

# Game Level Design Documentation

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## MISTS OF TURMOIL

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# LEVEL DESIGN DOCUMENT

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## OVERVIEW

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### ELEVATOR PITCH

People vanishing, time running out, policeman Adrian Phelps must investigate a series of local disappearances and put an end to the island's turmoil. Run and jump through this third-person platformer, solving puzzles and collecting the artefacts necessary to open the portal to The Other Place and discover the truth.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**High Concept:** Step into the shoes of a policeman and embark on a journey of mystery and discovery across a strange Scottish island and uncover the truth.

**Genre:** Third person platformer.

**Setting:** Weird fiction world.

**Target Player:** Young adult to adolescent casual gamers with an interest in mystery and cover-up narratives.

**Play Value:** The game will feature an enjoyable gameplay experience through the use of challenging platforming puzzles, an easy and quick to learn control system, and set in a mysterious and strange world. NPC's will help guide the player to their object as well as providing some background lore behind the island and give insight into the unusual events that have occurred. The experience should feel quite unsettling and unnerving but the player should feel a curiosity to delve deeper into this unfamiliar world. The player is playing against time and so must act fast if they are to complete the level in time.

**Competition:** The game features a similar setting and feel to that of Slender Man and Call of Cthulhu with its gloomy and murky tone. It features a similar puzzle style to that of Super Mario 64 with its use of moving platforms and large blocky shapes.

**Unique Selling Point:** Whereas other mystery-driven games are typically slow paced allowing the player to take their time with solving puzzles, this game offers fast-paced gameplay so the player must try to discover all they can and find out the truth before time runs out. This will allow for a lot of replayability as the player can discover new details and learn from their mistakes on their next playthrough.

**Game Engine:** Unreal

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## PLAYER GOAL

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The goal is for the player to investigate the recent disappearances of the local residents on the island. The player must uncover all the clues they can, whether that be from any remaining inhabitants or through environment clues, and put an end to the turmoil.

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## DESIGN INFLUENCES

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The game draws a lot of inspiration and influence from the popular game *Slender: The Eight Pages*, a first-person survival horror based on a quasi-folklore meme figure known as the Slender Man. It's gloomy, murky setting and the thick, dense layer of fog that encompasses the game world is a big inspiration for my games world. The player should not be able to see too much of the world ahead of them so having a thick blanket of fog cover the environment will help with impairing the player's vision and leave what lies ahead up to their imagination. Leaving the player to the unknown will make them curious and allow for their imagination to help drive their own gameplay experience.



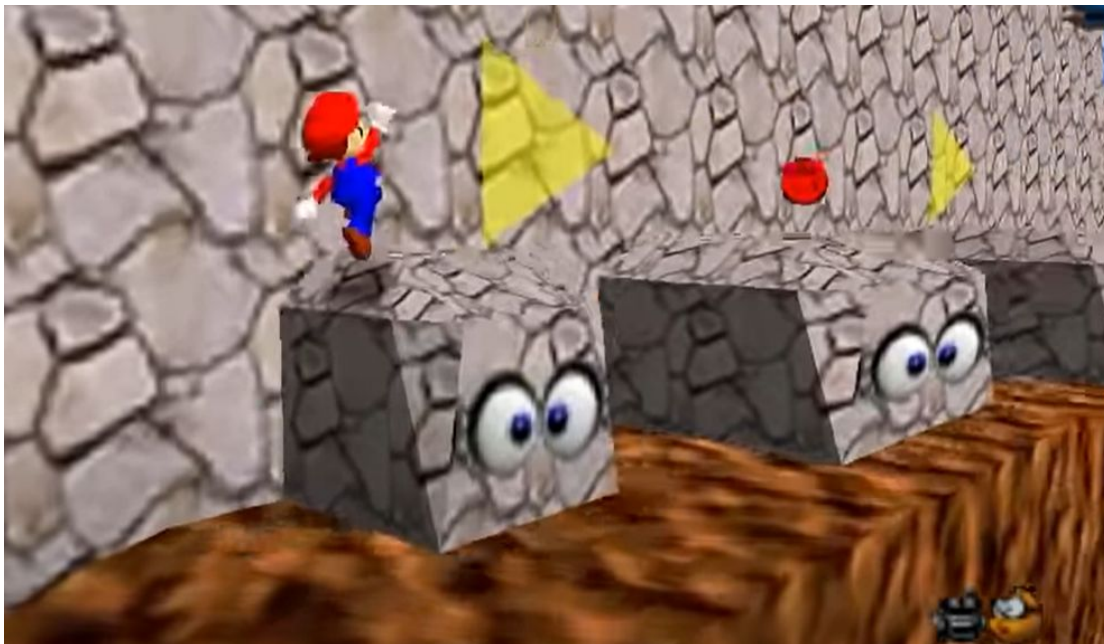
***Slender: The Eight Pages***

Call of Cthulhu is a role-playing survival horror based on themes of lovecraftian and physiological horror. Call of Cthulhu follows a private investigator, similar to that of this game. Influence was drawn from its damp, rugged and atmospheric environments, as well as from its gameplay such as revealing clues to the player with environment cues.



***Call of Cthulhu***

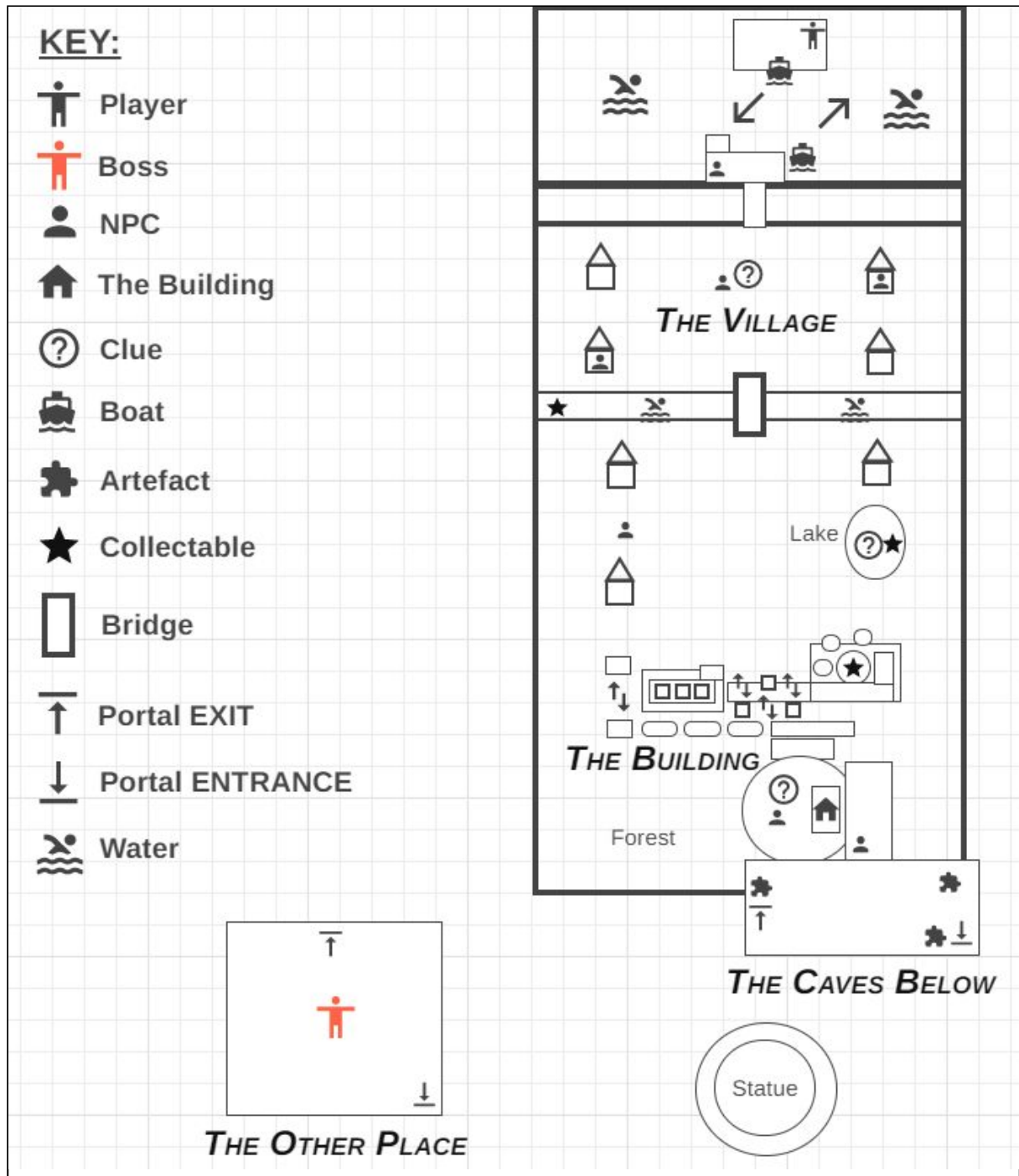
Super Mario 64 is a widely acclaimed and influential 3D platforming game made by Nintendo. The player assumes control of Mario across a range of innovative open environments of varying sizes, traversing through the game's many puzzles. Super Mario 64's use of unusually large blocky shapes in some of its puzzles and moving platform sections inspired the creation of some of my puzzle designs.

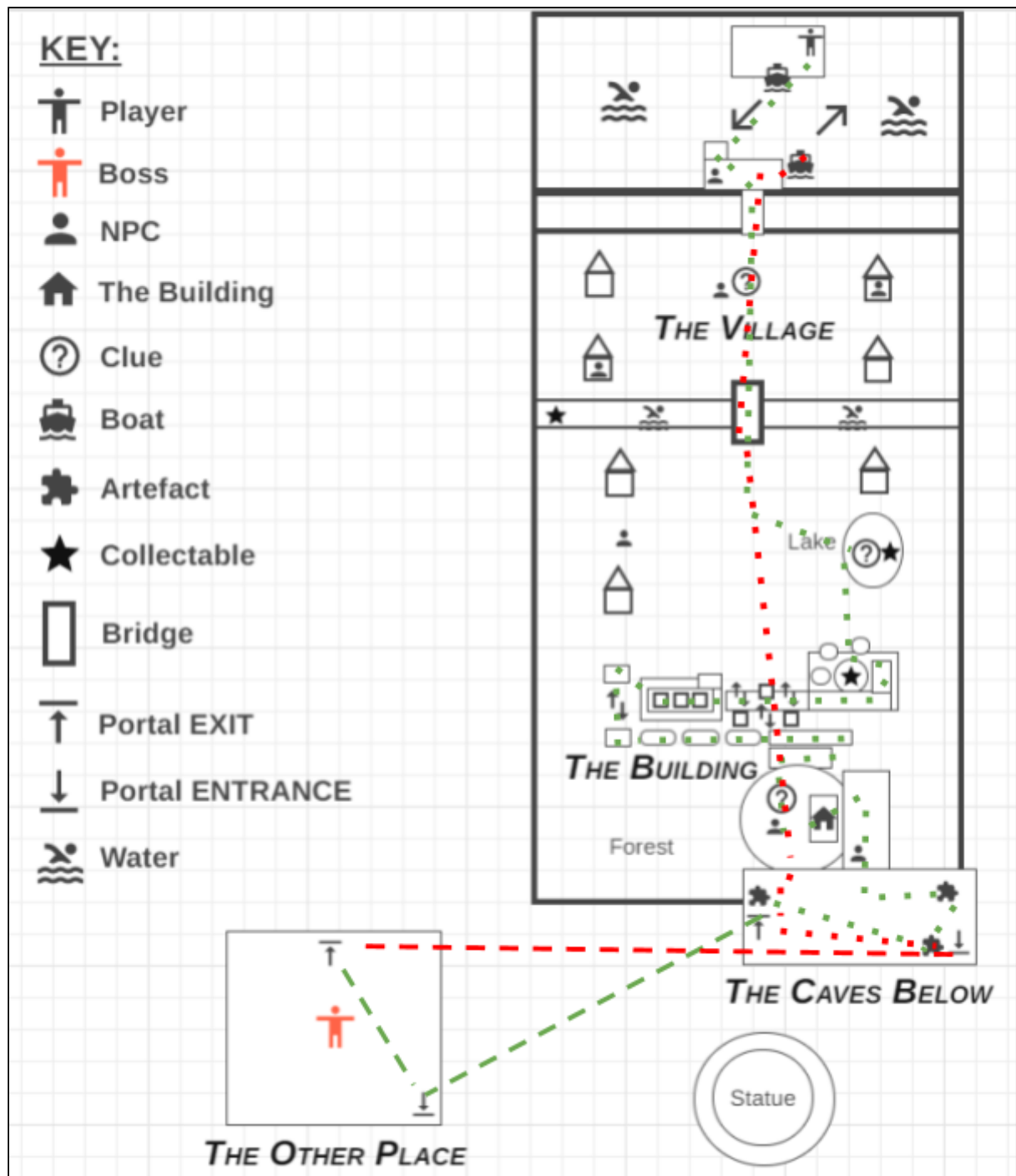


***Super Mario 64***

## MAPS / LEVEL LAYOUT

### TOP-DOWN PERSPECTIVE



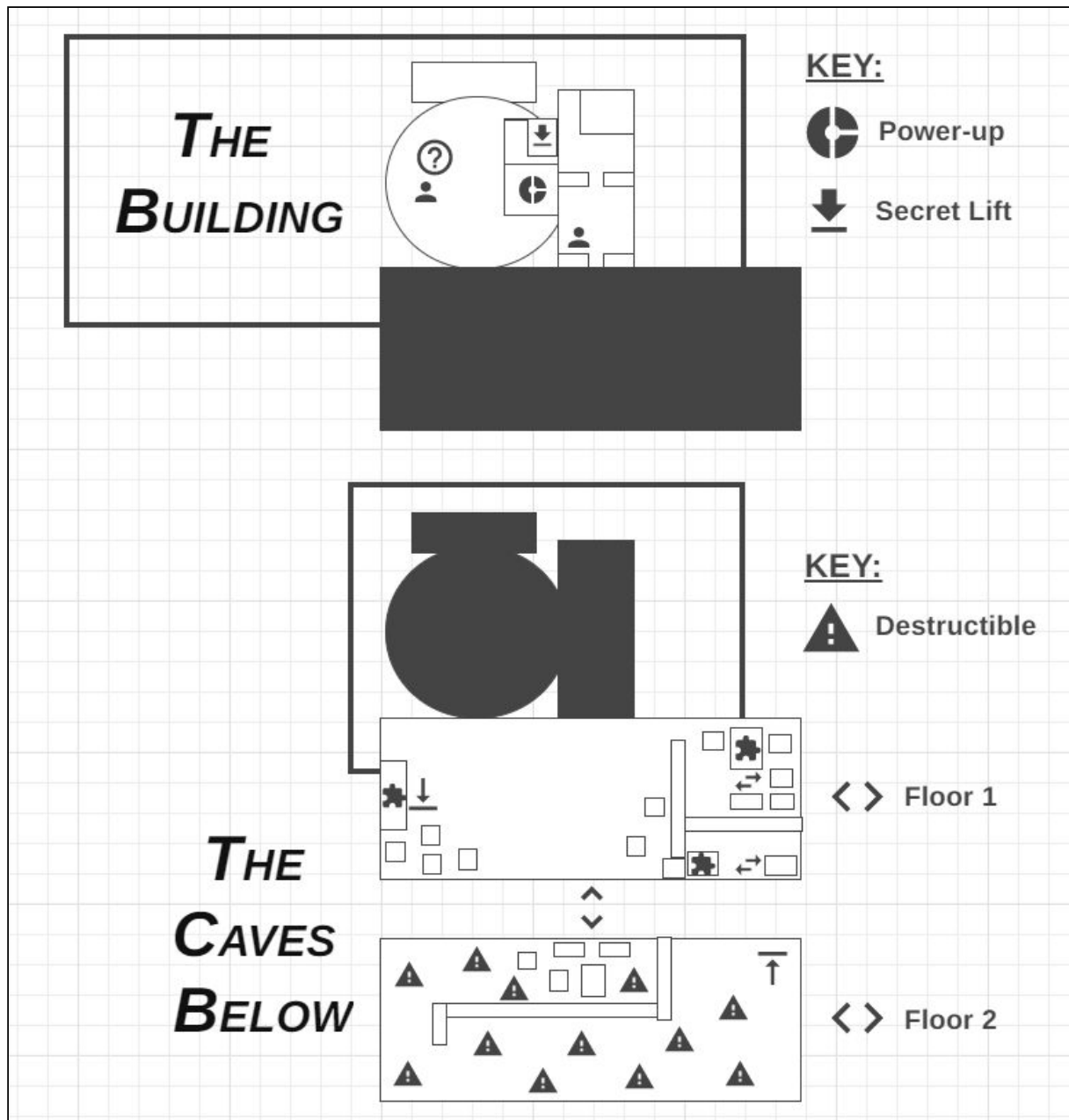


### Expected Route

**Green:** Route there

**Red:** Route back

## CLOSE-UPS



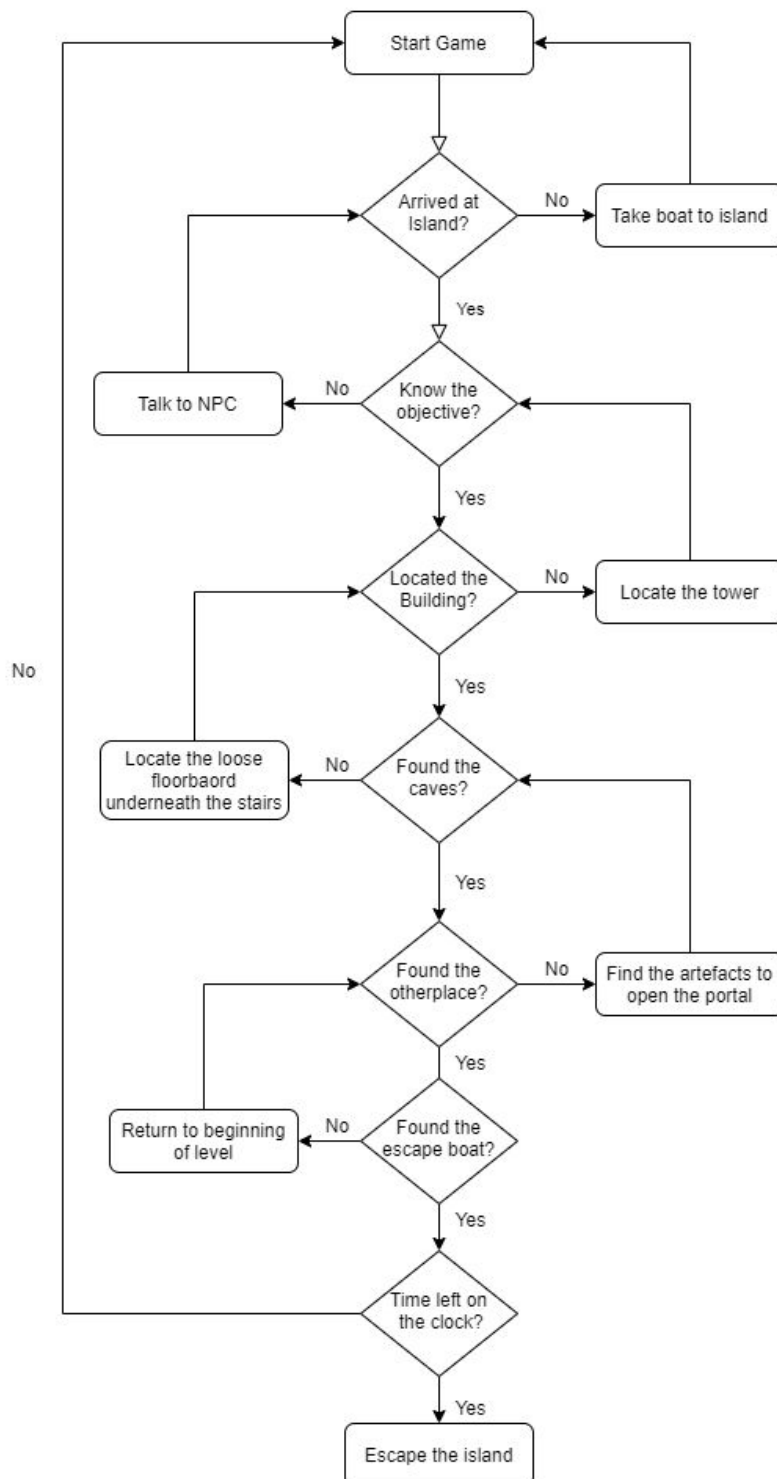


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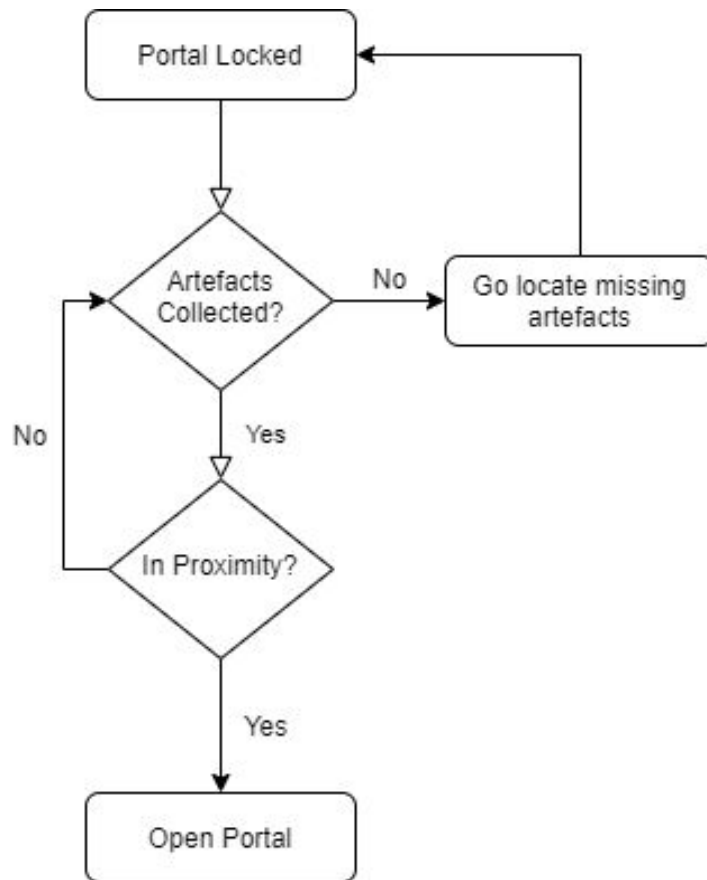
# PROGRESSION AND CHALLENGE

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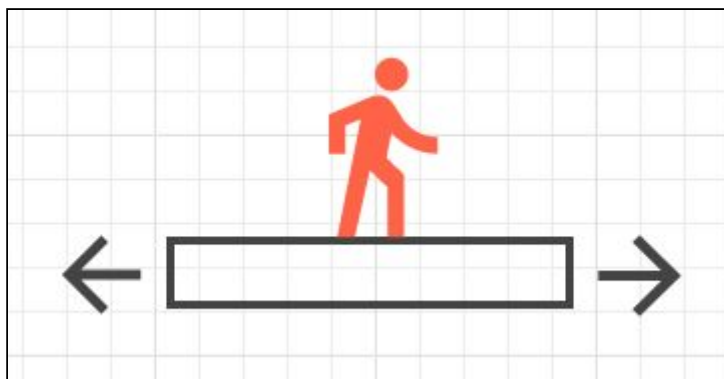
## LEVEL-FLOW DIAGRAM



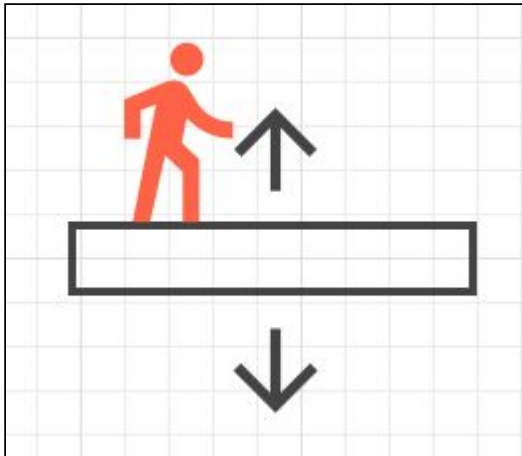
## ARTEFACT COLLECTION DIAGRAM



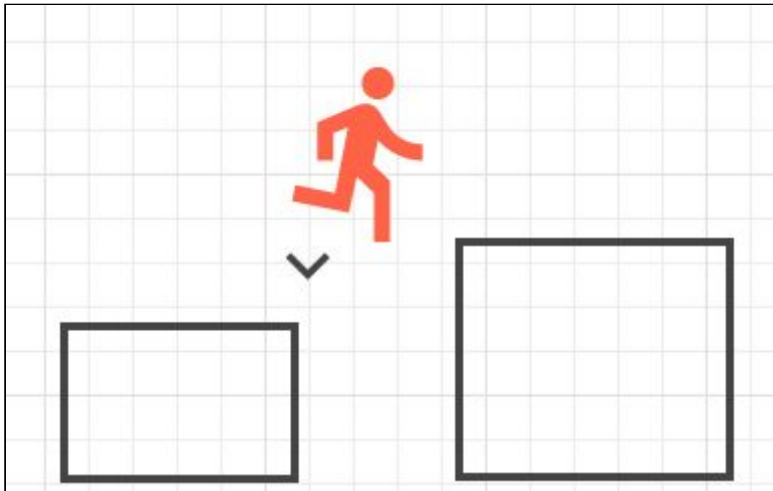
## SIDE-TO-SIDE PLATFORMS



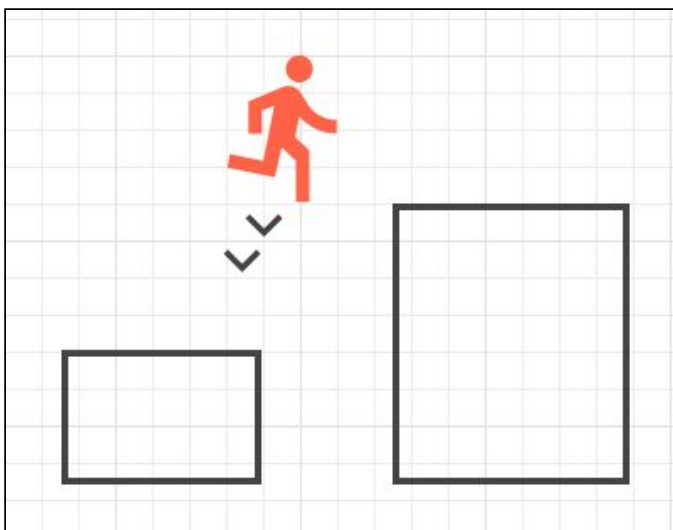
## ELEVATING PLATFORMS



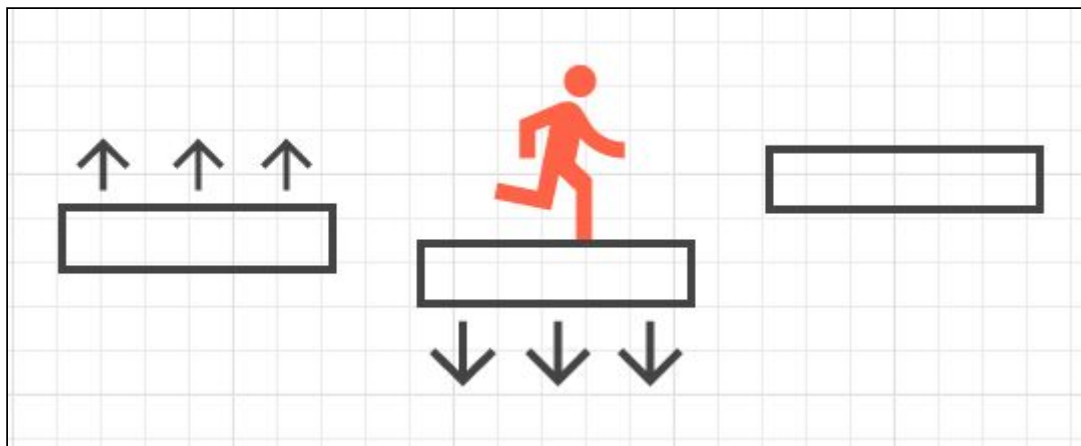
## SINGLE JUMP GAPS



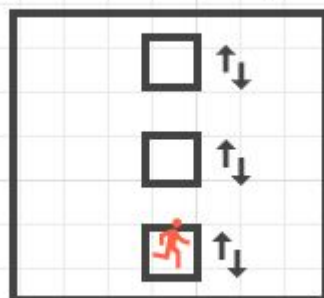
## DOUBLE JUMP GAPS



## PRESSURE-CONTROLLED PLATFORMS

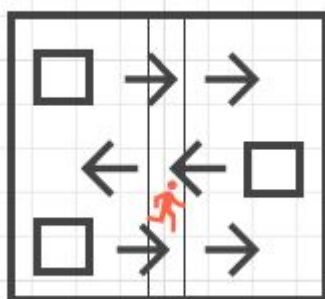


Pressure activated platforms

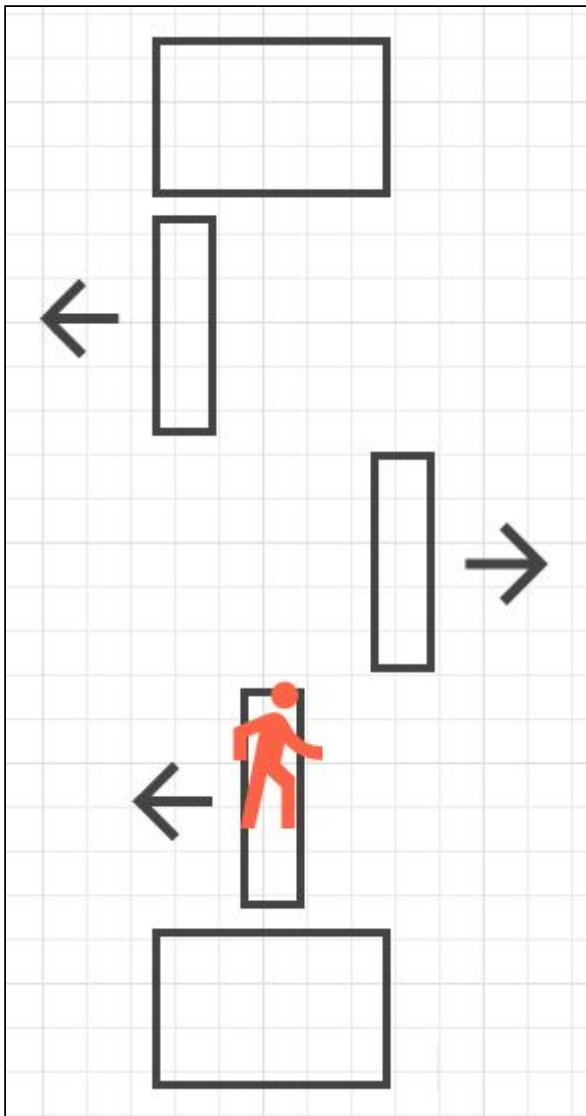


## FAST-MOVING PLATFORMS

Fast-moving obstacles



## NARROW SIDE-TO-SIDE PLATFORMS



## ARRIVAL - THE VILLAGE

- **CHALLENGES**

- Locating the clues
- SIDE-TO-SIDE
- ELEVATING PLATFORMS
- SINGLE JUMP GAPS
- PRESSURE-CONTROLLED PLATFORMS
- FAST-MOVING PLATFORMS
- NARROW SIDE-TO-SIDE PLATFORMS

## ENTRANCE - THE BUILDING

- **CHALLENGES**

- Locating the hidden floorboard.

## DESCENT - THE CAVES BELOW

- **CHALLENGES**

- Collect all three artefacts
- SIDE-TO-SIDE
- ELEVATING PLATFORMS
- SINGLE JUMP GAPS
- DOUBLE JUMP GAPS
- FAST-MOVING PLATFORMS

## MADNESS - THE OTHER PLACE

- **CHALLENGES**

- Escape the boss
- SINGLE JUMP GAPS
- DOUBLE JUMP GAPS

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## GAMEPLAY NARRATIVE

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### ARRIVAL - THE VILLAGE

Upon arriving on this strange, mysterious island, the player will be greeted by the local boat keeper. They will welcome the player and blather on about the strange events that have recently occurred on the island. Proceeding onwards, the player will find themselves at the local village and be greeted by another resident. They will reiterate the strange happenings and inform the player that they should locate The Building. The player can then choose to investigate the houses, some of which will be occupied, with some residents not saying much and simply grunting whilst others will be helpful towards the players investigation. The player at this point should feel an increasing curiosity at this point, questioning what has the residents so fearful. Progressing onwards, the player will find themselves enveloped in a thick blanket of fog, impairing their vision slightly ahead. Not too long after this they will find a small forest and in the middle of this forest they will find the beginnings to a large tower. Advancing up this tower is no easy feat as the player shall be tasked with journeying across a multitude of different platforming puzzles of varying complexity. The sheer height of this tower will enable the player to overlook the entirety of the village with the hopes of conveying awe and wonder. A little bit of unease may be felt for fear of falling off which will make the player wary of their every step.

## ENTRANCE - THE BUILDING

After successfully navigating through the tower puzzles, the player will reach the top of the tower and come across the The Building; a church. Outside the church a local resident will be loitering. Choosing to speak to this person will reveal something strange about the church perhaps suggesting something is hidden in there. The player will then need to investigate the church, locating this supposed hidden feature. Upon looking underneath the stairway, the player will find themselves beginning to sink through the floorboards as a platform unveils itself beneath them, taking them down below.

## DESCENT - THE CAVES BELOW

Reaching the bottom of the platform, the player will find themselves in a small tunnel. At the end of the tunnel, another islander will be waiting for them. They will provide the player with the knowledge that they will need to locate the three ancient artefacts in order to access the nearby portal. The caves will be dark and dimly lit, so the player will need to use their wits and tread cautiously to avoid falling from platforms. After collecting the three artefacts the portal will be opened and the player can proceed on through.

## MADNESS - THE OTHER PLACE

The player will be transported to a strange place, quite unlike the island he had just been on. Gravity will appear to be different here, as floating rocks can be seen floating above them. In the centre of this large, unusual place, a colossal figure can be seen supposedly sleeping, with lifeless bodies scattered around; the apparent missing residents. As the player approaches, the figure begins to wake up and then chases the player. During this fast-paced sequence, the player must use any abilities acquired to travel across to the other side to where another portal is situated.

## RETURN

Exiting the portal, the player will find themselves in another cave section. The player will need to travel through quickly as the cave collapses around them. The player is against the clock at this point and must escape the island before they are captured by the colossal creature. This section will help encompass a sense of urgency to get out. Once out of the cave, the player will need to jump down the tower platforms towards the ground, travelling once again through the village and out to the dockyard and board the last boat docked there. After boarding the boat, the player will escape.

# DEBRIEFING DOCUMENT

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## AUTHORSHIP

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I can confirm that everything is my own work and that any sources used are acknowledged.

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## DESIGN PATTERNS AND PRINCIPLES

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### GUIDANCE

NPCS are implemented to give clues to the player, providing guidance to the objective as well as giving some background lore. This is effective in nudging the player in the right direction but not holding the player's hand.

### SAFE ZONES

Sections are implemented throughout the level to provide a safe spot for the player to remain without consequence. For example stationary platforms are positioned after each puzzle. This is effective as it allows the player to have a breather between puzzles and tackle them in their own time.

### FORESHADOWING

The cave exit is visible from The Building. The exit is too high for the player to jump to even with the double jump powerup active, but is positioned here to make the player curious of how to reach this unreachable area. It also contributes to the flow of the level by showing everything is connected.

The large mannequin statue hints at the big boss of the level. The collectable figurines are also miniature mannequins.

### VISUAL LANGUAGE

The way to each area is guided through the use of a pair of fire torches. These are situated at each significant progress point of the level and in front of major level areas. Cutscenes are used to indicate where the artefacts are positioned so the player has a rough idea of where they need to go.



## EDUCATIONAL DEVICES

When the player obtains the double-jump powerup, they are immediately tasked with utilising it to collect all three artefacts needed for opening the portal.

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## ASSETS USED

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- **MODELS**

- Unreal Engine SM\_Bush
- Unreal Engine SM\_Couch
- Unreal Engine ThirdPersonCharacter
- Unreal Engine LeftArm\_StaticMesh
- Unreal Engine RightArm\_StaticMesh
- Unreal Engine Linear\_Stair\_StaticMesh
- Unreal Engine Bump\_StaticMesh
- Unreal Engine Shape\_Cube
- Unreal Engine TemplateFloor
- Unreal Engine SK\_Mannequin
- Unreal Engine SM\_Rock
- Unreal Engine SM\_Lamp\_Ceiling
- Unreal Engine Shape\_Wedge\_A
- Unreal Engine Wall\_400x300
- Unreal Engine Wall\_Door\_400x300
- Unreal Engine Floor\_400x400
- Unreal Engine SM\_Door
- Unreal Engine SM\_DoorFrame
- Unreal Engine Shape\_Cylinder
- Unreal Engine Shape\_Cone
- Unreal Engine SM\_PillarFrame
- Unreal Engine Shape\_Pipe\_180
- Unreal Engine Shape\_Plane
- Unreal Engine Wall\_Window\_400x300
- Unreal Engine Material Sphere

- **TEXTURES / MATERIALS**

- Unreal Engine M\_Asset Platform
- Unreal Engine M\_Basic Floor
- Unreal Engine M\_Basic\_Wall
- Unreal Engine M\_Bush
- Unreal Engine M\_Wood\_Floor\_Walnut\_Worn
- Unreal Engine M\_Wood\_Floor\_Walnut\_Polished
- Unreal Engine M\_Wood\_Walnut

- Unreal Engine M\_Glass
- Unreal Engine M\_Rock\_Slate
- Unreal Engine T\_Brick\_Clay\_New\_Mat
- Unreal Engine BasicShapeMaterial
- Unreal Engine M\_Concrete\_Poured
- Unreal Engine M\_UE4Man\_Body
- Unreal Engine M\_UE4Man\_ChestLogo
- Unreal Engine M\_Tech\_Hex\_Tile\_Pulse
- Unreal Engine M\_Fire\_SubUV
- Unreal Engine M\_Rock
- Unreal Engine M\_Water\_Ocean
- Unreal Engine M\_Metal\_Gold
- Unreal Engine RampMaterial