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SEEBOARD PLC

# Vagniacae Roman Settlement and Temples East of Springhead, Kent

NGR TQ 561900 172420

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Oxford Archaeological Unit

May 1997

SEEBOARD PLC  
VAGNIACAE ROMAN SETTLEMENT AND TEMPLES  
EAST OF SPRINGHEAD, KENT  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT  
SEEBOARD CABLE TRENCH  
NGR TQ 561900 172420

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

MAY 1997

## **Summary.**

*On the 29/4/97 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief at a site adjacent to the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Kent no. 158 ) Vagniaë Roman temple site to the east of Springhead, Kent (NGR TQ 561900 172420), subsequent to the excavation of a cable trench by Seeboard. No archaeological features were seen and no finds were retrieved.*

## **1. Introduction.**

The watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Seeboard plc on the advice of the Oxford Archaeological Unit as the site is located in an area of extremely high archaeological potential, and on the edge of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) itself (fig. 1).

## **2. Background.**

This work is further to that carried out in the Autumn of 1994, when the OAU excavated approximately 860m of cable trench on behalf of Seeboard plc; the trench passed through a part of the SAM believed to encompass Springhead Roman town. A part of the excavated cable trench passed through the SAM to the West of the railway line which proved to be devoid of archaeological features or deposits. The remaining length of trench ran East of the railway; excavation in this section produced evidence for Roman activity dating from the the 1st to the 4th centuries and was characterised by ditches, gullies, pits (some used for metalworking), postholes, floor layers and a succession of road surfaces. Numerous finds of a wide variety of types and materials were recovered. A more full discussion of the past work done by the OAU in the area may be found in "Northfleet, Springhead: Post-excavation Assessment and Research Design", OAU 1996.

## **3. Aims.**

To record any archaeological remains exposed on site to previously established standards (OAU Fieldwork Manual, First Edition, 1992). The ultimate goal being the preservation by record of any archaeology, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance.

## **4. Methodology.**

An inspection visit was made to the site subsequent to the excavation of the cable trench (fig. 1), located between the tarmaced footpath and the fence line delineating the scheduled monument boundary. The trench section was inspected as were the spoil heaps for any stray finds. Within the constraints imposed by Health and Safety considerations the deposits exposed in section were cleaned, inspected and recorded in section and by colour slide and black and white print photography. Written records were also made on proforma sheets.

## **5. Results.**

The cable trench measured 60m long by 0.20m wide by 0.70m deep. The earliest deposit seen was (2), a tenacious mid brown/gray silty clay loam 0.40m thick. This was sealed by (1), a friable mid yellow clay loam with 30% sand and gravel inclusions. No cut features were seen and no finds were retrieved.

## **6. Discussion.**

It is thought probable that those deposits seen relate to the construction of the A2 embankment and the laying of the tarmaced footpath, rather than to the adjacent SAM. The sterile nature of both deposits would imply their importation from elsewhere and subsequent use as infill, also the high sand and gravel content of (1) would appear to imply redeposited material used as makeup.

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OAU  
May 1997.

## **Bibliography.**








Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Assessment of Historic and Cultural Effects. Final report, November 1994. OAU.

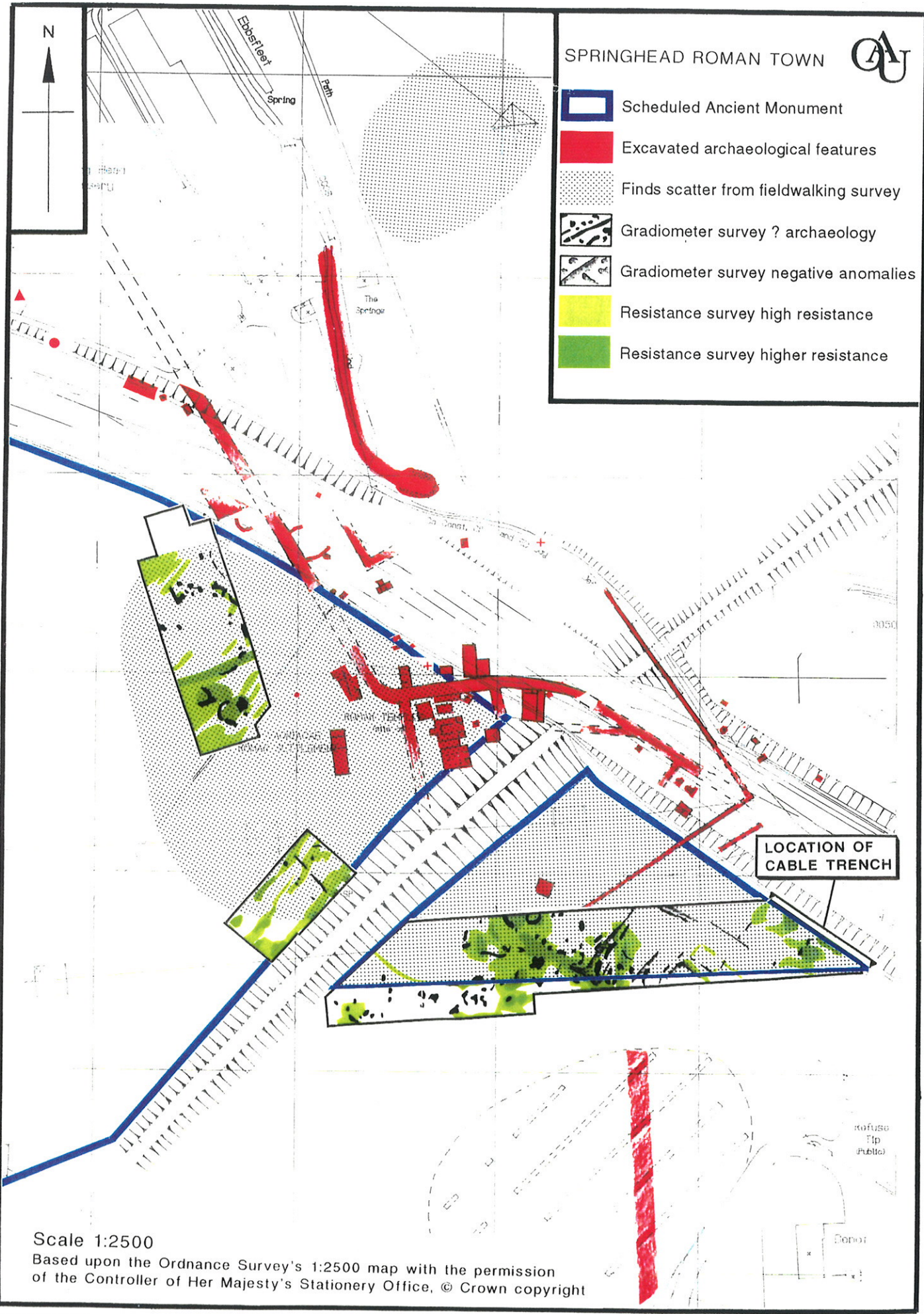
Northfleet, Springhead. Post-excavation Assessment and Research Design, OAU 1996.

Fieldwork Manual, First Edition, D Wilkinson (ed.) OAU 1992.

SPRINGHEAD ROMAN TOWN



-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Excavated archaeological features
-  Finds scatter from fieldwalking survey
-  Gradiometer survey ? archaeology
-  Gradiometer survey negative anomalies
-  Resistance survey high resistance
-  Resistance survey higher resistance



Scale 1:2500  
 Based upon the Ordnance Survey's 1:2500 map with the permission  
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Figure 1