

THE LIGHT FANTASTIC: USING AIRBORNE LIDAR, IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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ABSTRACT:

English Heritage is the national body responsible for all aspects of the historic environment, including historic buildings, monuments and areas, and archaeological remains. The Aerial Survey & Investigation team, within the Research Department, deals with the recording and interpretation of sites and landscapes visible on aerial imagery. In England aerial photography has been systematically used for archaeological survey for over 40 years, but in the last decade the potential of using lidar has become apparent. As greater interest has developed in lidar, and its use has become more widespread, the need became apparent for guidance to help those intending to use the lidar for archaeological survey. Lidar data can be immensely useful and has unrivalled capabilities for mapping in certain environments, particularly some types of woodland. There are, however, still lots of uncertainties within the broader archaeological community about just what it can and cannot do. There are also many aspects of the data collection that need to be clearly understood and correctly specified if the data obtained is to be as useful as possible. To this end English Heritage has produced a set of guidelines to help those intending to use lidar for archaeological survey. These cover the major aspects of data collection (i.e. issues of resolution and data formats), as well as issues related to using the data in day-to-day survey ranging from producing viable hard copy printouts for use in the field, to mapping with fully interactive raster surfaces in CAD and GIS.

TOPIC: Lidar and laser scanning

ALTERNATIVE TOPIC: Not Specified