

A conservation management plan for Hereford's city defences

Part one



Herefordshire Archaeology
Report 000 (revised consultation draft)
February 2011

Hereford's city defences

a conservation management plan

Herefordshire Archaeology Report 000 (internal draft 1.4)

February 2011

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Introduction

The medieval cathedral city of Hereford has been surrounded by its stone walls for about eight centuries, though it has been fortified for even longer. Militarily obsolete since the end of the Civil War, the gates were all demolished in the 1790s and, with the growth of the Victorian city, stretches of the walls were demolished or concealed behind new buildings.

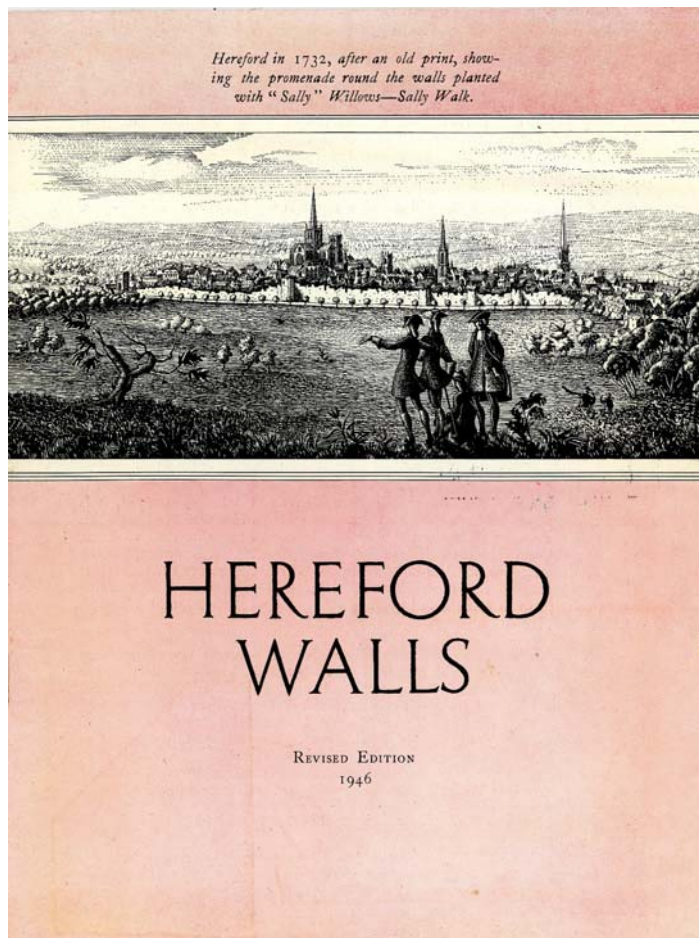
By the eve of the Second World War the city was facing a growing problem as the steadily increasing volume of through-traffic, still following its medieval route through High Town, Broad Street and across the old Wye Bridge, was causing accidents, congestion, pollution and damage to historic buildings. The strategic solution arrived at by central government was to bypass the city to the west, widening Victoria Street and building a new bridge over the river. The city's response was that a circulatory boulevard should be linked to such a scheme, carrying traffic around the north side of the city to take further pressure off the ancient central streets.

In 1949, George Cadbury, a member of the West Midland Group on Post-War Reconstruction and Planning, wrote a pamphlet suggesting that this offered an unprecedented opportunity to 'open up the city walls for their historical interest, and at the same time make Hereford a *Precinct City* [with a pedestrianised centre] by using the old surrounding moat and Sally Walk as a by-pass'. The Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club, representing the county's historical and archaeological interests, offered their view that:

'These ancient remains are an integral part of the history of the city and a heritage which any city should be proud to possess and preserve with loving care. The opportunity now available of demarcating, exposing and preserving the remains of the walls and the site of the ditches throughout the whole circuit of the defences, would give to the city of Hereford a feature which we believe to be unparalleled in this country'.

They argued that there was scope for recreating the tree-lined walk that had surrounded the city in the 18th century, when the edge of the ditch had been marked by willows, giving it the name 'Sally Walk' (a common corruption of *Salix*, the Latin species name for willow), the name still attached to Bath Street well into the 19th century. They further suggested that the walls, thus revealed, should be restored by specialist masons and the former ditch laid out as gardens or even, in places, re-excavated and refilled with water. This ran counter to one proposal from Whitehall (the Ministry of War Transport), which had suggested that the new road could itself be placed in the re-excavated ditch (see illustration, below).

It was to be another twenty years before work on the A49 improvements and the inner relief road was completed, construction work having finally commenced in 1965. Many aspects of the post-war vision for the city walls were realised in the process. The best-preserved sections of the western wall facing Victoria Street were cleared of superincumbent buildings,

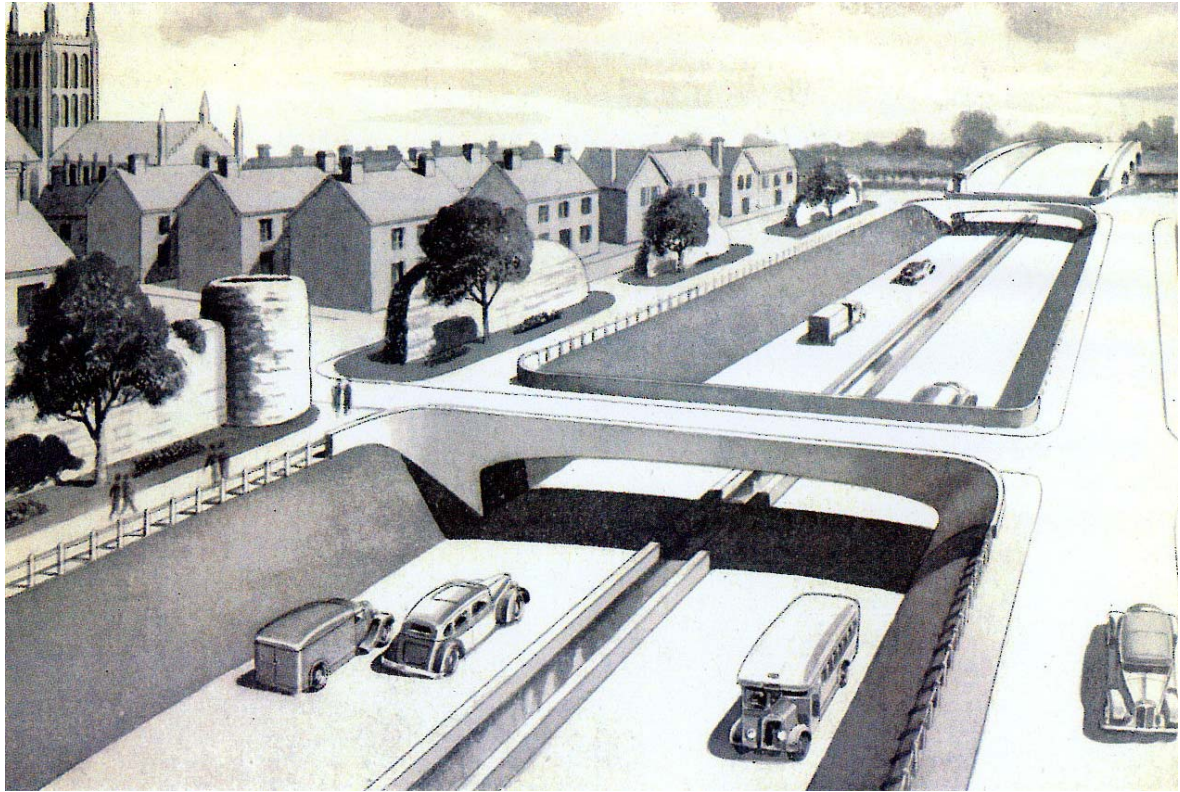


George Cadbury's 1946 proposals for opening up and displaying the city walls in the context of the proposed bypass. *Hereford Walls* can be seen as the ancestor of this conservation plan.

restored by specially-trained masons and opened up to public view; further sections on Blue School Street and Bath Street were accorded similar treatment. But, by 1968 traffic volumes had already increased to such an extent that the re-creation of the tree-lined Sally Walks of the 18th century was scarcely an option. Moreover, the demands of traffic engineering and modern retailing had overtaken the conservation imperative to the extent that the north-western corner of the walls had to be taken down and reconstructed on a new alignment, and there were further losses of fabric along the new inner relief road, on New Market Street and Blue School Street.

It is now more than sixty years since George Cadbury's original proposals were first published and forty years since the restoration of the walls. Since then, parts of the city walls, particularly but not invariably those parts in private ownership, have deteriorated significantly, to the extent that they appear on the current *Heritage at Risk Register* (English Heritage 2009), 'condition poor', priority category 'C'. It is also the case that the post-War vision of Hereford made more attractive to visitors who would wish to see 'the ancient city, with its walls and cathedral' has not yet been fulfilled, because the potential of the walls as a component of the tourist-historic city has never been fully realised. Though now (mostly) visible from the inner relief road and bypass, access to

the walls varies from the discouraging to the impossible (nowhere is the wall-walk accessible to the public), and the most interesting features – the two surviving bastions – are in poor condition and their interiors are in private hands. Nor is there any on-site interpretation to explain to visitors or citizens what it is that they are seeing, or that they are passing through the defended perimeter into the ancient cathedral city.



The Ministry of War Transport's vision for Hereford. The improved A49 trunk road, upgraded to a dual carriageway, running in the re-excavated city ditch past the remains of the city wall towards the proposed new bridge. The latter was eventually built as shown here (Greyfriars Bridge) though the A49 (Victoria Street), though widened, remained at surface level

The impending re-design of the inner relief road and the perceived need for longer-term heritage-led regeneration in the city offer an opportunity to re-visit the post-War vision, to complete the work of a previous generation of city and transport planners, and to return the medieval defences to their central role in shaping the identity of the city.

The context of this conservation plan

Following the repairs and conservation of the city wall, described above, undertaken as part of the Inner Relief Road work in 1968-9, further work through the 1970s was confined to excavation on sites immediately inside the defences in advance of redevelopment, for example, the Liberal Club in 1970 and Bewell House in 1974 (NW quarter) and Cantilupe Street in 1972 and 1975 (south-east quarter). Most of these were published in 1982 in the second Hereford City Excavations volume *Excavations on and close to the defences* by Ron Shoesmith.

In March 1996 Hereford City Council produced a *Management Strategy* for the city walls, prepared by David Baxter, the City Conservation Officer. The introduction noted that, since the late 60s, the wall had 'been abused, neglected and left to deteriorate' and the management plan set out to:

1. To preserve what remains of the City Walls
2. To provide some form of interpretation for the public
3. To prepare future maintenance programmes for the City Walls
4. To guide Council's Landscaping and Environmental policies so that they are not detrimental to the City Walls
5. To investigate the tourist potential of the City Walls

Its recommendations were only partly implemented before local government in the county came under a unitary authority. In early 1997 Archaeological Investigations Ltd, the former City of Hereford Archaeology Unit, were commissioned by the City Council to undertake an archaeological survey of the Gunners Lane and Greyfriars Surgery sections of the western defences; in retrospect (although it was not stated at the time) these sections can be identified as having been largely unaffected by the major repairs and rebuilds of the late 60s. The AIL report that followed the work contains phased stone-by-stone survey drawings and a historical commentary (Boucher and Shoesmith 1997). Examination of the stretches of wall that were surveyed shows that some repair work was indeed undertaken, missing stones identified in the *Management Strategy* having been infilled with recessed tile courses in the SPAB readable repair tradition. No more work, either survey or repair, appears to have been undertaken before local government reorganisation and the creation of Herefordshire Council in 1998. It appears to have been the case that, with the advent of the new authority and the departure of the city conservation officer who had been responsible for the *Management Strategy*, work on the city defences lapsed.

Since then, no further work has taken place apart from the excavation of further threatened sites immediately within the wall. Most of the recommendations of the 1996 *Management Strategy* have remained unimplemented: no overall maintenance programme has been introduced, there has been almost no interpretation of the wall to the public, and its tourist potential remains untapped. Maintenance issues have risen up the agenda, with vegetation growth on some sections rightly attracting the indignation of elected members, amenity bodies and the public at large. Hereford city walls

have, in consequence, repeatedly featured in English Heritage's *Buildings at Risk Registers*, and in the current *Heritage at Risk Register* (English Heritage 2009), 'condition poor'.

This conservation management plan was commissioned to address these issues and has been prepared by Herefordshire Archaeology with capacity-building grant aid from English Heritage.

The purpose and scope of this conservation plan

The purpose of this plan does not differ greatly from the 1996 *Management Strategy*, described above. The immediate imperatives may be briefly summarised as the identification of archaeological/historical, ownership, condition, access and other issues leading to:

- the provision of information to support the creation of an active and informed management regime, including programmes of archaeological investigation and recording
- an analysis of the potential for better public access to the monuments that comprise the city defences
- the provision of interpretation at defined locations around the monuments

The underlying imperatives are twofold: the better preservation of the monuments and their better exploitation as an asset in heritage-led regeneration for the city as a whole.

Scope

The plan covers most of the principal monuments that comprise the Saxon and medieval city defences:

- The city wall, together with its associated features (the city ditch and internal rampart, the city gates) and those parts of the Saxon defences incorporated in the above (Scheduled Ancient Monument HE 124)
- The Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch (Scheduled Ancient Monument HE 47)
- The Bartonsham Row Ditch (Scheduled Ancient Monument HE 47)

Three monuments that played a role in the defence of the city are *excluded* from this plan. These are:

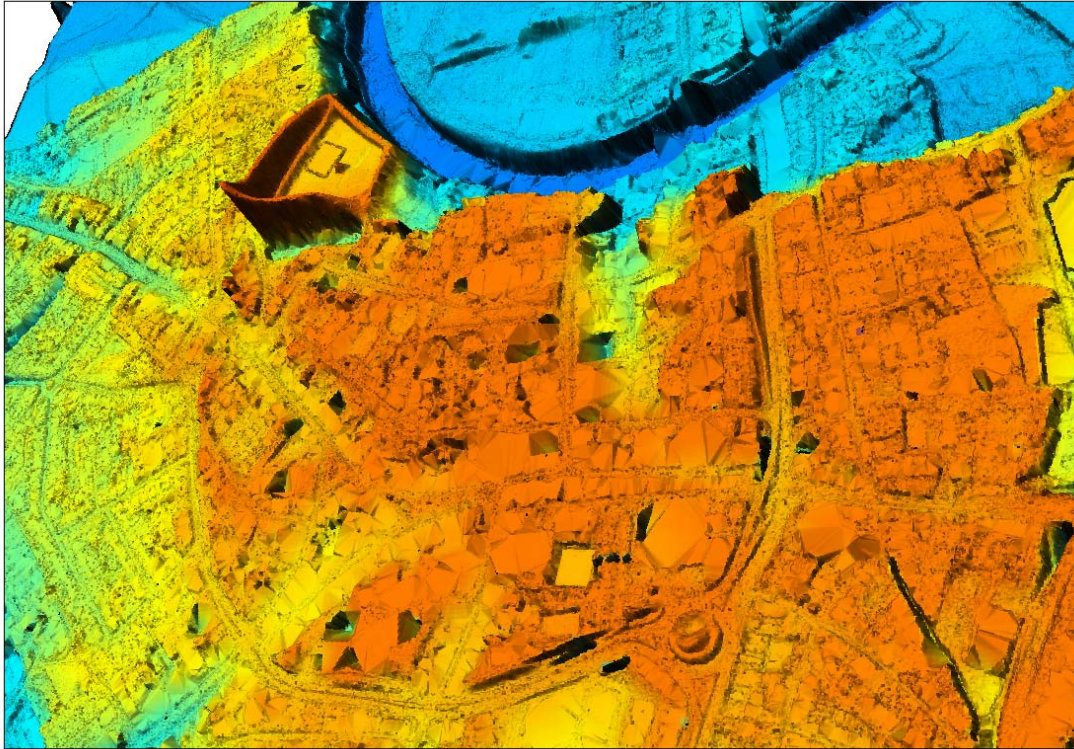
- The northern side of the pre-Conquest defences. With the expansion of the defended perimeter in the late 12th century to embrace the new

Norman market area based on High Town, the north side of the old Saxon defences became redundant. The ditch became a sewer, the rampart was gradually levelled and the defences gradually disappeared beneath the encroaching town. Its course (not scheduled) lies west-east between Eign Gate/High Street/High Town/St Owen Street and West Street and East Street.

- The Wye Bridge (Scheduled Ancient Monument HE 21). This is a mainly 15th-century structure with later alterations and late 11th-century origins. It was formerly gated at its outer (south) end, in common with most other major urban medieval bridges in the region. No trace of the gate tower now survives above ground and the standing monument is to all intents and purposes a civil structure.
- Hereford Castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument HE 152). An immediately post-Conquest period shire town royal castle, this would initially have been conceived as an instrument of the military suppression of the city, its role changing rapidly to become a principal component of its defence. There are however sufficiently numerous issues that are specific to this complex monument to argue that it lies beyond the scope of this plan and should be the subject of a conservation management plan of its own. It followed a post-medieval trajectory that was different to that of the other components of the defences in that it became a public park, laid out with formal walks, a role that continues. Castle Green as it became is an under-utilised public space badly in need of investment. It has also lost significance, in the sense that there is nothing there to tell residents or visitors that it is a substantial relic of a Norman and later castle and not just a municipal park. It is this writer's experience that there is a very common perception across a broad spectrum of the local community that 'Hereford has no castle'.

Although excluded from this conservation plan and from the preceding conservation statement these monuments (which are not covered in Part 2, the gazetteer) are included in the historical/ archaeological introductory commentary below.

Also excluded from this plan are 20th-century defence monuments, including air-raid shelters, searchlight and anti-aircraft batteries, pillboxes and Home Guard and resistance installations, for example the compromised resistance Operational Base on Dinedor Hill (Lowry and Wilks 2002, 69).



copyright: Geomatics Team, Environment Agency, 2010

LiDAR image of Hereford city centre, viewed from the north-west (south to top), from which standing buildings have been digitally removed and vertical measurements exaggerated. The line of the defences is clearly visible as a horseshoe-shape emphasised by the ring road outside. The western and northern ramparts can be seen (right and bottom centre). The ramparts of Castle Green (top left) peak at Hogs Mount; the hollow left by the quarrying away of the motte is visible to the right (west) of Castle Green. The former Saxon defences may be discerned as a rise in levels extending west and north (down and to the right) from Castle Green. The King's Ditch is visible as a deep incision into the high ground within the western defences

Understanding and significance

The defences today: an outline description

'Hereford. Long but quite featureless stretches of wall lie along the line of the ring-road; on the west side of the city low and discontinuous remains run from the river to near West Street; parts of two rounded bastions survive.'

(Creighton and Higham, *Medieval Town Walls* 2005, 265)

This extremely sparse, not to say threadbare, entry in the most recent general account of English town walls, presents what might be characterised as a drive-by description of Hereford's defences. While not entirely inaccurate, it ignores much of the complexity and all of the subtlety of a complex series of urban defence monuments that are among the best preserved in the region and the most archaeologically significant in England.

The most obvious remains of Hereford's medieval defences surviving above ground today are those of the, mainly 13th-century, city wall. This formed a C-shaped enclosure around the city with its open side occupied by the River Wye, and part of its east side formed by the perimeter of the outer bailey of Hereford Castle (Castle Green). The Wye frontage appears at present to have been undefended, except by the Row Ditch earthwork on the south bank and the gate at the end of the Wye Bridge. The city wall alone extended for some 1600 metres; with the east side of the castle the complete perimeter on the north bank was in the order of 1900 metres in length. If to this is added the Row Ditch on the south bank, medieval Hereford's total defended perimeter would have been in the order of just under 2.3 kilometres. If, however, an outlying linear earthwork to the south-east, the Bartonsham Row Ditch, is added, the complete outer defences (excluding the castle perimeter facing the city and superseded pre-Conquest defensive alignments) achieve something in the order of three kilometres, of which around 37% still bears standing remains, whether wall or earthwork.

The component parts of the medieval city defences

The 'city wall' is a shorthand expression for a series of inter-related archaeological monuments consisting, from the outside in, of the city ditch, a berm (a strip of flat ground of varying width between the ditch and the wall), the masonry wall, and, in most places, a rampart behind the wall. In total these features occupied a zone on average some twenty-five metres wide. In some areas there was, in addition, a road within the wall, though not, it seems, consistently, as a primary (original build) feature in any period. As a consequence 'wall streets', built on top of the ramparts but secondary to them, still exist along the northern 12th-century defences at Wall Street, along the pre-Conquest defences at West Street and East Street, and have been

excavated behind the pre-Conquest defences at Berrington Street, Victoria Street and Cantilupe Street.

The city wall itself is a structure of some complexity. Around the west and east sides of the city it takes the form of a retaining wall, where it has been cut into a long sequence of earlier ramparts that have substantially raised the ground level; on the north side it has been cut into only a single phase of rampart with the consequence that much of its superstructure is or was free standing. While substantial stretches of masonry on the west and north sides conform to a uniform pattern or building technique and appears to be more or less 'as built', other stretches show no such uniformity and instead appear to have been rebuilt at an unknown point in time, property by property. Other stretches can be shown to have been rebuilt, or in one area newly built, to look 'original' in the 1960s, others to have been rebuilt as a distinguishable repair in accordance with the philosophy of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB).

The defences of Hereford: an archaeological and historical summary

Past work

Historical accounts of the city defences may be said to have begun with John Price's *An historical account of the city of Hereford* in 1796. Beginning with the story of the Welsh sacking of Hereford in 1055 and Harold Godwinson's subsequent refortification, Price proceeds to the Domesday account and thus to the construction of the castle, drawing heavily upon John Leland's account of it before its partial demolition following the civil War. The events of the Civil War were dealt with in detail. Describing the city of his own time he noted that:

'This city was formerly surrounded with a deep ditch and broad walls; the latter are even now standing, and, in some places, but little injured by the ravages of time. Some of the gates have lately been taken down, with a view of improving the entrance of the city; but the design has not been fully answered, the venerable aspect of the place being injured, without an adequate acquisition of elegance' (Price 1796, 57).

John Duncumb, writing a few years after Price, began the Hereford city section of his *History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford* (1804) with an account of its military history, using many of the same sources as Price.

The earliest archaeological-topographical accounts of the city defences are those by Walter Pilley and Alfred Watkins in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Walter Pilley, a confectioner, can lay claim to be the discoverer of Hereford's Saxon defences, by monitoring occurrences of dark, waterlogged soils in building works and using detailed topographical observation to reconstruct their course along West Street and East Street (Pilley 1899). Pilley's work was taken up and greatly extended by Alfred Watkins. In addition

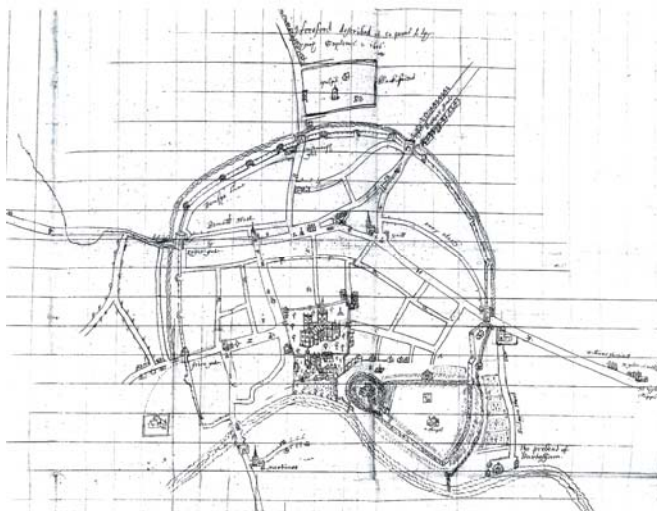
to photographing sections of the city wall that he saw being demolished (see Part 2), he published two fundamental papers on the subject in the *Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club*: 'Hereford City Walls', in 1919, and 'The King's Ditch of the City of Hereford' in 1920. The former adopted a gazetteer-like approach to the remains of the city wall, noting recent exposures and losses; the latter re-examined many of Pilley's observations on the northern pre-Conquest defences and speculated as to their relationship to 'the King's Ditch', an infilled stream valley or gully roughly 100 metres west of the cathedral (see Lidar image, above).

Sources

The volume of documentary resources of relevance to the defences increases substantially through time. The pre-Conquest years are of course the most sparsely documented, limited to enigmatic references in national or local chronicles (see Gaps in Knowledge section, below). The defences were obviously a feature of the city c.1086 when Domesday Book was compiled as a distinction was carefully drawn between citizens living within or without the walls – though whether the defences were then militarily viable, or were obsolete but of continuing legal/jurisdictional significance is uncertain.

The construction of the medieval city defences is generally held to be marked by the royal charter of 1189 that gave the city the right to organise the collection of its own fee farm (the annual payment by a royal borough to the Exchequer) in return for taking responsibility for the construction of new defences. With the renewal of royal interest in the city's defences, references to them begin to appear in central government archives. Thus in 1190 the Pipe Rolls record expenditure on the construction of four gates (Whitehead 1982, 18-19). And, from 1224 almost continuously into the late 15th century, the Patent Rolls contain repeated grants of murage, allowing tolls to be charged at Hereford to support the cost of building and maintaining the walls (Turner 1970, 205-7). From the 16th and 17th centuries the flavour of the documentation changes, with complaints in the city archives from the ward juries to the mayor and council about the decay and disrepair of the defences.

Cartographic sources commence with John Speed's birds-eye-view of the city published in 1610. As in most English towns, this is a fundamental source for the basic line of the defensive perimeter or enceinte, even if it is extremely short on detail, particularly of the bastions or mural towers, only one of which is shown.



John Speed's MS plan of Hereford 1606. Reproduced from Brian Smith's *Herefordshire Maps 1577-1800* (2004)

Speed's manuscript plan is rather better, showing the majority of the bastions, mostly in their correct locations, together with a much more convincing eastward return of the wall along the riverside linking the south-westernmost bastion (B1) to the end of the Wye Bridge. After Speed there is a gap of almost a century and a half before Isaac Taylor's map of the city in 1757. A generally accurate and detailed work, this too is of fundamental importance as a source that narrowly pre-dates the improvements of the late 18th century during which all the city gates were demolished. After that, only the large-scale manuscript plans surveyed in 1858 by Timothy Curley, the City Engineer, intervene before the incomparable Ordnance Survey 1:500 sheets of 1886. Curley's plans too are an important source as they immediately pre-date the changes following the 1854 Hereford Improvement Act, and they have been extensively used in Part 2 of this conservation plan.



The central portion of Isaac Taylor's map of Hereford, 1757

Archaeological research (post-Watkins) may be said to have begun in earnest in the mid-1960s, with excavations in advance of the construction of the Inner Relief Road and attendant developments. Small-scale excavations by Stan Stanford, Helen Sutermeister, Frank Noble and Ron Shoesmith were followed by Phillip Rahtz's open-area exploration of the defences on Victoria Street in 1968. This in turn was followed by extensive further work by Shoesmith, to which references are made throughout part 2. The following **historical and archaeological summary** derives mainly from the archaeological work of Ron Shoesmith and the historical research of David Whitehead first published in Shoesmith's 1982 volume *Excavations on and close to the defences*. More recent synthetic studies have led to some revisions, notably Alan Thomas and Andy Boucher's *Further sites and evolving interpretations* (2002) volume, and David Whitehead's *The Castle Green at Hereford* (2007).

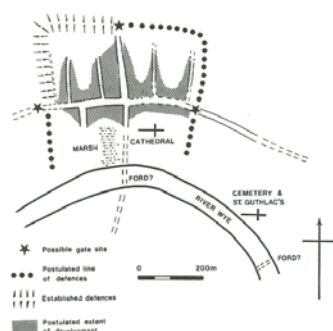
The thumbnail phase plans below are also taken or adapted from Shoesmith 1982.

The first settlement

The origins of Hereford remain enigmatic. There is an increasing body of evidence for Roman activity, including buildings in the vicinity of the cathedral. The latter was probably founded c.700AD. There was a separate, contemporaneous, burial ground in Castle Green, later identifiable as the minster of St Guthlac.

Late 8th century/early 9th century: undefended settlement developed in the Victoria Street/Berrington Street area, possibly within a local planned framework of north-south streets, including Berrington Street itself, another to its west and possibly Aubrey Street to the east.

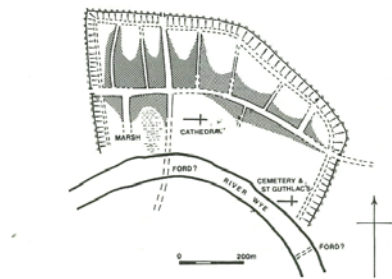
The earliest defences, probably 9th-century



(*Shoesmith's Stage 1 defences*). The first defended town with a gravel rampart and external ditch. The defences have been found by excavation on

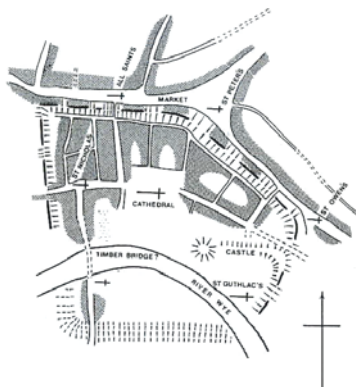
the west and north sides but the putative eastern side returning down the eastern side of the Cathedral Close remains unproven.

The extended defences of c.900AD: the *burh*



(*Shoesmith's stage 2 defences*). The town was refortified with a turf, clay and timber rampart extended well to the east to include the St Guthlac's (Castle Green) site. Dating evidence is ambiguous but the episode probably belongs in the years between 881 and 918. The defences were strengthened by a stone wall built in front of the rampart later in the 10th century (*Shoesmith's stage 3 defences*)

Neglect, emergency and refurbishment in the 11th century

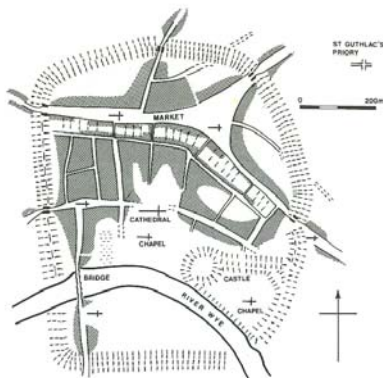


(*Shoesmith's stage 4 defences*). There is evidence from both the west and east sides of the city for a period of disuse and neglect of the defences before a refurbishment episode involving the re-excavation of the ditch to the west and provision of a timber fence or palisade on the east. These may be associated with the documented re-fortification of Hereford by Harold Godwinson in 1055 following the sacking of the city by Welsh forces that year. Recent C14 dates from the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch south of the river suggest that may date to the same episode. Possibly the Bartonsham Row Ditch to the east did too.

The Norman Conquest: castle and new market place

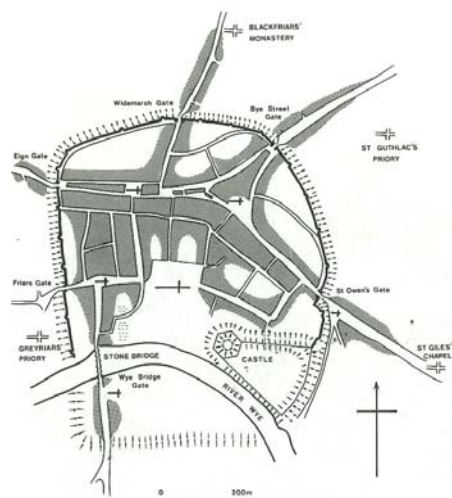
Immediately following the Norman Conquest the castle was established (by 1067) in the south-east corner of the defended enclosure and subsumed the site of the minster of St Guthlac's. A decade later a new market place was established on existing roads to the north of the old defended perimeter, irrevocably shifting the settlement's commercial core.

The new medieval defences post-1189



New defences were built to enclose the newly developed High Town area, re-using the western and eastern sides of the old perimeter but establishing a new line further north. At first the new circuit consisted of a ditch and gravel rampart, with four gates built in timber in 1190.

The 13th-century city wall



The earth and timber defences were gradually strengthened by the addition of a stone wall to the front of the ramparts. This process probably began with the

first grant of murage in 1224; a royal mandate of 1251 urged the mayor and bailiffs to complete the work but the bailiffs' accounts suggest that construction work on one bastion was taking place in the 1290s and another as late as 1319. The photograph (right) shows a sample of the suspected primary phase city wall masonry.

Demilitarisation and privatisation in the 15th-17th centuries

With the pacification of Wales in the 1290s much of the military rationale for the city defences disappeared. Encroachments on the ditch and its watercourse were a recurrent feature of the period. New methods were sought to raise revenue for the maintenance of the wall from guilds, and increasingly from holders of adjoining property.

The English Civil War and the siege of 1645

Although the walls were in a generally intact and sound state, by 1643 it was found that the gates could not be closed or blocked, the ditch required scouring, houses had in places encroached upon the defences and no additional works had been added. In 1644 'bulwarks' were added around the city. It was besieged twice in 1645, first by the clubmen and then by the Scottish Parliamentary army and successfully resisted both.

Quarries and public nuisances, 17th-19th centuries

After the Restoration, the pre-war trajectory continued with gates, bastions and stretches of land along the defences leased out; bastions were commonly rented out as craftsmen's workshops. Ward juries continued to complain about the poor state of repair of the gates. From the 1690s the walls were increasingly regarded as a source of building materials although unauthorised depredations were still punished. In 1774 the Hereford Improvement Commissioners were established by Act of Parliament: under their auspices the Friars' Gate was removed in 1782, the Wyebridge Gate in 1783, St Owen's in 1786, Eign Gate in 1787, Bye Street Gate in 1798 and Widemarsh Gate in 1799. The 1854 Hereford Improvement Act resulted in the culverting of the city ditch watercourse, grossly polluted by sewage from the housing that had developed along the outside of the wall. The increasing density of development along the wall throughout the 19th century led to the loss or concealment of wall fabric and the demolition of most of the bastions.

The advent of conservation, mid-20th century

The continuing development pressure on the city wall coincided with the rise of local historical/archaeological consciousness and an increasing regard for the city wall as an ancient monument. Other than in the writing and photography of Alfred Watkins and his contemporaries this found tangible expression in the 1940s with the Woolhope Society's response to plans for the inner relief road, described in the introduction above, and ultimately in the conservation, repairs and archaeological investigations accompanying the road building programme in the 1960s.

Gaps in knowledge

Many aspects of the development of Hereford's defences remain obscure despite a longer track record of archaeological investigation than many comparable towns can offer. A distinction can be drawn between gaps in knowledge that directly affect the standing monuments that form the main thrust of this conservation plan (the city walls, the Saxon defences incorporated by the city wall circuit, and the two Row Ditches) and the city defences in their totality, including the castle and the Saxon defences that became redundant in the 12th century and now underlie the city centre. The more general research questions are dealt with first, those pertaining to the monuments contained in this plan, second.

The city defences in general (including SAMs HE 124, 47, 152)

- The date and course of the earliest defended perimeter. The gravel rampart found on the west and north sides of the pre-Conquest perimeter is conventionally dated to mid-9th century (e.g. Thomas and Boucher 2002, 8) though its chronology, in an aceramic period and sandwiched between widely-separated C14 dates is extremely imprecise, as a recent research paper has shown (Bassett 2008, 191). The eastern side of the first enclosure has been thought since the 1960s to run down the eastern side of the cathedral close (the earliest defences were absent from the Cantilupe Street site to the east) but this has never been demonstrated by excavation.
- Precise dating of the later Saxon defences. 'In many respects the sections excavated across the pre-Conquest defences of Hereford are the most satisfactory ones undertaken in the west midlands, but they have left some key questions unanswered' (Bassett 2008, 182). Steve Bassett's 2008 paper usefully rehearses the difficulties inherent in reconciling the excavated archaeological sequence (Shoesmith's stages 2, 3, and 4) with the limited historical record for the fortification of Hereford – essentially references to Harold Godwinson's refortification in 1055, inferences drawn from Aethelred and Aethelflaed's activities elsewhere, and the brief reference to forces from Hereford deployed in 914. Better dating of the defences may well be possible, particularly on the redundant northern perimeter (the West Street-East Street line) where conditions are suitable for organic preservation. Walter Pilley, writing in 1899, referred to 'oak slabs' at the bottom of ditch 'which probably formed part of the old defence or palisading' (UAD event 44380). The reality of Harold Godwinson's documented refortification of 1055 has been much discussed and still remains uncertainly correlated with the archaeological sequences excavated at, for example, Cantilupe Street. Recent C14 dates from the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch appear to associate that monument with this historical episode but its implications for other defensive features in Hereford remain unclear.

- The castle. Although outside the scope of this conservation plan, the form, development, and particularly the antecedents of Hereford Castle are major unknowns in the history of the defence of Hereford. David Whitehead has recently (2007, 15, 25-8) rejected the notion of a pre-Conquest castle on the site while stressing the probability of a royal hall in the area. The presence of an early burial ground has been demonstrated by excavation in the south-east corner of the bailey (Castle Green) together with pre-Conquest buildings thought to be part of the early minster of St Guthlac. But pre-Conquest minsters were usually defined by a surrounding enclosure. Does a pre-Conquest *vallum monasterii* form the primary phase of the perimeter sequence of the castle? Coming forward to the decline and end of the castle, two early manuscript plans show the castle curtain walls and towers. Were these structures levelled to their footings in the early 18th century, or do substantial, standing, masonry walls and towers survive and await discovery within the elevated walks around Castle Green?
- The river frontage. A very pertinent question was asked in the 2002 *Hereford City Excavations* volume: was the river frontage always undefended (given how shallow stretches of the Wye are) or did the pre-Conquest defences return along the riverbank (Thomas and Boucher 2002, 184-5), possibly along the terraces either side of Bridge Street?

The standing monuments in particular (SAMs HE 124 and 47)

- The date and the function of the Bartonsham Row Ditch are equally obscure at present. As a linear earthwork it could be of almost any date, though the traditional view of its origin as a siege work by the Scottish army in 1645 seems the least plausible of all, given its length, size and durability. Its role in delineating the potential settled area, or town fields, east of the city is striking, but its substantial construction and linking of the end of the Eign Brook (in a deep gully) to the Wye, enhancing the natural rise in levels, suggests that it was conceived as a defensible, military obstacle. Possibly it was part of the Godwinson refortification of the mid-11th century, but this remains speculation. The investigation of earthwork components of town defences, and the whole subject of urban defences in the Norman period (pre-late 12th century) have been identified as research priorities for many years (Jones and Bond 1987, 112) and highlight the significance of the two Row Ditches, otherwise rather underestimated, in the city's defence.
- The refurbishment of the recently extended defences with a new stone wall in the course of the 13th century is generally accepted, but there are elements of its organisation and chronology that are not yet clear. The city wall fabric shows a uniform masonry construction style being applied to the circuit from at least the south-west corner to the middle of the north side (Blue School Street). From the masonry present at the Barrels pub near St Owen's Gate it seems that this 'primary' masonry

type was not absolutely ubiquitous – but how comprehensive was it, and what are the implications in terms of the time-span of the construction work and the infrastructure needed to provide it, particularly quarrying? Any opportunity to examine primary, un-rebuilt fabric on the circuit east of the Bye Street Gate (i.e. sections 12-16) should be seized.

- Many excavations around the northern perimeter in particular have illustrated the richness of archaeological deposits immediately behind the late 12th century ramparts, particularly for evidence of industrial activities, though in one instance in terms of timber structures associated with the use of the defences (UAD 44354). This does not seem to be a depositional effect, reliant on better preservation conditions in proximity to the earth rampart, rather it seems to reflect a zoning of activities in the medieval settlement, and appears to be replicated in the pre-Conquest town with industrial activity well represented immediately to the rear of the redundant Saxon northern defences. This phenomenon was a recurrent theme in Shoesmith's *Excavations on and close to the defences* volume (1982). In short it appears that the defences represent a corridor of well-preserved archaeology with wider implications than the defences themselves. This deserves further exploration. Recent excavations on Gaol Street also possibly suggest that other marginal activities (social as well as spatial) were pursued in this zone (see section 12). There is also a possibility of contacting pre-12th-century settlement evidence sealed by rampart material where the new defences cut through the existing built-up area, for example either side of Widemarsh Street.
- Although botanical and other environmental data has been retrieved from ditch deposits on the Saxon northern defences (e.g. UAD 44373, East Street) the presence around the circuit of up to five phases of rampart offers the opportunity for sampling a number of buried soils of various dates between the (perhaps) 9th and 12th centuries (identified as a research priority by Creighton and Higham 2005, 279).
- An aspect of the western defences that is not clear is the history of the treatment of the rear of the ramparts. This arises from the character of the masonry retaining wall on one property (to which access was not possible in the preparation of this plan), which has early characteristics: small masonry blocks of squarish proportions, strengthened with clasping buttresses. It is not at present known whether this treatment was unique to that plot (and was the result of action by an individual plot holder) or whether it was applied more widely along the western defences where the rampart has been cut back and retained.
- None of the city gates have been seen since their demolition at the end of the 18th century (with the marginal exception of the bridge over the city ditch outside St Owen's Gate, seen in service trenching). While it is unlikely that remains of their late 12th-century timber phase will have survived rebuilding in stone in the 13th century, all of the gate sites

have the potential to yield useful data about the form of the gates (known only from a handful of illustrations), including, for example, the balance of military and civic design imperatives, and their development in the medieval and early Modern periods.

- Although the events of the Civil War are extremely well documented, the adaptation of the defences to meet new military demands, particularly in the siege of 1645, has never been fully assessed. Archaeological investigations have not always successfully distinguished ordinary post-medieval repairs from Civil War improvements and the most likely candidate for a siege battery earthwork (adjoining the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch) has not been investigated.

The significance of Hereford's city defences

Hereford's medieval and pre-Conquest defences are self-evidently of historical and communal importance to Hereford itself: they are a tangible reminder of the city's origins in a remote and turbulent period that also saw the construction of Offa's Dyke as an almost unprecedented work of statecraft; they are a tangible reminder of the city's continuing role as a royal border fortress and as a self-governing political centre through the later Middle Ages; they are a tangible reminder of the events of the English Civil War and, in particular, the eye-witnessed events of the siege of 1645. These points will be developed further below. But the significance of Hereford's defences is also much wider, and this can be expressed both nationally and regionally, both in aesthetic terms as a standing monument (specifically the city walls) and in evidential terms as a source of archaeological information.

The wider comparative picture: English urban defences

Hereford is one of 48 English towns with standing remains of medieval urban defences (Creighton and Higham 2005, gazetteer). It is by no means one of the best preserved, even if re-used Roman walls (as at York, Chester, Chichester or Exeter) are excluded from the equation, though neither is it one of the worst, with roughly a half of its medieval perimeter still expressed by walls or earthworks. Against this, two bastions or mural towers survive out of 17, and none of the five gates survive. At a national level, expressed solely in terms of its preservation as a standing monument, the city defences of Hereford can therefore be assessed as being of moderate significance.

Heritage value: the temporal dimension

The principal, national, significance of Hereford's defences undoubtedly lies in their archaeological, evidential, dimension, specifically their incorporation of the standing ramparts of the pre-Conquest town and the time-depth that these give to the monument, extending the story of their development – and the length of time that they have stood in one form or another – back at least 1100 years, probably to the 9th century, if not before.

The regional context

The standing monument

Hereford is of course a shire town and as such invites comparison with the capital towns and cities of neighbouring counties. The most obvious point to be made is that the medieval defences of Hereford are the best preserved in the West Midlands region.

The comparative plans figure shows Hereford and its neighbours, Worcester and Shrewsbury, to the same scale. It will be immediately apparent that a

greater proportion of Hereford's circuit of walls survives than at either of its neighbours. At Worcester, roughly 30% of the medieval defended perimeter survives as a standing monument. However, much of the surviving masonry is concentrated in the riverside frontage of the Cathedral Close (accounting for roughly 10% of the total circuit) and part of the remaining circuit of civil, rather than ecclesiastical, origin is hidden behind private premises on the Butts (north side). The easily-visible city wall is therefore limited to the east side, along City Walls Road, and this accounts for around 15% - 20% of the whole. At Shrewsbury, this figure rises slightly to around 20% of the 'civil circuit' and more (c.25 - 30%) if the royal castle and its outer perimeter are included, Shrewsbury possessing by far the most complete urban castle in the region. By contrast, at Hereford, of a walled medieval perimeter of 1660 metres some 745 metres survives standing, in either original or modified form, representing some 44.9% of the total and this percentage rises further if the surviving earthworks of the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch are taken into account.

Heritage value and visibility

Bare statistics and percentage survival statistics do not however fully do justice to the relative *perceptual* (aesthetic) significance of the defences at Hereford. A major distinction between Hereford and Shrewsbury is that at the latter a large proportion of the defensive circuit is hidden within private property – a function of its early medieval development wherein the defences were cut through existing burgages around almost the whole perimeter, rather than just at specific points of arterial growth. At Hereford the city walls were mostly cut across open ground and for centuries provided a boundary to most urban development. In geographical terms, the Hereford walls provided a classic fixation line that determined that development inside and out would be divergent in character; ultimately they provided the line for the Inner Relief Road of the late 1960s, which has largely assumed their historical role. In short, the walls of Hereford are highly visible, those at Shrewsbury are less so. The consequence in perceptual terms is of the utmost importance. At Shrewsbury the ancient town centre is defined by the river loop. At Worcester, the ancient city centre is largely defined by its concentration of churches and only to a very limited extent, on the east side, by the presence of the walls. At Hereford the ancient city centre is defined – or should be – by the city walls, which are visible from most entry points to the city.

In terms of surviving features and details, the region's towns are more evenly matched. Major town gates no longer survive above ground at any of the shire capitals discussed so far, having universally been swept away by a wave of urban improvement around the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The only exceptions are found locally in the smaller market towns of Ludlow, Bridgnorth and Monmouth and further afield at Warwick and Coventry, in both of which the vast majority of the remainder of the circuits have disappeared above ground. The remains of major gates can also be seen below ground in a cellar in Worcester (Sidbury Gate) and displayed following excavation in Gloucester (Eastgate); water gates survive standing at Shrewsbury and at Worcester. Mural towers or bastions are more equally distributed: Hereford has two

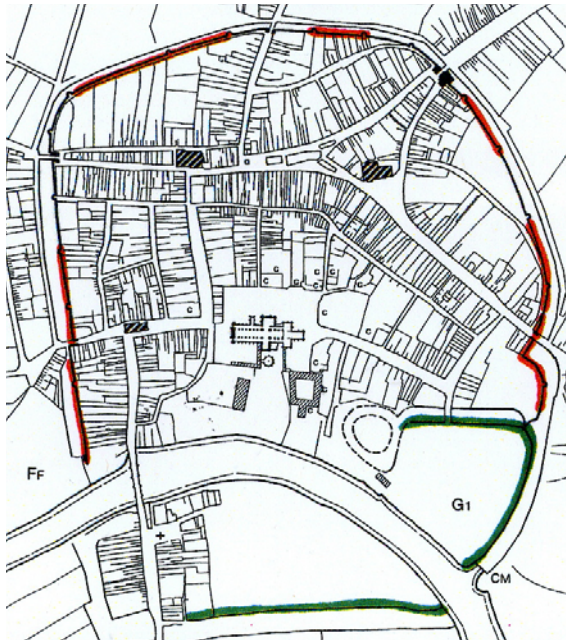
(standing ruins), Worcester one (displayed footings) and Shrewsbury one (still occupied).

Hereford again achieves considerable regional significance in terms of the survival of earthwork features: the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch and the Bartonsham Row Ditch. The former has recently been re-dated and now appears most likely to date from the documented refortification of the city by Harold Godwinson after 1055; the latter remains completely enigmatic but is most plausibly interpreted as a demarcation and outer defensive line of the city and its immediate surroundings at some point in the early medieval period (see part 2, sections 17 and 18), possibly also 1055. Nowhere else in the region do major freestanding earthwork components of defensive circuits survive in this way, except much lower down the urban hierarchy (e.g. Winchcombe, Kilpeck or over the border at New Radnor or Montgomery).

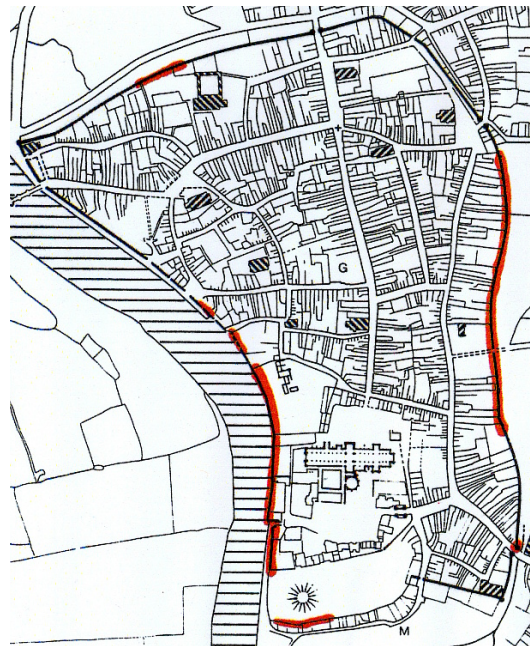
Further detailed comparison of Hereford with the neighbouring shire towns is difficult because of the lack of information on Shrewsbury's town walls. No fabric recording or general field-based study of them has ever taken place and there is simply no information on the form, development or current condition of a substantial proportion of the monument. Arguably, the need for a conservation plan for Shrewsbury's medieval defences is as great as that of Hereford's.

The archaeological monument

Many of the points expressed above concerning the significance of Hereford's defences in the national context can be repeated with equal or greater force in the regional context. The discovery and archaeological investigation of Hereford's pre-Conquest defences continues to overshadow similar work in every other town in the region. Early work in Tamworth (11 sites, excavated 1960-1978) has not been followed up by more recent investigation and, although producing a body of evidence of considerable importance, is not without its difficulties of interpretation (Bassett 2008). In Worcester the pre-Conquest defences have been explored on two sites (Deansway site 4 and the City Arcade) in the late 1980s and 1990s. These excavations were of fundamental importance in settling long-standing questions about the city's physical evolution and in giving physical shape to the famous 'foundation charter' of the Worcester burh of 889-899, though each intervention was in reality very limited in its contact with the defences (Baker and Holt 2004). In Shrewsbury, the line of the pre-Conquest defences is strongly suspected, but has never been proved by excavation (Baker 2010). Only in Hereford have the pioneering large-scale excavations of the late 60s and 70s been followed at regular intervals by further interventions, particularly along the (unscheduled) West Street-East Street northern perimeter. This body of evidence was last reviewed in 2002 (by Thomas and Boucher) but continued development pressure ensures that investigations continue to this day.

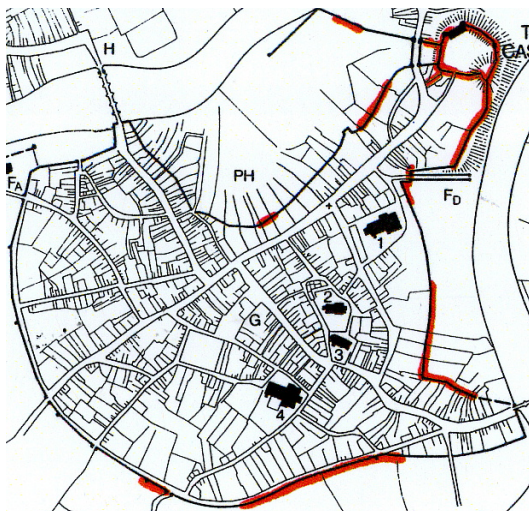


HEREFORD



WORCESTER

SHREWSBURY



Comparative plans of
West Midland shire towns
and their defences:

Red: standing masonry
Green: surviving earthworks

Conservation policies and issues: the *Status Quo*

The local planning policy context

The following Unitary Development Plan (1997) policies affect the monuments that comprise the city defences:

- **ARCH 3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments.** Development proposals and works which may adversely affect the integrity, character or setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments will not be permitted.
- **ARCH 4 Other sites of national or regional importance.** Planning permission for development which would destroy or seriously damage unscheduled, nationally important remains or sites of regional importance, or their character or setting, will not be permitted.
- **ARCH 7 Hereford AAI.** Within the Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance, development which is likely to affect archaeological remains or their setting will only be permitted where either full preservation in situ can be achieved, or time and resources will be made available for an appropriate level of archaeological investigation, conservation and post excavation work to be carried out.
- **ARCH 8 Enhancement and improved access to archaeological sites.** Proposals affecting sites of archaeological interest will be required to show how the interest will be protected and where feasible, can be enhanced. Favourable consideration will be given to development schemes which emphasise the original form and function of the sites and where appropriate improve public access to them. Such measures will be secured by use of conditions, planning agreements and management plans.

Local designations

All of the city defences with the exception of the Bartonsham Row Ditch fall within the Hereford *Area of Archaeological Importance* (one of only five such in England) and for much of the circuit the defences, including the line of the extramural ditch, were used to define its boundaries.

Most of the city defences monuments fall within the Hereford Central Conservation Area. The exception is the Bartonsham Row Ditch, only the western end of which (in the vicinity of Bartonsham Farm) falls within the Central Conservation Area. While the remains of the city wall are not listed as such, a number of Listed Buildings contain parts of the city wall. These are noted individually in Part 2 of this plan under the sections in which they occur

The national planning policy context

As a major heritage asset, the city defences fall within the scope of the new Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* (Dept for Communities and Local Government 2010) which articulates the government's objectives for planning for the historic environment. These objectives include the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance by ensuring that, amongst other imperatives, 'the positive contribution of...heritage assets to local character and sense of place is recognised and valued'.

Designations

Most of the city defences monuments are Scheduled as Ancient Monuments:

- The main city wall circuit: SAM HE 124
- The Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch: SAM HE 47
- The Bartonsham Row Ditch: SAM HE 47
- Hereford Castle: SAM HE 152

The current scheduling boundaries are reviewed in detail in the gazetteer (part 2 of this conservation plan). In general, it concludes that – for many sections of HE 124 – the scheduling is complex, confusing, anachronistic and not wholly adequate. This appears to have arisen mainly as a consequence of the scheduling pre-dating the opening-up of the city defences in the road-building campaign of the 1960s: SAM boundaries are in many areas discontinuous and appear to respect the footprints of buildings that are no longer there. The scheduling of both the Row Ditches under a single designation is not ideal and coverage of each of these monuments is discontinuous and restricted to the standing earthworks, excluding their external ditches. A review of the SAMs is recommended.

Conservation issues

Ownership (general)

The medieval defences are in multiple ownership:

- Substantial sections are in public ownership, standing wholly within Council-owned land (for example, the Bath Street/Gaol Street car-parks, the Row Ditch crossing Bishop's Meadow)

- Substantial sections form a boundary between Council-owned land and multiple ownerships on the other side (along Victoria Street from below the Greyfriars Surgery to the Berrington Street car park)
- Some sections are in completely private multiple-ownership, generally forming a party wall between different private owners (for example between properties on Mill Street and Cantilupe Street and between neighbouring premises on St Owen Street)

Ownership is examined in more detail in part 2 of this plan (the gazetteer) though in general no attempt has been made at this stage to document multiple private owners.

Repair and maintenance

Repairs and maintenance on publicly-owned sections of the city wall are at present specified by Herefordshire Council's Property Services Department and undertaken by Amey plc as contractors on behalf of the Council. This is at present done on an *ad hoc* basis, generally in response to notifications of problems with undergrowth or unsafe masonry from other Council departments, members of the public or amenity bodies. Repairs and maintenance of the wall on private property are the responsibility of the property owner concerned. Problems arise where the city wall forms a party boundary between public and private land. In this instance (mostly on the western defences) the Council has traditionally accepted responsibility for the outer face with individual owners taking care of the inner face.

Access and promotion

Public access to the defences

The questions of current and potential public access are considered in detail, section by section, in Part 2 of this plan. In summary, physical public access to the city defences monuments is at present possible around a majority of the circuit, and along the outlying earthworks. It is however almost entirely limited to the outer face of the city wall, the monuments are neither signposted nor interpreted, and their setting is frequently discouraging, or even dangerous.

The most accessible sections are as follows:

- The outer face of the western city wall, via car-parks in the Greyfriars Surgery area (sections 1 and 2), the grass verge along the Victoria Street dual carriageway (section 3), and the footpath along the inside of the wall at Gunners Lane (section 5)
- The outer face of the north-western city wall, via the pavement and grass verge on the south side of New Market Street (section 8)

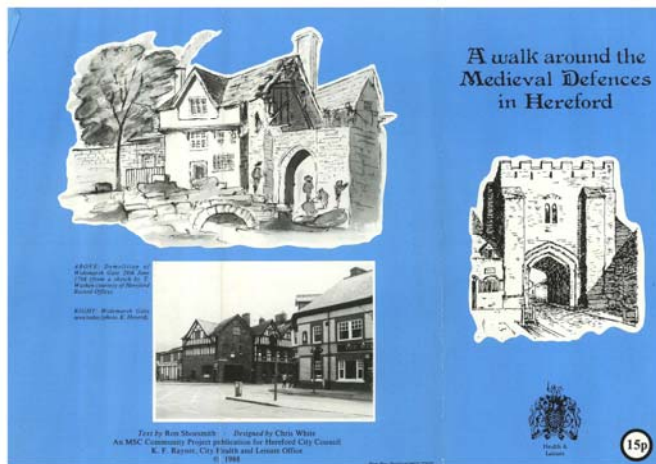
- The outer face of the north-eastern city wall along the south side of Bath Street, from Bastion Mews to the car-parks east of the Police Station via public open spaces and car-parks (section 12)
- The line of the city wall and its successor structure at the back of the Bath Street/Gaol Street car-park (section 14)
- The outer face of the city wall in the back yard of the Barrels pub on St Owen Street (section 15)
- The city wall and the excavated Saxon defences at the displayed Cantilupe Street excavation site (section 16)
- The Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch is accessible along its surviving length in the public park east of St Martin's Street
- The outside face of the Bartonsham Row Ditch is accessible for most of its length via a casual footpath along the edge of the meadow to its south

Public access is currently *not* possible to the inside face of the wall at parapet level anywhere along the western defences, or to the interior of either of the surviving bastions. Much of the standing city wall south of St Owen Street (section 16) is not accessible as it runs through and forms the boundary between private gardens. The city wall section to the rear of the Maylord Orchards shopping centre (section 10) is inaccessible because of its setting on a narrow grass verge with heavy traffic on both sides.

The provision of information and interpretation

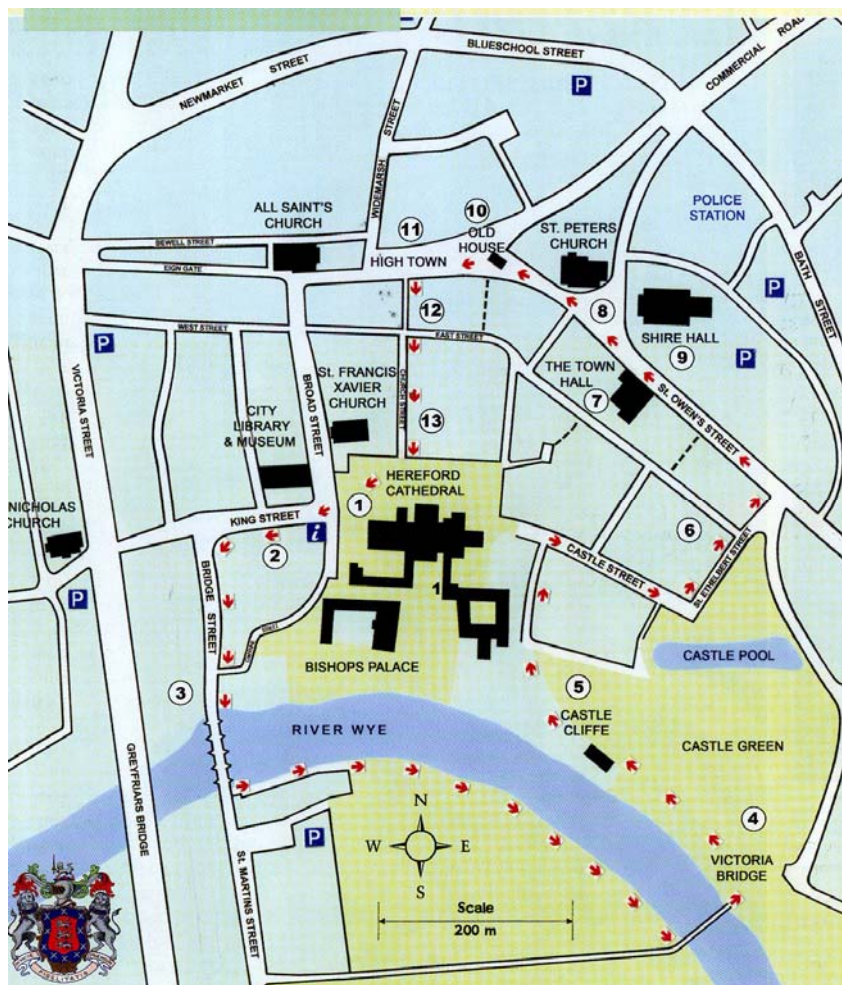
With the exception of a display panel mounted in the Cantilupe Street excavation site, and some blue plaques commemorating the site of city gates, there is no on-site interpretation anywhere around the defences.

The last known leaflet describing the remains of the defences and offering a guided route around them was published in 1988 and is long out of print.



A visitor guide to the history and remains of the city defences, 1988 (Hereford City Council/Ron Shoesmith)

Two Heritage Walk leaflets are currently available from the Tourist Information Centre, both produced by the Hereford Guild of Guides, but neither walk includes the city defences (other than Castle Green and the Bishop's Meadow Row Ditch) in its itinerary and the city centre visitors' guide omits the city walls entirely from its map (see below). TIC staff report that they regularly have visitors asking for information about the city walls but are presently unable to meet this demand.



City-centre plan from the current *Hereford visitors' guide*.
The city walls are notable by their absence

Further information is available on the Internet but this is a mixture of academic material (archaeological contractors' reports, heritage websites) and items appearing in local government minutes and press briefings.

Policy Proposals

The following proposals are intended to form a strategy for the long-term maintenance, protection, enhancement, display and promotion of Hereford's medieval defences while simultaneously safeguarding and highlighting their historical significance. Detailed proposals under these headings are contained section by section in the gazetteer, part 2 of this plan. The following eight areas identify an agenda for action. These are then followed by an action-plan that identifies programming priorities.

1. Strategic Planning

1.1 There should be a long-term presumption against further penetration of the city wall line by public thoroughfares: to safeguard the viability and sustainability of the present historic street pattern with its associated footfall, and the character of Hereford as a walled cathedral city.

1.2 Consideration should be given in future development briefs and master planning to re-inscribing (by the planning of new buildings or by floorscaping), or physically re-creating the city wall in some form to repair major gaps in the circuit and so restore the character of Hereford as a walled cathedral city, distinct from its suburbs. This applies particularly in the Bath Street/Gaol Street area (sections 13 and 14).

1.3 With the imminent regeneration of the ESG leading effectively to a northward extension of the city, there is an imperative for carefully designed connectivity between the old and the new quarters. This inevitably implies detailed scrutiny of that sector of the city wall, particularly in terms of (i) past and existing routes through it (ii) the character and date of its fabric and (iii) its immediate setting. It is recommended that a further, more detailed analysis take place specifically of the city wall sector (sections 7-11) affected by the ESG regeneration process to look at precisely these issues.

2. A repair and maintenance strategy

2.1 Understanding and significance. This plan should be adopted as the basis for a comprehensive programme of remedial work and maintenance. All works should be informed by a clear understanding of the monument, and must, therefore, be preceded by an appropriate level of survey, recording and analysis of the historic fabric to be affected. The recording should be carried out to a uniform standard and all records permanently archived.

2.2 A regular, effective and properly resourced cycle of maintenance and inspection should be set up for all parts of the city defences in Council ownership. All work should be carried out to the highest conservation standards.

2.3 In areas where the city wall forms a party-wall between Council-owned land outside and privately-owned land inside (as on Victoria Street) a management agreement should be drawn up which would cede management of historic fabric to the Council with modern elements (mostly brickwork on top) remaining the responsibility of the owner. Where this cannot be agreed the Council should take the initiative and assume responsibility for remedial works that are essential to safeguard the integrity of the monument.

Implementation

2.4 The Council should manage the sections of wall in their ownership as exemplars of good practice.

2.5 A targeted schedule of works should be set out as soon as possible to prioritise the most urgently needed repairs on Council owned and privately-owned sections. Less urgent works should be scheduled to take place within an agreed initial period before the maintenance and inspection cycle (2.2 above) commences.

2.6 The possibility should be investigated of agreeing a generic, time-limited Scheduled Monument Consent with English Heritage (as on Hadrian's Wall) to allow for the regular removal of ivy and undergrowth and associated minor consolidation works.

2.7 Guidelines should be prepared (available via the Council's website or in leaflet form) for private owners of city defences monuments briefly setting out current understanding of the monument, and giving advice on repairs methods and appropriate specialist contractors.

3. A designation review

3.1 No change is recommended in this context to either the Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance or to the Central Conservation Area boundaries.

3.2 A review of the extent of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments covering the city defences is *urgently* required, with an imperative to extend but simplify/rationalise the relevant SAMs.

4. Enhancement

4.1 A scheme should be devised, costed and implemented for providing floodlighting along the best-preserved and most visible sections of the city wall, specifically:

- Along Victoria Street (sections 1, 3 and 5)

- On the Edgar Street roundabout (section 7)
- Along New Market Street (section 8)
- On Blue School Street (section 10)
- On Bath Street at Bastion Mews (section 12)

4.2 Either in the medium-term, or in the short-term as part of the re-design of the inner relief road, the electricity sub-stations built against the outer face of city wall on the Victoria Street/St Nicholas Street corner, and on Bath Street between Bastion Mews and the Police Station, should be removed.

4.3 Advice and encouragement should be given to owners of commercial properties (particularly A3 uses) containing sections of the city wall to conserve, enhance, display and promote these.

5. Access

5.1 The currently extremely poor provision of public access to the city defences should be addressed in two stages.

5.2 Stage 1: A limited but high public profile project to archaeologically record and restore the ruined bastion 4 at the south end of the Berrington Street car park with a view to providing some interpretation and, if feasible, providing public access to its interior.

5.3 Stage 2: In the longer term, a study to investigate the feasibility of providing public access, including disabled access, to identified sections of the surviving rampart-top wall-walk and the interior of the surviving bastions should be implemented for the following locations:

- Bastion 2, adjacent to the Greyfriars Surgery
- The wall-walk within the Berrington Street Job Centre grounds

5.4 In any redesign of the inner relief road, pedestrian access should be provided along the surviving section of wall behind the Maylord Orchards shopping centre.

6. Promotion

6.1 General: external promotion of Hereford as a visitor destination and as one of England's leading tourist-historic cities should take full account of the substantial and visible surviving remains of the city defences.

6.2 A scheme should be devised, costed and implemented to provide on-site interpretation panels at key locations around the defences (see Part 2 of this plan) but with an emphasis on the former gates at points of entry into the city centre, and on the specific locations described in 3.1 (above). An easily identifiable over-arching design scheme should be devised to 'brand' the city defences, unless such interpretation is devised as part of a much broader scheme covering the city centre as a whole (also needed) and thus subsumed within a wider 'Historic Hereford' brand.

6.3 A scheme should be devised, costed and implemented for providing a city walls walk, around the course of the former defences, to include Castle Green and the south bank (Bishop's Meadow) Row Ditch. For missing/heavily-compromised sections between landmarks a virtue can be made of necessity by allowing users to spot the clues and draw their own conclusions.

6.4 Appropriate signage should be introduced to guide residents and visitors out from the centre to the defences and, for the proposed walls walk, around the defences. Specific signage should be included to guide people to the displayed Cantilupe Street excavation site with its unique exposed Saxon city wall.

6.5 A low-cost or free leaflet for visitors should be designed and produced to guide them to and around the city defences.

6.6 Any future redesign of museum gallery space devoted to archaeology and the city of Hereford should make full provision for material on and from, and be linked to, the city defences.

7. Addressing the gaps in knowledge

The gaps in knowledge listed earlier in this plan should be included in the proposed *research framework* for the city as numbered research policies and included as appropriate in schemes of research/conservation-led investigations and briefs to archaeological contractors. The scope of such research-led/information provision work should include:

- Seminars and guidance for archaeological contractors and planning (development-control) staff concerning the gaps in knowledge and how they might be addressed
- A programme of heritage-led regeneration of areas adjacent to the wall with clear action points linked to specific sections of the wall
- A limited, carefully-targeted and duration-defined programme of proactive archaeological recording and investigations aimed at resolving particular interpretative questions

8. Addressing the missing component of the defences

8.1 The historical significance of the city wall and its attendant features can never be fully realised while the physical remains of Hereford Castle are undervalued and uninterpreted.

8.2 A separate conservation management plan should be designed, commissioned and funded for Castle Green. One of the outcomes of such a plan should be an enhancement and interpretation scheme designed to be consistent with the treatment of the city defences.

CONCLUSION and ACTION-PLAN

A recent characterisation study of its historic townscape concluded that Hereford is – measurably and objectively – one of the best-preserved major historic cities anywhere in England, with only one minor street added within the walls since the Middle Ages (*Herefordshire Archaeology report 266*, 2010).

The city walls are an integral part of that historic townscape and any enhancement of them will add materially to the historic character of the city as a whole.

A number of simple measures are outlined in this plan to do just that, without the necessity for any capital-intensive programmes of works. Properly maintained, made more accessible, displayed and interpreted within an improved setting and properly promoted, the city walls can play a leading role in a broader campaign of heritage-led regeneration.

Immediate priorities for the period 2011-2014:

These are essentially either urgent actions to address specific issues, or are actions that should serve to focus activity in subsequent years.

- Resolve issues concerning the interface between the ESG and the city walls (policy proposal 1.3, above)
- Undertake urgent remedial work (1) on vegetation re-growth since 2009 and (2), on failed structural elements and unstable masonry in the Greyfriars Surgery/Black Lion area, following appropriate archaeological recording and agreement with private owners and English Heritage (see 2.4 and 2.5, above)
- Develop and carry out a project to better record and understand, and restore one or both surviving bastions and improve public access and information (see 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, above)
- Develop a signage and interpretation strategy, linked to other city-centre initiatives, for example streetscape re-design and enhancement
- Develop a floodlighting and display strategy to improve the setting of the walls and their display
- Establish a permanent maintenance programme
- Undertake a review of the spatial scope of current statutory designation provision and in particular the extent of scheduling

Developmental priorities for the period 2012-2026:

These are actions that should serve to implement the strategic policies in the LDF:

- Planning and strategic development: better 'inscription' (visibility) of the wall in all localities
- Tourism and economic development
- Case-led or area-led development, especially Berrington Street and Bath Street (see Gazetteer, wall sections 3-4 and 12-14)
- Research and documentation

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