

The Swanland Village Design Statement was adopted by the East Riding of Yorkshire Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance on 4th March 1999.

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Introduction

In July 1997 the Swanland Parish Council invited the Swanland Village Association (SVA) to produce a Village Design Statement (VDS). After a well attended public meeting which endorsed the desirability of producing a VDS, a Design Group of SVA members, parish councillors and other villagers was established to advance the project.

The Swanland Village Design Statement is the product of the work of this Design Group, with guidance from the ERYC. In writing the document the views of all Swanland residents were sought by means of a questionnaire and by an open workshop. Outcomes of the questionnaire are referred to in some of the following sections. The young people of the village were also asked to express their views.

History

Swanland is an ancient hilltop village with records extending back to the 13th century. Even in medieval times it was a long village with houses strung out along a hollow road, now Main Street. Excavations were carried out in 1989 on the present St Barnabas Drive before building started. The foundations of many old walls were temporarily uncovered. Further ancient walls are to be seen on the north side of West End. The village has been the site of several grand houses, including Swanland Manor (home of the Reckitt family) demolished in 1935 on the site of The Park, and Swanland Grange, demolished in the 1960's, now Grange Park. The only one surviving is Swanland Hall (c 1760 with wings added c1820) in Hall Park, a Listed Building, of which the northern wing was removed in about 1930. The smaller Swanland House, some 140 years old, also remains on the south side of West End, as does Beech Hill House, of equal date, on Beech Hill Road.

The village has a number of other 18th and early 19th century Listed Buildings, all of which are concentrated along Main Street, West End and by the pond.

The early topography of the village remains recognisable in Woodgates Lane, West Leys Road, Main Street and Kemp Road which are unaltered in their course. Tranby Lane was



Mere Cottages and Mere House in Main Street

diverted and straightened in the early 19th century. Dale Road, Greenstiles Lane and Mill Road were constructed later. The present village pond, man-made, has always been a significant feature of the village centre. It probably dates back to the 15th century or earlier, and, until some 50 years ago, extended unfenced further to the north and east.

Until the early part of the 20th century Swanland had only between 400 and 500 inhabitants and was an integral part of the surrounding farming community. In 1910 the Ordnance Survey recorded about 100 properties with the present Main Street and West End as the principal east-west axis. Since then the village has progressively become a residential area for people working elsewhere and the population began to expand. By 1951 the population had risen to 1200.

In the Development Plan for the County of York (East Riding) 1960 Swanland was identified as a Minor Centre where "all suitable development" would be encouraged. By 1971 the population had almost doubled to 2300. In the first Structure Plan (1979) Swanland was defined as a Selected Settlement. By 1998 there were nearly 1500 houses with a population of nearly 4000.

New development since the early sixties has mainly taken the form of estates of speculatively built houses of various styles and size, together with a few developments of individually designed houses.

Setting in the landscape

Questionnaire: 90% said they would oppose any application for development which extended the village boundaries.

Swanland stands some 260 feet above sea level in open countryside on the south eastern edge of the East Yorkshire Wolds, seven miles west of the centre of Hull and just under two miles north of the river Humber. There are many mature trees in the village and around its perimeter. As one approaches Swanland from North Ferriby, Anlaby or Great Gutter Lane the picture is of a compact well wooded settlement. The view of Swanland from the A164 gives enticing glimpses of Swanland through the trees.

Looking out from Swanland to the south there are magnificent views over the river Humber, to the east over agricultural land with distant views of Hull, and to the north towards the Wolds. People taking the popular walk along West Leys Road or Woodgates Lane can enjoy the open vista to the west.



Looking out from Swanland south-east towards the Humber Bridge

Until the recent developments on Greenstiles Lane and Dale Road, Swanland was generally screened off from the outside world by groups or lines of trees, and the soft approaches through open countryside with trees and wide grass verges have helped to preserve the rural distinctiveness which makes Swanland special. Although there has been generous tree planting to screen the new development on Dale Road from the north and in the gardens of the new houses on Greenstiles Lane, it will take some time for these trees to mature and to restore these green approaches.



View of Greenstiles Lane from Tranby Lane when approaching from Anlaby

The adopted Local Plan (1996) acknowledges the importance of the existing village edge. Any further expansion of the development area would have to be into the open countryside, which, in addition to being good (Grade II) agricultural land, is designated as being of high landscape value. Such further development could lead to urbanisation and loss of the essential character of Swanland and its amenity.

Design guidelines

Future development at whatever scale should seek to conserve and respect the setting of Swanland within the surrounding landscape.

Trees should be planted to screen any future development in order to maintain the wooded appearance of Swanland.

Recommendations for action

Any further expansion into open countryside would alter its setting in the landscape and would destroy the distinctiveness which makes Swanland special. Particular care should be taken to protect the natural environment as planned in the ERYC Environmental Strategy Document dated March 1998.

The village centre

Questionnaire: The large majority liked the pond and its surrounds, the "village identity", the friendliness and community spirit and the peaceful environment.

The pond and its surrounding buildings contribute to Swanland's village character. Swanland is fortunate in that the buildings around the pond create such a harmonious and satisfying whole.



Christ Church and the Institute

Over the last two hundred years each building has been constructed in a different style from its neighbour but showing respect to the proportions of the other buildings and the space around the pond. For example, the Victorian Old School with its Gothic windows contrasts with the Georgian Christ Church with its Venetian windows, but the two blend very satisfactorily.

The Old School was built in 1876 and extended sympathetically in the 1930's. The building fell into disuse in 1993. Because of its individual character it contributes a great deal to the scene which residents and visitors alike find so attractive.

Another satisfying aspect is the sense of enclosure. Approaching from West End the Pump House restricts the width of the road at this point, and then the view of the pond and Christ Church opens up in full. Similarly coming up Main Street, as one passes the Institute, one is suddenly presented with another attractive view of the pond and its surrounding buildings.

This area is the centre of Swanland. Indeed all the shops, the library, the Institute, the village hall, one of the churches, the primary school, the bowling club, the tennis club and the public house are situated round the pond or nearby. The pond and its wildlife, trees and surrounding buildings present a very pretty picture, and this is the natural place for people to stop a while to talk when on the way to or from the shops or other community facilities, or just to enjoy the view. But the main street runs alongside the pond and as a result there are



Approaching the pond from the west



Approaching the pond from the east

cars driving through and many cars parked on both sides. The cars and the ugly white lines on the cracked concrete and tarmac detract considerably from the attractive appearance of this area. The pavement on the north side of the pond is narrow and families feeding the ducks on the east side have to watch out for cars being parked there.



..... "families feeding the ducks on the east side [of the pond] have to watch out for cars being parked there."

"We like the pond. Not many villages have ponds". Sally, Rachel, Georgina, aged 10-11.

Design guidelines

Any modifications to buildings around the pond should be sympathetic with the style of the original, and any new building should show individual character but also sensitivity to its surroundings, in order to maintain the harmony of the area.

The Pump House with its accompanying old pump should be conserved as historic features and to maintain the sense of enclosure at the west end of the pond.

To retain the village atmosphere of Main Street and the area around the pond, it is important that this area feels safe and welcoming to pedestrians and does not appear to be dominated by cars. Any development in this area and any new traffic management measure should take account of this.

The existing traffic management measures of yellow and white lines and car parking facilities detract from the character of the village centre. Future measures should enhance the character of the village centre; for example, the use of trees, shrubs and brick paviors would be more appropriate than bollards and coloured tarmac, whilst the design should ensure the safety of pedestrians and car drivers. In addition this would enhance the appearance of the immediate surrounds to the pond, make the road less of a dividing line between the pond and the buildings to the north and serve to control the indiscriminate parking alongside the pond.

Signs should be erected only where absolutely necessary and be sympathetic to their surroundings. (See also under Traffic Management).



Artist's impression of suggestion for controlling parking alongside the pond

Recommendations for action

The area in front of the Old School overlooking the pond is, at the moment, a wasted opportunity and should be exploited for its views over the pond towards Mere House.

The Old School boundary wall alongside the alleyway to the east of the building is ugly and forbidding, and should be lowered or removed.

There is much scope for making the edges of the pond more pleasant for children and adults, and for improving the appearance and ecology of the pond itself.





Suggestion for making the surrounds of the pond more attractive





..... and safer for children



Suggestion for improving the appearance and ecology of the pond

Shops and community facilities

Questionnaire: Over 50% of respondents said they would miss the shops, Post Office and doctor's surgery more than anything else if they were to disappear from the village.

Swanland is relatively well provided with shops and other community facilities. The shops are all situated along the axis of West End and Main Street east and west of the pond. The village therefore has an obvious centre and this contributes to the sense of community.

The character of the village owes a great deal to these small shops, some of which are housed in the white painted one storey buildings which are characteristic of the centre of Swanland.



Shops in West End

Design guidelines

The provision of a variety of shops should be maintained and encouraged.

Any future development of new shops or alterations to existing premises should reflect the character and scale of other businesses.

The replacement of small windows by large plate glass windows would be inappropriate.

Main Street, West End and Mill Road

Questionnaire: More than half the respondents who tried to identify the characteristic architectural features of Swanland singled out the white cottages on West End and Main Street, and other white painted houses by the pond and in Main Street.

The origins of a simple linear village are clearly apparent from the variety of styles and ages of the buildings along Main Street, West End and Mill Road. These roads run the whole length of the village and form the main east-west axis. There are sixteen Grade II listed buildings in Main Street and West End which include a number of 18th century cottages, a large country house of the same vintage, an early 19th century church and two fine 18th century houses. Towards the eastern end of Main Street a terrace of small, flat fronted 19th century cottages in mellow brick, with small front gardens, provide an authentic and attractive link with Swanland's past.

In March 1999 the local authority created a Conservation Area encompassing the oldest buildings in the village centre.

There are a number of 20th century houses of every passing style. There is little cohesion, and in the last fifty years houses have been built with scant



19th century cottages in Main Street

consideration for the position and style of neighbouring buildings. Some houses are set back high above road level, with steep paths or drives.

The most conspicuous buildings are the white water tower, erected in 1931 and a significant landmark at the western entrance to the village, and St. Barnabas church, built 1992, with a prominent grey tiled roof at the eastern end of the axis.

Mill Road contains a few cottages and one or two houses that date from the 19th century. These are situated at the western end of the road, near to the site of the early mill. In the early part of this century some further individual properties were erected, but on a small scale. These were of brick with bow fronted windows, and still with elements of white render in sympathy with the earlier building. The main development of the road, however, came in the nineteen-sixties, when an extensive range of bungalows and dormer bungalows were erected on the south of the road, backing onto woodland, and on the north side of the road, in the gaps between the earlier houses.

Design guidelines

Any alterations to or conversions of the 18th, 19th and early 20th century properties should recognise the historical and aesthetic significance of these buildings. When roofs, doors and windows are being replaced, or walls are being repaired or repointed, original or sympathetic materials and details should be used. Proportions should be maintained by keeping the original sizes of windows and doorways.

Alterations to newer properties should respect the materials and proportions of the original buildings and their older neighbours.

Pre- and post-war development

Questionnaire: 93% of respondents considered that they live in a village, not a suburb or a dormitory town.

Until relatively recently Swanland was characterised by its open pasture land, the parkland of the great houses of earlier years. Now much of the open space within the current boundaries has become lost in the building of new estates. Plans for further building have been approved on much of what remains. The character of the village has thus already inclined towards the urban.

Nonetheless Swanland has managed to retain much of the feeling of a rural village even with its considerable modern developments, due to the spaciousness of the layout of its new housing.







A number of individual houses were built prior to the Second World War, but post-war development in Swanland began in earnest in the sixties and, in the main, these buildings are typical of those seen in any other part of the country. There is no local distinctiveness of style, with a range of brick colour and type of roof tile. Nonetheless each estate has its own individual identity.

Building density north of the Main Street / Mill Road axis is considerably higher than that to the south of this line, and near the pond, in Mere Way, densest of all. However, it is generally lower than the average found in other parts of the area.



Mere Way



Northfield

To the south of the Main Street / Mill Road axis, the building density is, in the main, low. The different developments contain a variety of architectural styles, ranging from pre- and post-war individually designed houses in the Tranby Lane, Kemp Road and West Leys Road areas, to the neo-Georgian, mock Tudor and contemporary designs of the 80's and 90's.

These larger properties, set in generous plots surrounded by mature trees, generate a feeling of openness and space which contribute to the special character and amenity of the village. Many of these properties are in areas which have been defined as being of "common character" and as such will be protected by Policy E7 of the Local Plan from unsympathetic subdivision and infill.



Stratton Park



On Hill

Although the Local Plan accepts that within any settlement there may be other areas which have not been specifically identified under the "common character" policy, there is no certain protection against the loss of open space.

Design guidelines

In order to protect areas against loss of character and amenity where houses have been laid out to provide plenty of open space, the original intention as regards density, layout and the aesthetics of the development should be adhered to, before any change is authorised. Additional areas of "common character" should be considered.

When plans are drawn up for new housing estates, a suburban 'regimented' look should be avoided. Housing should be designed to be appropriate to its setting and should be constructed in good quality brick with pitched pantile or slate roofs. Design should be clean, and well proportioned with strong outlines. The scale and proportions of neighbouring buildings should be respected.

Extensions or additions to existing houses should follow the form and character of each house, maintaining the colour of the bricks, roof pitch, roof tiles and style of windows. Particular care should be taken to ensure that extensions do not close the gaps between the houses to an extent that would result in a loss of spatial amenity.



New development at Blacksmith's Yard, Main Street



A sensitive addition (right side) to Easenby Farm House

The open feel of estates, created by generous grass verges (as in Manor Road), sizeable open front gardens (as in Northfield) or communal open spaces (as in The Green) is an attractive feature. In these developments the open aspect should be protected.

Each estate of houses has its own particular character, and this character should be maintained in any alterations or infill.

Where traffic is low, the use of brick paviors across the full width of the road - as in On Hill and at the north end of St Barnabas Drive - should be encouraged as it presents a less urban picture, gives pedestrians more space in which to walk, and helps to slow traffic.



The open aspect of Northfield



The use of brick paviors in St. Barnabas Drive

Trees, hedgerows and grass verges

Roadside verges, old field hedgerows, mature broad-leaved trees and spaciousness all contribute to the air of rural tranquillity.

"Things we like about our village: the peacefulness and quietness, the trees and plants". Class 5/6, aged 10-11.



Mature trees, hedgerows and grass verges in Greenstiles Lane

Trees

Large, mature trees such as beech, horse chestnut, oak and lime are an essential element in the character of Swanland. These important trees are found in groups on the edge of the village, for example on Beech Hill Road, along Greenstiles Lane and within many of the large gardens.

The beech plantation on Beech Hill is likely to have been established before 1806 and is approaching the end of its healthy life.



Beech trees on Beech Hill Road

Design guidelines

As well as retaining mature trees it is essential that new ones be planted to replace any that have been removed or have reached the end of their natural lifespan.

The planting of appropriate native trees should be encouraged in any development either within the gardens or in open spaces provided. Consideration should be given to creating new small wooded areas.

Recommendations for action

Many of the trees in the village are of a similar age, especially those in the spinneys around the perimeter; it is important that these spinneys are managed to encourage new growth so that they survive into the future.

Some areas of grass may look better when planted with trees or appropriate shrubs.



Trees and shrubs on open space in Manor Road



Old hedgerows in Tranby Lane

Hedgerows and verges

Wide roadside verges and hawthorn hedges, dating from 1837 when Swanland was enclosed, create leafy entrances to the village.

Grass verges within the village help create a feeling of spaciousness. Some of these verges are being badly damaged by commercial vehicles, or by parking cars. For example the grass verge on the north side of Tranby Lane near the school is severely eroded due to car parking by parents leaving and picking up their children at school.

Design guidelines

Wherever possible, old hedgerows should be retained. Along routes where they are thin or there are gaps they should be replanted with an appropriate species.

Where front gardens are, in the main, bordered by low hedges or shrubs, as for example in Manor Road, it is not appropriate to replace these by high walls or fences.

Where hedges are high, as in Tranby Lane or Kemp Road, the replacement of these by tall fencing or walls would be inappropriate.

The wide roadside verges should be managed to keep their rural appearance. Along the roads on the approaches to the village, i.e. Mill Road, Dale Road, Occupation Lane, Tranby Lane and Swanland Hill, the verges should not be kerbed except for the requirements of road safety or drainage.

Along Tranby Lane, Greenstiles Lane and West Leys Road <u>within the village</u> it is preferable that verges are not kerbed or given hard surfaces except where there is an essential and overriding public need. However, if the edges are being consistently encroached on and damaged by parked cars or lorries, then low kerbs could be constructed.

In any new development consideration should be given to creating a feeling of openness by planning for open and generous front gardens, a central green area (as in The Green) or by the construction of green verges.



Low hedges and shrubs in Manor Road



High hedges in Tranby Lane

Recommendations for action

Whenever developers or contractors spoil verges by the parking of lorries, etc., the reinstatement of the verges should be enforced by the ERYC.

An alleviation of the problems of parents who park in Tranby Lane when bringing their children to and from school could be the creation of some parking spaces in the vicinity of the Old School (see Recommendations for Action under Traffic Management).

Street 'furniture'

• Pond area

The street "furniture" in this area leaves much to be desired. There are four litter bins, of three different designs presenting a rather messy picture. There are two contrasting styles of street lamp: the ones down Main Street are more suited to a trunk road than a village centre. The ones by the pond in front of Christ Church and the Institute are of a traditional Victorian style and more in scale with the surroundings.

The new bus shelter by the pond blends well with its surroundings, but the red litter bin sticks out like a sore thumb, and the bus timetable is inappropriately positioned.



Victorian style lamp by the pond



Lamp post in Main Street near the pond



Bus shelter and litter bin by the pond

• Elsewhere in the village

Street lamps are mainly of the standard orange sodium variety, and the lamp columns are of a very utilitarian and stark design. Neither the lamps or columns are appropriate for village streets and residential areas.

The telephone cables strung across Main Street and Dale Road, and the telephone and electricity cables in Beech Hill are an eyesore.

Shop signs are often attractive, hand painted and appropriate for a village setting, but sometimes too garish. On the whole signs advertising other businesses are practical but unobtrusive.



Three dimensional lettering on Swan and Cygnet



Painted sign at Hairdresser's

Design guidelines

Street lighting in Main Street alongside the pond should be more appropriate for this predominantly pedestrian area.

There should be a uniform style of enclosed litter bin.

As part of a rolling programme, the present orange sodium lamps should be replaced by bulbs which give a more natural "white" light (as already in Dale Close and Easenby Close). Light should be directed downwards to avoid "light pollution" of the night sky. The present utilitarian lamp standards in the estates should be gradually replaced by more attractively designed ones.

Telephone and electricity wires in Main Street, Dale Road, Beech Hill and elsewhere should be buried when the opportunity arises.

Shop and business signs should be unobtrusive and well designed. Often the most satisfactory method of providing shop signs is to paint the fascias, and use sign-writers to add the lettering. Alternatively, three-dimensional letters can be individually applied. These should by preference be of wood or brass. Internally illuminated signs are not appropriate.

Traffic signs should be kept to a minimum, and sited on existing posts wherever possible. If there are more than one in close proximity, they should be assembled on one post where practicable.

Recommendations for action

The bus timetable should be mounted in the bus shelter.

Sturdy cycle racks should be provided near the pond.

Playing fields, playgrounds and open spaces

Playing fields, tennis courts, and bowling greens provide both an open and verdant aspect, and a focus of community activities. The present playing fields are of a size adequate for current needs; however, the capacity of its carpark is not sufficient for the future.

There is a lack of a large multi-purpose hall for indoor sports.

There are two excellent playgrounds for young children.

"We like the playing fields because there is lots of space for football and cricket you can go on the skateboard ramp. The playground includes swings, slides, seesaws, etc... Class 5/6, aged 10-11.



Open space at the new development, The Green

Design guidelines

It is important to preserve open recreational space, i.e. the area round the pond, the school and village playing fields, the children's playgrounds and other open spaces such as that in The Green development, both to retain Swanland's character, and to provide the focus for communal events and open air recreation.

More evergreen trees and shrubs should be planted to the west and south of the playing field to provide shelter from the wind and to reflect the wooded nature of other parts of the village.

To be in keeping with the green, spacious nature of the rest of the village, new development should incorporate open areas, as in The Green, or be of an acceptable low density by other means, for example larger open front gardens. Open areas should be informal and natural in appearance consistent with the village's rural character and should include the planting of trees which are characteristic of the village and which are so spaced that they can develop to maturity.

Recommendations for action

Additional car parking at the playing field is desirable if the present overspill onto West Leys Road is to be avoided.

Traffic management

Questionnaire: Over 50% of respondents were concerned about traffic speed at various places in the village, particularly in Main Street, West End and Mill Road.

The rapid growth of Swanland has put increasing pressure on its centre, particularly in terms of the number of cars driving down and parking in Main Street. The problem of parking is at its worst at the start and finish of the Primary School day.

In Main Street many of the houses do not have access to a garage, consequently there is no alternative to on-street parking. This may cause problems as the amount of traffic grows.



Parking in Main Street

We can presume that the number of cars being driven through and about the village will continue to increase - in spite of the public's new-found awareness of the importance of cutting down on pollution and congestion by making more short journeys on foot or by bicycle, and longer journeys by means of public transport.

Design guidelines

A pedestrian priority zone with a much lowered speed limit for vehicles should be created along Main Street from Haldenby Court to the entry to Dower Rise. This would contribute to the safety and convenience of pedestrians and be more sympathetic to the village atmosphere which is, as the questionnaire overwhelmingly showed, highly valued by residents.

The use of an attractive combination of block paving and other hard surfaces together with appropriate planting in Main Street in the area of the pond will indicate to drivers that they are entering an area where pedestrians have priority.

Recommendations for action

Parking spaces alongside the pond would be made more distinct and attractive by the use of planting and paving.

Motorists driving into the village should be made more aware of the change in environment and the need to adopt a more appropriate speed by means of entry features and changes in road surface. Traffic has to be slowed down at the entries to the village to protect pedestrians, particularly children and the elderly. This applies particularly to traffic driving down the long and straight Mill Road and up Kemp Road.

Sympathetically designed traffic calming measures should be constructed, at the Kemp Road intersection with Tranby Lane (which would also help car drivers at this difficult crossing) and with Main Street / West End, to emphasise the speed restriction in Main Street.

Whether the redevelopment of the Old School and James Reckitt Memorial Hall takes place in the near future or not, some more off-street parking should be created immediately in that area. This would minimise parking in the busiest part of Main Street, both enhancing the recreational attraction of the pond and making conditions safer for pedestrians.



Artist's impression of suggestions for traffic calming measures at approaches to pond area



Block paving and planting to show that here pedestrians have priority



Trees and paving mark parking bays

Provision for walkers, cyclists and horse riders

Questionnaire: Paths for a safe approach to the playing field were called for, and some 25% of respondents would like to see paths for leisure purposes, both for walking and cycling.

Swanland is surrounded on all sides by highly cultivated agricultural land. A short distance to the north there is a very good network of paths and bridleways, including the Wolds Way. But Swanland has no public footpaths (Parish Paths) connecting with this network. The only access for horse riders or walkers is along Dale Road or Occupation Lane, narrow country roads without pavements where riders and walkers have to be constantly wary of speeding cars.

Within and immediately around the village there are no possibilities for walkers except along the main streets and the roads through the estates. Even then paths are often too narrow for two people to walk alongside each other, particularly on Greenstiles Lane and Tranby Lane. On the south side of Main Street the pavement is very narrow and uneven, and in some places slopes down to the kerb. This makes walking very difficult for the elderly and infirm.

West Leys Road is often used by pedestrians, either walking to the playing fields or doing a round tour (back up to the centre of the village via Kemp Road or down to North Ferriby and back up to Swanland via Woodgates Lane and Mill Road). Yet there is no footpath or pavement.

Recommendations for action

Through negotiation with the relevant landowners, the Parish Council should attempt to create "Permissive paths" as follows:

- I. A footpath from Woodgates Lane to join the Wolds Way in Terrace Plantation.
- 2. A footpath from Mill Road to join Great Gutter Lane and link with Stonepit Road.
- 3. A footpath from West Wold (on West Leys Road) to Woodgates Lane.
- 4. A footpath / bridleway from Westfield Farm to Waudby Farm Lane and Tom Potts Lane.
- 5. A footpath from Occupation Lane to Dale Road.

In view of the increasing fast traffic there is an urgent need for a surfaced path on the west side of West Leys Road, from West End to the playing field.

The footpaths on Greenstiles Lane and Tranby Lane need to be widened within the present green verge.

The pavement on the south side of Main Street towards its eastern end should be made level.

The use of cycles should be encouraged by means of traffic calming measures and the provision of cycle racks in the village centre.



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