

Donna Williams

From: Caroline McHardy
Sent: 18 September 2020 12:33
To: Markwell, Jonathan (Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk)
Cc: Craig Pettit
Subject: FW: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188)

Dear Jonathan,

I am sorry to hear that but as I explained in my email I need to discuss this with SSE and the person I need to speak to is on leave until the 23rd. Under our current agreement I can grant an EOT until the 30th September, therefore can I offer this for agreement with the intention that next week once I have spoken with SSE we can agree an EOT to allow us to reach a favourable position and get to the Nov 4th committee as agreed on Monday.

I hope this is welcomed in the spirit of working towards a positive outcome. Aside from the above I would hope that outstanding reports that have been funded by Berkeley can be forwarded on for our benefit so we can continue working productively over the next few days regardless of your view on my suggestion, in particular the BPS report which is long overdue and the Energy response?

Kind regards

Caroline McHardy
Land and Development Director

Berkeley
Designed for life



Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) Ltd
Berkeley House, Farnham Lane, Farnham Royal, SL2 3RQ

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From: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 September 2020 13:52
To: Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Cc: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188)

Dear Mr McHardy,

Thank you for your reply. I have been advised by my managers that I cannot continue discussions, to enable the application to hopefully be in a position to be progressed positively, without an agreed extension of time being in place. I would therefore welcome your confirmation as soon as possible please.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Section | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

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From: Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>
Sent: 17 September 2020 12:02
To: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>
Cc: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>
Subject: FW: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188)

Dear Jonathan,

Thank you for your email.

We have contractual arrangements with SSE and I will need to update them fully before I can respond. Given the delay from the target date which was back in June, I specifically need to update them on our progress and the timescales we discussed moving forwards.

As you will see I have just requested a date again from your Housing Officer and BPS. Getting more confirmation and certainty on dates for key meetings with the outstanding consultees will aid me in my discussions with SSE regarding the EOT.

Anything you can do to help would be appreciated and if you are able to give me a call I would be more than willing to discuss further.

Thank you

Kind regards

Caroline McHardy
Land and Development Director



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From: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 September 2020 09:20
To: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>
Cc: Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188)

OFFICIAL

Dear Mr Pettit,

Thank you for your email; there is obviously quite a bit to reflect on here, so I will revert in due course to you. On first glance however, it does not appear that you have responded to my suggested extension of time for the determination of the application until 4th December, as per my email after our meeting

on 14th September - I would therefore reiterate my request for your response on this matter as soon as possible please.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Section | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

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From: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>

Sent: 16 September 2020 17:07

To: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>; Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Cc: Cook, Darren <Darren.Cook@reading.gov.uk>; Kim Cohen <Kim.Cohen@bartonwillmore.co.uk>; Emily Ford <Emily.Ford@bartonwillmore.co.uk>; joseph.harding@berkeleygroup.co.uk; Sophie Haslum <Sophie.Haslum@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Subject: RE: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188) - transport

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon Jonathan,

Thank you for your email below, which we will consider and revert on.

Further to our meeting, please find attached our drafted minutes of the meeting, which I would be grateful if you could confirm are an agreed and accurate representation of what was discussed.

Within the meeting you requested confirmation from us on certain elements:

Café use class – we consider it is most appropriate for the café to be considered as A3, as is currently written within the application.

Correspondence with the Environment Agency – pleased see attached correspondence between Berkeley and the EA. For clarity, we did send you our response in July (dated 15th July 2020 and re-attached for reference). However, I have also attached the EA’s response dated 6th August 2020 (PDF) together with our further response on 3rd September, seeking to agree clarification on the ecology buffer (including the landscaping/planting). We are awaiting their feedback (due by 18th September) on the revised shadowing and sunlight assessment EcoConsult/eB7 provided to the EA.

Comments on the layout and ‘stacking’ of the apartments – on the Velux window’s point for the top floor of Block C, we are currently reviewing this to see whether we can incorporate a dormer window or alternatively, create a study.

Clarification on internal changes to apartments:

Alterations to a number of apartments have been made in order to provide the requisite quantum of enhanced Approved Document M dwellings. In some instances, given the movement and turning space requirements, this has led to a handing in the apartment layout from other floors. The affected properties are:

- Southern elevation mid apartment within block B at ground floor (drawing 448.PL.BC.100) and first floor (drawing 448.PL.BC.101)
- 5no. dwellings on the courtyard elevations (north and east elevations) within block B at first floor (drawing 448.PL.BC.101)
- 3no. dwellings on the street elevation (west elevation) within block B at first floor (drawing 448.PL.BC.101)

The south-eastern apartment within block B (drawing 448.PL.BC.109) hands from the floors below in order to make use of the additional external “skin” of the building at this level and provide dual-aspecting to this apartment.

As we turn to other elements I will confirm our response to you in writing.

Actions list

Further to the above, attached and actions contained within the minutes of the meeting, please see below a table of action points, which we thought useful as a tracker. I have updated this, including the submissions within this email. As below, we now await updates in relation to the Element Energy response, BRE availability for a call and final comments from Thames Valley Policy/Environmental Health, from you. Additionally we are awaiting feedback from Steve Hicks, having provided meeting availability for a call with BPS. I would be grateful therefore if you could keep us updated with these points.

Many thanks and do let me know if there are any queries.

RBC (Steve Hicks) to liaise with BPS on viability in preparation for a meeting to discuss with BHOC.	RBC	Urgent
BHOC to advise of availability for a meeting to discuss viability with RBC/BPS during w/c 14 th and 21 st September.	BHOC	Sent – awaiting RBC response
RBC to review Stantec’s submission of 10 th Sept and advise of any further comments.	RBC	Received 15th Sept
BHOC/BW to prepare note relating to the north-south pedestrian/cycle route providing the justification and rationale for the route. To include a policy assessment of the proposals. Note to bring elements of submission together in one place to aid officers.	BHOC/BW	Being prepared
Stantec to prepare note in relation to Vastern Road crossing design and costing.	Stantec	Being prepared
BHOC to advise RBC of the preferred use class for the café building, relevant to recent changes to the Use Class Order.	BHOC	Confirmation provided

		above (16th Sept)
BHOC to review JM's comments on detailed design and respond accordingly, namely the internal layout of units and their associated 'stacking'.	BHOC	Partial response above (16th Sept)
BHOC to advise JM of preferred approach in terms of Employment and Skills Plan (financial contribution or provision).	BHOC	Being considered
BHOC to share copy of correspondence with the EA with RBC.	BHOC	Enclosed above (16th Sept)
JM to liaise with Element Energy and BRE (microclimate) and share updates once received.	RBC	JM to advise (target w/c 21st)
JM to share comments received from Natural Environment Officer and BRE (daylight/sunlight).	RBC	Received
BHOC to review Natural Environment Officer comments following issue and respond as necessary.	BHOC	Being considered
JM to liaise with Thames Valley Police and Environmental Health to obtain final comments.	RBC	JM to advise (target w/c 21st)

Craig Pettit

Planning Associate



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From: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 September 2020 16:25

To: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>; Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Cc: Cook, Darren <Darren.Cook@reading.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188) - transport

OFFICIAL

Dear Mr Pettit / Ms McHardy,

Further to our meeting yesterday, please see below from my colleague Darren Cook in specific response to the transport note submitted last week in advance of the meeting. I trust that these comments are of

assistance to you and help clarify some points as you draw together the various information, as discussed yesterday.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Section | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

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From: Cook, Darren <Darren.Cook@reading.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 September 2020 12:47

To: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188) - Agenda and attachments for meeting on Monday 14th September

OFFICIAL

Hi Jon,

Further to our meeting yesterday morning I thought it best to get some comments to you quickly for the applicant to address.

Internal Vehicle Access Arrangements

I still have concerns regarding the turning facility provided within the application site. I would re-emphasise my comments from the meeting that I have no objection to vehicles crossing the footway /

cycleway but it is the need for vehicles to reverse over the route that I specifically have concerns about. I reference the following points from Manual for Streets below, to which the application would be at odds with.

6.8.8 Reversing causes a disproportionately large number of moving vehicle accidents in the waste/recycling industry. Injuries to collection workers or members of the public by moving collection vehicles are invariably severe or fatal. BS 5906: 2005 recommends a maximum reversing distance of 12 m. Longer distances can be considered, but any reversing routes should be straight and free from obstacles or visual obstructions.

7.10.3 Routeing for waste vehicles should be determined at the concept masterplan or scheme design stage (see paragraph 6.8.4). Wherever possible, routing should be configured so that the refuse collection can be made without the need for the vehicle having to reverse, as turning heads may be obstructed by parked vehicles and reversing refuse vehicles create a risk to other street users.

I appreciate that the number of servicing movements maybe low but the interaction of vehicles reversing over the pedestrian / cycle route which would be utilised by commuters and leisure users including children would be detrimental to highway safety and cannot be supported.

The applicant has also referred to the development of Colliers Way as a comparison to this application however, the servicing arrangements for that site did not include any reversing movements over the pedestrian / cycle route and a dedicated off carriageway turning head within the development car park was provided.

New Pedestrian/Cycle Route through site / Justification for Northern part of the proposed cycle/footway

I note from the document submitted in advance of the meeting, and as discussed in the meeting, that the applicant does not believe that there is a Policy requirement for a direct route and has referred to Paragraph 5.9 below, of the Reading Station Area Framework.

5.9 A major 'city spine' - a direct pedestrian route - is proposed through the historic core, the Station Area and through to the Thames. This spine is based on the north-south link which is the most significant movement corridor in the RCAAP, and is vital to the success of development in this area. The spine will extend across the Thames with a new footbridge(s) and new riverside parks, which can act as amenity space for new residents. The spine will include enhancements including wider pavements and greater pedestrian priority in Station Road. North of the railway, the spine will incorporate a 'green link' towards the river. Buildings will face onto the spine rather than away from it, and, on all parts of the spine south of Vastern Road, the frontages will be enlivened with active uses including retail and leisure.

However it should be stressed that this section relates to Public Realm and would not feature the requirements of cycling. I would however draw the applicants attention to the Transport section of the Reading Station Area Framework and in particular Paragraph 11.10, which explicitly refers to a direct route for pedestrians and cyclists, see below.

11.10 High-density mixed-use development in the Station Area will maximise the potential for local walking and cycling trips. The framework will help to secure high quality pedestrian and cycle facilities to include routes that are direct, well lit, naturally surveilled and safe.

I would also reiterate the comments made within my previous written statement that referred to Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design dated July 2020, which provides guidance on proposed cycle facilities, see extracts below:

18) Cycle routes must flow, feeling direct and logical. Users should not feel as if they are having to double back on themselves, turn unnecessarily, or go the long way round. Often, cycling schemes - when crossing a main road, for instance - require cyclists to make a series of ninety-degree turns to carry out a movement that a motor vehicle at the same

location could do without turning at all. Schemes should be based on a proper understanding of how people actually behave rather than how they might be expected to behave.

4.2.2 When people are travelling by cycle, they need networks and routes that are:

a Coherent;

a **Direct**;

a Safe;

a Comfortable; and

a Attractive

4.2.7 Directness is measured in both distance and time, and so routes should provide the shortest and fastest way of travelling from place to place. This includes providing facilities at junctions that minimise delay and the need to stop. **Minimising the effort required to cycle, by enabling cyclists to maintain momentum, is an important aspect of directness.** An indirect designated route involving extra distance or more stopping and starting will result in some cyclists choosing the most direct, faster option, even if it is less safe.

It is appreciated that the route would be shared with pedestrians but this would not detract from the basic design principles that should be adhered to when designing the proposed route through the site. In addition and as I highlighted at the meeting the pedestrian bridge is already accessed via straight ramps on either side of the river albeit that the ramp turns 90° on the southern side heading east to west. The Highway Authority are unaware of any speeding cyclists, issues or conflicts along the existing route and therefore do not believe that any conflicts would arise from providing a direct / straighter route within the site.

It was stated within the meeting that the development will increase the density of pedestrian movements given residential flows attributed to the development. However, Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design states the following on shared use design:

6.5.9 Research shows that cyclists alter their behaviour according to the density of pedestrians - as pedestrian flows rise, cyclists tend to ride more slowly and where they become very high cyclists typically dismount. It should therefore rarely be necessary to provide physical calming features to slow cyclists down on shared use routes, but further guidance on this, and reducing conflict more generally, is given in Chapter 8, section 8.2.

As I alluded to within the meeting there could be other design features that could aid reduce speeds if this was necessary including the alignment of the route on the podium in the same way as the 90° turn does on the southern side of the bridge.

Overarching all of the above is Paragraph 5.4.6 of the Local Plan which states:

The successful development of this area hinges on improved accessibility by public transport, and improved permeability for pedestrians and cyclists. In terms of permeability, improving links for pedestrians and cyclists through the centre, particularly in a north-south direction, is one of the key principles for the spatial strategy of the centre, along with removing barriers to access within the centre. If visual links are also provided, this will help change the perception of the area north of the station as a separate entity. The opening of the underpass under the station and the provision of a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Thames have recently helped to achieve this vision, but further improvements can still be made. Ensuring active frontages along these routes will assist these to become attractive links, as will the provision of new areas of open space. This is particularly important on the route between the shopping core, the station and the Thames. **In particular, on the Riverside site (CR11g), achieving this north-south link is the main priority for the site, and this should be given substantial weight in development management.**

Given the above it is clear through Policy and design guidance that the development must include a direct north south route and that this is the main priority for the site.

Design of Access to Southern Towpath

The Council have commenced the process that would permit cycling along the towpath and although this may not have reached a conclusion the scheme should ensure that suitable design standards are included within the site as this would form part of the desirable route to and from the town centre. The route will also become the desire line to NCN Route 5 to the east of the site, as previously identified within previous comments.

The Highway Authority therefore does not agree with the comments provided.

Waste Collection Strategy

The submitted information address the concerns regarding Bin store No. 4 but as per previous comments other bin stores were located in excess of 10m which is the design recommendation and the distance to which RBC refuse collection team work to. It would therefore need to be confirmed what arrangements will be put in place for all refuse stores that exceed the distance to ensure that bins are not left obstructing the surrounding footways.

Disabled Parking Bays

In principle I am happy that the location of the disabled bays are acceptable but the development must include locations where pedestrians can access the surrounding footways and this should be included on revised plans.

Cycle Store Design

It has been stated that in addition to the 2.35m headroom that is provided at Building D, there is an additional 0.5m headroom provided as part of the service area. At the location of the cycle store this will remain clear and as such provide an overall headroom of 2.85m and suitable for the josta style racks. I am happy that this would be acceptable but section drawings should be provided confirming this.

I must also stress that access locations for Blocks C and D are still to be addressed.

If you have any questions regarding the above please let me know.

Kind regards,

Darren Cook
Transport Development Control Manager
Transport | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (DEGNS)

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From: Markwell, Jonathan
Sent: 10 September 2020 13:41
To: 'Craig Pettit' <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>

Cc: 'Caroline McHardy' <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Subject: RE: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188) - Agenda and attachments for meeting on Monday 14th September

Dear Mr Pettit,

Thank you for your email. I can confirm that I will be joined by Darren Cook at the meeting on Monday. It was hoped that Steve Hicks / the consultant from BPS would be in a position to attend too, but I have been advised on Steve's return from leave this week that the consultant is actually on leave this week, so they won't have had an opportunity to both view/assess/discuss the viability response you submitted last week (as at least one of them has been on leave since your submission); as such, this matter will need to be discussed at a later separate date. Steve will make contact with BPS next week to discuss this and we will be in touch to arrange a separate date for this.

In terms of the highways based information just submitted, based on my first glance this appears quite substantial in nature and will be likely to require some time to consider (both from a pure transport perspective and then with wider officers as well as to the wider impacts on the proposals). Before even forwarding the information onto Darren Cook, I doubt whether there is sufficient time for it to be fully assessed prior to the meeting on Monday morning. I presume your thought process was to submit this now for you to then elaborate / explain further at the meeting, and then allow officers to consider matters further in greater detail subsequent to the meeting? I would welcome your clarification.

Turning to the microclimate responses, I will forward on this commentary to BRE and seek whether they are content for this to be discussed further via an initial conference / zoom / teams call and the logistics / procedures around this.

In terms of the energy review, Element Energy advised me (subsequent to receipt of further information from your consultant on 4 September) that their report would be anticipated to be completed during w/b 14 September.

I hope that these initial responses are of assistance to you and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Section | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

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From: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>

Sent: 10 September 2020 12:38

To: Markwell, Jonathan <Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk>; Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Cc: Kim Cohen <Kim.Cohen@bartonwillmore.co.uk>; Emily Ford <Emily.Ford@bartonwillmore.co.uk>; joseph.harding@berkeleygroup.co.uk; Sophie Haslum <Sophie.Haslum@berkeleygroup.co.uk>; David Taylor (Oxford) <Dave.Taylor@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Subject: 55 Vastern Rd, Reading (200188) - Agenda and attachments for meeting on Monday 14th September

This is an EXTERNAL EMAIL. STOP. THINK before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments.

Good morning Jonathan,

Ahead of our meeting on Monday, please note for your consideration the following:

1. Proposed agenda (attached)
2. Highways – response prepared by Stantec and accompanying revised tracking drawing (attached)
3. Wind – commentary following comments received by BRE (please see below in body of email)
4. Energy – further to my email on 4th September confirming that our client's energy consultants Hodkinson had supplied the requested cost data to Element Energy, no further dialogue has been received. I have attached the cost data again for clarity.

Regarding the attached highways response, the main change which has been made is to move the location of the refuse collection vehicle from overhanging the footpath when collecting the bins from Block D, to now parking parallel to the building. This will mean that the vehicle will fully cross over the foot/cycleway, however this will only be for a matter of seconds. With the previous approach, the front end of the vehicle would overhang whilst the bins were being collected. We trust that this approach is seen as positive and better than making any changes to the 'direct' nature of the foot/cycleway and/or any unnecessary intrusions onto it.

Regarding wind, our client's consultants RWDI have reviewed the document provided by BRE. The document highlighted three concerns that were considered to be unresolved by the reviewer as follows:

- A. Walking use wind conditions west of the existing Sovereign House entrance in the context of the cumulative surrounding buildings;
- B. Standing use conditions on private balcony spaces; and
- C. The lack of quantitative evidence of mitigation for an area of standing use conditions in the café seating space.

In response to the above identified points, please see the below commentary:

- A. For clarity on point one, the area being referenced is to the western side of the entrance foyer (Figure 1 - attached) for the existing Sovereign House, east of the Site on Vastern Road. In the context of the cumulative schemes (excluding 80 Caversham Road and Vastern Court schemes), wind conditions in this area are predominantly suitable for strolling use (yellow contours in Figure 2 - attached), with a small area of walking use conditions (pink contours in Figure 2). BRE's comments are accepted where it is stated that these conditions would be windier than suitable for an entrance location and made windier by the interaction of the Proposed Development with cumulative schemes, however, the entrance is located some metres further east in an area of sitting use conditions (green contours in Figure 2) that would be considered suitable for an entrance location. The area west of the entrance foyer would not be an area reasonably expected to be

frequented by pedestrians (we consider that the only entrance in this location is an emergency exit door, where for this use wind comfort is not a key concern) and therefore has not been considered an entrance or pedestrian thoroughfare. Additionally, existing landscaping in this area has not been accounted for within the assessment and would be expected to shelter this area from the effects of the Proposed Development – it is anticipated that with the planting of the scale seen in this location will result in a drop of one comfort category would be seen in these areas. In the context of the existing surrounding buildings and in the context of the cumulative schemes including 80 Caversham Road and Vastern Court, wind conditions in this area would be calmer. While this has been raised with the reviewer, RWDI would be happy to highlight this in more detail in the report to remove any suggestion that this has been overlooked.

- B. Point two is one of a difference of opinion between RWDI and BRE and RWDI note that their approach has been widely accepted by numerous London boroughs and peer reviewers. The justification for standing use conditions on balconies is that occupants at height would be expected to be more tolerant of windier conditions due to the exposure this location inherently incurs. Additionally, the use of the balcony will also be constrained by the prevailing weather conditions on any given day and would therefore be expected to be used when appropriate weather conditions prevail. Large outdoor amenity spaces are assessed more strictly as these spaces may be expected to be suitable for amenity use regardless of the prevailing weather conditions and being located at ground level.
- C. As discussed with the reviewer, where there are no instances of strong winds it is commonly accepted practice to assess the likely suitability of wind mitigation measures using professional judgement based on experience of similar development. RWDI therefore reaffirm their assessment that the proposed landscaping scheme and the border treatment incorporating a wall to the west of the café space and balustrade formed of dense railings to the north of the café space, would constitute an appropriate level of wind mitigation for the highly localised area of standing use conditions at the north-eastern corner of the spill-out space.

In RWDI's experience a verbal discussion with the reviewer may be a beneficial and positive approach to resolve these remaining areas of concern. I would be grateful therefore if you could please share the above with BRE and subsequently arrange a call with them, so that our client's consultants RWDI can have a detailed discussion on these elements.

Having considered my commentary above and the attachments I have included, I would be grateful if you would please consider who should attend the meeting from the Council's perspective. In terms of viability we would request the attendance of Steve Hicks, as this is a key discussion and we would welcome Steve's updated thoughts on this matter as well as Darren Cook, RBC Highways, following submission of our revised highways comments.

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Craig Pettit

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