

4. PRELIMINARY PRINCIPLES & CONCEPT DESIGN

4.1 PRECINCT ANALYSIS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

In preparation of the concept plan for the subject site, we are providing overall built form principles and concept for the whole of the industrial precinct.

This over-arching concept and guidelines will ensure a cohesive development outcome for the precinct with the subject site as the first phase of the potential rezoning.

Concept for the precinct:

The concept for the rezoning of the industrial precinct is based on a principle increased permeability through the precinct towards the existing and established open space along the Cooks River. The potential change of zone and uplift of the precinct can bring a much needed upgrade of the open space and especially the river foreshore.

The scale of the proposed built form within the precinct needs to be carefully designed to allow transition to the existing lower scale, but also allowing containment and demarcation of new open space areas and links.

The context of the site is beginning to transition to a medium and higher density precinct. However, it is GMU's opinion that any new built form on the industrial sites should respond to the current scale of some of the existing fine grain and lower scale houses, especially along the northern boundary. Therefore, lower scale is being proposed towards the north. These buildings should also be of a 'fine grain' through articulation or orientation of buildings.

The redevelopment of the precinct can become a new benchmark along the Cooks River Bicycle Way. The proposed greater heights along the public links and new public spaces are located to the south to avoid overshadowing and oriented to allow for view sharing from internal spaces.

The vision:

The current industrial precinct will be a vital element in the future of South Strathfield as it will create an opportunity to revitalise the Cooks River foreshore and enhance permeability of the area by providing new links between open spaces as well as creating new focal points for public gathering.

The potential built form will respect the existing context, but also mark the potential for a future transition in scale. The taller built form will mark the new enhanced foreshore and the parks on a journey along the river connecting different suburbs. It will establish a new character for Strathfield South as a modern suburb providing quality spaces and amenity for future and existing residents.

Design Principles for the precinct are to:

- Provide lower scale buildings along the northern boundary in response to the existing context with medium scale towards Water Street and the existing parks;
- Allow for small increase in street wall height on the corners to mark the entries to the precinct from the outside;
- Create a series of communal open spaces integrated with the new pedestrian and cycle network;
- Create new road connections and shared areas allowing access for the wider community from the north and east; and
- Concentrate taller built forms towards the river and marking the main links.

The proposed structure for the industrial precinct including all elements discussed above is shown in Figure 19 to the right.



4.2 CONCEPT FOR THE SITE

Based on the analysis of the area and potential uplift for the industrial precinct, GMU has arrived at the following concept design for the subject site:

The concept plan, shown in Figure 20 is an example of how the built form massing could be distributed on the site in order to meet the principles for the development of the precinct, discussed on the previous page as follows:

- The height facing the northern properties, which are currently 1-2 storeys to comprise of 3 storey podium with the fourth level setback and a potential for a small 'pop-up' to ensure transition in height to the existing lower scale development.
- The proposed street wall height along Water Street to be also 3 storey as a response to lower scale development across the street and to the north. The corner towards the river is marked with a higher podium.
- A maximum height of 7-8 storeys to be located away from the street and the existing low scale properties and oriented in the north-south direction in order to avoid overshadowing to the communal open spaces. Additionally, the upper levels of the tallest buildings to include setbacks to minimise the perceived bulk and scale.
- The orientation of buildings to provide as much permeability from the site towards the river and the open spaces.
- The potential view impact from the higher points of the terrain (on the approach from Strathfield South along Homebush Road) to be considered in orienting and locating the higher elements in the concept design.
- The street setback to follow the existing predominant setbacks along Water Street. The setback along Water Street currently varies between 3-6m.
- The setbacks along the side boundaries are to be a minimum of 50% of the required separation as per the SEPP 65 requirements and the proposed built form to provide compliant separations to avoid visual privacy issues and to ensure good solar access.
- The setbacks along the river foreshore will allow for increased landscape area and appropriate distance to differentiate between public and private spaces with the use of landscape rather than high fences.
- The street to have passive surveillance through the provision of private gardens along the footpath. Other buildings will also include private gardens accessed from ground level apartments, wherever possible.
- This concept also includes a suggestion for a public link through the site and allowance for semi-public spaces connected with each other through a network of pedestrian links and marked by landscape, following feature trees or other elements to enhance way-finding and create a stronger 'sense of place'.

In addition, to the preliminary masterplan shown in Figure 20, GMU has included a set of 3d model views of the proposed envelopes and preliminary visual impact analysis based on the available information. These are shown on the following pages.

This preliminary masterplan is an example of how the over-arching principles for the precinct could be delivered, subject to skillful design. To assist with that, GMU have prepared a set of design guidelines that could apply to the site in order to achieve the best design outcome and the appropriate massing distribution. The guidelines are included in chapter 4.5.



Figure 20. Preliminary masterplan for the industrial precinct

4.3 3D PERSPECTIVES OF THE CONCEPT



Figure 21. Perspective view from Homebush Road towards the proposed massing for the site.



Figure 24. Perspective view towards the proposed concept massing along the Cooks River - facing East.



Figure 22. Perspective view along Water Street looking south towards the proposed massing on the site.



Figure 25. Perspective view towards the proposed concept massing along from the southern bank of the Cooks River along Water Street.

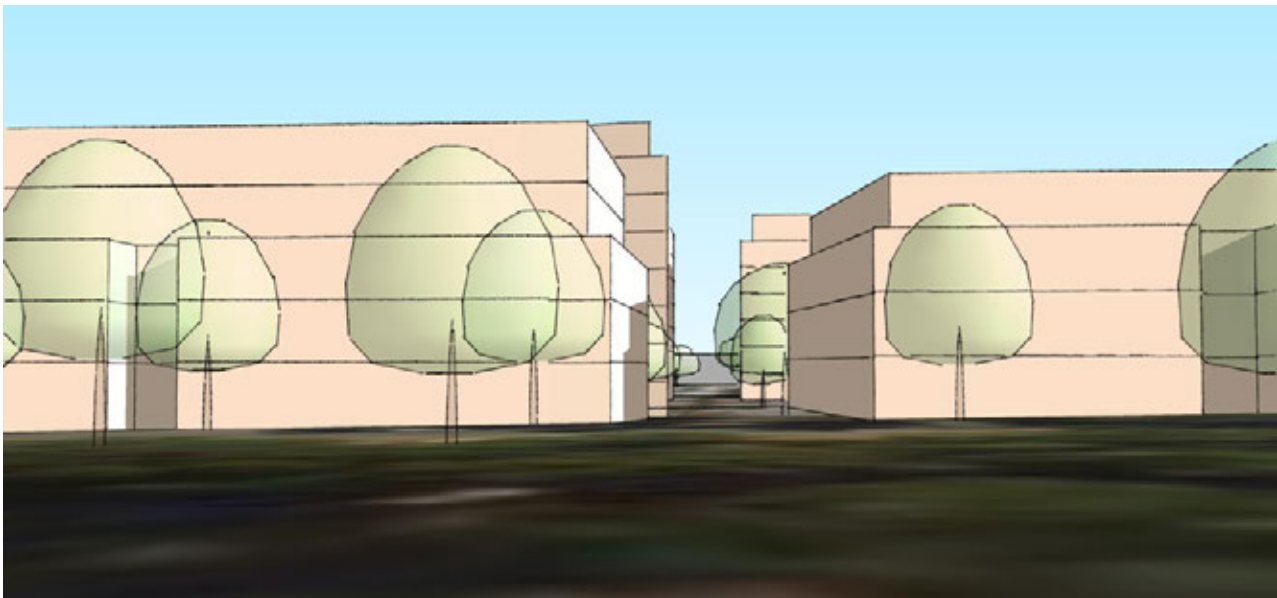


Figure 23. Perspective view along potential link from Water Street to the west of the industrial precinct.

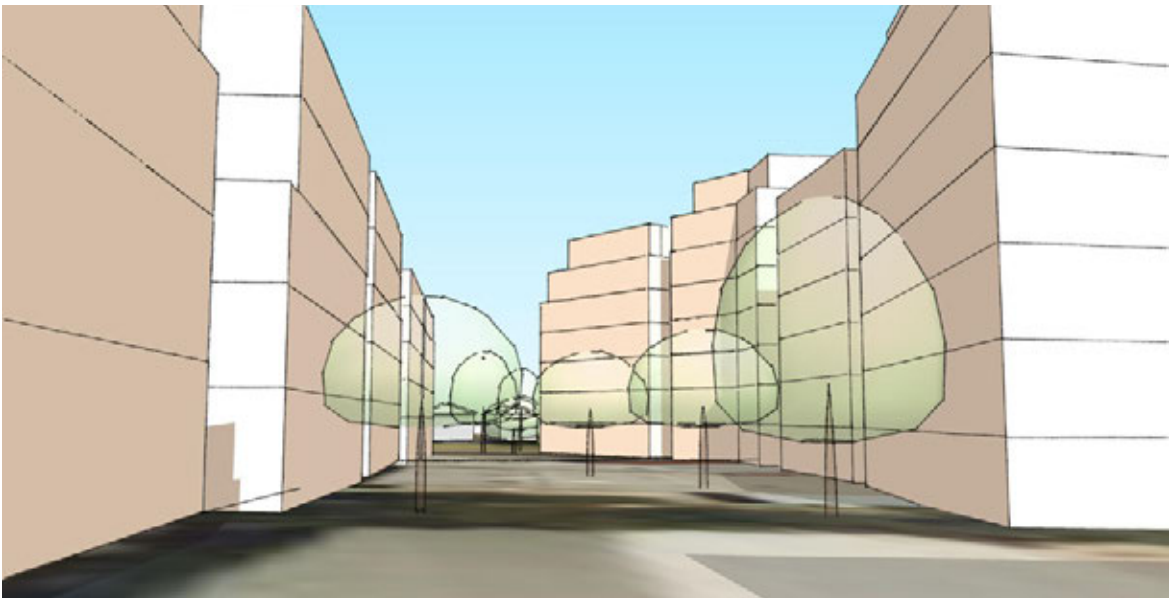


Figure 26. Perspective view towards the river from the internal space within the proposed massing on the site.

- LEGEND:
- Suggested Massing
 - Existing Buildings

4.4 VISUAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

As part of establishing a good design outcome for the subject site, GMU have undertaken preliminary visual impact analysis based on the view on approach from Strathfield South along Homebush Road (Figure 27) and from the southern bank of Cooks River along Water Street looking north (Figure 28).

These views show how the proposed height markers are located away from the main view lines and appear lower than the horizon line fitting into the context and the district views without unreasonable impacts.



Figure 27. Photo taken from Homebush Road showing district views towards the site with the proposed massing superimposed showing minimal visual impact from this vantage point.



Figure 28. Photo taken from Water Street showing the scale relationship of the proposed massing in the existing context. The proposed massing has been superimposed onto a photograph taken during a site visit.

Open space

Refer to Figure 31.

Objectives

- To provide a network of generous communal open spaces to cater for passive and active recreation opportunities for future residents;
- To enhance connectivity with the Cooks River and associated open spaces;
- To contribute to the improvements to the riverfront open space; and
- To provide sufficient deep soil zone for the healthy growth of mature trees on site allowing water filtration and the reduction of stormwater run-off.

Guidelines

- Provide community or bicycle storage facilities on the ground level where the site is affected by flooding;
- Provide a series of communal open spaces between the proposed built forms with good solar access of no less than 2 hours between 9am and 3pm in midwinter;
- Provide pocket parks as connections from the communal open spaces to the Cooks River and its riverfront open space;
- Min. 6m for deep soil zone along northern, boundaries to ensure landscape setting to the context;
- Min. 3m for deep soil zone along the eastern boundary fronting Water Street; and
- Provide landscape design that includes feature, flowering trees or other landscape features to enhance way-finding, contribute to the landscape character of the site and promote a stronger 'sense of place and community'.

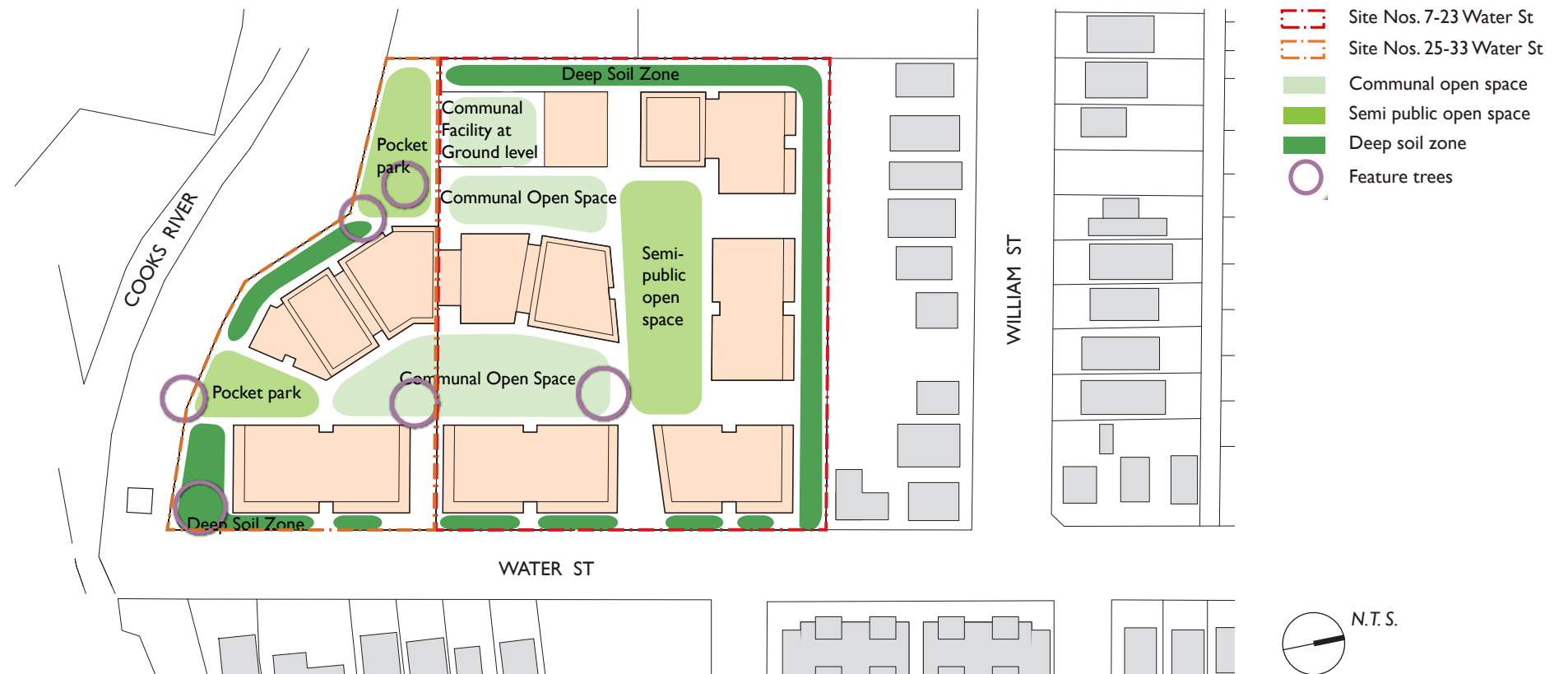


Figure 31. Open space distribution

Access

Refer to Figure 32.

Objectives

- To improve the site's accessibility and strengthen its connection to surrounding open space networks; and
- To provide a number of residential access points to activate Water Street and communal open spaces.

Guidelines

- Maximum 2 vehicular access points along Water Street to be located no closer than 6m from the pedestrian network;
- Provide street access directly to ground floor units along Water Street; and
- Provide an internal pedestrian network connecting the site to Cooks River and surrounding parks and to the potential new network on the adjacent industrial land.

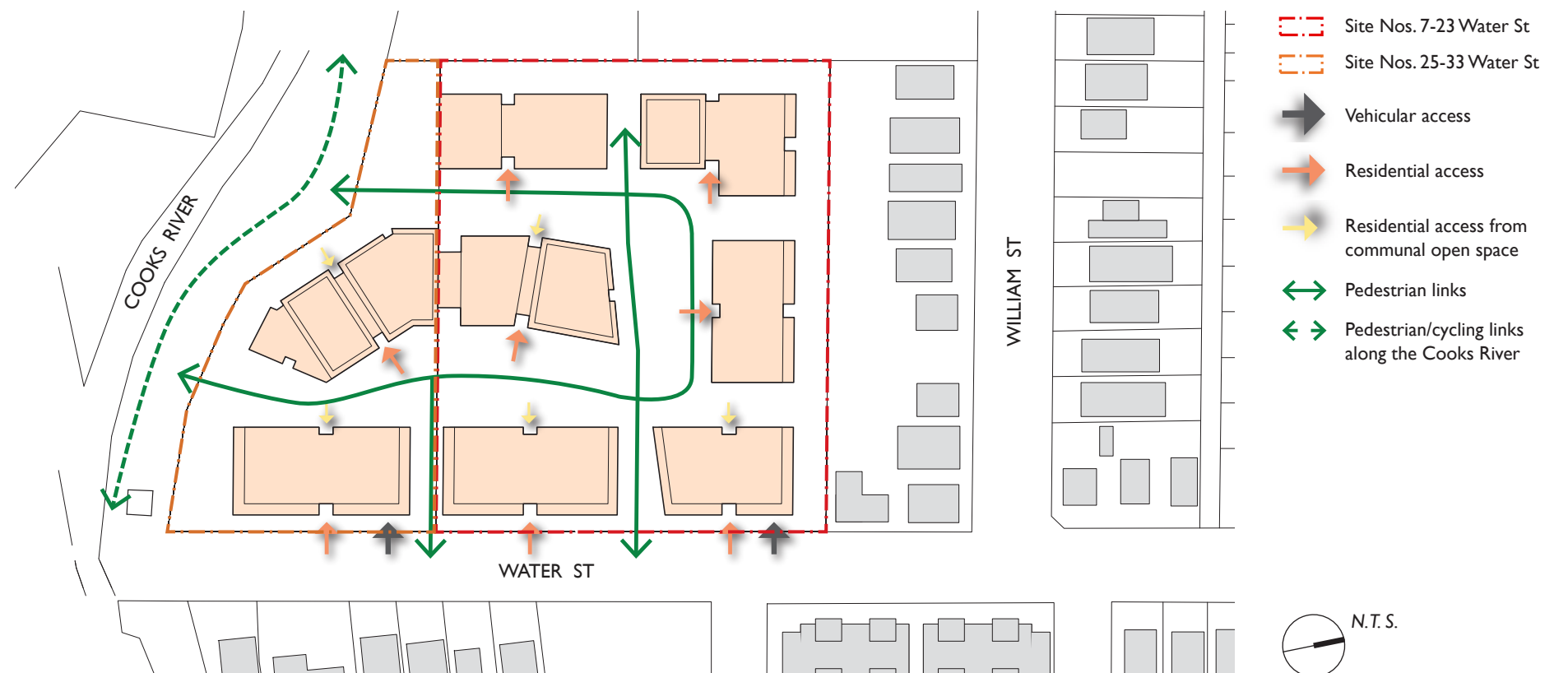


Figure 32. Vehicular and pedestrian access

Shadow impacts

Refer to Figure 33.

Objectives

- To minimise overshadowing impacts to surrounding public open spaces in midwinter;
- To ensure SEPP 65 compliance with solar and daylight access to the proposed units; and
- To provide high levels of solar access to the communal open spaces within the site.

Guidelines

- Sculpt the proposed built form to create fast moving shadows to the Cooks River foreshore and Dean Reserve;
- Provide a minimum of 2 hours of solar access between the hours of 9am and 3pm in mid-winter to at least 50% of the communal open space.

Design Excellence

The proposal is required to achieve design excellence through the following guidelines:

- Design concepts are to achieve an appropriate articulation of the buildings with insets that divide the volume vertically and setbacks which divide volumes horizontally to create appropriate proportions of building elements and minimise the appearance of building bulk and scale to the surrounding open space.
- High quality materials including a variety of natural materials are to be used for all buildings, the public domain and the private domain.



Figure 33. Shadow extent by the proposed massing.

4.6 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

GMU's analysis of the subject site, consisting of both lots (Nos. 7-23 and 25-33 Water Street) has provided the basis for the proposed change of zone from industrial to a residential development. The proposed master plan can enhance the character of the surrounding context and precinct and provide much needed upgrades to the river bank through a potential VPA (Voluntary Planning Agreement). The potential change in zoning on the sites will also have a better contextual fit with the surrounding residential lands.

A potential increase in height and density, if delivered in a skillful way can improve legibility and permeability of the area towards the existing community assets such as open spaces and the Cooks River cycle way to the south.

The described massing for the site can deliver a positive built form outcome for the area and set a good precedent for the future transformation of the existing industrial precinct from lower scale to medium-high scale residential.

The proposed massing translates to a Floor Space Ratio between 1.75-1.8:1 depending on the internal design of the residential units. However, as this density is higher than the surrounding context, it is important to take into account all design principles and guidelines discussed and listed in chapters 4.1-4.5 in order to achieve an appropriate built form that fits within the context and is able to deliver design excellence over and above SEPP 65 minimum standards.

Based on the findings of this study, GMU recommends this site for rezoning as a residential use with an FSR of up to 1.8:1 for both sites (Nos. 7-23 and Nos. 25-33 Water Street). It is also recommended to increase the height based on Figure 29 in chapter 4.5 in this report, which shows up to 8 storeys in the middle of each lot with transition towards the site edges to lower scale.

For more details on the proposed changes to the LEP controls please refer to the planning proposal application report prepared by Urbis.

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