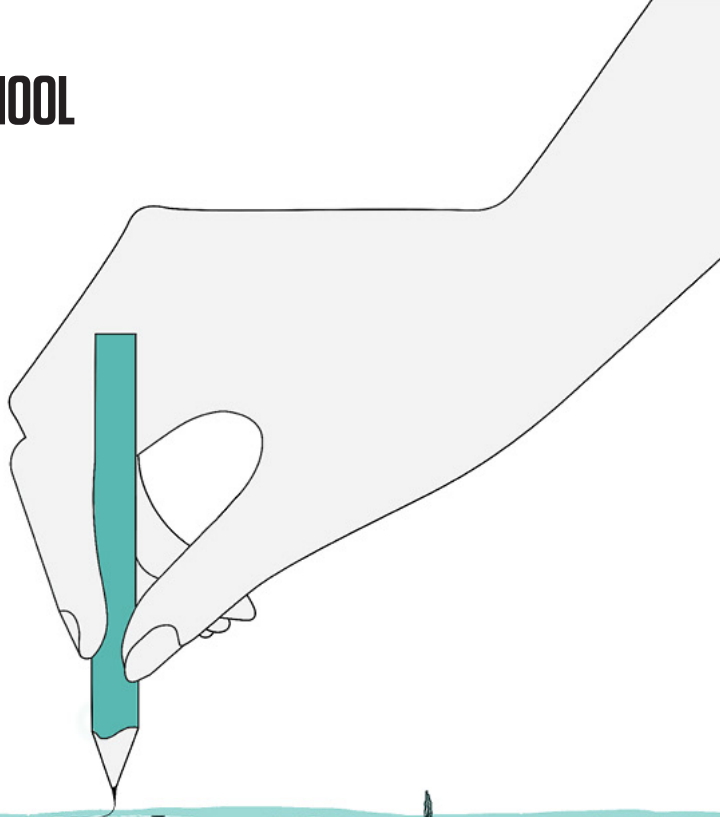


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**MSA  
LIVE 26**

## Team

Sion Lewis (MArch1)

Hui Ling Beh (MArch1)

Cynthia Easwaramoorthi (MArch1)

Varsha Tarikere Srinivas (MArch1)

Vidhi Uplekar (FDN)

Carla Henderson (BA1)

Will Cooper (BA1)

Onur Canbeylli (BA1)

Daniel Burns (BA1)

Liesje Knights (BA1)

Yutaro Iida (MLA1)

## Collaborators

# CyanLines

Steve Connor & Megan Brown

"CyanLines is the bold plan to link and transform Manchester's green and blue spaces – its squares, pocket parks, rivers, canals and viaducts – to enable residents and visitors alike to enjoy, understand and better connect with nature and each other."

Having only been launched in September 2025 CyanLines has already established 4 routes that work their way around beautiful natural spaces of Manchester. The overarching goal of the Cyanlines is to create a network of 100 miles of route composing of linear parks, green-blue corridors and traffic-free walking or cycling routes for the community and Manchester city.

CyanLines has a strong social presence in Manchester holding frequent walks and events in collaboration with a variety of collaborating groups and institutions such as , Greater Manchester Environment Fund, Groundwork Greater Manchester, Canals and Rivers Trust, United Utilities, Marketing Manchester, TFGM, GM Moving, The Ramblers, the Universities, Oxford Road Corridor, CityCo, Imperial War Museum, Science & Industry Museum. CyanLine is slowly becoming a nexus for all things social and natural in Manchester.

# Introduction

## Cyan+

Fallowfield Expansion Study

Cyan+ is a collaboration between students from various years across the Manchester School of Architecture. Consisting of 11 students from MArch1, MLA1, BA1 and FDN.

We are working with CyanLines to suggest further development of one of their existing routes, from its original terminus in Whitworth Park, down into Platt Fields Park and towards Fallowfield. We felt that this area in particular offered a wide range of green spaces that may have been overlooked in the development of the original CyanLines. Our main aim was to connect Platt Fields Park, one of the main green and blue spaces within central Manchester, to existing CyanLine 3, the Corridor of Knowledge.

We are looking to provide a new outlook on this existing route, proposing a toolkit to offer support in the process of extending the CyanLine, with the hope that the establishment of a new line in this area would act as a catalyst for social and environmental regeneration.

100 miles  
of nature in  
our city



Cyan+ Team

# Defining a Brief

## Understanding the client

CyanLines is a highly successful initiative that has made great progress in improving and expanding blue and green spaces around Manchester. Upon the initial meeting with the collaborator we found that they were open to us taking the wheel on the direction of the project.

As a team we attended some pre organised walking tours in which we were able to become accustomed to CyanLines, what they are, and what their aims are and how they are achieving these aims with the larger group of people walking along the lane.

Materials handed out at this event were useful in framing what makes a CyanLine. We were able to take this further and explore what can be improved along our CyanLine.



Cyanlines Walking tour

## Collaborator engagement

After taking some time to reflect we presented our initial thoughts and ideas to the collaborator, receiving mostly positive feedback. However, they advised us to focus more clearly on the main objective: integrating major regeneration projects into CyanLines. Taking this feedback onboard, we explored ways to incorporate purpose built student accommodation developments such as the Fallowfield campus and Moss Lane east, into our pathway plans. By doing this, we were able to create pathways that not only use key regeneration sites but also improve accessibility and strengthen community engagement with the spaces.



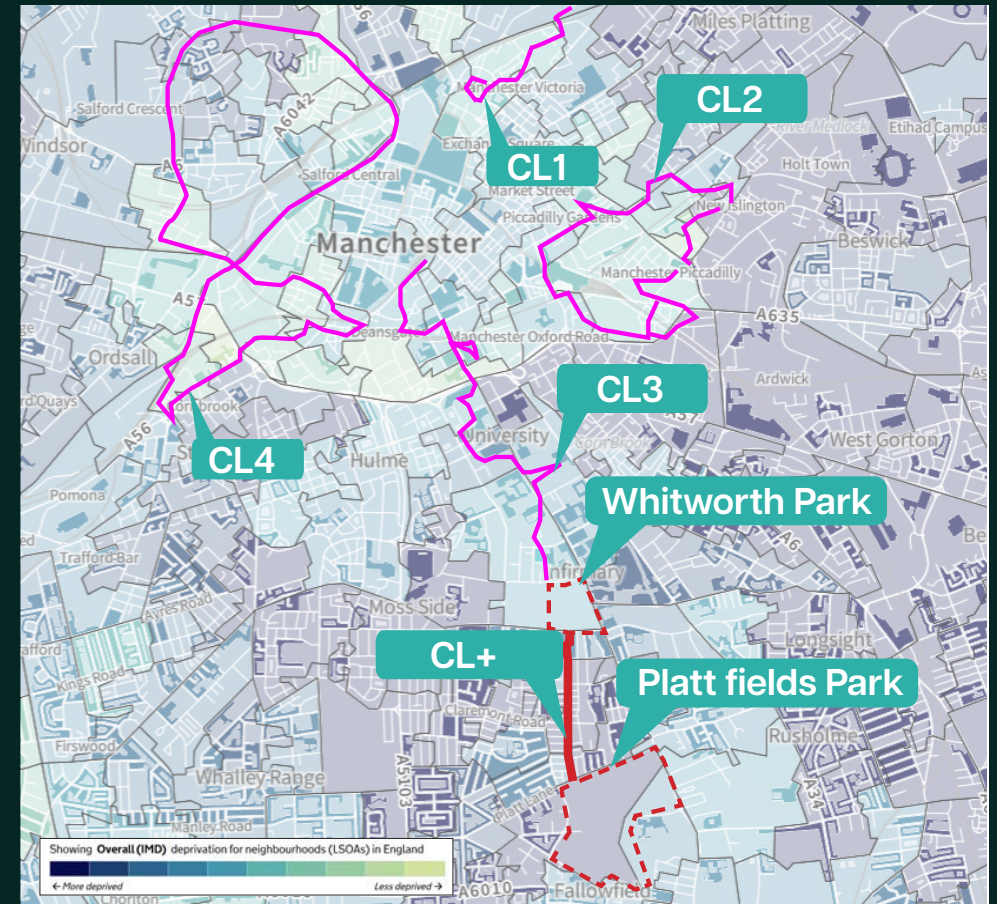
Design Direction Meeting



Proposed Moss Lane East Student Accommodation

## Delivering Social Impact

A core driver behind the derived brief of the project was the overlaying of existing CyanLines over the ONS deprivation map. This highlighted how all the existing CyanLines reside within fairly affluent and well developed areas. For this, we decided that it would be beneficial for the CyanLines to investigate how the expansion of lines into areas of increased deprivation could act as a catalyst of change in these zones.



ONS Map of deprivation of neighbourhoods - By 1 Degree of deprivation

## The Defined Brief and Outputs

Our agreed aim is to undertake a feasibility study of expanding the pre-existing CyanLine 3 from Whitworth Park to Plattfields Park. In doing so, developing methods and strategies of how to establish Cyan Lines in residential neighbourhoods to help promote community engagement with blue and green spaces.

# Parkfield Street Corridor

## Initial Site Explorations

As we conducted our site visit, walking up from Platt Fields park towards Whitworth Park, we explored the Parkfield Street corridor. A residential area in Rusholme.

We found multiple green spaces along this route, including parks, sports pitches and allotments. However, these spaces were not particularly usable, presenting unsafe conditions, with fly-tipping, broken glass and unsafe roads. We noted the potential they had, with the access for children and families living in the area, as well as the opportunity to provide a convenient commuting route between Platt Fields Park and the city centre of Manchester. We shared and recorded ideas of how they could be improved and where was best to plot our route. Focusing particularly on the bin alleys between buildings and the Feel the Rhythm Pocket park, a small community run park and allotments.

We felt that these spaces particularly had the potential and that they would provide a useful starting point for the extension following 3, 30 and 300 rule of trees to CyanLine 3 and hence Cyan+.



Cyan+ Proposal



Cyan+ route with pocket spaces



A - Alleys between backyards



B - 'Feel the Rhythm' Pocket Park



E - Platt fields Park Lake



C - Group site walk along the green lane



D - Parkfield Green



F - Parkfield Street

# Community Engagement

## Engagement 1 - Questionnaire and User Understanding

In our first engagement we created a questionnaire that was distributed around Platt Fields park to members of the public and keep Manchester tidy event. This allowed us to gain basic insights into how people used the space as well as gathering participant opinion of green and blue spaces in the area. However, we felt that the information gathered was very surface level and did not comprehensively portray what the public wanted to see in their community.

## Engagement 2 - Feel The rhythm pocket Park

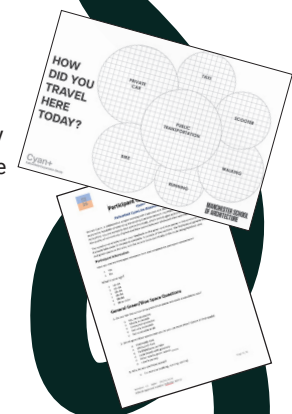
In the second engagement we visited 'Feel the rhythm pocket park' (that is situated along the Cyan+) and took part in some litter-picking and gardening. This helped us align ourselves with community and their uses and needs of the space. Alongside this, we took printouts of precedents and maps to gain feedback on potential interventions to the area. Discovering first hand what will work and what won't.

## Engagement 3 - Precedents in Context

For our final engagement we aim to bridge the gap that we had felt was present in the previous. Members of the community were unable to adequately understand how intervention would manifest in space. To overcome this we generated visuals that implemented desired attributes from the previous engagements into existing photos of the area. This allowed for direct and meaningful feedback from the community on our ideas.

## Outcome of Engagements

The outcome of the engagement was a rich understanding of what interventions would benefit the community along the cyanline. This was collected in the raw form of comment and reflection from the community but were refined down into 6 core themes that were used as markers for success in our design:



Engagement 3 - Feedback board in Context



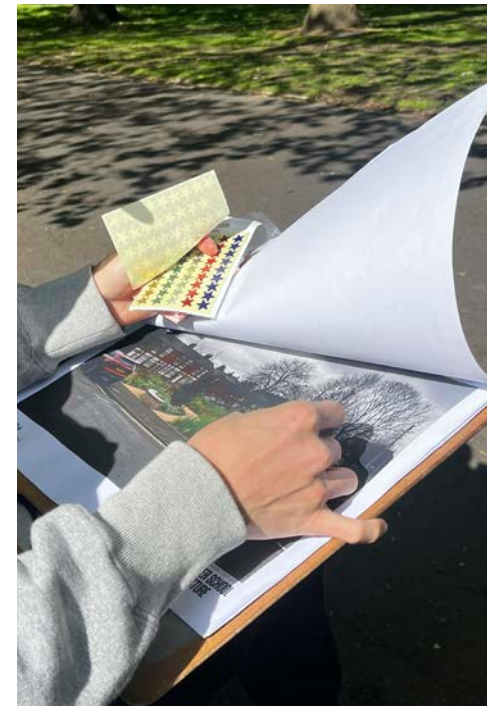
Engagement 2- Gathering local knowledge on area



Engagement 2- 'Feel the rhythm Pocket' park Litter-pick



All Engagements - Participant Reward Badges



Engagement 3 - Sticker Feedback on engagement boards

# Proposed CyanLine

## Whitworth to Plattfields

Engagement with the community provided us with information to which Cyan+ was designed. The map below outlines the proposed route and highlights the intervention that can be implemented to improve important aspects from the community engagement.

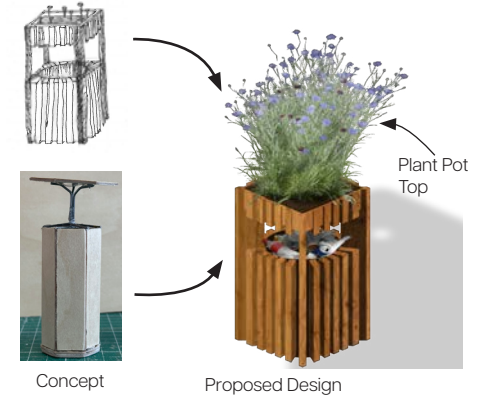


## Modular Strategies Implementation

As part of the Cyan+ we developed modular design strategies that can be implemented down the whole length of the route. These are simple strategies and elements were derived and can be implemented to combat issues that arose from engagement with the public.

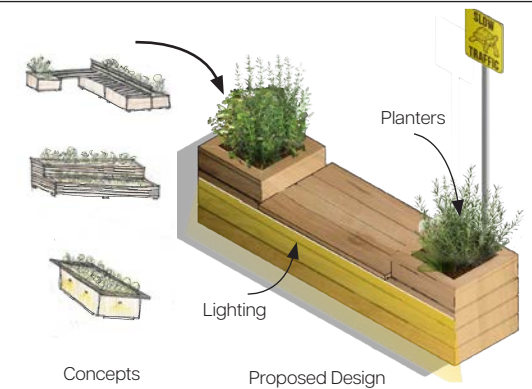
### Rubbish Bin

Rubbish bins were designed as an essential element for maintaining clear and orderly space, with the intention of integrating them seamlessly using sustainable materials and planter features



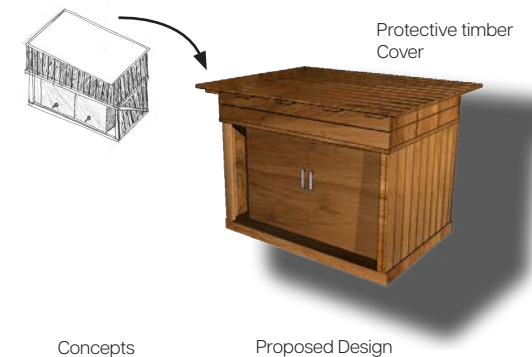
### Planter Bench

Planter benches are another key element designed to integrate seating with greenery and lighting, creating safe pathways and comfortable pause points. The signage is also integrated with the planter bench design to improve way finding



### Rainwater Capture Tanks

Water collection and reuse strategy is proposed to be integrated into the space, involving rainwater harvesting and use of storage tanks to support sustainable water management.



# Proposed Interventions

## Improvement to Green Spaces



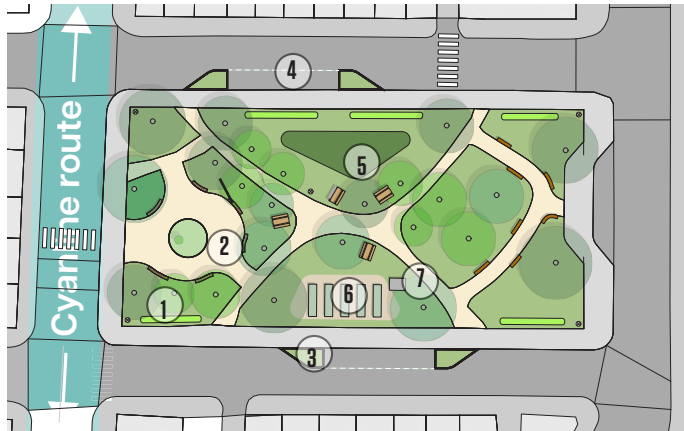
Revitalizing an existing green space by integrating aesthetic rain gardens for drainage, community-focused play space and seating area, and designated parking space to eliminate sidewalk encroachment.



Concept Sketch

### Proposed Intervention Key

- ① Rain gardens
- ② Benches and Rest points
- ③ Traffic slowing Measures
- ④ Designated Roadside Parking
- ⑤ Play area
- ⑥ Growing spaces
- ⑦ Rainwater Collection tank



Proposed Park field Green Plan



Proposed Park field Green Visualisation

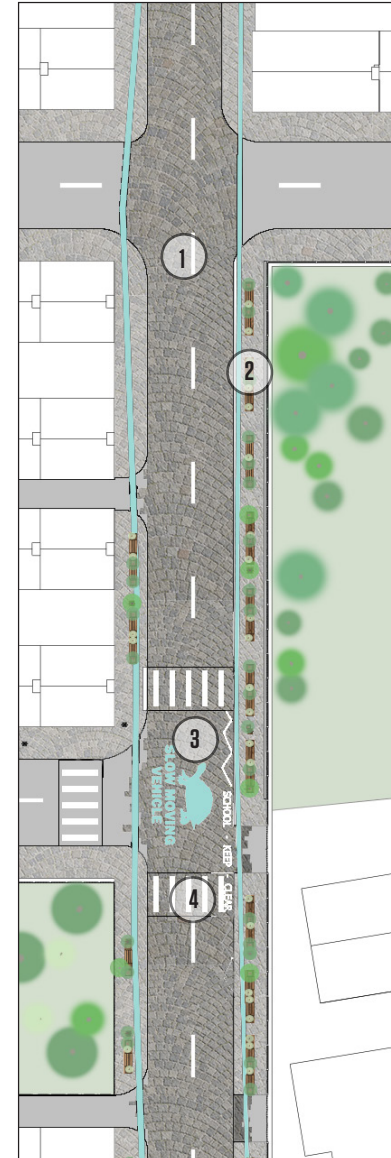
## Pedestrianisation and Cycling Routes



Following engagement and feedback from diverse user groups, the street design has been re-envisioned to better reflect user needs. Strategic improvements focus on enhancing the overall experience and ensuring safer commuting routes. Key interventions include upgraded paving, clearly defined boundaries, age-friendly signage, newly designated crossing zones, and measures to improve traffic flow.

### Proposed Intervention Key

- ① Paved routes
- ② Planter box integrated with seating and lighting
- ③ Signages near the school zone
- ④ Dedicated safer new crossing zones



Plan view of the proposed Cyan+ route



Existing site conditions



Proposed route view

# Ginnel and Alleyway regeneration



Following engagement and site analysis, the alley is reactivated as a safer green route through adaptable planter boxes, edible planting, warm under-lighting and improved paving. Rather than using standard ornamental planting, the edible garden encourages local care and everyday interaction, while the modular planter system remains flexible, easy to use and simple to maintain.



Concept Sketch



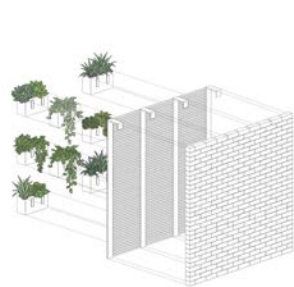
Option 1- Low planters



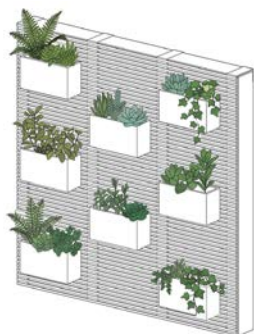
Option 2 - Wider Planters



Option 3 - Wall Planters with integrated lighting



Wall planter design Build Up



Wall Planter system

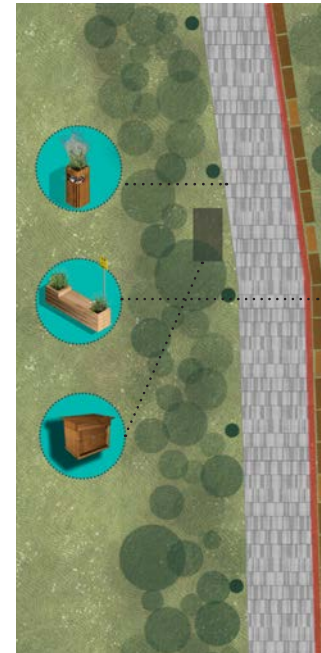


View of planter systems in context

# Opening Up smaller Walkways



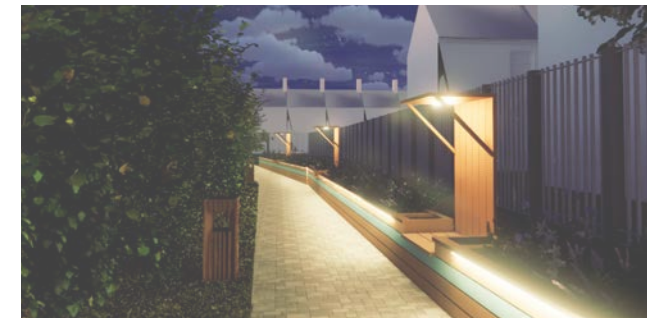
Along the line there is a short section of path that is narrow, a dark and is a wind trap for litter. We have explored how the implementation of the modular design strategies can be used to open up spaces such as these along CyanLines.



Plan of the proposed space



Daylight view of the seater with shading cover



Night view of light integrated as part of the seating

# Reflection and Future Implications

This project has been very enjoyable to work on, from the initial brief definition with the collaborator all the way to the intensive week of engagement-fuelled design. As a group we have gained a greater appreciation for engagement with collaborators and local community groups and how they can be used to produce rich and meaningful design outputs. The relationship formed with groups and people along the Cyan+ such as the members of the community at the 'Feel the Rhythm Pocket Park' has been invaluable in understanding the potential of the underutilised spaces in the area and their needs.

We hope that this project will act as the foundation upon which the expansion of CyanLines 3 into Fallowfield will be built. We also hope that this allows for the establishment of more CyanLines of its type that will work to improve the quality of green and blue spaces in peripheral communities. Following our final presentation to the collaborators, we received highly positive feedback that continued to inspire new ideas. They also expressed interest in pursuing the project further and aligning it with similar initiatives they are developing on their side. We're excited to see where Cyan+ will go next!

## ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1, Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students, BA foundation and year 1 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

## LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA LIVE projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

## SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA LIVE projects are for community benefit or have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

## EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

## STUDENT-LED

Our MSA students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. The projects are celebrated in presentations at the end of the academic year. .

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

## LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 400 students from 5 cohorts in MSA have worked on 34 projects with partners.

## QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team, Emily & Julie:

**[e.crompton@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:e.crompton@mmu.ac.uk) and [j.fitzpatrick@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:j.fitzpatrick@mmu.ac.uk)**

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