

## Historic Townscape of Hereford

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Wednesday, 21 April 2010 10:08 - Last Updated Sunday, 09 May 2010 10:48

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Herefordshire Council's archaeologists working on the city centre have unveiled some startling new images and maps showing Hereford in ways it has never been seen before.

The first is a 'LiDAR' image of the ground surface on which the city stands. Taking data from the Environment Agency, it uses airborne laser scanning to create a minutely accurate picture of the ground surface, with all the buildings digitally removed and tiny variations in ground level magnified.

Dr Keith Ray, Herefordshire's county archaeologist, said: "This then produces an image of what the city might look like as an abandoned site. The advantage for archaeologists is that it becomes possible to see clearly features that are otherwise obscured by buildings.

"One such feature is a lost valley that runs through the city from Aubrey Street, across King Street to the river. Known as the **King's Ditch**, which has almost disappeared as rubbish has been thrown into it and mud built up in it over a period of four thousand years.

"A second image looks like an aerial view of the city at night. It is in fact a computer-generated map that shows the city in negative, to highlight the open spaces and the dense pattern of narrow alleyways and old building plots that are such an attractive feature of the ancient centre.

"The study concludes that Hereford has one of the best-preserved historic city centres anywhere in England, in which medieval neighbourhoods can still be traced to this day," he added.

The study, a 'historic townscape characterisation', is available on the council's website under Conservation at [http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/The\\_Historic\\_Townscape\\_of\\_Central\\_Hereford\\_March\\_2010.pdf](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/docs/The_Historic_Townscape_of_Central_Hereford_March_2010.pdf) and at Hereford Library in Broad Street.