

1 CASTLE HILL CRESCENT, ROCHDALE, OL11 4HZ.

Preliminary Roost Assessment update and Nocturnal Bat Survey Report

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1.	SCOPE & PURPOSE	4
1.2.	LOCATION	4
1.3.	OBJECTIVES	5
2	METHODOLOGY	6
2.1.	PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT	6
2.2.	NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEYS	6
2.3.	SURVEY LIMITATIONS	7
3	PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESMENT RESULTS.....	8
	<i>EXTERNAL</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>INTERNAL.....</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>SUMMARY</i>	<i>8</i>
	<i>HIBERNATION ASSESSMENT.....</i>	<i>12</i>
4	NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY RESULTS.....	13
4.1.	04/08/2025 NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY	13
4.2.	28/08/2025 NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY	14
4.3.	ASSESSMENT.....	15
5	RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION.....	16
5.1.	IMPACT ASSESSMENT	16
5.2.	PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHODS-PWM's	16
5.3.	BAT ROOSTING PROVISION AND ENHANCEMENTS.....	16
5.4.	LIGHTING	16
6	BIBLIOGRAPHY	18
7	APPENDIX	19

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCOPE & PURPOSE

- 1.1.1. Collington Winter Environmental (CWE) Ltd was commissioned by Solid Void to undertake an updated Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and subsequent Nocturnal Bat Surveys at 1 Castle Hill Crescent, Rochdale, OL11 4HZ. This report has been produced to inform a planning application to demolish the existing structure and construct a new apartment complex.
- 1.1.2. The author of this report is Jon Hayter, Senior Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd. Jon holds a Class 2 Bat Survey Licence (ref: CL18-2019-39842-CLS-CLS) from Natural England and holds a depth of experience undertaking surveys, obtaining licenses and designing bat mitigation for planning applications.
- 1.1.3. A copy of the most recent proposal drawings is included in the Appendix.

1.2. LOCATION

- 1.2.1. Please refer to Figure 1.1 for the property location.
- 1.2.2. The building is a detached fully rendered bungalow with a slate roof, located within the urban centre of Rochdale adjacent to the main A58 trunk road and is surrounded by other residential properties. It is located on the end of a cul-de-sac of residential properties with a terraced lawn dominated garden to the south and east, no other vegetation is present within the site boundary.
- 1.2.3. The habitat connectivity is poor with little in the way of established linear features; there is a line of roadside trees 25m to the south running parallel to the adjacent road which leads to an area of woodland 150m to the southwest. However, this is bisected by a row of large, terraced houses and a further minor road. To the north lies an area of further woodland and scrub which flanks the wider housing estate, connectivity is also poor, with no vegetated features offering access to the potential foraging resources. (See Figure 1.2 for habitat connectivity plan)
- 1.2.4. Although the roads cause an immediate physical barrier to the south and the urban centre of Rochdale extends eastwards, the wider southern landscape is more rural with extensive parkland and the River Roch which would offer urban dwelling bat species access to suitable habitat and foraging.

Figure 1.1 Site Location.



Figure 1.2 Site habitat connectivity plan.



Red polygon indicates site location

Green areas offer optimal foraging habitat

Yellow lines indicate connectivity and linear features within the wider landscape.

1.3. OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. The objectives of the updated Preliminary Roost Assessment and Nocturnal Bat Survey are as follows:

- Identify any potential roosting features associated with the building.
- Assess the value of the buildings for roosting bats.
- Identify the species assemblage of bats using the site.
- Identify any potential bats roosting within the building.
- Provide recommendations on any further surveys or mitigation required for bats.

2 METHODOLOGY

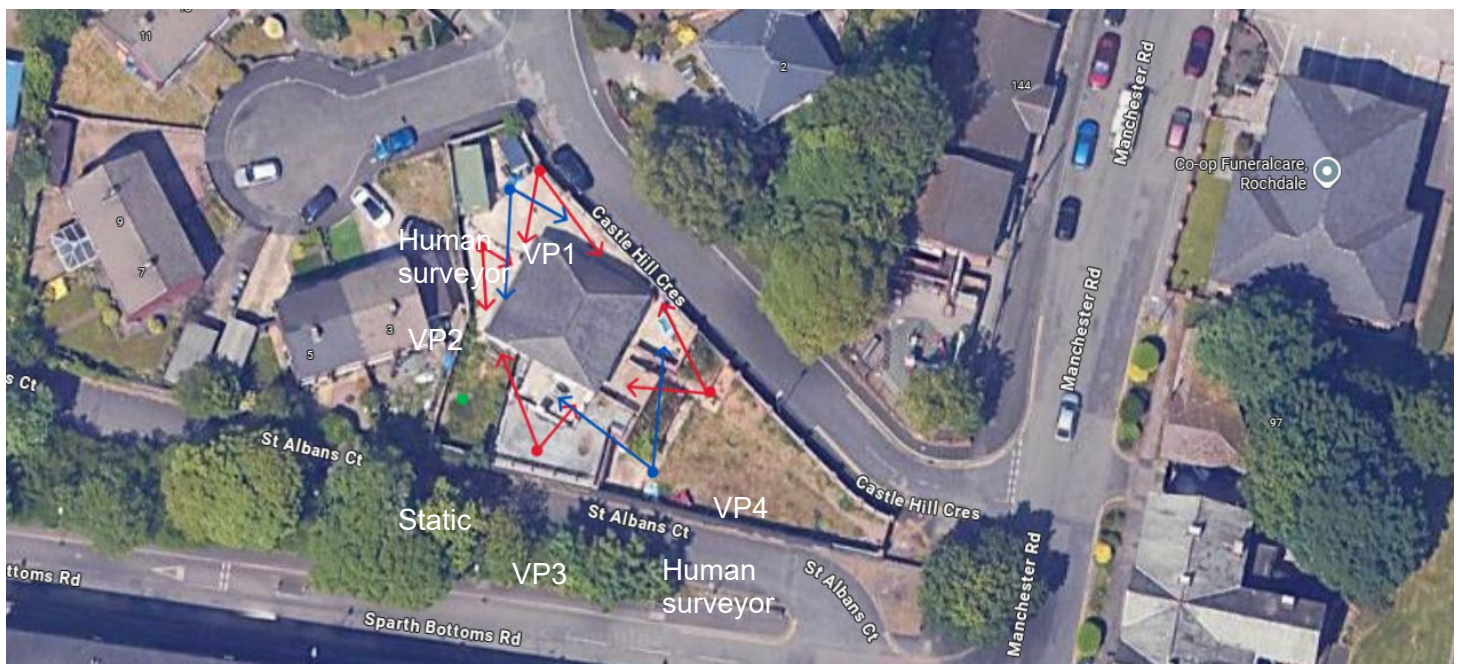
2.1. PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT

- 2.1.1. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was previously undertaken on the 31st of March 2025 by E3P Ltd. However, it was not deemed sufficient to fully classify the roosting potential of the building as no internal access was gained to fully inspect the internal conditions of the building.
- 2.1.2. A second and recent updated visit was undertaken by Shona Bancroft, Graduate Ecologist at Collington Winter Environmental Ltd on the 4th of August 2025. The weather was dry and mild, and the temperature was 16 degrees Celsius externally with a light northerly breeze and light cloud cover.
- 2.1.3. The updated site visit was necessary to gain internal access to check the loft spaces and roof condition and re-inspect the external features for the proposed initial follow up emergence survey to be conducted on the same day, this would form the basis of the rating of the property and subsequent survey effort required in line with BCT best practice guidance.
- 2.1.4. The updated survey was undertaken following guidance set out in Collins (2023). This includes undertaking a detailed internal and external inspection of any features to compile information on potential and actual bat entry/exit points, roosting locations and evidence of bats.
- 2.1.5. Excerpts from the previous PRA assessments are included for context below along with findings, this is to enable a timeline of evidence to be detailed to make effective conclusions regarding the bat roosting classification on site.
- 2.1.6. A search on Magic.co.uk was conducted to determine any historic EPSL licenses that may need to be considered within the sphere of influence of the proposals and identify any bat roosts in the locale which could be affected. The search covered a 2km radius from the site.

2.2. NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEYS

- 2.2.1. Collington Winter Environmental Ltd undertook two dusk emergence surveys, the first on the 4th of August 2025 and a second on the 28th of August 2025, the NVA camera, static acoustic detector and human viewpoints remained identical across both surveys (Details of which are included in Table 2.1 below).

Figure 2.1 Locations of vantage points (VP) used during the survey.



2.2.2. The surveys were undertaken in line with guidance as set out in Collins (2023, as amended).

2.2.3. Two human surveyors, each equipped with an Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro were located between the four NVA camera vantage points. All four vantage points utilised Nightfox Whiskers NVA systems, and one additional Titley song meter static detector was deployed on site to capture additional acoustic information.

2.2.4. The camera footage was reviewed by qualified ecologists after the survey using relevant media players and by Artificial Intelligence (AI) provided by Wildlife Imaging Systems to provide bat flight tracking data to assist with roost identification and general foraging activity.

Table 2.1 Survey and Surveyor Details

Date	Sunset	Start	Finish	Surveyors	Weather Conditions
04/08/2025	21:00	20:45	22:30	VP1- Nightfox whisker VP2 –Nightfox whisker and Rhiannon Hobbs VP3 – Nightfox whisker and static detector VP4 -Nightfox Whisker and Jen Thomas	Temperature: 16 Celsius Cloud cover: 0/8 Octas Wind: 2 max (Beaufort scale) Rain: 0
28/04/25	20:07	19:52	21:37	VP1- Nightfox whisker VP2 –Nightfox whisker and Andy Taylor VP3 – Nightfox whisker and static detector VP4 -Nightfox Whisker and Shona Bancroft	Temperature: 15 Celsius Cloud cover: 5/8 Octas Wind: 3 max (Beaufort scale) Rain: light rain for first 5 minutes of survey then dry.

2.3. SURVEY LIMITATIONS

2.3.1. *Myotis Alcaethoe* (*Myotis alcaethoe*), Brandt's (*Myotis brandtii*), Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*) and whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*) bat are often difficult to distinguish between by handheld detectors and sound analysis. As such, the species have been recorded as *Myotis* sp. throughout this report.

2.3.2. There were no other limitations encountered during the updated site visits or updated emergence survey.

3 PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT RESULTS

3.1.1. The results from the previous PRA visits, have been summarised and attached along with excerpts.

3.1.2. The 31st of March 2025 PRA visit (reference 82-293-L1-1) was undertaken by E3P and stated that the building held a **high** potential based only on an external survey with no effective PRF feature inspection or categorisation and involving limited justification for the rating and recommendations.

“The main residential building (B1) was assessed as having High bat roosting potential on a precautionary basis. Under current development proposals, B1 is due to be removed to facilitate the development. The building was assessed as having High bat roosting potential, on a precautionary basis, due to the damaged and lifted roof tiles and gaps in the eaves providing potential access points into the loft void. This internal space may be suitable for use as a maternity roost, as well as potentially supporting roosting bats on a regular basis. Therefore, prior to removal of the building, it is recommended that three Nocturnal Surveys be undertaken between May and September (inclusive), with at least two surveys being undertaken between May and August (inclusive). Prior to the first nocturnal survey, it is recommended that a loft inspection be undertaken to determine whether the loft is suitable for maternity colonies. If a loft inspection is carried out and no signs of a maternity roost are observed, and it is determined unsuitable for maternity colonies, then the building can be downgraded to Moderate potential, and only two surveys between May and September (inclusive) with one between May and August (inclusive). If however, the building shows potential for maternity roosts the full set of three surveys will be required” (E3P Ltd, 2025)

3.1.3. The results of the updated PRA inspection on the 4th of August 2025 prior to the first emergence survey are detailed below (photographs are included in Table 3.2 below)

3.1.4. The building was found to contain multiple features which afforded suitable PRF's for bats, both internally and externally, it was of a rendered blockwork construction with a slate roof and interlocking ridge tile system, the internal loft void was constructed from wooden roof trusses with a bitumen felt liner (see plan 3.3 below for PRF feature plan).

EXTERNAL

3.1.5. There were several areas of failed and rotten fascia and soffit boards on the northeast elevation of the building which afforded access into the soffit box area void. These measured roughly 0.5m to 1m long with an opening on the vertical face of around 30mm extending up to 150mm, no evidence of bat access was observed such as urine staining, droppings or smooth edges often created by access over time, these features were rated as low value.

3.1.6. Multiple sections of damaged and missing ridge and hip tiles were observed at the union with the slate roof covering on the northwestern and southern roof elevations. These offered crevice dwelling species access between the slate roof covering and the felt liner.

INTERNAL

3.1.7. A number of small tears were evident in the bitumen felt liner within the roof loft void. These were too small to offer external access into the loft void for void dwelling species as they measured only 10mm at their largest point.

3.1.8. The roof void was very clean, and no observable light egress was visible when inside in the dark, especially corresponding to any external features noted during the PRA such as slipped or missing tiles or the damaged soffit and fascia

3.1.9. No bat droppings, feeding remains or evidence of bats was observed within the loft space.

SUMMARY

3.1.10. It was confidently assessed that the building offered only moderate potential for bats considering all of the historic and recent information and has been downgraded from the initial report following the full internal inspection with no evidence of bats observed, therefore it was deemed that two emergence surveys were sufficient to determine any bat roosting within the building.

3.1.11. The results of the Magic.co.uk data search are included below in Table 3.3. There were three records returned within a 2km search radius, two were located within 800m of the north of the site and one to the east and all related to the destruction of resting places for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and Daubenton's bat, only one record is considered recent as the other two are over 10 years old.

Table 3.2 Photographs from 04/08/2025 PRA visit

Photograph 1- Southern elevation of the building.	
Photograph 2- Southeast corner broken fascia, this feature offers access into the soffit area, no evidence of bats was observed, and the feature was rated low value.	
Photograph 3- Low value PRF on the northern elevation, with an area of open fascia and soffit. No evidence of bats was observed.	

Photograph 4- Eastern elevation showing the render finish.



Photograph 5- Northern elevation showing the slate roof and damaged render, no features were evident on the rendered walls



Photograph 6- northwest corner ridge line and hip showing missing mortar and small gaps between ridge tiles and slates, these features were rated as moderate and could not be fully inspected from the ground. They were all covered by the emergence surveys and NVA cameras.



Photograph 7-Lifted Ridge tile on the main ridgeline, this feature held moderate suitability and was covered by the resulting emergence surveys.

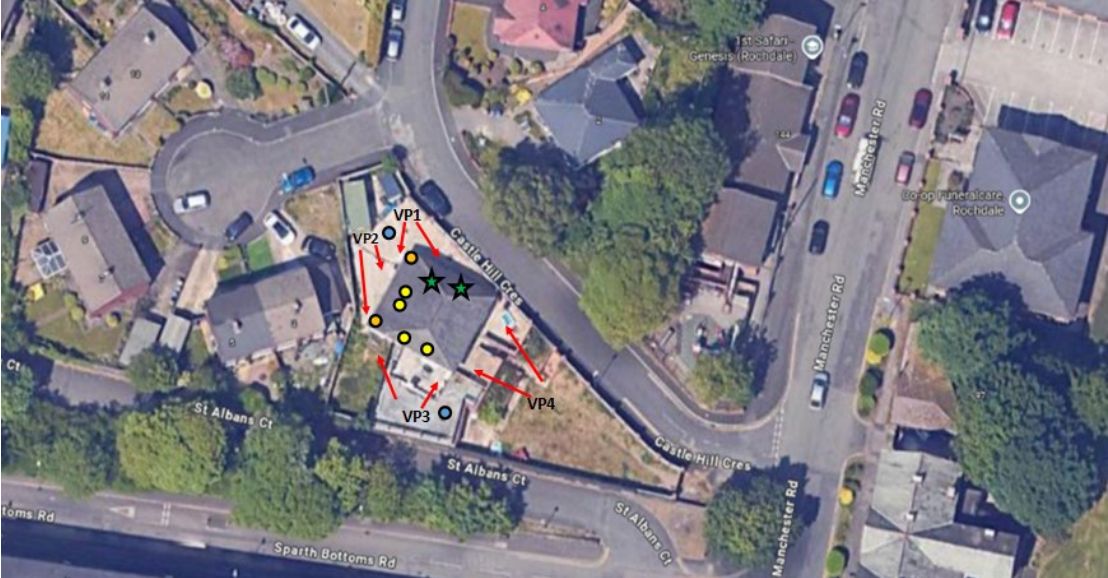


Photograph 8 - Internal loft void





Figure 3.1- PRF features building plan.



Yellow dots lifted and slipped tiles and slates
Orange dots damaged fascia and soffit
Green stars areas of damaged felt liner

Table 3.4- Magic.com search results.

Case reference of granted application	Species on the licence*	Distance from site (KM)	Direction from Site	Licence Start Date	Licence End Date	Does the Licence				
						impact on a breeding site	allow damage of breeding site	allow damage of a resting place	allow destruction of breeding site	allow destruction of a resting place
2009-709-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	0.4	N	2009	2010	N	N	N	N	Y
2015-8047-EPS-MIT	C-PIP, DAUB, S-PIP	0.65	N	2015	2020	N	N	N	N	Y
2011-2750-EPS-MIT	C-PIP, S-PIP	1	E	2011	2013	N	N	N	N	Y

HIBERNATION ASSESSMENT

3.1.12. The building was deemed to hold no hibernation potential, due to it being a residential property with consistent high internal temperatures and insulation not conducive to providing optimal conditions for overwintering bats, therefore it is not considered further within this report.

4 NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY RESULTS

4.1. 04/08/2025 NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY.

- 4.1.1. Bat activity was recorded sporadically and at very low levels throughout the survey, with only common pipistrelle and noctule recorded and a total of four bat passes over the duration of the survey.
- 4.1.2. The first bat was recorded at 21: 32 (approximately 32 minutes after sunset) by VP1. It was a common pipistrelle commuting north to south over the site. Common pipistrelle formed three of the four acoustic records, mostly observed within the proximity of VP1 and VP2 to the north and west of the building.
- 4.1.3. The static detector to the west of the building recorded eleven calls, again mostly of common pipistrelle associated with the roadside tree cover and one brown long eared bat pass at 21:56 (56 minutes after sunset)
- 4.1.4. Noctule activity consisted of one commuting pass above the building at 21:45pm.
- 4.1.5. No bats were recorded emerging from the residential building.
- 4.1.6. The subsequent camera footage review was undertaken by qualified ecologists and utilised tracking technology supplied by Wildlife imaging systems to provide additional assistance to determine trajectory and orientation of foraging, commuting and any potential emergence events. Please see Figures 4.2.1.

Figure 4.2.1 – Dark point image for each Vantage point derived from footage analysis.



VP3	
VP4	

4.2. 28/08/2025 NOCTURNAL BAT SURVEY

- 4.2.1. Bat activity was recorded at very low levels throughout the survey, with only common pipistrelle heard. A total of two bat passes only, were recorded over the duration of the survey.
- 4.2.2. The first bat was recorded at 20:42 (approximately 35 minutes after sunset) by VP2, it was a common pipistrelle. Common pipistrelle formed the other acoustic record, and both were recorded as heard not seen.
- 4.2.3. The static detector to the west of the building recorded four calls, all common pipistrelle, again associated with the roadside tree cover to the west.
- 4.2.4. No bats were recorded emerging from the residential building.

Figure 4.2.2. – Dark point image for each Vantage point derived from footage analysis.

VP1	
-----	--

VP2	
VP3	
VP4	

4.3. ASSESSMENT

- 4.3.1. Both the surveys had consistent results with only common pipistrelle species recorded across both surveys foraging and commuting around the vicinity of the site, however, it must be noted that activity levels were extremely low and most activity was either commuting or heard and not observed.
- 4.3.2. The visual observations suggested that the bat(s) were commuting from the area north of the site and using the roadside hedgerow to the southwest as a foraging corridor, this was highlighted in the earlier sections as a likely utilised resource given the lack of other vegetation on the site, as a historic roost for common pipistrelle is known 400-600m north of the site this indicates it could still be present close by given the timings of the recordings.
- 4.3.3. It is confidently assessed that the building does not hold any roosting bats and an EPSL license will not be required in order to facilitate the demolition of the building. It is however, recommended that PWM's (Precautionary Working Methods) are followed given that bats are a transient species and there is a low possibility of the potential existing roosting features being used for ad -hoc roosting.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION.

5.1. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1.1. Based on the survey data, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will not be required to allow the proposed development to proceed as no evidence of bats was observed within the building or during the subsequent secondary survey effort.
- 5.1.2. No known bat roosts will be affected by the proposals, and it is deemed that the proposed project will have minimal effect on the species of bats at a site and a local level given that no habitat is present on site to support foraging bats.
- 5.1.3. As historic roosts are known close by to the site, precautionary working methods are advised to be followed during the construction works, these are detailed below, providing these methods are adhered to no foreseeable impact is expected on known bat roosts.

5.2. PRECAUTIONARY WORKING METHODS-PWM's

- 5.2.1. The building will be demolished under PWM's with input from a licensed bat ecologist. The works will involve a prestart check by the ecologist to ensure that there are no bats present within the structure and perform a toolbox talk to explain field signs and how bats utilise buildings for roosting and how they likely could be disturbed by the demolition works.
- Hand demolition only will be used when stripping the roof covering. All slates and ridge/hip tiles will be removed using a 'lift and flip' method whereby each underneath face is inspected before discarding to check for torpid bats.
 - Careful observation will be undertaken to look for droppings and any other field signs during the roof strip works.
 - Once the roof structure has been removed any felt liner will be cut along the timber rafters and rolled slowly exposing the underside and the open internal loft void.
 - The roof timbers will be cut away from the wall plate and ridge beam timber and not pried or twisted at these intersections, which are often used by bats as a cavity type feature.
 - The soffit and fascia timbers will be slowly removed in long lengths from one end being careful not to insert long bars into dark voids and levering will be against solid surfaces only.
 - Once the roof and soffits and fascia have been removed the ecologist will perform one last check over to ensure that no other features or evidence of bats is visible and then remainder of the building can be demolished without any requirement for supervision or constrained working methods.
 - Contractors are forbidden from handling or interacting with bats should they be discovered the ecologist must be notified immediately and all work ceased, until the site can be fully assessed and any relevant licensing applied for and in place before works can lawfully proceed.

5.3. BAT ROOSTING PROVISION AND ENHANCEMENTS

- 5.3.1. Development will not result in an overall loss of bat roost provision on site and given that the proposals are to construct a new building on site it is recommended and preferred that some enhancements are included for the bat species known locally and to provide a biological enhancement on site.
- 5.3.2. Provision should be made to include at least two bat boxes into the scheme which can be affixed to the new building, externally on the southwest elevation facing the roadside tree line and more optimal habitat. These are known to be successful for crevice dwelling species such as the pipistrelle species.
- 5.3.3. Further details of suitable boxes can be provided by a suitably qualified ecologist along with installation guidance and maintenance.

5.4. LIGHTING

- 5.4.1. The site recorded very low levels of general bat activity around the site, however, it is important to maintain

favoured foraging pathways by using low lux level lighting both during and post construction.

- 5.4.2. Any new external lighting must be directed to avoid light spillage onto any existing roost features such as the treeline to the southwest, even in a more urban environment bats are sensitive to large changes in artificial light within the environment.
- 5.4.3. Lighting periods are strongly recommended to be minimized using motion sensors, on a short timer. Bulbs with “warmer” lights should be used as a preference as these are less impactful than bright white lights. Avoid light spillage above an angle of 70 degrees onto vegetated margins, by fitting lights with downward facing baffles and low lux level bulbs.
- 5.4.4. A detailed lighting plan should be considered separately from this report and consulted when designing any new lighting around the new and larger residential building.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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