Year 13 NEA

To what extent is Mermaid Quay a Fortress Landscape?

Map

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Figure - Map of Mermaid Quay https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Mermaid+Quay,+Cardiff/@51.4635816,-3.1680653,534m/data=!3m2!1e3!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x486e0337c76d4031:0xf94e95c4c6431b7a!8m2!3d51.4635816!4d-3.1658766 (Accessed: 1st November 2022 10:11)

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# Introduction

## Hypothesis

I have three hypotheses that will answer my main question. They are:

1. Crime in Mermaid Quay occurs prevalently.
2. Evidence of major fortification of Mermaid Quay is present.
3. Distribution of fortification is widely spread and even throughout Mermaid Quay.

## Specification Link

My title links to multiple sections of the course. 3.2.1.1 is Globalisation and in a world ever expanding and growing, in terms of both population and security, fortress landscapes are both changing and growing ever more prevalent. Section 3.2.3.2 is Urban Forms, and different ways of fortifying links to this section. In Section 3.2.2.1 which is the nature and importance of place allows me to look at why somewhere like Mermaid Quay would be fortified.

Finally, the skills I will use to collect data links to Section 3.2.2.3, where I will use both numerical and worded sources of data to answer my sub-questions.

## Theory and Research

Throughout this document links will be made to the subject specification, which is AQA A-Level geography. The work I am doing will come from a certain section of the course I am studying and will typically link to more than once section. My investigation title is “To what extend is Mermaid Quay a fortress landscape?” This ties into primarily section 3.2.1.1 Globalisation and 3.2.3.2 Urban forms. Here we can investigate how Mermaid Quay is developed as a Fortress Landscape while serving its purpose as a shopping centre in the Cardiff Bay area.

Fortress Landscapes are deliberately landscaped and designed around security, protection, surveillance, and exclusion. [[1]](#footnote-1) More prevalent in medieval era constructions you can visually see the defences in place, such as walls and moats, along with typical construction taking place at strategic high points with good visibility. Theses methods are done with the intend to provide the most security and safety to the inhabitants of the facility.

In the modern era it is less prevalent to see such blatant techniques, however, this isn’t to say methods aren’t still used that line up with the continued existence of fortress landscapes. Features such as CCTV (Closed Circuit Television), security alarms, gated communities, and speed bumps are all day-to-day features of towns and cities designed to protect and seclude residents.

Figure - Sky view of fortress https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/fortress-of-almeida (Accessed: 1st November 10:01

 One controversial fortress landscape more prevalent in modern day cities is anti-homelessness architecture. This is defensive architecture, hostile designs, or exclusionary designs [[2]](#footnote-2) with the intention of preventing homeless people from residing in public spaces. There is a stigma of crime and unsafe behaviour surrounding homeless populations in cities and so city designers are including items such spikes, or contoured designs of benches to prevent the stay of homeless people. This will reduce the number of lingering people, but some see it as inhumane and cruel, considering how much they are already struggling, it isn’t fair to do this on top of that. Mosquito Alarms[[3]](#footnote-3) provide a similar purpose by letting of a high-pitched squeal outside shops to disperse crowds and people are more on board with this, however, this is more designed for temporary crowds with somewhere to go. Anti-homeless architecture is designed to kick people out with no where else to go, hence its controversy.

Figure - Anti-homeless architecture https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/feb/18/defensive-architecture-keeps-poverty-undeen-and-makes-us-more-hostile (Accessed: 3rd November 2022 10:52)

A picture containing outdoor, stone

Description automatically generatedWe can see another example of this in Figure 4, where the seating has been designed to prevent sleeping on by taking a curved design to resemble rocks. Whether this is intentional it is unclear, however, this design does result in no homeless people residing in this spot here in Mermaid Quay.

This is one of many features of a Fortress Landscape present in Mermaid Quay, and my research will investigate what else is present in this area to maintain safety and security. Designed as a seaside shopping spot in a once run-down area of Cardiff Bay. It has been significantly redeveloped and a large part of that – similar to many modern cities – has been ensuring safety and security is present and maintained but a larger part for Mermaid Quay has been ensuring that the look and feel of the area has not been tainted by features designed for this purpose. In Figure 3 the spikes could be considered an eye soar, not pleasant to look at and unfriendly for pedestrians passing by. Mermaid Quay’s approach is a much more appealing approach to preventing homeless people from sleeping in this area.

Figure - Anti-homeless architecture in Mermaid Quay Joshua Netherton (20th October 2022)

# Table of Figures

[Figure 1 - Map of Mermaid Quay 0](file:///C:\Users\joshu\Documents\GitHub\Geography-NEA\Geography%20NEA%20-%20JN.docx#_Toc118365019)

[Figure 2 - Sky view of fortress 2](file:///C:\Users\joshu\Documents\GitHub\Geography-NEA\Geography%20NEA%20-%20JN.docx#_Toc118365020)

[Figure 3 - Anti-homeless architecture 2](file:///C:\Users\joshu\Documents\GitHub\Geography-NEA\Geography%20NEA%20-%20JN.docx#_Toc118365021)

# Bibliography

* *Bishop’s Cleeve photos, maps, books, memories* (no date) *Francisfrith.com*. Available at: https://www.francisfrith.com/bishop-s-cleeve (Accessed: 18 October 2022).

1. https://www.coolgeography.co.uk/advanced/New\_urban\_landscapes.php#:~:text=Fortress%20landscapes&text=Developments%20are%20deliberately%20landscaped%20and,between%20different%20groups%20of%20people. (Accessed: 3rd November 2022 10:20) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/anti-homeless-architecture-hostile-designs/#:~:text=There%20are%20many%20names%20for,in%20a%20town%20or%20city. (Accessed: 3rd November 2022 10:53) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.coolgeography.co.uk/advanced/New\_urban\_landscapes.php#:~:text=Fortress%20landscapes&text=Developments%20are%20deliberately%20landscaped%20and,between%20different%20groups%20of%20people. (Accessed: 3rd November 2022 14:47) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)