

SORN – Level Design Document – Level 1

1. Level Overview

- Level Name: *The Wall*
 - Game: *SORN*
 - Level Type: (Tutorial/Combat)
 - Player Count: 1
 - Estimated Playtime: 5-8 minutes
 - Difficulty Tier: (Early)
 - Primary Player Fantasy: Infiltrate “The Wall” and execute the *Commander*
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2. Narrative & Context

Story Purpose:

- This level exists because our narrative has taken us to this desert wasteland with direct orders to infiltrate a location called “The Wall” and eliminate a target called the “Commander of the Wall.” The outer part of the wall, which is a desert, nests a security checkpoint players will go through as a tutorial area before infiltrating the Wall

Narrative Beats:

- Beat 1: “Getting Online” which is our stationary tutorial
- Beat 2: Clearing out the security checkpoint to get comfortable with the controls
- Beat 3: Infiltrating the wall via a side vent, and entering room 1
- Beat 4: Defeating enemies in sector 1, and progressing to sector 2
- Beat 5: Defeating the enemies in sector 2, and progressing to the boss room
- Beat 6: Engage in boss fight with the commander and defeat him
- Beat 7: Escape down the hatch and exit through the front door (previously locked) and escape in your hub ship (cutscene)

World Lore Elements: Decals showing what PMC I am attacking

3. Player Goals & Objectives

Primary Objectives: Defeating the Commander of the Wall

Secondary/Optional Objectives:

- Complete the tutorial
- Clear out enemies at security checkpoint
- Clear out sector 1
- Clear out sector 2

Fail Conditions: Losing all health results in death, resetting player to previous checkpoint

Success Conditions: Progressing to the next beat is possible (doors unlock)

4. Level Flow & Structure

Entry Point: Drop in via hub ship

Critical Path Summary:

1. Complete tutorial
2. Clear security checkpoint
3. Clear out sectors 1 and 2
4. Defeat the boss

Exit Point: Through the initially locked front door

5. Gameplay Mechanics Used

Core Mechanics Highlighted: Target lock on

New Mechanics Introduced (if any):

- Boost
- Dash
- Fire right weapon
- Fire left weapon
- Fire rockets
- Reload
- Heal
- Jump

Mechanics Reinforced: Target lock on, rockets

6. Combat Design

Combat Style: Open arena, chokepoints, ambushes, vertical combat,

Enemy Types: Turret, drones, hermit, laser turret, opposing mech

Enemy Placement Philosophy: Enemies are placed strategically for balance as well as **breadcrumbing**

Encounter Progression:

1. Encounter 1: Checkpoint enemies flow from front to back leading to the vent in the wall
2. Encounter 2: Strategically placed enemies flow from right to left, breadcrumbing the player to the door. Additionally, enemies are placed keeping in mind variety and balance
3. Encounter 3: Enemies flow from front to back and are also placed on the side of the players, enabling 360-degree combat. Verticality is introduced via jump pads allowing for further traversal
4. Encounter 4: Boss fight combines everything learned into a fight against another mech

Difficulty Ramp: More enemies faced as level progresses, as well as variety

7. Exploration & Navigation

Traversal Mechanics:

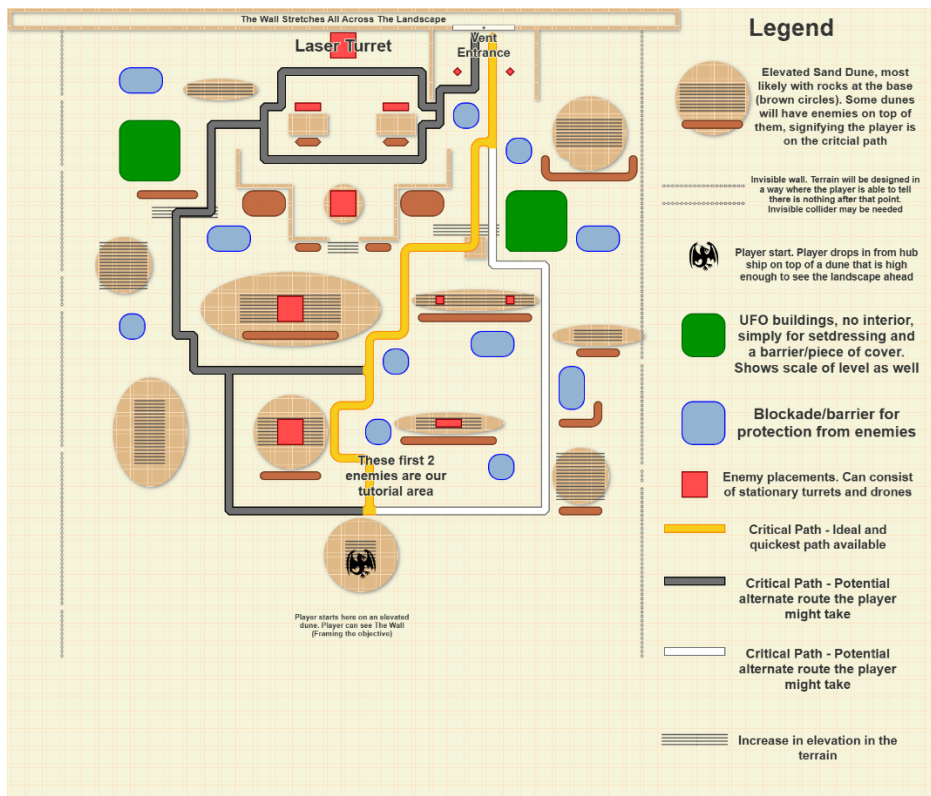
- Jumping
- Upward thrusting
- Boosting state
- Dash

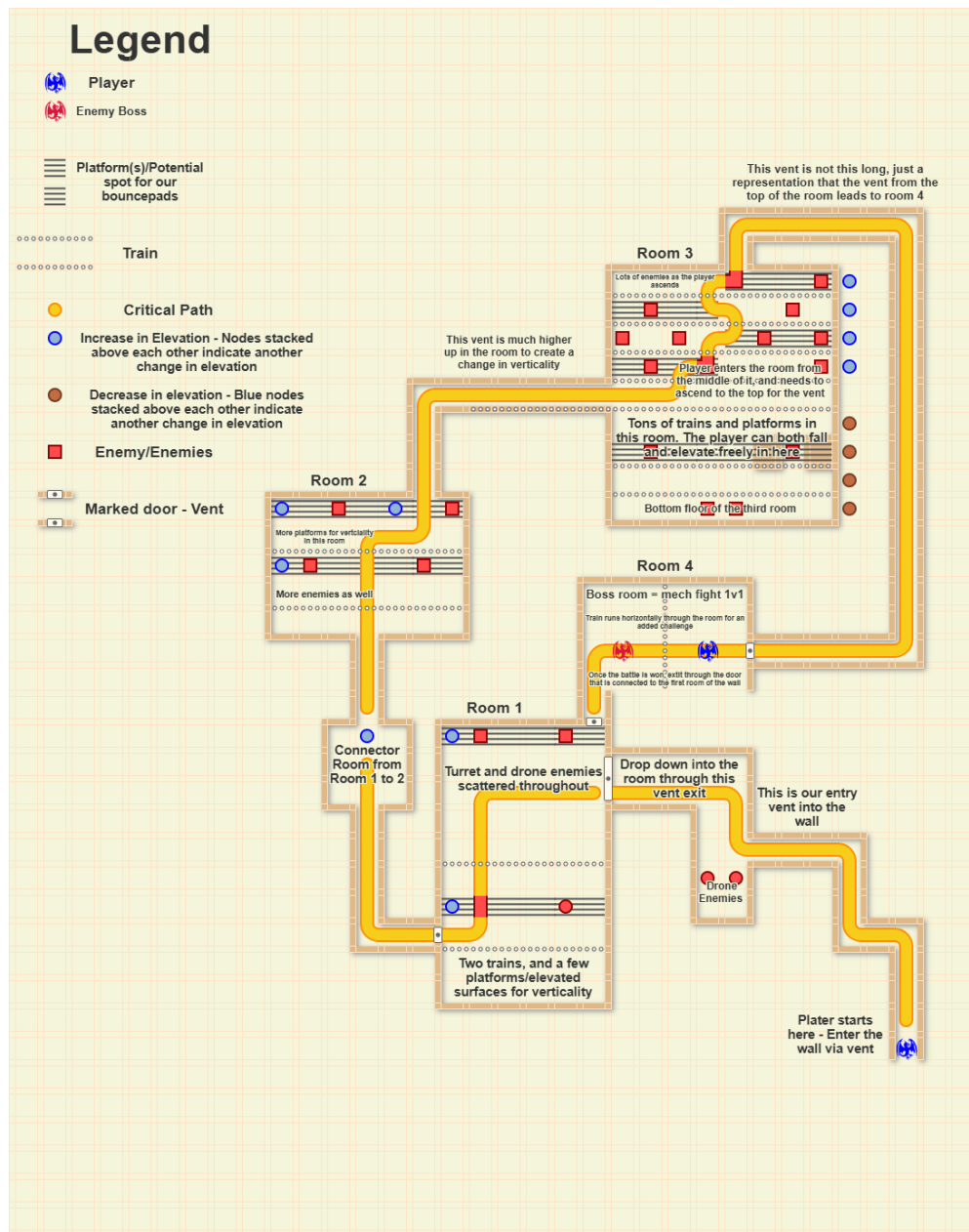
Landmarks & Wayfinding: Objective markers with distance

Secrets / Optional Paths: None

Risk vs Reward Elements: Limited amount of rockets and heals per level

8. Level Layout (Top-Down Description)





9. Environmental Storytelling

Visual Themes: Art style not finalized

- Set Dressing Goals: Spaces should feel lived in, but props should also be placed with logical reasoning. Additionally, all props/pieces of cover should be placed strategically to

allow for balanced engagements, encourage aggressive gameplay, provide proper sightlines, and verticality where needed while maintaining visual interest and cohesion

Implied Events:

Play space is currently occupied by opposing faction, and is an operational shipping facility using trains to transport cargo throughout the wall

10. Art & Audio Direction

Art:

- Biome / Environment Type: Desert and Industrial monolith play space
- Color Palette: Brown, gray, navy blue, green, military colors
- Key Visual References: Miro board

Audio:

- Ambient Sounds: Whooshing of our mech while in boosted state
 - Combat Audio Cues: Hit markers, explosions
 - Music State Changes: Different parts of the level have different soundtracks
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11. Technical Considerations

Performance Targets: Perfect 60 FPS

Streaming / Level Partitioning: Level streaming is used to load/unload levels not needed.

Additionally, it is used so we can work in the same level at the same time in engine

Blueprint / System Dependencies: Enemy BP, Mech BP, Train BP and splines

Known Risks: Different designers working on same levels can cause creative differences, or result in a level that is not cohesive

12. Player Experience Goals

Intended Emotions: Exhilaration and satisfaction

Pacing Notes: Tutorial is tame, but once the player approaches the checkpoint the pace increases substantially. Downtime exists between encounters but only for brief stints.

Moments to Remember: Final boss fight vs the Commander of the Wall

13. Metrics & Testing Notes

Time to Complete: 5-8 minutes

Death Hotspots: Laser turret guarding the entrance to the wall

Player Confusion Points:

- Understanding that players can only progress when their current objective is complete
- There is no backtracking
- All mechanics in tutorial should be spoon fed and applied in the level at some point

Iteration Notes: Images, design process, and thought process should be presented in the #level chat and explained thoroughly. This includes intentions, concepts, future changes, and any assets/systems that need to be made or implemented for the next iteration

14. Open Questions / To-Do

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