

Develop at Ubisoft 2023-2024 Game Design Final Design Document

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Designing a High Value Character for Watch Dogs: Legion



Chemical Engineer

High Value Character

With expertise extending beyond the hacking space, the Chemical Engineer introduces innovative ways to manipulate the environment.

As players navigate the dystopian streets of *Watch Dogs: Legion's* London, the Chemical Engineer presents a fresh perspective, offering both challenges and rewards that extend beyond the conventional technological paradigm.

While Chemical Engineers may lack the physical prowess of many High Value Characters, they make up for it by using their intelligence.

In video games with weapons, the first instinct is often to run in guns blazing. The *Watch Dogs* series allows players to take a more deliberate and strategic approach using hacking abilities, which can be used to manipulate technology in the environment and influence combat.

The Chemical Engineer enhances this, offering players extra utility to play their way, taking advantage of every tool in their arsenal in a strategic fashion.

Chemical Engineer Abilities



Chemical Trap

Lay a portable, activatable trap to knockout enemies



Corrosive Catalyst

Melt through locked doors, audibly alerting nearby guards



Exothermic Blast

Trigger an explosion that increases damage taken by nearby enemies



Chemical Trap

A trap that causes an explosion that knocks out enemies, stuns allies, and destroys gadgets that are in range.

Can be thrown a short distance in an arc or placed in front of the player. Once in the world, the trap must be activated to explode. It cannot be pre-armed.

Activatable using:

- Line of sight
- Spiderbot
- Camera
- Drone

- ⬡ Small and unobtrusive
- ⬡ Undetectable by enemies
- ⬡ Smaller range than in-world traps
- ⬡ Visible explosion radius
- ⬡ Flexible playstyle

Thrown Trap

As the player holds the gadget key, a throw arc appears for precise aim.

Placed Trap

The player moves to the desired location and taps the gadget button to place the trap.

The Chemical Trap allows for a flexible playstyle.

For instance, it can be placed proactively in an enemy's path or left behind to prevent pursuit.



Corrosive Catalyst

Combine chemicals to melt through locked doors without need for a key or junction box activation.

Requires 3-5 seconds to activate and follow through, adding difficulty and additional considerations to its use.

Melting the door triggers an audio cue that nearby enemies can hear, who will investigate and set other guards on alert over the radio.

- ✧ Provides new paths
- ✧ Allows bypass of difficult puzzles
- ✧ Creates new utility with risk to balance it out
- ✧ Employable as a distraction
- ✧ Extended cooldown

The Corrosive Catalyst will only alert guards once. When the all clear is signaled, they will proceed as though the door was unlocked.

Though it alerts guards, the Corrosive Catalyst allows players to avoid long sections of combat and stealth to retrieve a key or reach a junction box.

This can increase accessibility for more difficult levels, while remaining balanced for general gameplay.



Exothermic Blast

Release a blast of chemicals that make those around you temporarily take increased damage from your attacks.

Enemies become quicker to take down, allowing for defense in case of emergency, or for a pre-planned takedown.

The Exothermic Blast allows for combat flexibility and quick clearing of enemies.

Combines concepts of:

- Extra damage passive
- DJ's Feedback Loop
- Chemical Engineering background

To create Exothermic Blast:

A temporary boost that allows for versatility while remaining balanced

Despite the Chemical Engineer's strong ability to set up and manipulate their environment, they are weaker when it comes to gunplay and hand to hand fighting.

This ability gives them back the option to enter and succeed in combat, while maintaining a cohesive character design.

The Chemical Engineer offers a rounded gameplay experience, allowing for multiple playstyles.

Designed around strategy and planning, this character can be played stealthily or aggressively.

Starting weapons:

- LTL 68P DedSec Pistol

Health:

- No additional health or armour abilities

Movement abilities:

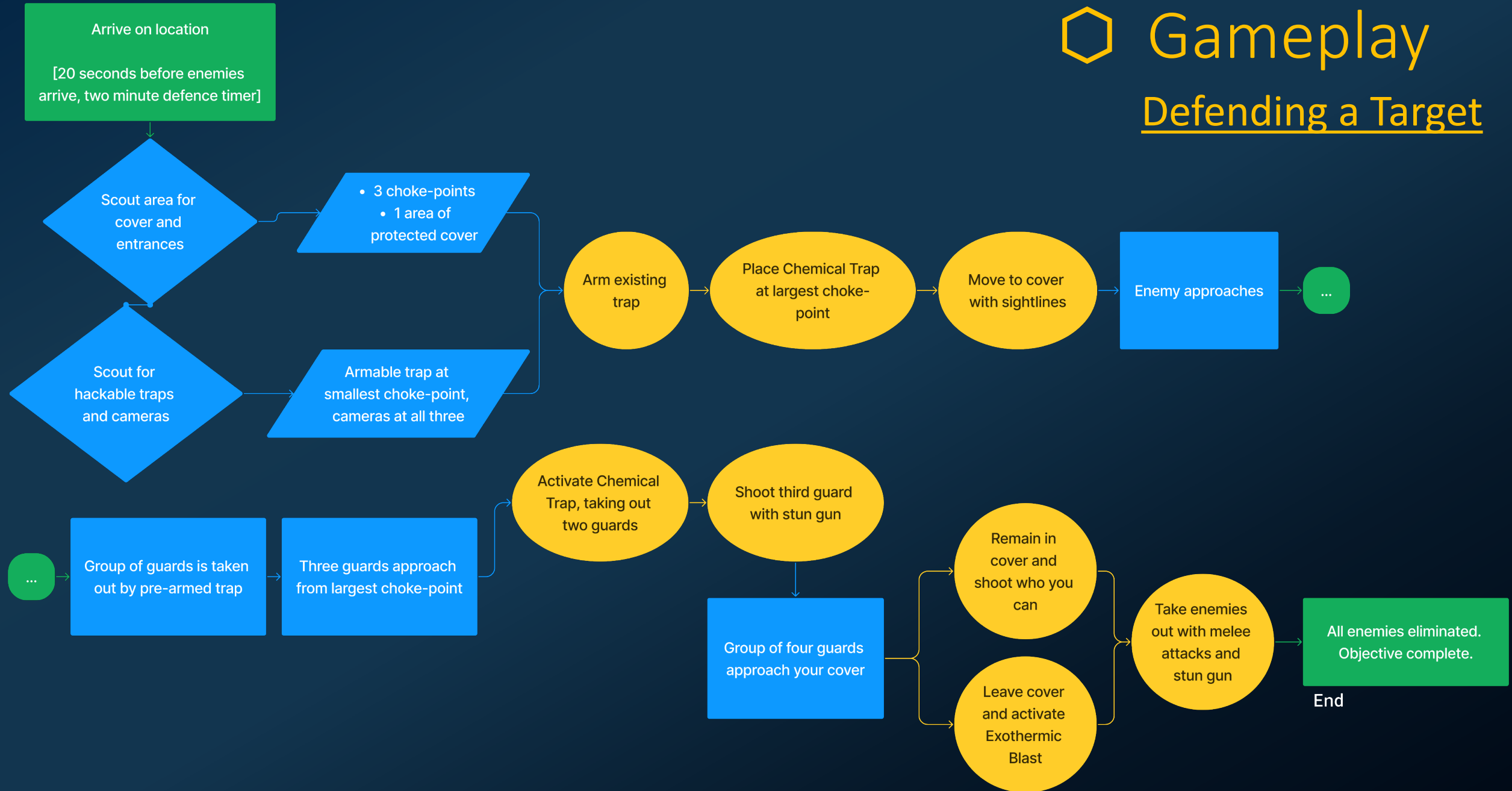
- Running
- Crouching
- Climbing

Start



Gameplay

Defending a Target



Start



Gameplay

Infiltrating a Lab

Possible gameplay of a Chemical Engineer versus a Spy.



⬡ Character Differentiation

The Chemical Engineer brings a different experience and field to Watch Dogs: Legion, while not breaking the rules of the world.

While many characters focus solely on technology, the Chemical Engineer brings in science. It is a twist on the basics of the game, grounded in the reality of a high-tech futuristic London, bringing in something new yet realistic.

Accessibility Considerations

The Chemical Engineer facilitates different playstyles, allowing player agency. The player can use the abilities to avoid the quick reactions required by combat.

The placeable Chemical Trap can allow players to tailor the environment to their needs, rather than finding ways to path enemies into pre-set traps.

Corrosive Catalyst allows players to bypass particularly difficult scenarios, and strategically navigate the world to their advantage.

Design Process

Consider character's purpose:

- What role is the character trying to fill
- How can it manipulate the world
- What unique style and technology can be introduced

Brainstorm possible professions:

- Must make sense in world – no wizards
- Consider professionals that would exist in the world that are not already operatives in the game
- Created a list of skills that various professions could have – how would they be fun in gameplay

Design Reasoning

- Abilities are loosely based on science – what would someone who works in a lab have access to?
- Lab worker would struggle in physical confrontations but excel strategically.
- When the character needs to engage in physical confrontation, what could they use to turn it to their advantage?

The abilities of the Chemical Engineer reflect skills of other operatives in the game with a unique twist. This is to ensure the character could fit into the game as though it was there from the start, while still giving the player a reason to pick the Chemical Engineer specifically.

Collaborative Overview: Task List & Dependencies

Level Design

- Adding Chemical Engineer to the world to be recruitable

Narrative Design

- Providing basic backstories for the Chemical Engineer – why are they in the world?
- Supply basic descriptions for the character and its abilities for in world

Art, Animation, and Sound Design

- Create animations and sound for the abilities
- Create clothing related to Chemical Engineer to add to game

UI/UX Design

- Create icons for Chemical Engineer abilities

Programming

- Create the abilities in game
 - Create the trap (by modifying the existing traps or creating a new item)
 - Create the melting door ability – code for it to alert AI in the area the one time
 - Modify the passive extra damage to be a temporary affect when Exothermic Blast is activated

QA

- Playtest the abilities – are they enjoyable and balanced?

The Chemical Engineer's Chemical Trap, Corrosive Catalyst, and Exothermic Blast, offer a strategy-oriented gameplay style, adding fresh and interesting utility to the game.



This intelligent yet physically weak character possesses a well-integrated kit that mirrors its persona's backstory and capabilities.



Immersing players in a distinctive experience that embodies the atmosphere of Watch Dogs: Legion's dystopian London, the Chemical Engineer character offers a journey filled with both challenges and rewards.

