

**Archaeological Evaluation at 28-30 London Hill
Rayleigh Essex**

Grid reference: TQ 806 910
Planning Application: 15/00641/FUL
Oasis No. 256654

Prepared for:
Flushgroup

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Contents

Non-technical summary.....	1
1. Introduction	2
2. Site Location & Geology.....	3
3. Planning background.....	4
4. Archaeological and Historical Background	4
5. Map Information	6
6. Archaeological Evaluation	7
7. Results: Evaluation by Trenching.....	7
8. Interpretation and Conclusion	9
9. Health, Safety and Environment.....	9
10. Ownership of Finds, Storage and Curation of Archive.....	9
11. Archive preparation and deposition	9
12. Resources	10
13. Copyright.....	10
14. Acknowledgements	10
Appendix I: Summary Report	12
Bibliography	11
Appendix II: Digital Images.....	12

Non-technical summary

This report is of the findings for an archaeological evaluation by way of trial trenching in advance of the construction of three detached dwellings. The project has been carried out in response to an archaeological brief written by Alison Bennett of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Team, dated the 8th of April 2016.

Two trenches were excavated to cover the footprints of the new development.

The site lies within an area highlighted by the Historic Environment Record as having a high potential for archaeological deposits and specifically an outer ditch to the castle was thought to extend along the line of London Hill at this location.

In spite of the high potential for archaeological evidence at this location the evaluation by trial trenching did not locate any archaeology or finds.

1. Introduction

1.1 The planning application (15/00641/FUL) was submitted to Rochford District Council for the demolition of an existing dwelling and the 'construction of three new dwellings'. As the site lies within an area highlighted by the Historic Environment Record as having a high potential for archaeological deposits being present a full archaeological condition was recommended, in this case an evaluation by trial trenching was requested. The full condition that was recommended (condition 22) was based on the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.2 A written scheme of investigation was presented to the Historic Environment Team by Archaeoserv and accepted as part of the archaeological process. The results of the evaluation were inspected by Alison Bennett (Historic Environment Officer ECC) for Thurrock Council who visited the site to inspect the ditch feature. The overall findings of this project are presented here as part of the ECC brief requirement.

2. Site Location & Geology

NGR: TQ 806 910

2.1 The development site is on land at 28-30 London Hill Rayleigh (TQ 806 910) in south Essex, and to the immediate east of the motte and bailey of Rayleigh castle.

2.2 The geology for the site is London Clay (BGS: 258/9).



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Figure 1. Site Location

3. Planning background

3.1 The planning application (15/00641/FUL) was submitted to Rochford District Council for the demolition of an existing dwelling and the 'construction of three new dwellings'. As the site lies within an area highlighted by the Historic Environment Record as having a high potential for archaeological deposits being present a full archaeological condition was recommended. The full condition that was recommended (condition 22) was based on the National Planning Policy Framework and stated:

'No development or preliminary groundwork's of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority.'

REASON: The site is of potential archaeological interest.

3.2 *Prior to commencement justification: Given the location of the development, as identified by ECC as being adjacent to the historic core of Rayleigh where medieval and post-medieval archaeological deposits may survive, it is important to ensure that prior to works commencing any possible deposits are explored.'*
(Rochford District Council Decision Notice, 29/01/2016).

3.3 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief will be sought in standards for '*Field Archaeology in the East of England*,' (East Anglian Occasional papers 14, 2003). In addition, this brief has been compiled respecting the following standards: Regional Research Framework (East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 3, 1997, 'Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties, 1. resource assessment'; Occasional Paper 8, 2000, 'Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy'; and Revised Research Framework for the Eastern Region, 2008, and Medlycott, M (ed.) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 Archaeological Background

Medieval and post medieval finds have been made in close proximity to the current site at London Hill. The information relating to this held in the HER is as follows: *Watching brief, 1986, discovered evidence for a building in a cut feature within a dark organic build up, a possible hearth, a layer of clay and charcoal and perhaps an occupation layer - a series of clay floors. The amount of charcoal may indicate a workshop rather than a house. Pottery finds suggest a C14-C15 occupation date. The discoveries indicate that the street alignment of London Hill existed and was probably built up by the C14 and C15 (HER 13374).* The potential and importance archaeologically of the current location cannot be underestimated, the HER states: *The morphology of the medieval built-up area is not entirely clear, however it*

appears to have been concentrated along the High Street, in the area to the east of the outer bailey. The parish church was sited at the north-eastern end of the town, its location perhaps marking the site of the original Domesday settlement. At this point the east-west route of London Hill meets the north-west route of the High Street. To the south of the church is a triangular built-up area, delimited by London Hill, Bellingham Lane and High Street. It is possible that this area originally formed part of the market-place (see below), however a watching-brief at 3-5 London Hill (ESMR 13374) established that the area was already partly built-up by the 14th and 15th centuries. Traces of several successive clay floors and a hearths were noted on the site. Some of the property boundaries on either side of the High Street may well reflect the original layout of the medieval tenements (HER: 13374).

4.2 Historical Background

Rayleigh was probably one of the most important centres in south Essex in medieval times. The presence of a well-preserved mount representing the motte of the castle (HER:13586) built by Sweyne (of Essex). Rayleigh castle is one of 48 castles mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and the only one recorded in the county of Essex. The Survey records that Swein (other spellings are Sweyn, Sweyne, and Suen) built the castle in his manor. He was the son of Robert FitzWimarc, a Norman lord and favourite of Edward the Confessor (r.1042–1066). Swein was one of the wealthiest landowners in post-conquest Essex, and the Survey records that in 1086 his lands were worth £255. By the time of the early 13th century the castle was in ruins and the remains, or the rubble that existed on the mount at the time, were used by its new owner *Hubert De Burgh* to build his new castle at Hadleigh around 1215.

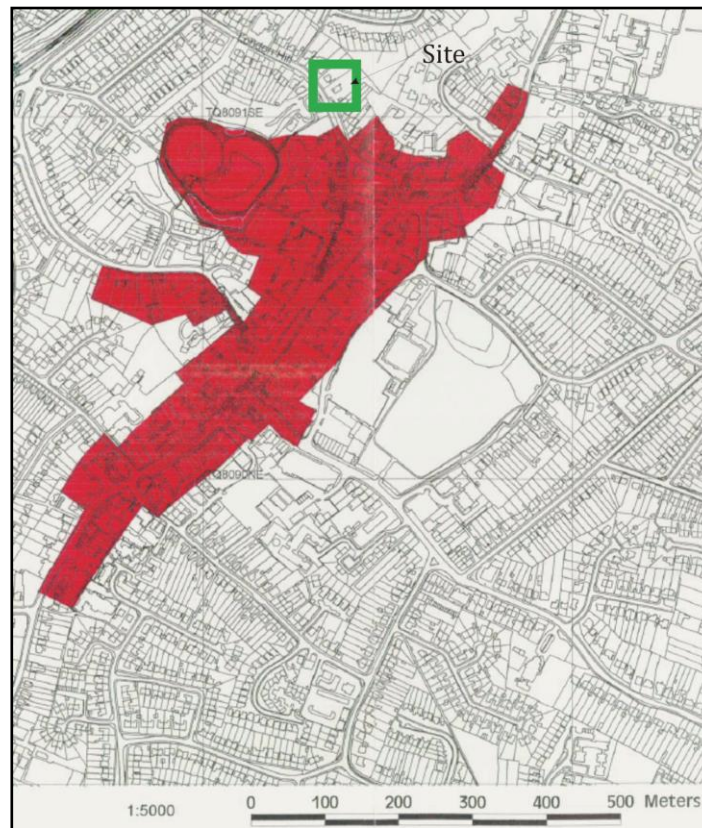
Although Rayleigh's status as a fortified town waned rapidly from this point onwards, Rayleigh continued to grow throughout the medieval period with the church, the Holy Trinity being built to the east of the castle during the 11th century and the tower incorporated in the 15th century. A market was established, probably as early as the 13th century and may have been sited between Bellingham Lane and the High Street. Recent discoveries have shown that medieval London Hill was on the same alignment as today and that the high street probably forms the original north-south road, rendering Rayleigh a little-changed town except for the post medieval build up which is seen today.

The site at 28-30 London Hill is considered to be on a possible alignment of a further outer ditch appertaining to the castle, which was located during trial trenching just off Bellingham lane to the south of London Hill where it joins the High Street (Archaeological evaluation, Payne, D.; Archaeoserv, 2015).

5. Map Information



Figure 4. Chapman & Andre map of Raleigh, 1777



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*Figure 5. Historic town Extent and site (in green) located above
(Raleigh: Historic Town Assessment Report, Medlycott, M, 1994)*

6. Archaeological Evaluation

6.1 Methodology

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> was initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.

6.2 This project was carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (MAP 2). All work was undertaken to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and Museum of London Archaeology Service (Molas) standards.

6.3 The fieldwork was undertaken by Dennis Payne BA (Hons) ACIfA and Mr Martin Brooke of Britannia Archaeology with relevant experience.

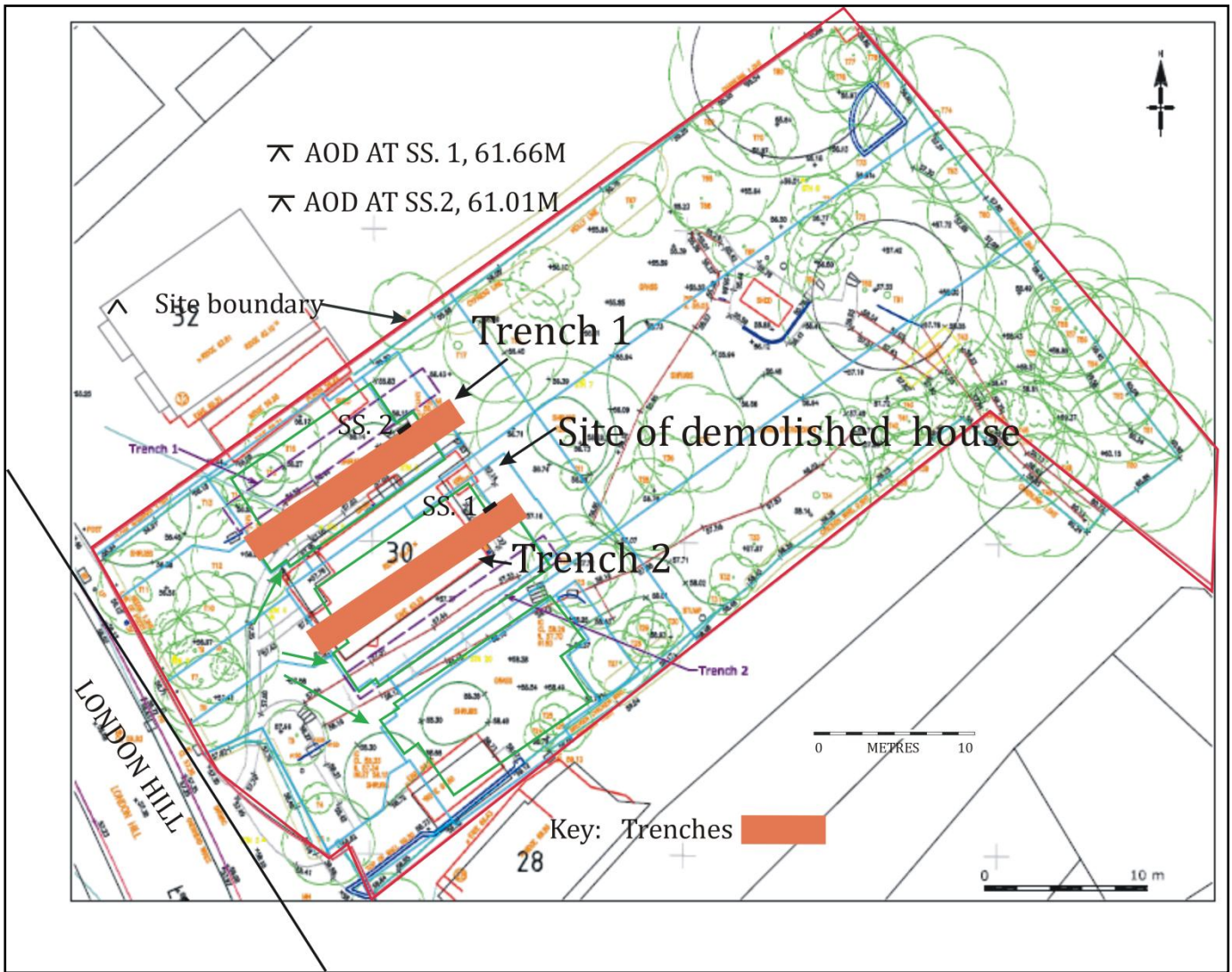
6.4 The Post excavation work will be carried out in part by Archaeoserv along with the appropriate specialists that may be appointed for this project.

6.5 A photographic record was compiled, comprising an overview of the site prior to work starting, as well as after completion of the work using high resolution digital images of at least ten million pixel resolution, and is included with any excavated features, sections and other relevant details that aid the site interpretation.

7. Results: Evaluation by Trenching

7.1 Two evaluation trenches were opened in a parallel arrangement to cover the proposed building footprints, closer than originally planned (fig. 4), measuring 10m in length by 1.8m in width; the original plan to place one either side of the demolished house was not possible (see fig. 3 in the WSI) due to the amount of modern build-up of the surface to compensate the gradient of the hill where trench 2 had originally been planned (plt. 3; pre-exc). The site had also been re-worked in recent times, which had truncated the original ground surface and sub-surfaces that may have contained any archaeological evidence that may have once existed here (plts 8 &9).

7.2 The re-modelling of the ground surface meant that no top soil was remaining, only a demolition spread (1000) consisting of a mixed soil with crushed building material and waste modern items, which covered a large area of the site. Below the demolition spread, the natural silty clay (1001) was observed to a depth of 0.20m (exposed) in Trench 1 and 0.10m in depth (exposed) in Trench 2; no archaeological features could be seen, undoubtedly due to the truncation of the site.



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Figure 4. Post-excavation plan of trenches 1 & 2

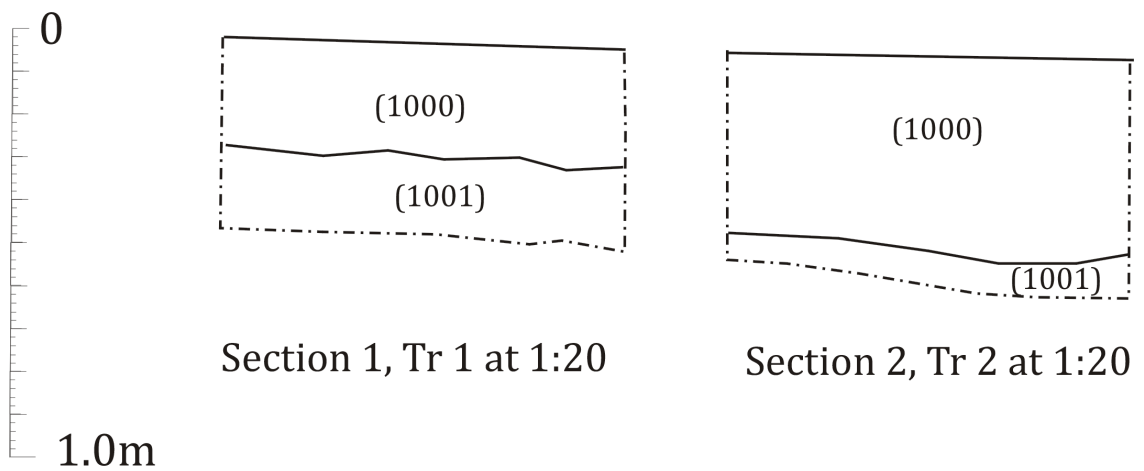


Figure 5. Sample sections of trenches

8. Interpretation and Conclusion

8.1 As discussed, the location of this site on a fairly steep incline coupled with the disturbance from the previous building (demolished) meant that previous ground-works on the site had disturbed the original ground level. The location for trench 1 was moved to the location as per the trench plan due to the high level of modern make-up to level the ground and this also negated any possibility of locating any archaeological evidence.

8.2 As a result of the disturbance of the site, neither of the trial trenches located any evidence for previous use or earlier occupation evidence on the site.

8.3 The negative result of this evaluation and the lack of evidence for a further ditch related to the castle does not necessarily mean that the possible alignment for an outer ditch along London Hill does not exist. Future archaeological work in this vicinity may throw more light on its possible existence and it is recommended that the extent of London Hill should be subject to further investigations when the opportunities arise.

8.4 The findings of no archaeology encountered at this location have shown that no further ground-works to develop this site will compromise any archaeology at 28-30 London Hill Rayleigh.

9. Health, Safety and Environment

9.1 A risk assessment strategy covering all activities was carried out during the lifetime of the project.

9.2 All work was carried out in accordance with current health and safety legislation.

9.3 Every care was taken to minimise the environmental impact.

10. Ownership of Finds, Storage and Curation of Archive

All artefactual material recovered will be held in long term storage by the Thurrock Museum archive, and ownership of all such archaeological finds will be given over to the museum to facilitate future study and ensure proper preservation of all such artefacts. In the unlikely event that artefacts of significant monetary value are discovered, and if they are not subject to the Treasure Act (1996), separate ownership arrangements may be negotiated.

11. Archive preparation and deposition

The archive/report will be presented to the Southend Museum, to the standards as laid out in their specification/brief.

12. Resources

The evaluation was undertaken by Dennis Payne BA (Hons) ACIfA and Mr Martin Brooke of Britannia Archaeology using standard archaeological field techniques.

13. Copyright

Copyright will remain that of the author. License will be given to the client to present any reports, copyright of the author, to the planning authority in good faith of satisfactory settlement of account.

14. Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Mr David Camm of Flushgroup who funded the project and who appointed Archaeoserv to this task.

Alison Bennett (Essex CC Historic Environment Advisor to the project).

Bibliography

British Geological Survey. 1990: sheet 258/9

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. (eds.), 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 - Research Agenda and Strategy* (East Anglian Archaeology)

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Gurney, 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*

Medlycott, M., 2011 Medlycott, M (ed.) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24

Morris, J., (ed.) 1986 *The Domesday Book of 1086*, Phillimore

Payne, D., 2015 *Evaluation at 4 High Street Rayleigh*; Archaeoserv

Appendix I: Summary Report

Previous Summaries/Reports:	
ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY SUMMARY SHEET	
Site name/Address: 28-30 LONDON HILL RAYLEIGH 15/00641/FUL	
Parish: RAYLEIGH	District: ROCHFORD
NGR: TQ 806 910	Site Code: LHR 16
Type of Work: EVALUATION	Site Director/Group: Dennis Payne ARCHAEOSERV
Date of Work: 20/07/16	Size of Area Investigated: 400 m ²
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: SOUTHEND	Funding source: Client
Further Seasons Anticipated?: NO	Related HER No.s: N/A
Final Report: COMPLETED ATTACHED	
Periods Represented: N/A	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>Two evaluation trenches measuring a total of 20m by 1.80m were excavated across the site; due to previous re-working of the site (leveling, demolition and make-up) any archaeology that may have existed here was truncated out, as a result no archaeology or finds were locate</p>	
Author of Summary: D Payne	Date of Summary: 17/08/16

Appendix II: Digital Images



Plate 1. Pre-excitation view of site, looking west



Plate 2. Pre-excitation view of site, looking west



Plate 3. Built-up area over original site of trench 1.



Plate 4. sample section 1. in trench 1



***Plate 5. Trench 1, looking west
(avoiding modern concrete foundations of demolished house)***



Plate 6. Sample section 2, trench 2, looking north-west



Plate 7. Trench 2, looking west



Plate 8. Trench 2 in progress showing over burden of demolition material



Plate 9. Trench 2 in progress showing over burden of demolition material

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OASIS ID: dennispa1-256654

Project details

Project name	Evaluation a t28-30 London Hill Rayleigh essex
Short description of the project	no archaeology was located due to recent groundworks which had truncated any possible remains
Project dates	Start: 05-07-2016 End: 17-08-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	N Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX ROCHFORD RAYLEIGH 28-30 london hill rayleigh
Postcode	SS7 4RY
Study area	400 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 806 910 51.588337126961 0.607330058942 51 35 18 N 000 36 26 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Position derived from charts
Height OD / Depth	Min: 60m Max: 66m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	DENNIS PAYNE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	ALISON BENNETT

Project director/manager	DENNIS PAYNE
Project supervisor	DENNIS PAYNE
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	FLUSHGROUP

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	SOUTHEND MUSEUM
Digital Contents	"none"
Paper Archive recipient	SOUTHEND MUSEUM
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	evaluation at 28-30 london hill rayleigh essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	PAYNE, D.
Other bibliographic details	NA
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	ARCHAEOSERV
Place of issue or publication	TRIMLEY ST MARTIN SUFFOLK
Description	A4 bound
URL	NA

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Entered on	17 August 2016

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