Bringing History Alive Through Design: An Interactive Medieval Resort

An Honors Thesis (LA 404)

by

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Abstract

This project addresses the gap in education of medieval history being taught in schools. It attempts to fill in that gap by providing information and experiences relevant to medieval history from which people can learn. The problem was to create a park which shows the most amount of historical accuracy possible while creating a destination people want to go to. To do this the site was broken up into distinct areas with different purposes to cater to the wants of as many guests as possible. The park also allows guests to stay the night, creating a resort environment. The project is located in Fort Wayne, Indiana due to its large population and lack of competition with other fairs and entertainment that may be similar to the project.

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Bringing History Alive Through Design:
An Interactive Medieval Resort

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ABSTIZMA

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INTRODUCTION

History is so extensive today that teachers do not have nearly enough time to thoroughly teach about it. Some subjects and time periods are neglected in order to make way for more recent history topics. Medieval history is one such glossed-over topic. For this reason, a destination devoted to demonstrating and experiencing medieval life and culture firsthand would be beneficial not only to children still in school, but to anyone who would want to expand their knowledge of the time period. Therefore, the design of this project works to enable people to receive hands-on knowledge and experience a representation of medieval life.

At this park, people are guided on adventures through the lives of what real medieval people would have experienced. Guests can herd sheep, watch a blacksmith make a sword, and even help the candlestick maker to make candles. Many more fun, interactive experiences that enable children and other guests to acquire hands-on learning are in store. The park also features a vast amount of entertainment, such as jousting, shopping, dining, siege weapon demonstrations, and much more.

This destination is also unique because it not only features a park for daily visitors but it also allows guests to sleep within the resort, better enabling them to obtain a fully-immersive experience into the life of the medieval period. Also, to increase the choices and number of experiences offered to guests, the resort is broken up into three distinct sleeping types: The castle, the merchant house, and the peasant house. By offering a park that also functions as a resort, guests can immerse themselves in the area in completely different ways.
In order to be able to truly understand the decisions made in the following design, one must first understand the background of the subjects being represented. Four areas that needed to be researched were identified including medieval history, the functions of castles and resorts, and the educational standards of Indiana. The first section gives a brief history of the time period being focused on and gives insight to how people lived in the Middle Ages. The second section discusses the differences and purposes of castles in medieval England. The third section goes over important things to consider in resort design. The last section looks at a few of the academic standards in Indiana and how this resort could address those.

 Médieval history is a rather vast topic, so it seems necessary to look at a narrow window. For this project, the historical focus will be on England during the 12th – 14th centuries. England was chosen as the focus country because of our shared English language and because of the British influence on America due to colonization. The time period was selected because it was a time in which England had recovered from the fall of the Roman Empire and was making great progress as a civilization. It is also a distinct period in time, since it occurs right before the Plague that happened during the mid-14th century, which greatly altered the course of growth that was taking place. This background will begin with the latter part of the 11th century, when a great shift in power took England in a new direction.

When William I of Normandy conquered England in 1066, he brought along many changes. The first was the introduction of the feudal system. This system consisted of a series of services owed to the entity that had greater societal power. In this system, the king owned all of the land. He then gave some land to select people known as Lords in return for their military service. The Lords held large amounts of property, and as such had to travel among different manor houses scattered throughout the holding. Stewards managed the property under the Lord and were tasked with more detailed work. They also traveled around the Lord’s holdings. The bailiff occupied a position under the Steward. He was generally a local of the community who stayed in the manor house and oversaw the responsibilities of the Lord when neither he nor the Steward was present. The reeve was the manager of the estate. He kept track of the flow of goods and money and made sure the peasants were doing what they were supposed to be doing. Peasants had varying degrees of prosperity within their class. Some peasants were unable to own land, and therefore had to find work to feed themselves. Some peasants owned just enough to feed their families. Others were lucky enough to have enough land to produce a surplus of goods, which allowed them to buy more lands or goods with their incomes. (Gies 44-66).

Agriculture was a major part of peasant life, especially in villages. Peasants were expected to work in the fields of the Lord in order to provide food and services. In turn the Lord promised to protect the peasants. In regards to their own food, subsistence farming was the dominating practice. However, in this system, any extra food that was produced was wasted.
Eventually it became more profitable to sell any surplus of food in a market. This enabled an important shift in the economy in which peasants were paying their rent with money as well as goods and services. Some common crops included wheat, barley, oats, peas, and beans. Because of the technology of the time, it was more efficient to plant crops in long rows because the plow would not have to be turned around as often. It was also common to allow some fields to lie fallow in order to regenerate the soil. While no crops were growing, animals would be grazed on these fields, adding the nutritional content of their manure. Animals included cows, sheep, pigs, chickens, horses, and oxen. Sheep were the most common animals, and horses/oxen were the least common. A good portion of the dairy products produced came from the milk of ewes. (Gies 88-106).

Towns in medieval England were distinctly different than villages. The concept of a town in this time was as a trading center. One of the determining factors for the location of boroughs had to do with the ability to move people and places to that location. Crossroads were popular places for towns, as well as along rivers where cargo could be shipped easily. Fields and parks surrounded the towns, and wooded areas lay beyond that. The town itself was divided into distinct areas based on the trade of the people that lived there. Fires were a major concern of towns in the medieval period because of the layout of the houses as well as the material used to make them. Streets were quite dirty and smelly since there was a lack of a waste disposal system (Salzman 66-87).

The Castle

Castles as we think of them today did not begin to show up in England until the reign of Edward the Confessor, who is not mentioned in the brief history above. It was during this time that the King made friends with people in Normandy and those people then introduced the idea of the castle in the 1050’s. However, only a few castles were built during Edward’s reign before William I conquered England (Liddiard 36-37).

According to Goodall’s book, The English Castle: 1066-1650, there were two basic ways to go about organizing the castle: the tower and the courtyard. In the tower model, all of the buildings were within one tightly packed structure that was several stories tall (49). The trend seemed to be that freestanding towers were built on top of mottes, with the bailey at the bottom of the motte and sometimes spread around it. Mottes were formed by digging a ditch in a circle and piling the earth from that into a hill. Goodall refers to this type of earthwork as embanking (75). In the courtyard method, the buildings were spaced out around a central courtyard and were generally shorter in stature (38). In this setting, the earth is retained, meaning the bailey wall is built right up to the ditch, creating a dramatic vertical element. The earth from the ditch was then piled up behind the wall, raising the ground level of the area within the bailey. The walls themselves were between 10-15 feet thick in order to be stronger, but also to allow people to walk on top of it (75).

The use of the tower would be more impressive, as it would be visible from far away. However, the courtyard method better addresses the space outside of the castle but still within the bailey and creates interesting niches. It might also be possible to combine the two methods in order to maintain the interesting space and impressive tower simultaneously.

Common elements that surrounded medieval castles include monasteries, land to sustain the castle economically, a park or area to hunt and fish, and a town of some kind (Goodall II).
Salzman states that not only were monasteries religious buildings, they also housed travelers (68). Therefore the monastery could possibly be used to house more guests while still maintaining some accuracy.

The interiors of castles were often comprised of service and kitchen areas, a common area such as a great hall, private apartments called withdrawing rooms, and a chapel (Goodall 23). The hall, kitchen, service areas, and apartments could easily fit into the program of the resort. The chapel would be harder to give a purpose to. However, since monks were the driving force behind literacy and learning during the Middle Ages, it would make sense that the chapel could be converted into an educational gathering room for groups.

The Hall is generally the most important feature of a castle (Goodall 25). It is not only located centrally in relation to the other areas within the castle, but it is also the first room visitors enter (25). Goodall provides a detailed description of the hall layout and relationship to other areas of the castle:

"Entrance to the hall in the late Middle Ages was usually though [sic] a porch set against the extreme of one of its long sides. The porch door led into the so-called screens passage, an area of the hall concealed from the body of the interior by a timber partition or screen. Also opening into the screens passage from the adjacent end wall of the hall were three service doors leading respectively to the kitchen, buttery and pantry. Two doors in the screen gave access to the 'low' end of the hall interior. At the opposite end of the room, and demarcated by a step running across the width of the interior, was the dais at the 'high' end of the hall. ... Opening from the dais was a doorway to the withdrawing chambers beyond." (25)

When eating, tables were laid out lengthwise with those of lesser standing sitting towards the screen and the lord of the house sitting at the head table (Goodall 25).

The hall has the opportunity to become a central area of interest for the resort. Not only would guests have to pass through it to get to their rooms, it would also be an incredible opportunity to provide large dinners that maintain the ambiance of dinners in that time period.

The withdrawing rooms were actually series of rooms that, while more private than the hall, were still somewhat public. Directly off of the great hall was a great chamber in which the throne or a bed that represented our modern-day idea of a throne was kept. The rest of the rooms continued from there in a set order from least private to most private. The bedchamber was the last room in this series (Goodall 28).

These withdrawing rooms could definitely become the rooms in which guests would stay in. However there would not be enough rooms provided within the limits of the castle to support the projected amount of guests. Therefore, either accommodation outside of the castle, perhaps within the surrounding town, or a modification of the castle structure, would have to be incorporated.

Resorts

Resorts require various components in order to function. Some of these things can be logically thought of, such as a parking lot, but others need the guidance and experience of someone in the field of resort design or management. The following research focuses on analyzing information provided by people knowledgeable of resorts and hotels and what it takes to run them. It will also gather information about design practices and strategies that are employed often in resorts, which will then be evaluated to determine what can be applied in the instance of a medieval resort.
The difference between going to an amusement park and a resort is the length of stay on the property. You do not spend the night at an amusement park, but you do in a resort. When you think of staying the night someplace that is not your home, your mind might immediately visualize a hotel. The problem with this is the hotel you visualize probably looks similar to many other hotels across the U.S.

A good point is brought up in Black's book, *International Hotel and Resort Design*, that one of the biggest struggles while designing hotels and resorts today is the dueling nature between making something familiar, comfortable, and easy to use to the visitor, while also making something completely different from anything they have ever seen before (7). There is no doubt that staying in a medieval resort would be a unique experience, but that uniqueness has to be moderated so as not to overwhelm the guest.

According to Gee, the determining factors involved in whether visitors have a good time and might come back is the result of three important periods in their experience: the first impression, the registration, and the stay itself (63). In order to address these three factors, a resort might provide friendly and prompt service, a clean environment, and an easy and painless check-in. It is important to begin to address these issues in the design process. Since a medieval resort would be a very different experience for people, it might be necessary to incorporate a transitional space that the guest will travel through on their way to register for their stay. Giving the visitor the opportunity to momentarily forget their old world and embrace the medieval world they are going to be living in for the next several days could be a successful strategy in creating the correct ambience.

While maintaining this mood, it is also important to provide the guest with appropriate signage that would help them easily navigate (Penner 294). Resorts, due to their likelihood of hosting many new guests, must have a layout that is easy to understand with landmarks that people can use to easily orient themselves (Penner 285). Examples of methods that would make the resort more readable include creating lines of sight, widening the roads and pathways, incorporating distinct lighting, drawing attention via planting, and using attention-grabbing graphics (Penner 294).

Being able to find one's way, however, means nothing if other areas of the resort are not up to par. Gee gives several categories that must be strongly considered, including window views, rooms, food, activities, recreation, and service (63). The room layout and service provided are somewhat beyond the field of vision for a landscape architect. The views presented, the amount of space devoted to eating establishments, and the programming of spaces for recreation and activity do need to be designed. There are two basic strategies to improve views as outlined by Penner. The first includes more permanent solutions such as the site selection and the building's form and orientation. The second involves more site design by changing the lay of the land and forcing views of interestingly designed environments and structures (294).

While most design focuses on the guest and what they see, do, and interact with, sometimes it is also important to consider what the guest should not see. While it is necessary to include such aspects as service and employee access and circulation, it is also important to hide and separate these services from the guest experience in order to preserve the ambiance of the resort (Penner 294). Security is also something that needs to be in place but needs to be subtle so as not to be distracting (Penner 296).
Penner recommends the combined use of topography, walls, and video surveillance to achieve the necessary safety conditions (296). There are also various behind-the-scenes systems built into hotels and resorts that allow them to function discreetly that do not need to be viewed by the guests. Some of the systems that require space to be laid aside for them include administration offices, food preparation and storage areas, trash storage and removal, overall storage areas, employee areas, laundry and housekeeping areas, and mechanical areas (Penner 376-382).

**Education**

According to the Department of Education, there were over 54,000 students ranging from Pre-K to 12th grade in Allen County in 2013. With so many students nearby there seems to be an opportunity to connect with these schools and offer standards-based, educational experiences within the resort. Indiana posts its academic standards online at learningconnection.doe.in.gov. These standards provide a jumping-off point to begin programming educational spaces and activities. A few learning opportunities have been identified that could easily be incorporated into the design of the resort. These consist of Social Sciences standards for Kindergarten, First, Second, and Sixth grades and the high school World History class and are listed below. How each will be addressed individually will be discussed during the design section of the report.

**SS.K.4.2 2007**
Identify and describe different kinds of jobs that people do and the tools or equipment used in these jobs.

**SS.K.1.1 2007**
Compare children and families of today with those in the past.
Example: Compare clothing, houses and objects of the past with the present.

**SCI.2.4.2 2010**
Identify technologies developed by humans to meet human needs. Investigate the limitations of technologies and how they have improved quality of life.
Research questions and use a variety of information resources to obtain, evaluate and present data on people, cultures and developments in Europe and the Americas.
Example: Collect data and create maps, graphs or spreadsheets showing the impact of immigration patterns in Canada, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster on Russia and access to health care in the European Union (EU).

**SS.6.1.4 2007**
Medieval Period: 400 A.D./C.E. - 1500 A.D./C.E. Describe and explain the development and organization of political, cultural, social and economic systems in Europe and the Americas.
Example: Feudal system, manorial system, rise of kingdoms and empires, slavery, and religious institutions

**SS.WH.4.5 2007**
Describe how technological improvements in agriculture, the growth of towns, the creation of guilds, and the development of banking during the Middle Ages, as well as the institutions of feudalism and the manorial system influenced European civilization.
Project Statement and Significance

This project addresses the gap in education of medieval history being taught in schools. The America of today was built on colonization of European countries, particularly from England. In reality, medieval history does pertain to our history here for this reason. Currently, most of the history and social sciences in Indiana are focused exclusively on Indiana. Although this does make students more knowledgeable about the state in which they live, it does not encourage students to think more globally. Therefore, it is necessary to address this problem, however since the curriculum is already full, it would be beneficial to create an area where people can learn outside of the school environment.

This project is significant for landscape architecture, because it presents another outlet for what the landscape architect can do. Learning through experiencing on a large, outdoor scale is not something that is currently common, but in places where it does exist, it is popular. Landscape architects have this ability to create experiences, it only needs to be utilized.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Research of background information and case studies led to the realization of 4 important goals for this resort in order to function and address the problem of the lack of medieval education. While historical education is the first and most important goal, it is also necessary to provide more draws to make people want to come and be educated, therefore there has to be a certain element of entertainment available on site. And finally, with a large and complicated project such as the design of this resort, it is necessary to program for elements and infrastructure that must exist in order for the resort to function efficiently and safely for guests.

Goal 1: Accurately show history through design
   Objective 1A: Building uses, layout, and materials
   Objective 1B: Building relationships
   Objective 1C: Street layout and materials
   Objective 1D: Treatment of open spaces

Goal 2: Encourage opportunities to learn and engage
   Objective 2A: Learning stations
   Objective 2B: Active engagement
   Objective 3B: Special programs

Goal 3: Provide entertainment
   Objective 3A: Shows
   Objective 3B: Shopping
   Objective 3C: Dining

Goal 4: Accommodate guest needs
   Objective 4A: Overnight accommodations
   Objective 4B: Group gathering
   Objective 4C: Rest Areas
   Objective 4D: Sanitary facilities
   Objective 4E: Infrastructure and screening
   Objective 4F: Parking

PROGRAM

Goal 1

Town plots are roughly 60’x60 feet. There are 68 plots. On these plots there are three buildings: the hall/store, the storage/workshop, and the residence. The average hall size is 45’x24’, the average Residence size is 45’x15’. The average workshop/storage unit size varies based on the occupation of the particular merchant using it. A courtyard connects all of these areas.

Village plot size varies based on the status of the resident. Cottages are 10’x20’ with a total plot size of 50’x300’. Longhouses are 14’x50’ with a plot size of 100’x300’.
The castle sits atop a motte 20' taller than the land in the town. The area is graded to form a moat around it. Slope up to the castle is 30%, with a bridge spanning the moat that has a slope of 4.9%. Streets in town 30' wide because of the tighter space created by the buildings. Paths outside of town 15' wide.
Furlongs behind village plots are 66'x660' long.
Woods fill in all area that is not programmed as open space and screen views when necessary.
60' buffer from the road inward.
Stream created to drain water, create visual interest, and help transition into the park.
Ponds created to catch and hold rainwater runoff while creating views and areas to interact with.

Goal 2
Learning stations were created at merchant houses, within the castle, in some village houses, and at the siege weapon area.
Merchant houses which educate include potter, basketweaver, glass blower, church, farrier, painter, candlestick maker, carder, weaver, miller, and wheelwright.
Village experiences include helping to grow plants, do chores, and herd animals.
Educational shows impart information while entertaining.
Group camp created in the village to accommodate overnight class field trips.

Goal 3
Permanent stage with an area of 25'x40'. Seating for 800 people.
Falconry arena with an area of 45'x70'. No tall structures will be within 100' of the arena.
Priority seating is provided for 50 people.
Jousting arena is 250'x80'. There is seating for 800 people.
The siege engine exhibition is 100'x100' and contains a learning station, trebuchet, catapult, and ballista.
Indoor stages occur in some merchant homes and in the great hall of the castle.
Shops include blacksmiths, goldsmiths, masons, jeweler, tanners, shoemakers, butcher, armorer, bowyer, glassblowers, carpenters, seamstresses, potters, candle maker, toymaker, bakery, brewery, basket weaver, cooper, carver, luther, herbalist, saddle maker, tailors, painter, and sculptor.
Multiple dining areas including the great hall in the castle, the baker, butcher, fishmonger, cheese maker, and brewer houses in the town, one house in the village, food carts in the market, and walk around concessions at the jousting and falconry fields.

Goal 4
Overnight accommodations include 60 rooms in the castle, 16 merchant houses, 12 rooms at the inn, and 12 houses in the village.
Space was provided at the entrance for groups to gather before entering.
Restrooms are provided at the entrance to the park, town, castle, and in the village.
Shade is provided by trees and over arching buildings.
500 paved parking spaces, a bus drop off and parking area, and grass lot overflow parking is provided.
Design Process

Design begins with research in order to be informed about what is being designed. This project was no exception to this, with large amounts of research taking place over roughly six months. Once the research was compiled a site had to be chosen and analyzed. This was chosen based on the criteria which are outlined in the site location section. There is not much happening on the site, since it is mostly farmland. The analysis focused on the best areas to place programmed elements, such as woodland, the castle, and the town. From this two distinct concepts were generated, each having its own merits. Eventually one was chosen over the other based on the space used and better relationships of the different programed areas. This concept was developed further and fleshed out with more programmed elements. While creating the master plan, more details were thought out and designed. The end result is a project that is comprehensive in how was designed and how it functions.
After the research was conducted and a strong set of goals were laid out, all that was left was implementing them into the design. This began with first choosing a site. Ideally, a site would have been chosen that contains similar features to that of the English countryside during the medieval ages: somewhat remote, wooded, with many rolling hills. However, this condition does not exist in this area. Instead the site was chosen based on factors of location. The site needed to be close to a densely populated area in order to bring more people in and have a nearby source of people to draw employees from. It was also important to choose a place in which there were few, if any, competing attractions. Figure 1 shows the top 5 biggest cities in Indiana as well as nearby medieval festivals.

Because of its size, proximity to other large cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Columbus, and Indianapolis, and the lack of nearby medieval festivals, Fort Wayne became the logical choice. However, since the site would need to be very big to hold everything programmed into the design, it was necessary to look just outside of the city limits, where the landscape turned to agriculture in order to find a site large enough.
Transportation to the site was another factor looked at. Two interstate highways travel around Fort Wayne: I69 and I469. I69 extends up into Michigan and soon will continue down into southern Indiana and on as far as Texas. Since travel to the site would be facilitated while traveling on this Interstate it became necessary to choose a possible site that was close to it, preferably near an exit. There are 10 exits on I69 within the vicinity of Fort Wayne, of these only one connects to a highway that leads toward Chicago. However, there needs to be a spatial buffer between the highway, interstate, and site in order to reduce noise and pollution exposure of the resort.

Using these new criteria, the optimal place to position the site would be somewhere outside of Fort Wayne, close to exit 109A on I69, and an area far enough away from the highway to be buffered from the noise. The site chosen in figure 2 meets all of this criteria and it has enough connected open land to make the proposition of placing a medieval resort within it feasible.

Figure 2: The site is orange. The green lines show required buffers. The circles indicate exit ramps
Figure 3 shows a graphic representation of the site at a smaller scale. The highest areas of the site occur in the north. Water flows toward the south and off of the site. The topography is slightly hilly, but not extremely varied with roughly a 30 foot difference from highest to lowest point. There are six relative high points spread throughout the site and two major depressions. There is also a woodlot located in the southeast portion of the site. The site is bounded by four separate roads and four residential areas. The three residential areas toward the north are farmhouses, while the area to the south is denser but still rural houses. These houses are surrounded by trees. The street to the south has the most traffic. There is a school/church located just north of the site.

Figure 3: Inventory of the site. Blue dotted line is water flow. Blue areas are depressions. Purple areas are high points.
Figure shows the land use of the site. The vast amount of green area indicates farmland. The lighter green shows where the lone woodlot on the site is. There is one institutional building located adjacent to the site to the north. This is a private school and church. The yellow areas indicate single family residential areas.

Figure shows the general character of the site. The vast majority of this photo is of soybeans. In the distance is the woodlot. To the right of the woodlot is a residential area that is shaded by trees. The road is typical of rural Indiana in the sense that it is fairly narrow and has no margins on the side. This picture was taken from the northwest.

Figure shows the site from the east. The residential areas here are on either side, with the woodlot between them. Because the site is large and mostly farmland, the views around it look similar.
Strengths:
The location limits competition of similar attractions.
Large site provides room to experiment to find the right layout.
The site is not flat and boring, nor does it have a large grade change which would make it difficult to build upon.
The woodlot provides tree cover and ecological diversity on the site.

Weaknesses:
No walking or biking trails lead to the site, which limits the accessibility to those with cars.
The county roads that surround the site are not conducive to biking or walking.

Opportunities:
In the vicinity of major highways, which facilitates access by car or bus.
2-3 hours away from major cities including Indianapolis, Chicago, Detroit, and Columbus, which is a reasonable distance to drive to the site from.

Threats:
Sprawl could expand and surround the site, creating a different edge effect from what currently exists and might provide different views from what was intended.
Farmers could spray chemicals on their fields which could blow into the site.
Case Study: Conner Prairie

Conner Prairie is a self-termed “interactive history park” where Indiana’s past comes alive and guests are encouraged to experience and interact with history. Within the 200 acre site there are six themed outdoor spaces that each represents a different time period or lifestyle in Indiana’s history. These areas include Lenape Camp, Conner Homestead, 1863 Prairietown, 1859 Balloon Voyage, 1863 Civil War Journey: Raid on Indiana, and the Nature Walk. Guests participate directly in the lives that are represented in each area. For example, wages can be earned by assisting with chores, which can then be spent at a store. There are also opportunities for guests to gain experience with hand crafting in areas such as candle and basket making. They also have an interesting sort of game in Prairietown in which guests have the opportunity to be assigned to a particular aspect of society such as a gardener or socialite. With each assignment, there are different objectives that the guest must meet in order to ‘level up’. Not only does this provide encouragement to engage, but it also provides the opportunity for each visit to be different.

Apart from the regular business, Conner Prairie also hosts group tours, school tours, and special events. Because they have such a strong connection to history, Conner Prairie is able to meet many of Indiana’s academic standards, which makes it an opportunity for students to engage in hands-on learning. Several special events revolve around holidays, such as Easter, the Fourth of July, and Halloween. They have several days devoted to reenacting the Civil War. During the summer the park draws in large crowds with its ‘Symphony on the Prairie’. There are roughly 500 parking spaces.
Case Study: Ohio Renaissance Festival

The Ohio Renaissance Festival is a great example of the types of entertainment that could be available at this resort. They have 11 stages scattered around the area which host around 100 shows each day that they are open. Some of these stages are outdoors and suitable for jugglers, swordplay, and similar shows that require a lot of space. Other stages are located indoors and are focused more towards smaller scale performances such as playing music. An area for jousting can also be found on the site. There are six permanent food vendors, such as pubs, and three carts that specialize in only one or two food items. The Ohio Renaissance Festival is also host to around 140 craftsmen that sell wares in their large marketplace. Some of their vendors specialize in areas such as glassblowing, blacksmithing, candle making, metalsmithing, stone carving, boot making, leather crafting, jewelry making, armor/weapon making, period clothing, stained glass, oils/incense, pottery, musical instrument crafting, and various art production. Within this list, there are more than one vendor for each category with art, clothing, and jewelry seeming to be the most popular.

The festival is contained within 30 acres. Over half of that is taken up by open fields used as parking lots. The area where the action takes place is fenced in. There are two pathways that run basically parallel to each other with the buildings between them. It appears that this outer road was not programmed for guests to use, and instead appears to be a method for supplies to be moved around. There is a large area within the interior of the ring road in which rides, some theaters, and the jousting space takes places. There is also one other road where merchant buildings sit which cuts through the upper fourth of the inner area. The front of these buildings face the road, but the back of them are screened by trees. There are also two small streams running through the festival area, which have wooded banks.
Warwick Castle is a unique tourist attraction in Warwick, England. The aspect that sets this entertainment venue apart from others is the castle that the 64 acre site revolves around. Because this castle was a residence, it was constantly upgraded to suit the needs and wants of its owners. As such, much of what is portrayed is of the 15th century or later.

Warwick Castle is focused much more on entertainment than education. To quote from their website ‘...our shows mix history with spectacle, knowledge with fun. When you remember seeing our Trebuchet throw its fireball, you’ll also remember how it works. That’s learning by accident’. As entertainment goes, Warwick Castle offers some attractions that are similar to that of the Ohio Renaissance Festival, but others that are different. For example, Warwick Castle holds jousts and has areas to shop and eat, although these are not as numerous or extensive. Some of the attractions that differ include a bird of prey show, an archery demonstration, and demonstrations of other larger weapons such as a ballista and trebuchet. There are also two special attractions: One is based on the show ‘Merlin’ and the other revolves around the castle dungeon.

Special events and programs are also present at Warwick Castle. They have implemented a program which they call ‘glamping’, or glamorous camping. ‘Glamping’ involves staying in large tents that provide wooden floors, beds, and other amenities. These are located within a five minute walk from the castle. Other events include a Mother’s Day Lunch, Christmas events, and weddings. There are over 300 parking spaces, plus many bus parking spaces.
**Concept A**

Several concepts were created in order to discover the best relationship of areas within the site. Two were explored in further depth because of the large amount of difference between them. Concept A shown in Figure 4 attempts to use the most space to the best advantage possible. In this concept guests would enter the site from the east. The parking lot would be completely separate from the other areas of the resort. From the parking lot the guest would travel to the town portion of the resort. Since towns were often located at a crossroad, it made sense to do this for the town in the resort as well. From the town one would go north to access the castle, west to access the village, and south to access one of the ponds that also serve as a collector for stormwater and runoff.

*Figure 4: Concept A*
The second concept is much more compact and contains several unprogrammed areas. In this concept the parking was located at the northern end of the site. Guests then only had a short walk to the town, which functions the same way as in the first concept. In this concept however, the castle is uniquely situated not only on the higher end of the site, but also between two small depressions, which could be reworked to function as a moat.

Both of these concepts have positive and negative attributes. While the first concept does use space more effectively, it also places the castle at a lower elevation that the village, which would generally not have happened in this period of medieval England. However, the use of a motte and moat could give the castle the appearance of being higher up and would make a more dramatic statement. The second concept places the parking in a highly visible area, which means it would be harder to immerse the guest in the medieval ambiance. However it does place the castle in a position that is naturally more accurate.

Figure 5: Concept B
Master Plan

A: Vehicle Entrance
B: Bus Parking Lot
C: Paved Parking
D: Parking Overflow
E: Park Entrance
F: Town
G: Market Square
H: Castle
I: Moat
J: Jousting Arena
K: Falconry Arena
L: Amphitheater
M: Longhouses
N: Furlongs
O: Cottages
P: Village
Q: Siege Weapon Demonstration
R: Pond 1
S: Pond 2
T: Service Entrance
U: Service Building
V: Employee Parking
The final design solution was developed further from concept a. In this solution, the guest enters from the southwest corner of the site through a large archway that cannot be missed while driving.

Once the driver has made the turn suspense and separation from the outside world is hinted at by the tree lined driveway that curves slightly and barely restricts the view. From here the guest would be guided through the curved parking lot. The shape was used in order to make the parking lot appear smaller than it actually is. On the southern end of the parking lot there is also a bus option for when groups come to the resort by bus. Once the vehicles are parked, guests will walk over bridges that span a small creek and runoff area. Here they will enter the overflow parking lot. The idea behind the distinct areas was that the separation between so much hardscape and the open grassy field would aid the guests in getting into an alternate mindset.

Guests would then move on to the main entrance to the resort.
The gate is large and noticeable, which will help people find their way. The plaza in front of the gate serves several purposes. The first is to provide a meeting place for groups to gather and get organized before they try to get into the park. It also provides a waiting area for guests who need to use the restrooms which are conveniently located on the outside edge of each tower. Finally, it provides a place for the line to enter to form. Seating is provided, but shade trees were not incorporated into the center of the plaza so that the view of the gate would not be blocked.

Guests enter through the two archways closest to the towers. The center archway is an exit from the park because having different spots for entering and exiting facilitates the flow of traffic and reduces conflict.

Once guests enter the gates they are guided through a wooded setting until the path turns slightly and the trees open up to a view of the castle and town. Since this would be a natural spot to stop and take pictures, there is a small paved area just off of the path for people to stop while still allowing traffic to flow along the path.

![Figure 9: First View of Castle](image)

The path continues westward, and woods once again obstruct the views of the castle for the time being. Soon the path curves again and the town gates come into view. Guests walk a little further and the tree canopy drops away and there is a straight view down onto the first pond.

Walking through the gates provides a strong sense of transition from one concept to another. They make a point that the guest is no longer in the woods, they are somewhere else and that place is important. The town is a dense area, which also contrasts with the woods the guests just came out of. The houses are two to three stories tall with upper stories that sometimes jut out into the street and provide a sense of enclosure. The space in town is much more active as there are more people and things are happening.

![Figure 10: Town perspective](image)
To help guide the guest through their experience here if they would like, there are ‘inns’ near every entrance to the town. These inns provide information guests may find useful and there are staff members present to answer any questions. These inns are also inconspicuous and convenient places for restrooms to be located. They also function as actual inns, with sleeping quarters located on the upper floors.

The buildings in medieval England were generally not placed next to others of the same trade, at least not on purpose. Although the layout of buildings next to each other which share similar raw goods would be logical to do here, it would not be accurate. Instead, the town is laid out into 5 districts based on the properties of the building uses. As shown in figure 11, the districts include a market district, animal district, a district which is comprised mostly of overnight merchant accommodation, a major shopping district, and the district where crafting of goods produces smoke. The housing district was placed outside of the shopping district so that in the likelihood of decreased numbers of guests staying at the resort, that area could be shut down in the winter without affecting cohesiveness of the other districts. The animal district houses all of the animals for the live shows as well as the trades that produce goods or services for the animals. The eastern district was placed thus so that if smoke did accumulate from the crafting of the merchants, it would be blown out of the town by the wind which blows out of the west during the summer. This would help keep the town less polluted.

Figure 11
The market square occurs at the crossroads of the two major roads in the park. This is a large area of non-permanent structures that would be used for various events. Concerts and outdoor performances could be held here. Also the area could host a true market on occasion and the area would be filled up with tents and carts. There is a fountain in the middle of the square which functions as a place to sit, a meeting point, and also as a representation of a well, which the towns in England would have had. The fountain would be drained during the winter, but some other centerpiece like a Christmas tree could stand atop it and give the square a festive feeling. Besides the shops located around the square, there is also a church located on the southern end. The church has the duality of functioning as a church, but also as a place of learning for guests.

Figure 12: The market square

From the market the guests can go up to the castle. This is where most of the resort rooms are located as well as the main dining area on site. Guests cross a stone bridge and a wide moat to get up to the castle, which is located twenty feet above the surrounding town. There is a small gathering area for people to meet or take pictures at the top of the bridge. Guests then have to walk through a gate to enter the courtyard. Here guests will experience a strong sense of release after being compressed in that gate. There is a section of paved courtyard that leads toward the entry lobby and great hall. The courtyard is broken up into different grassy areas, each one able to be used for different purposes such as shows, learning to fence, lounging, or meeting a group.
The back side of the castle not only houses the lobby and great hall, but it also provides an area for the kitchen, laundry rooms, offices, storage, and various other spaces a resort needs to function. There are no rooms on or views from this side of the castle, which allows the service building and employee parking areas to remain hidden and out of the way. Resort rooms are located on the side wings on the castle. The front wings of the castle are educationally focused, where areas would be held to show guests how castles were built, how they functioned, and their purpose. The two bays and the front four towers also have public roof access, where guests can go to get an overall view of the site and hang out.

As guests move back into the town from the castle and continue south, they reach a field which the path rings around. When guests follow the path, they will move back into a wooded area before briefly being shown a different view of the first pond before looping back around. Within the field however are two major attractions to the resort: The jousting and the falconry shows. Both of these arenas take their dimensions from the precedents at Warwick and the Ohio Renaissance Festival. The permanent seating is found on the south side of the arenas so the action can be seen when guests first leave the town and there would be nothing blocking it, except perhaps a crowd gathered around the area.

Whether guests choose to watch the shows in the fields or continue along the path, the only way to progress forward from here would be to the northwest. The second pond is screened from sight until the moment the path turns, where the trees open up to create the view. The guest is then drawn back into the woods momentarily, before the amphitheater and stage become visible. The seating area steps down gradually until it is almost on level with the waterline, creating a nice and unique backdrop to the stage. Here many different types of performances could occur, from reenacting famous plays, to acting out a comedy about how swordplay works.
Once guests move away from the theater, they are quickly introduced to the village. Here guests are immersed into a very different setting than they had previously experienced. Compared to the hustle and bustle of the town, the village is relatively calm. Two main types of houses exist here: the longhouse and the cottage. The longhouses are larger and are placed on twice the amount of land the cottages have. The croft areas of the longhouses consist of grassy or paved areas which functioned as a yard and as a place to keep the animals. Behind this was the toft in which subsistence crops for the residence are planted. The furlongs are long stretches of field beyond the tofts in which crops that belong to the lord are planted. In today’s setting, the crops from the furlongs are harvested and used in the kitchens throughout the park. The crops from the longhouse and cottage plots will either be used to feed guests, or they will be used to provide them with hands-on learning experiences in which guests will help plant, take care of, and harvest the crops. The village also has a gathering area, which is used to move animals, namely sheep, along as well as hosting events and shows. One of the unique aspects of the village is the availability for groups of guests to stay at an entire or multiple houses for the night, which is perfect for groups who want more space. The sleeping conditions are also slightly less comfortable than those of the town or castle, which means those people that are interested in really wanted to experience peasant life, can.

When moving away from the village to the southeast, the woods are again introduced so the guests can experience a moment of transition into the siege weapon demonstration area. Siege weapons, including the catapult, trebuchet, and ballista were popular weapons to attempt to bring down castle walls in the medieval period. This area explains how they worked while actually demonstrating what is happening.

It is also important to talk about what is not particularly seen and experienced by the guests themselves. There is a network of service and employee buildings and areas to the northeast of the site, sheltered by trees and the park boundary wall. The employee parking lot was located here because of its closeness to the castle, which required a service entrance to bring goods in. It made sense to locate the service and storage building along this service road as well so as to cut down on pavement and space needed. The transportation of goods within the park would all be taken care of by push carts disguised to look like they are from the medieval period. This not only allows the transportation, but also adds to the authenticity of the experience. Merchants who sell goods they produce in their shops also have the option of living in the house adjacent to their workspace. For those that decline this convenience, the space will then become incorporated into the spaces in which guests can stay the night. Since the park is a permanent structure, it is assumed that traveling actors and groups would be kept to a minimum. If this were the case then the employees would ideally be part of and live in the surrounding community, meaning they would not have to live on the site while they were working, so that space does not have to be set aside for temporary employee camping.
Educational Areas

A: Within the town engagement and learning opportunities include watching demonstrations by craftsmen including blacksmiths, masons, carpenters, and more. Guests have the opportunity to participate in and learn hands on in areas such as basketweaving, candle making, milling, baking, carding, spinning, and interacting with the horses in the stables and birds in the falconry.

B: The two wings of the castle in the front are demonstration areas of how castles were built, why they were built, and what was in them. The courtyard contains side areas for weapons demonstrations to be held.

C: The jousting arena allows guests to learn about jousting by watching a reconstruction of a real joust.

D: In the falconry arena, guests will learn about birds while watching a show.

E: The siege weapon demonstration area shows guests siege weapons in action while also having a station that provides historical information about the construction and use of siege weapons.

F: The pond provides an opportunity for guests to learn about fishing and how water is important. Here employees guide guests in the proper way to fish while helping them out and providing equipment and knowledge.

G: Most of the Longhouses and some of the cottages are pieces which show the live of a medieval peasant. They also provide guests with the opportunity to engage in these lives by aiding with chores and asking questions.

H: The furlongs provide guests an opportunity to learn about agriculture and help with the planting or harvest if they would like.
Dining Areas

A: The castle contains a great hall, which has a large dining room and can seat quite a lot of people at a time.

B: A butcher shop doubles as a restaurant specializing in different kinds of meats.

C: The market has several carts with a variety of food.

D: The fishmonger’s house has fish available to eat.

E: A roaming vendor sells snacks at the arena.

F: Two bakeries, a cheese maker, and two breweries sell food in this part of town.

G: If a guest feels brave, he or she may choose to eat with the peasants. The experience is authentic.
A: The castle holds the largest amount of guests.
B: The inns are at the entrance to town.
C: Many merchant houses can be stayed in overnight in the northern part of town.
D: Groups can easily stay in a few of the cottages located in the village or a single family can stay there.
Bringing History Alive Through Design:

An Interactive Medieval Resort
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G: If a guest feels brave, he or she may choose to eat with the peasants. The experience is authentic.
Figure 13: Jousting Arena

Figure 14: Falconry Area
Figure 15: Bleachers

Figure 16: Amphitheater
Grading Plan
Conclusion

In conclusion, the idea of designing a park and resort that could fill the educational gap about medieval history is entirely possible. The dynamics and complexity of such a project naturally encourage rich design to flesh out all of the problems and possibilities. The educational possibilities were addressed with stations to learn from as well as areas to directly participate in activities. The infrastructure demands were addressed with adequate parking, path size, group gathering areas, service areas. Large amounts of entertainment were provided to draw people in and help them have a good time while they are learning. All told, the design met the goals and objectives set.
Disney. Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge. n.d. 16 November 2013


