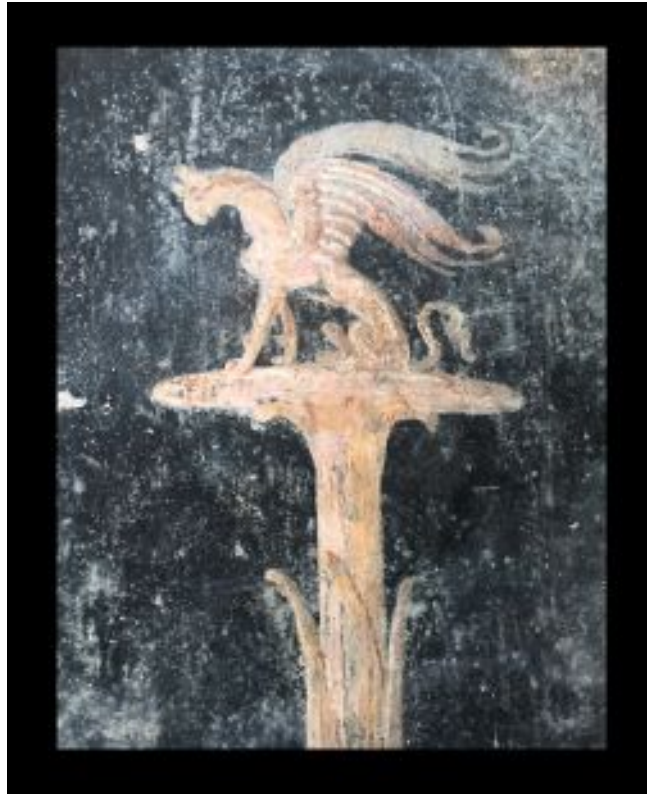


Archaeological Evaluation

Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon, Essex SS4 3HZ



TOUCHSTONE ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

June 2020

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Archaeological Evaluation
Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon, Essex SS4 3HZ

NGR: TQ 86432 93482

Planning Reference: 17/01159/FUL

EHER Site Code: AHA18

Touchstone Archaeology Project ref: AHA20

Curating Museum: Southend

Museum Accession code: 2018:3

Oasis ID: zoeschof1-313580

Document Control Grid						
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SUMMARY

Touchstone Archaeology was commissioned by Ashingdon Hall Care Ltd and Annabel Brown Architects to undertake an Archaeological Evaluation at Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon SS4 3HZ. The works were initiated by a planning consent condition due to the medieval history of the Grade II Listed Ashingdon Hall, the location of the Roman Road (Ashingdon Road), and the unknown location of the Battle of Ashingdon. The site had seen no previous archaeological evaluation. The works were carried out on 8th and 9th June 2020, following the demolition of the outbuildings and in advance of the construction of the new building. Three trenches were excavated across the length and width of the footprint of the new building and across the proposed parking area. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In 2017, planning consent was granted by Rochford District Council for the demolition of a stable outbuilding and the construction of a single-storey, self-contained, 10 bedroom, dementia facility (*Planning Ref: 17/01159/FUL*) with an archaeological condition (12) in place.

1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation for the evaluation was submitted to and approved by the Historic Environment Advisor, Alison Bennett in advance of the development (*TA, 2018*).

1.3 On the 8th and 9th June 2020, Touchstone Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation in the form of Trial Trenching at Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon SS3 4HZ (*TQ 86432 93482*).

1.4 The evaluation was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic. All works were carried out in accordance with Touchstone Archaeology COVID-19 Risk Assessment.

1.5 The works were carried out in accordance with the WSI (*TA, 2018*) and the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological Field Evaluation (CIfA, 2014)*, the *Management of Archaeological projects 2 (EH 1991)*, the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide (HE 2016)* and *Research and Archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper 24 (Medlycott, M. 2011)*.

1.6 This report provides an account of the archaeological evaluation.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 The site is located in the south east of England, the County of Essex, the District of Rochford and the village and civil parish of Ashingdon. The PDA is situated in a semi-rural area to the north of the village at the junction with Ashingdon Road and Church Road and contains the Grade II Listed Ashingdon Hall (*1322376/34914*).

2.2 The PDA is a sub-rectangular plot of c.1280sqm of hardstanding, outbuildings and paddock and is situated at an average height of 32m above Ordnance Datum (*aOD*) (*Fig. 1-2*).

2.3 According to the British Geological Survey the underlying solid geology at the site is London Clay Formation - clay, silt and sand. There are no superficial deposits recorded (*BGS 2019*).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 While there are several undated records of cropmarks within the area, there is little evidence of occupation or activity prior to the construction of the Ashingdon Road, a Roman Road that connected Southend with the port of Maldon and then onwards to Colchester and bounds the site to the west.

The earliest reference to Ashingdon is the battle that took place between King Edmund II (*Edmund Ironside*) and King Canute of Denmark (*Canute the Great*) on 18 October 1016. The location of the battle is contested but a Minster built in commemoration to those that died in the battle is considered to be the current Grade II Listed St Andrew's Minster (*HER:20700/13611*), completed in 1020 and found c.230m northeast. The church is constructed from ragstone, flint rubble, septaria, Roman brick and has C14th, C15th, C16th and C17th features.

The historic settlement of Ashingdon is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086. It was known as *Nessenduna* and later as *Assandune* meaning 'Ash hill' or 'Donkey hill'. At that time there was the church and two households, Robert the landholder whose holding may have been on the site of Ashingdon Hall, a smallholder and pasture for 40 sheep (*HER: 19959*).

Ashingdon Hall was rebuilt in the 17th century, although remnants of an older timber framed building still survive within the current building (*HER:34914*). In the 1777 Chapman and Andre Map, the village is no more than a hamlet of six dwellings; the Church, two adjacent dwellings, Ashingdon hall and properties that trace their origins to the C13th.

The site has seen no archaeological evaluation and there has been scant archaeological investigation within a 1km assessment area. Trial trenching at Land at Golden Cross Road in 2000 by Essex County Council proved negative (*EEX56276*).

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 The purpose of the work is to determine the date, character, function, extent, significance and condition of the archaeological remains and deposits within their cultural and environmental setting.

4.2 Site-specific research objectives may be able to determine if there is any

evidence of:

- Roman activity or occupation in relation to the Roman Road of Ashingdon Road
- The Medieval manor house and the development of the current property
- The Battle of Ashingdon that is thought to have occurred within the surrounding area

4.3 The evaluation fulfilled the aims and objectives by determining that there were no archaeological features or deposits surviving within the evaluation trenches.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the WSI (*TA, 2018*) and the Standards and Guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*Cifa, 2014*).

5.2 The groundworks were mechanically excavated, using a bladed bucket, by the construction company A & C Developments. The works were carried out over the course of one day and were monitored by archaeologist David Britchfield MCIfA.

5.3 All deposits were recorded using Touchstone Archaeology standard recording sheets. A full photographic record was made of contexts. Section drawings of the excavated profiles were not drawn and digitised (*Plates 2-3*).

5.4 The Archive was subjected to selection (*Cifa, 2019*) and is currently held at the office of Touchstone Archaeology in Danbury, Essex. The archive in the form of a PDF/A report will be deposited to Southend Museum in due course (*2018:3*). A summary of information from this project will be entered into the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain (*Appendix I - zoeschof1-313580*).

5.5 Archive

The contents of the archive include:

Type	No.
WSI	1
Site Diary	0
Context Register	1
Context Sheet	0
Photographic Register	1
Photographs	47
Drawings	1
HER Summary sheet	1
OASIS form	1
Archive Toolkit	1
Final Report	1

Table 1. Site Archive

6.0 RESULTS

6.1 TRENCH DESCRIPTION

In total 76.5sqm (6%) of the site was sampled.

Trench	Direction	L x W	Depth	Plates
1	East West	20.1m x 1.8m	0.67m bgl	1 & 4
2	North South	11.1m x 1.8m	0.45m bgl	2 & 5
3	East West	11.3m x 1.8m	0.42 bgl	3 & 6

6.2 CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

There was a common stratigraphy across the site. The lowest deposit identified was natural clay (Plate 1-6).

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

Context No.	Type	Interpretive Category	Depth (m)
101	Concrete Slab	Finished floor level	0.00 – 0.15m b.g.l
102	Hardcore	Levelling Layer	0.15 – 0.26m b.g.l
103	Clay	Natural Geology	0.26 – 0.39m b.g.l
201	Concrete Slab	Finished floor level	0.00 – 0.15m b.g.l
202	Hardcore	Levelling Layer	0.15 – 0.32m b.g.l
203	Clay	Natural Geology	0.32 – 0.45m b.g.l
301	Concrete Slab	Finished floor level	0.00 – 0.15m b.g.l
302	Hardcore	Levelling Layer	0.15 – 0.27m b.g.l
303	Clay	Natural Geology	0.27 – 0.42m b.g.l

6.3 FINDS

No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

7.0 DISCUSSION

OS Maps suggest that the demolished buildings were constructed in the 1970's (Fig.2) and replaced earlier buildings on the site (Fig.1). The trial trenching revealed that prior to the construction of those buildings, the site had been cleared of topsoil and subsoil and that the hardcore and hardstanding were built directly over the natural geology. All trenches were over cut to ensure that the clay was natural geology.

Archaeological Evaluation at Ashington Hall, Church Road, Ashington, Essex SS4 3HZ

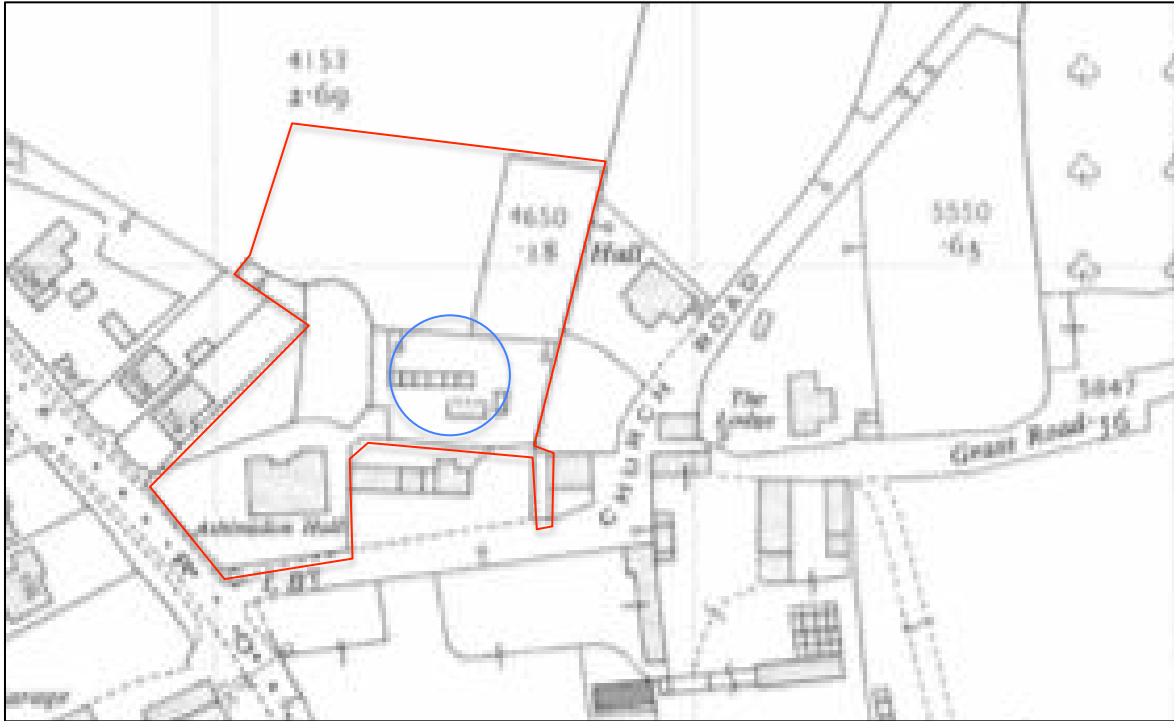


Fig.1. OS Map: National Grid Map 1961 1:2500

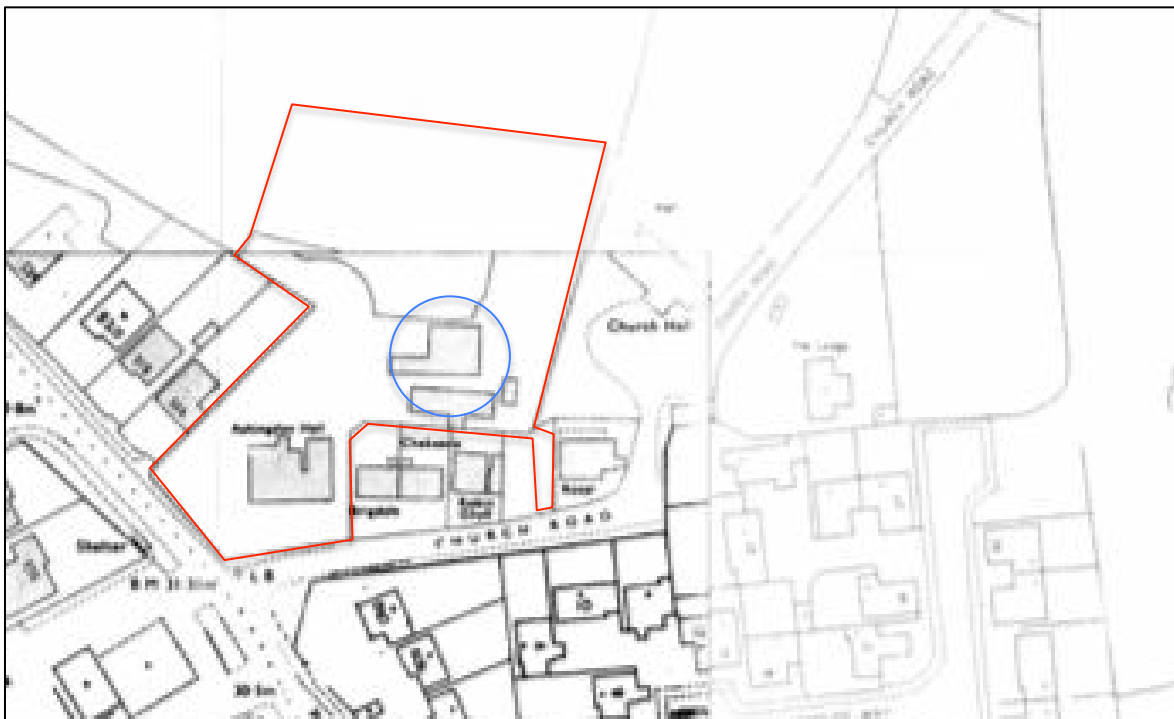


Fig.2. OS Map: National Grid 1972 1:1250

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Touchstone Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Ashingdon Hall Care Ltd and Annabel Brown Architects for commissioning the work and Alison Bennett and Maria Medlycott (ECC HEA) for their guidance throughout the project. David Britchfield MCIfA carried out the fieldwork and Zoe Schofield compiled the archive, prepared it for deposition and authored the report.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archaeological Archives, 2011: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation transfer and curation

BGS 2015 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/> British Geological Survey

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J., 2000, Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy, East Anglian. Archaeology. Occ. Pap. 8

CifA 2014 - Standard and Guidance: For an archaeological evaluation, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; Reading

CifA: Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials

DCLG [Department of Communities and Local Government], March 2012: National Planning Policy Framework

DCLG [Department of Communities and Local Government], March 2014: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment: Planning Practice Guide

Essex Historic Environment Record

OS Maps provided by Groundsure Ltd (2018)

Gurney, D., 2003, Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology. Occ. Pap. 14

HE 2015: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE), Historic England

Medlycott, M., 2011, Research and Archaeology Revisited: A revised framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology, Occ. Pap. 24

Touchstone Archaeology, 2020, Health & Safety Policies and Procedures.

Archaeological Evaluation at Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon, Essex SS4
3HZ

Touchstone Archaeology, 2018, Written Scheme of Investigation

*Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice (2nd Revision) 1996, DCMS Treasure (Designation)
Order 2002, TSO*

FIG.1. SITE LOCATION 1:1250

FIGURES AND PLATES

FIG.1. SITE LOCATION – 1. UK, 2. THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, 3. THE SITE 1:1250



Archaeological Evaluation at Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon, Essex SS4 3HZ

FIG 2. PLAN OF TRENCHES

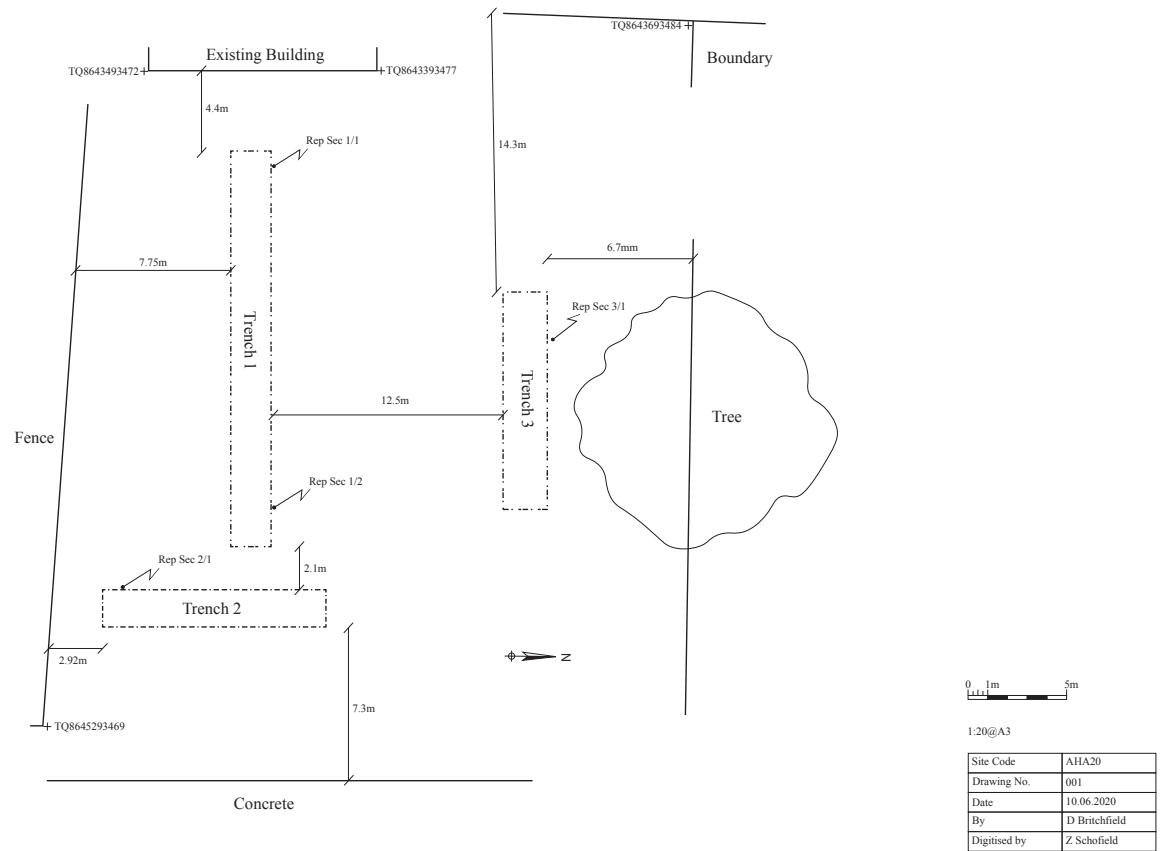




PLATE 1. TRENCH 1: VIEW FROM WEST (SCALE 2M X 1M)



PLATE 2. TRENCH 2: VIEW FROM NORTH (SCALE 2M X 1M)



PLATE 3. TRENCH 3: VIEW FROM WEST (SCALE 2M X 1M)



PLATE 4. TRENCH 1: FACING SOUTH (SCALE 1M)



PLATE 5. TRENCH 2: FACING WEST (SCALE 1M)



PLATE 6. TRENCH 3: FACING SOUTH (SCALE 1M)

APPENDIX I. EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site Name/Address: Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon SS4 3HZ	
Parish: Ashingdon	District: Rochford
NGR: TQ 86432 93482	Site Code: AHA18
Type of Work: Evaluation	Site Director/Group: Touchstone Archaeology Ltd, Zoe Schofield
Date of Work: 8-9 th June 2020	Size of Area Investigated: 1280sqm
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Southend 2018:3	Funding source: Landowner
Further Seasons Anticipated? No	Related EHCR No's: 1322376/34914
Final Report: Schofield, Z., Touchstone Archaeology Ltd, AHA18 Final Report, 2020	OASIS number: Zoeschof1-313580
Periods Represented: N/A	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: Three evaluation trenches were excavated in advance of a development on the site of C17th Ashingdon Hall. The topsoil and subsoil had been stripped when the original C19th buildings were demolished and the existing outbuildings and hardstanding were constructed in the 1970's. The new buildings were constructed directly on to the natural clay. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered.	
Previous Summaries/Reports: N/A	
Author of Summary: Zoe Schofield	Date of Summary: 11 th June 2020

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

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OASIS ID: zoeschof1-313580

Project details

Project name	Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon SS4 3HZ
Short description of the project	Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching in advance of the construction of a new Dementia Unit
Project dates	Start: 08-06-2020 End: 09-06-2020
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	17/01159/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	AHA18 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	2018:3 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	34914 - LBS No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Residential 2 - Institutional and communal accommodation
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural commercial
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX ROCHFORD ASHINGDON Ashingdon Hall
Postcode	SS4 3HZ
Study area	1280 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 86432 93482 51.608724399776 0.692747643757 51 36 31 N 000 41 33 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	Unknown

Archaeological Evaluation at Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon, Essex SS4 3HZ

Project creators

Name of Organisation	TOUCHSTONE ARCHAEOLOGY
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Zoe Schofield
Project director/manager	Zoe Schofield
Project supervisor	Zoe Schofield
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Southend Museum
Digital Archive ID	2018:3
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Text"
Digital Archive notes	PDF Report
Paper Archive Exists?	No

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	AHA20 Final Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Schofield, Z.
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Touchstone Archaeology Ltd
Place of issue or publication	www.touchstonearchaeology.com
Description	PDF Report
URL	www.touchstonearchaeology.com

Entered by	Zoe Schofield (zoeschofield1@gmail.com)
Entered on	11 June 2020

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APPENDIX III. ARCHIVE SELECTION STRATEGY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT ASHINGDON HALL, CHURCH ROAD, ASHINGDON SS4 3HZ

Project AHA20, Site Code: AHA18, 11th June 2020. V.01

SELECTION STRATEGY

Project Information

Project Management

Project Manager	Zoe Schofield zoeschofield1@gmail.com	
Archaeological Archive Manager	Zoe Schofield zoeschofield1@gmail.com	
Organisation	Touchstone Archaeology Ltd (TA)	
Stakeholders		Date Contacted
Collecting Institution(s)	Southend Museums Service (SMS)	12.06.2020
Project Lead / Project Assurance	Alison Bennett, HEA, Place Services	19.06.2020
Landowner / Developer	Ashingdon Hall Care Ltd	12.06.2020
Other	Annabel Brown Architects	12.06.2020

Resources

Resources required

No unusual resources required outside of TA normal operating equipment and personnel.

Context

The full aims and objectives of this project are detailed in the WSI (attached).

The aims of this project are to investigate any activity in relation to the Roman Road that bounds the site to the west, the Medieval manor House that predated the current C17th building and the development of the current building, the battle of Ashingdon that is thought to have occurred within the surrounding area.

Selection of the working project archive will be guided by the aims and objectives of the project

outlined in the WSI, the regional research framework and the Southend Museum Services Deposition Policy:

Touchstone Archaeology Ltd, 2018, Archaeological Evaluation at Ashingdon Hall, Church Road, Ashingdon SS4 3HZ: Written Scheme of Investigation. Project AHA18

Medlycott. M., 2011, Research and Archaeology Revisited: A revised framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology, Occ. Pap. 24

1 – Digital Data

Stakeholders

Zoe Schofield (TA Project Manager & Archive Manager)

Selection

Location of Data Management Plan (DMP)

All digital data will be collected, stored and selected in line with Touchstone Archaeology Ltd (TA) Data Management Plan located on TA's Main computer (IMAC) and TA Dropbox facility.

The digital data will be reviewed following data gathering and analysis to check that data is being properly preserved and version control upheld in-line with the TA DMP.

Strict version control will be applied throughout the project in line with the TA Data Management Plan (DMP) but it is proposed that only the final version of all born digital documents (reports, databases, images) will be selected for inclusion in the Preserved Archive.

Digital photographs will be assessed during post ex and selection based on the principles set out in the TA DMP and HE guidelines.

All raw and processed survey data will be included in the preserved archive.

The final decision about selection for inclusion in the Preserved Archive will be made following the reporting stage of the project and enacted during archive completion.

The following standards/ guidelines will guide the selection of digital data:

Touchstone Archaeology 2020. Data Management Plan. TA

ADS (2) Guides to good practice. <http://guides.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/g2gp/Main>

ADS (3) Guidelines for Depositors. <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors>

ADS (4) Guidance for the selection of material for deposit and archive

Historic England (2015a) Digital Image Capture and File Storage

Southend Museum Services: Essex Archaeological Archive Deposition Guidelines, 2015

De-Selected Digital Data

The project executive and collecting institution will be consulted on the fate of all de-selected material. It is envisaged that the de-selected material will be retained on the Touchstone Archaeology servers for 2 years following the completion of the project at which point they will be reviewed and deleted as necessary in line with the TA DMP.

Amendments: No Amendments

Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders
------	-----------	-----------	--------------

2 – Documents

Stakeholders

Zoe Schofield (TA Project Manager & Archive Manager)

Selection

2.1 All original documentary material created during data gathering will be selected for inclusion in the Preserved Archive. Duplicates, photocopies of originals and research materials will be de-selected during archive completion in line with Essex Museum Service Deposition Standards.

2.2 The documentary archive will be reviewed following analysis and again at archive completion in order to select for the inclusion in the Preserved Archive.

2.3 The following standards/ guidelines will guide the selection of digital data:

Touchstone Archaeology Ltd, 2020. Data Management Plan. TA

Southend Museum Services: Essex Archaeological Archive Deposition Guidelines, 2015

De-Selected Documents

It is envisaged that the material de-selected from inclusion in the preserved archive will be duplicates or re-productions created during the analysis phase of the project. De-selected material will therefore either be retained to supplement TA's research files or recycled.

Amendments: No Amendments

Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders
------	-----------	-----------	--------------

3 – Materials			
Material type	No Material evidence was recovered during the evaluation	Section 3.	1
Stakeholders			
Zoe Schofield Archive Manager and Project Manager			
Selection			
No Material evidence was recovered during the evaluation			
Uncollected Material			
No uncollected material evidence was recorded during the evaluation			
De-Selected Material			
N/A			
Amendments			
Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders