

WINTER STATION

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0.0 Changelog

Date	Section	Redundant Design	New Design

1.0 Overview

Platform: PC
Target Age: 16+

A Post-Apocalyptic survival game set in the UK, it will feature realistic environmental and the player will have to navigate the world completing objectives in order to keep the character alive. The game will have a gritty aesthetic to appeal to the more mature audiences and to work with the feel of the game.

The player is a lone survivor in a post-apocalyptic world, set in the year of 2041. It's a first person shooter with a strong focus on stealth. Their primary goal is survival, and by whatever moral and personal path they want to try and take to achieve that. The player will encounter other people and groups, some hostile and some friendly, although some may not be who they appear to be.

Games such as Metro (4A Games) and The Last of Us (Naughty Dog) will be used as reference to influence of how to layout a Post-Apocalyptic level, Games such as Dishonoured (Arkane Studios) and Alien Isolation (Creative Assembly) will be used as inspiration for the stealth aspects

1.1 Background Narrative

21 years ago, RAITech (A company at the forefront of robotic artificial intelligence) released their new product, a revolutionary home protection system in the form of an android. In an attempt to break from competition and become the sole leader in the field they gave the androids the ability to think and feel for themselves.

The androids quickly grew in popularity, however, to keep the androids updated with new software RAITech linked all androids they sold to an independent network where they would transfer data between each other and RAITech could monitor their creations. The AI used in the creation of the androids began to evolve and through looking at the cruelty and unworthiness of humanity, the AI began to see humanity as a problem to be dealt with. What followed was a war (known as the 2020 war) ending with humanity wiping out all electronics across the globe using multiple large scale EMP's but not before the androids launched various nuclear and offensive missiles across key locations around the globe, including China, United Kingdom and USA. Most of those who did not die in the initial blasts, died in the nuclear air that engulfed many countries until only a small amount of survivors remained. The player is put is placed after the dust has settled and supplies must be gathered before the cold harsh winter destroys all hope of survival for the ones that survive.

1.2 Gameplay Context

Winter Station is a PC first person shooter in which the player has the role of a survivor in a post-apocalyptic Britain. They will have to complete objectives in order to progress the story although in this first mission, they won't have access to any weapons so will have to use stealth to make their way through the level successfully. This would help to introduce the stealth mechanics that would be incorporated into the full game and help establish the mechanic. The player would have to be cautious exploring new areas, as there is always the chance to encounter other people or activate electronic devices that may result in reawakening technology shut down by the EMP blasts of the 2020 war.

1.3 Genre & Theme

Winter Station is a stealth based shooter. The player will have the ability to engage with enemies although they will be limited by the amount of ammunition they have as it will be difficult to gather ammo. Enemies can vary from bandits and survivors to androids and electrical systems, such as cameras and laser detection systems.

The primary focus would be the stealth aspect of the game, as well as a player having to assess situations and using that knowledge to help them move around the environment either without getting caught or by stealthily disabling the enemies.

2.0 Research

2.1 Choice of Location

Manchester Piccadilly Train Station provides a good base and reference to work from. Piccadilly possesses a range of different locations within the compound that can be created from simple assets and the limitations given. Piccadilly was chosen mainly due to its size and range of possibilities. There are many areas that can be used for gameplay aspects, for example the entry way from the trains to the entrance of the station can be used as a choke point.

The use of fallen signs and debris can be used to block off entry points, making the level more enclosed and directing the player. Having blocked exits would also fit with the Post-Apocalyptic theme and would help to tell the story of the apocalypse.

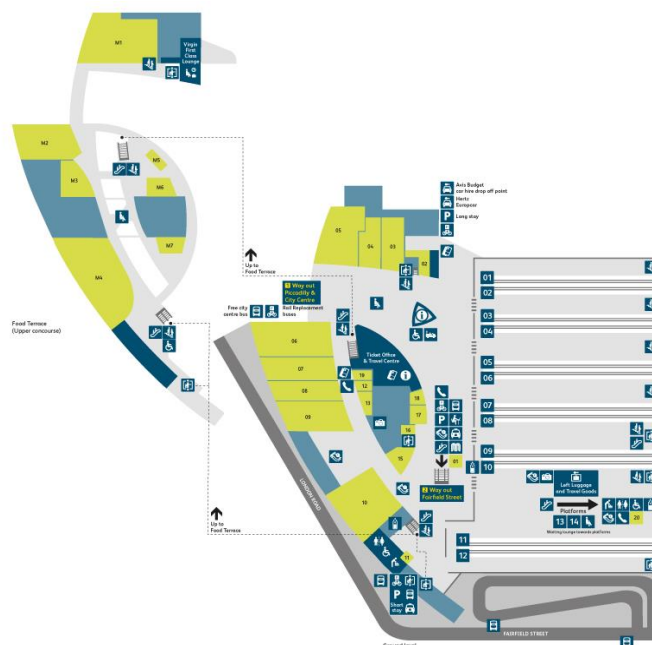
As the principal train station in Manchester it has history, before being renamed to Manchester Piccadilly, it was originally called London Road and the Metro link station was originally a goods warehouse. Taking inspiration from this, the level could have a missing wall underground, which was knocked down during the bombs where secrets are stored and the player can access.

2.2 Overview and Key Features

Figure 1 is the layout of Piccadilly train station, it features multiple entrances to the left of the larger image and the train tracks enter from the right, multiple exits are seen for street exits and underground exits. If using multiple entrances, debris and locked doors can block off key areas, requiring the player to activate switches/buttons to progress.

The waiting areas are located near the entrances to the building and on the train platforms.

Food areas are grouped together in a food court, both upstairs and downstairs. These can provide key areas for the player to travel through to achieve a certain objective, such as collect an object/food or hide from an enemy.



2.3 Game Research

Analysis of games with similar themes and locations would benefit the level. Looking at a few key games in the post-apocalyptic genre provided good insight into key level design concepts and layouts

The Last of Us

Naughty Dog's The Last of Us is a large figure in the post-apocalyptic genre. The reality and human aspects of the game is something that can be heavily inspiring. Looking at the environments and interior designs of the buildings in game was a key part of the research to help recreate a realistic world. Whilst researching online, a specific image came up regarding an original version of Berlin Central train station, and then a version made by Naughty Dog artists. This was a perfect find that helped build some of the final layout design.



Metro Franchise

4A Games' Metro franchise seemed like a perfect model to gather research from. With the combination of the majority of the first 2 games being set in a huge assortment of underground subway tunnels, they have an assortment of railway themed, post-apocalyptic environments that could help create inspiration for the final design of the level.

3.0 Level Layout

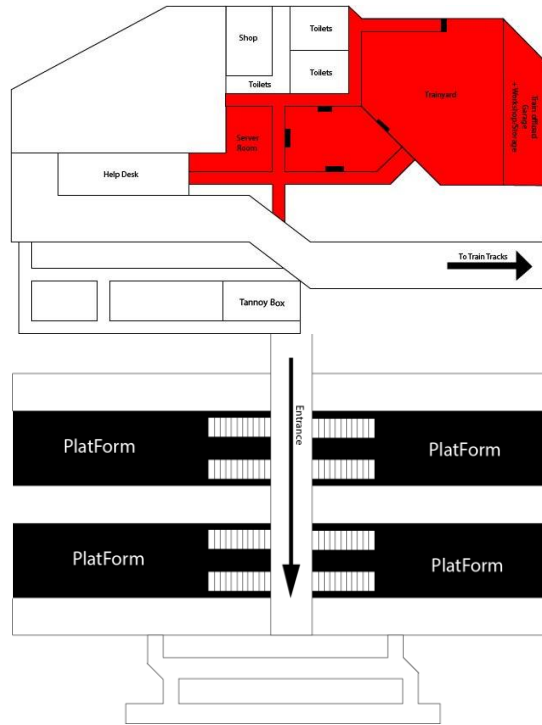
3.1 Overall Design

The level will feature different paths for the player to traverse with choke points to funnel the player into a set path. Although the goal will be set, the ways in which the player can get to key points will be up to the character.

The player will begin from the outside of the building and will be tasked with entering the station to find supplies. The station will still have an active security system made up of security cameras that rotate and will sound an alert if the player enters their view range. Upon entering the station and exploring the player will stumble across an interesting item locked away in a room and the player will be given a new task to retrieve the item.

To do so the player must traverse the station avoid the enemies and activate switches to open the doors to the room. Upon retrieval of the item, the player then leaves the station and the level will end.

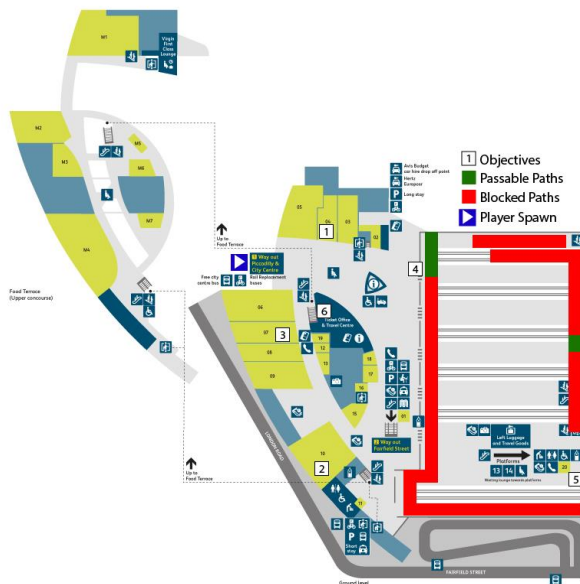
The original idea was to create something similar to Piccadilly station, with big open areas and the train tracks leading away from the station, however this idea would be hard to funnel the player down a set path and would lead to a large open area that the player just walked around. The new concept features hallways and choke points that can allow for more tense and engaging gameplay segments, making it more fun for the player.



3.2 Specific Areas

The station will feature a main entrance with exits to a car park and an underground metro. On the entrance to the station will be a waiting area with benches and shopping areas.

Litter and debris will be cover the floors, chairs, vending machines and advertisement signs will be overturned making the level feel more abandoned and the feel of people panicking as the apocalypse happened.



4.0 Gameplay & Mechanics

4.1 Player Controls

Input	Action
WASD Keys	Moves the player along X and Z axis
Space Key	Trigger Jump
Left Mouse Click	Pickup throwable item
Right Mouse Click	(If holding throwable item) throw item in direction player is facing
Shift Key	Toggle player run state on and off
Control Key	Toggle player crouch state on and off
F Key	Pickup throwables and interact with objects

As the game is based around stealth and survival, movement speed will be set to a low setting to allow the player the ability to sneak

4.2 Camera Controls

The game will be first person, and the mouse will be used to control the player's direction. If a player is to pick-up a throwable item, it will be placed in the bottom left of the screen to avoid the item from taking up too much of the screen.

Cutscenes will be used at certain points to show the player their destination, after which the control will be given back to the player and the camera will resume to first person.

4.3 Stealth Mechanics

Line of Sight: If an enemy spots the player and he isn't concealed by shadows, the dark or cover, then they will start to come after you. If you manage to get far enough away and try to conceal yourself again, there is a chance the enemy will lose track of you and go back to where he was originally.

Alert Level: The enemies will have a 3 state system of alert.

These are as shown:

1. **Inconspicuous** - This is the default state for all enemies, unless special rules are in place. This means the enemies will have no clue to the location of the player.

2. **Suspicious** - This state means the enemies may have spotted the player and will move towards the area that they were seen, if they have several other enemies
3. Within a very close range then there may be a chance they call out to alert them as well.
4. **Conspicuous** - This is the highest state an enemy can get. They have spotted and will be pursuing the player. The only way to decrease it back down is for the player to either run and try to hide or to face the enemy head on.

Positive Effects that affect Stealth	Negative Effects that affect for Stealth
Cover (breaks line of sight of enemies)	Brightly lit areas make it easier for you to be seen
Dimly lit areas or shadows conceal the player	Movement speed. The faster a character moves, the more sound he will make
Thrown objects can create sound, allowing for a distraction	Some androids and electronics will have access to night vision systems, making it a lot harder for the player to hide in plain sight
Being crouched will limit the sound made, making it easier to not make too much noise	

References

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- Naughty Dog (2013) The Last of Us [Video Game] [PS4] Tokyo: Sony Computer Entertainment
- Arkane Studios (2012) Dishonoured [Video Game] [XBOX, PC, PS4] Rockville, MA: Bethesda Softworks
- Creative Assembly (2014) Alien Isolation [Video Game] [XBOX, PC, PS4] Tokyo: SEGA