m main pool with diving boards, a training pool, a small pool for children and learners, and a popular sauna and steam room".

Swimming Pool – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Baby, toddler and children's shallow pool is needed	26
The facility should have multiple pools	21
Sauna and steam room is needed	21
Swimming pool is very important	17
Need pool to have enough lanes and facilities to host swimming galas	16
8 lane pool is needed	13
Would like a 50m pool	12
Splash pool area would be good	9
Enough space for spectators is needed	9
Training pool is needed	8
Slides would be good	7
25m pool is needed	6
Pool provision needs to be suitable for proper swimming	6
Existing pool is world class, concerned that this will be lost	5
Large pool is needed	4
Pool needs to be warm enough for young children	4
Would like a 33m pool	4
Women-only swimming sessions are needed	3
Pool is more important than gym	2
Do not want glass panels	2
Children's play area should be in the swimming pool area	2
Jacuzzi would be good	2
Local area needs a better pool	2
Newcastle needs a competition-sized pool	2
Air conditioning in swimming pool area is needed	1
Unhappy at losing a 33m pool	1
Diving pool would be good	1
Learn from pools elsewhere in Newcastle	1

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Swimming Pool – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Fun pool sessions for children would be good	1
Would like a 10-lane pool	1
Need a foot pool for hygiene purposes	1
Turkish bath would be good	1
Good changing facilities are very important	1
Would be good to have large inflatables in the pool	1
Outdoor swimming would be good	1
Wave pool would be good	1

### Leisure Centre

We received 100 comments about what people wanted to see at the leisure centre. The most common themes in their comments were around the need to learn from good practice and design at existing north east leisure centres, and that they wanted to see a café. One comment was: “The facility at Haven Point [in South Tyneside], provides hints at what can be achieved in terms of providing a competitive swimming venue in a modest footprint”.

Leisure Centre – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Learn from existing north east leisure centres	18
Cafe would be good	11
Need to have a community space	7
Outdoor space at the facility is needed	4
Would like a facility similar to Ponteland Leisure Centre	3
Inflatable space would be good	3
Need track facilities as local young athletes have to go elsewhere in the north east	3
Private changing rooms and showers are needed	3
Communal rooms are needed	2
Hospitality rooms for functions are needed	2
Studio rooms would be good	2
Outdoor play space would be good	2
Ice sports facilities would be good	2
Sports massage would be good	2
Grass roof would provide green space for the local area	2
Some people have Covid-related concerns over being in enclosed spaces	2

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Leisure Centre – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Climbing wall would be good	2
Sports hall is needed	2
Social space is needed	2
Centre needs appropriate facilities for older users	1
There are already two cafes in the local area	1
Would like space that can be rented for music classes	1
Changing rooms should be larger	1
Computer rooms and facilities are needed	1
Design the facility to minimise echoes	1
Party space would be good	1
Ice hockey facilities would be good	1
Outdoor multi-sport pitches would be good	1
Tenpin bowling would be good	1
Mothers' groups would be good	1
Healthy food should be on offer	1
Fitness facilities and healthy food fit together	1
Older people's social events would be good	1
Family changing rooms are needed	1
Changing rooms should be no-shoes	1
Need free lockers	1
Need hairdryer in changing rooms	1
Good showers are important	1
Community cafe facility is needed	1
Bowling alley would be good	1
Ice skating facility would be good	1
Play space is needed	1
Keep the facility properly clean	1
Cafe should stock local products	1

## Early Years, Play and Young People

We received 92 comments about people's environment concerns in relation to these proposals. The most common themes in their comments were around whether the centre could have soft play and clip & climb facilities. One comment was: "There are lots of families with young children who maybe can't travel to soft play facilities further afield, so this would be a great addition for children to play together".

Early Years, Play and Young People – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Soft play area would be good	56
Clip and climb would be good	7
Outdoor play area would be good	3
Children's area would be good	3
Soft play facilities locally are expensive	3
Gated play pen would be useful for when parents are getting changed	2
Do not want to see clip and climb, as these facilities already exist in the local area	2
Community space can be used for baby and family groups	2
Trampolines would be good	2
Creche would be good	2
Skateboarding facilities would be good	2
Year-round children's activities are needed	2
Aqua play for children would be good	1
Would like an interactive wall ball facility	1
Would like to see a youth centre facility for teenagers	1
Would like to see a flow rider facility	1
Baby and children's activities would be good	1
Teenagers need their own classes	1



## Swimming Classes and Activities

We received 89 comments about what people would like to see in connection with swimming classes and activities. The most common themes in their comments were around the importance of providing swimming lessons, and that providing lane swimming sessions was something people wanted to see. One comment was: “We need children’s swimming lessons, with appropriate pool [facilities] to allow for teaching of children’s swimming from beginners upwards through the stages.”

Swimming Classes and Activities – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Swimming lessons are needed	22
Lane swimming would be good	12
Swimming classes are needed	6
Aqua fit and aqua aerobics classes would be good	6
General swimming sessions are needed	5
Baby and toddler swim classes are needed	5
Spa would be good	5
Newcastle needs better swimming pools	3
Children's swimming lessons are needed	3
Affordable swimming classes for children are needed	2
Need children's swimming lessons	2
Swimming for All classes are needed	2
Adults-only swim sessions would be good	2
Older people's swimming sessions are needed	2
Adult swimming training plans would be good	1
Reducing humidity is important	1
Music whilst swimming would be good	1
Aqua deep classes would be good	1
Lunchtime swimming classes would be good	1
Evening swimming classes would be good	1
Pool exercise classes would be good	1
Swimming class timetable needs to offer a range of times	1
Adult beginner swimming lessons are needed	1
Hot tub would be good	1
Cold plunge pool would be good	1
Local children who have had to go elsewhere should get priority	1

## Fitness Classes and Activities

We received 77 comments about people’s views on fitness classes and activities at the new facility. The most common themes were that people wanted to see dance and fitness classes. One comment was: “Dance classes for adults is something I have looked into recently and there doesn’t seem to be anything that fits, so I would like this to be considered among the activities”.

Fitness Classes and Activities – would like to see	How often mentioned
Dance classes	6
Generic fitness classes	6
Exercise classes	5
Spinning classes	5
Women-only classes	5
Wellbeing classes	4
Boxing classes	3
Good class timetable is needed	2
Martial arts classes	2
Baby classes	2
Zumba classes	2
Aerobics classes	2
Yoga classes	2
Pilates classes	2
Squash facilities	2
Football – five- or seven- a side	2
Need a large enough space for big fitness classes	2
Local cricket clubs need facilities	2
Would be good to have classes which are popular already	1
Cookery demonstration classes	1
Need a range of classes from beginner to advanced	1
Current fitness classes are very good	1
Art and craft classes	1
Evening classes - need a good selection of these	1
Art classes	1
Football courts are needed	1
Strength classes	1
Health and wellbeing classes	1
Badminton	1

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<b>Fitness Classes and Activities – would like to see</b>	<b>How often mentioned</b>
Mindfulness classes	1
Early morning classes	1
Tai chi classes	1
Body pump and combat	1
Pool tables	1
Table tennis	1
Judo classes	1
Roller skating	1
Play groups are needed	1
Local triathlon clubs could run events at the centre	1

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#### Gym

We received 56 comments about what people want to see in connection with the gym facilities. The most common theme was that people wanted to see a large and good quality gym. One comment was: "I would like to see a large gym area including all the latest technology".

Gym – what people would like to see	How often mentioned
Good quality gym is needed	6
Large gym is needed	6
Gym should be fully equipped with good quality equipment	5
Good gym class timetable is needed	4
Outer West needs much better gym facilities	4
Women-only sessions in the gym would be good	4
Bigger gym facility is needed	3
Gym membership needs to be affordable	2
24-hour gym service would be good	2
Gym opening hours need to be extended so people can access it	2
Outdoor gym would be good	2
Gym should have the latest technology	2
Rooms for gym classes need to be big enough	2
Price should be the same for existing gym members as it is now	1
Would like to see a bigger gym than in the existing facility	1
Parent and child gym sessions would be good	1
Weightlifting classes would be good	1
Personal training would be good	1
Children's gym sessions would be good	1
Gym classes are needed	1
Learn from private gyms	1
Gym is more important than the pool	1

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#### Library

We received 30 comments about what people wanted to see from library facilities at the centre. The most common themes in their comments were that they wanted a bigger library space. One comment was: "I feel we need more library space."

Library – what people wanted to see	How often mentioned
Library space is too small	9
Need to have community space in the library	5
Need the library space	2
Library space should not be mixed with the cafe	1
Need the library space as it is an autism-friendly space	1
Sensory space would be good	1
Wi-fi would be good	1
Education classes in library	1
Library needs to have computer facilities	1
Library should have support available to use computers	1
Library space will be too small for school classes	1
Children need to be encouraged to read	1
Family space is needed in the library	1
Are libraries still needed	1
Children's groups at the library	1

## Project Plan and Consultation

We received 28 comments in connection with people’s views about the project plan and consultation on it. The most common theme in these comments was whether building a new leisure facility should be a priority given other pressing issues at present. One comment was: “Food poverty should be a higher priority than [building] new leisure venues”.

Project Plan and Consultation – what people wanted to see	How often mentioned
Should this be a priority at the current moment?	6
Unhappy with proposed operator	4
Feel it would have been more cost-effective to refurbish the existing leisure centre	3
The city needs more leisure facilities	2
Is the new facility needed when there is a gym at Newburn and a pool already exists?	2
Leisure centres are outdated	1
The old facility has reached the end of its working life	1
Many north east local authorities are closing old facilities and building new ones	1
How can a new centre be afforded when the running costs of the old one cannot be covered?	1
We could have built a new facility when shopping centre was redeveloped	1
Will people want to be close to each other following the pandemic?	1
A shame to demolish the existing pool	1
People are missing the old facility	1
Existing facilities are not being fully used	1

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### Local Area

We received 23 comments about how the new facility would fit into the local area. The most common theme in their comments was that there are not a lot of amenities in the local area at present. One comment was: “There is not a lot in the local area and activities such as soft play are becoming increasingly expensive”.

Local Area – what people wanted to see	How often mentioned
There are not a lot of amenities in the local area	4
The local area needs a leisure facility	3
Happy that the local area will get a new facility	3
Happy the Outer West is getting a top-class facility	2
Volunteer Centre base at the facility would be good	2
This will benefit local businesses	1
Co-located services would be good	1
Offer employment opportunities in cafe and gym	1
Outer West foodbank needs to be located here	1
Offer discounts to blue light service employees	1
Need membership options for families and individuals	1
Local history groups would be good	1
There are not a lot of children's services in the local area	1

## Accessibility

We received 11 comments about accessibility in the new facility. The most common themes in their comments were around having pool sessions for autistic adults and children would be good, and putting baby seats in the changing rooms. One comment was: “Can we have quiet swim sessions for autistic adults and children?”

Accessibility – what people wanted to see	How often mentioned
Pool sessions for autistic adults and children would be good	2
Need baby seats in changing rooms	2
Changing Lives toilet is needed	1
Disability access to pool is essential	1
Disability access to gym is essential	1
Disabled changing facilities are needed	1
Pool should have a hoist for disabled access	1
SEND sessions would be good	1
Give disabled adults the option to use the small pool	1

## Parking and Transport

We received four comments about people’s thoughts on parking and transport at the new facility. The most common theme was that secure bike parking would be good. One comment was: “Secure cycle park facilities for all types of bikes including cargo bikes [are needed], possibly a cycle lane to the [city] centre.”

Parking and Transport – what people wanted to see	How often mentioned
Secure bike parking would be good	2
Want to see enough parking spaces	1
Need good transport links including cycling	1



### Appendix 3 – do you use the existing leisure facilities in the Outer West, or have you done this in the past – if so, which ones?

As shown in the table below, the most common activities people either currently or previously did at the existing leisure facilities in the Outer West were swimming (152 people said they did this), using the sauna or steam room (76 people), and fitness classes (56 people). The table below shows all the activities and fitness facilities people were using or had used.

Activities done and facilities used at the existing leisure facilities in the Outer West	Number of times this was mentioned
Swimming	152
Sauna or steam room	76
Fitness classes	56
Gym	39
Other	37
Five- or seven- a-side football	27
Library	10
Soft play	6
Gymnastics	5
Lane swimming	5
Swim for all	5
Swimming Lessons	5
Fitness studios	3
Sports hall	3
Aqua fitness	2
Community room	2
Dance classes	2
Meeting rooms	2
Netball courts	2
Office facilities	2
Trampoline	2
Aerobics classes	1
Baby classes	1
Badminton	1
Children's activities	1
Community groups	1
Fitness for older people	1
Internet café	1
Library story sessions	1
Line dancing	1
Local history group	1

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<b>Activities done and facilities used at the existing leisure facilities in the Outer West</b>	<b>Number of times this was mentioned</b>
Spa and well-being facilities	1
Swimming club	1
Women-only classes	1
<i>I have not used the existing facilities either now or in the past</i>	22

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