

“Highland Waters” Game Design Document

Title:

“Highland Waters”

Target Audience:



This game will appeal to anyone with a sense of adventure and a love for the mysterious. As of right now the story will not involve any gore but there will be simulated violence, so an E rating should be sufficient.

Target Platform:

“Highland Waters” will be released for all platforms including; PC, Xbox360, PS3 and Wii. After initial testing a mobile release may be available.

Concept:

Thomas Kain, an adventurer and ex-mercenary, works for an unnamed employer who seeks ancient artifacts for a private collection. Kain doesn't ask questions, but only enjoys a stable job with good benefits and freedom. He learned long ago not to get involved in anything beyond what he is paid to do and wants to keep it that way. His current expedition has brought him to a largely unpopulated area of Northern Scotland, to a relatively small island off the north western coast that has old history. Kain is curious about this assignment as it is the first time he has been sent completely alone. He can only assume it is because of his special abilities, which worries him a bit more than usual. After finding a suitable spot to land, Thomas is struck by a mysterious electrical force as he tries to land directly on the given coordinates, Celtic Castle remains, so he has to land on a small stretch of land near the island instead.

The player takes control of Thomas, just after landing and finding his engines no longer working. Through the use of brief cinematics and abilities that can be accessed by utilizing specific keys, the player will be able to discover clues as to where he is and where he needs to go. It will also be up to the player to solve puzzles and create solutions to obstacles in order to progress throughout the level.

Will he be able to survive at this unknown place and finish the job he came to do? What mysteries will he unravel? These questions will push the player to explore his surroundings and push forward as more clues and more questions come to light. The island, the artifact and even the employer are not all they seem to be.

Game Play: (Sidescroller)

From the very beginning the player will have the ability to explore his surroundings with the freedom like that of Skyrim. If he gets close to a clue or something unique, a message will come up at the bottom of the screen displaying the characters thoughts whether relevant or not to the main storyline. If the object or area can be interacted with, the player will be instructed to use the E key to investigate further. Various camera effects will be used to focus the players' attention to certain areas and paths that should be taken. Side quests may also be utilized to create a more dynamic gameplay. Internal dialogue will be used when clues are realized to help the player move forward.

Characters:

Thomas Kain – The main protagonist of the story, Thomas is an ex-mercenary with a shady past. He has recently been employed by an unnamed person with the hopes of leaving his old life behind and enjoying a simple life of artifact discovery. This is the first expedition that has not gone according to plan.

Unnamed Employer – For the 1st level, the employer is only used for the purpose of the story, however during the length of the game, the employer may play a more dominant part.

Levels:

The game will consist of multiple levels, each having progressively more difficult puzzles and obstacles to get through before the player can proceed through the level.

Level 1 – “Rough Landing”:

After crashing onto the island and being the only apparent survivor, the player will discover an old church/temple at the top of the island he was headed to. The player will need to search for a way up and figure out puzzles and avoid obstacles.

Further levels to be determined.

Controls:

On the PC, the player will use the mouse to look around and the left mouse button to use any tools that he may acquire. The player will utilize WASD keys for movement and E key to interact with objects and the environment.

Audio:

A collection of sound effects will be used to bring the player closer into the world of the game as well as authentic Celtic background music to set the mood for each area that can be explored.

Mechanics:

The majority of the mechanics will involve puzzles that must be figured out in order to progress and if time permits, there will also be stealth action needed to take down various (but few) enemies throughout the game. One primary mechanic that the player can utilize is a special ability called "True Path or True Vision" (Title to be determined) in which the player can see into the past and follow the last person who sought the same objective as Thomas.

Puzzle #1: The player will need to figure out a way across a river using two pieces of wood and a pile of rocks that are nearby. ***True Path**

Puzzle #2: After crossing the river, the player will need to use the wall jumping ability to climb higher and into the opening of a cave above.

Puzzle #3: After entering a cave room, you will need to figure out a solution to a puzzle in order to open the door out before the room fills with water.

Puzzle #4: Once outside of the main chamber, you will enter an area where only pillars are left of the floor. Jump across the pillars before they fall to the depths below. ***True Path**

Puzzle #5: After getting outside, you must outrun a bolder before being flattened.

Puzzle #6: Figure out a way to take down a force field that is protecting the castle. ***True Path**

Additional objectives: Loot the body of an enemy player for a key, use ladders or ropes, avoid traps (falling floor, darts from wall, falling rocks, etc.)

Another chamber where the only exit is on the ceiling, the player will need to figure out how to fill the room with water in order to float to the top and escape.

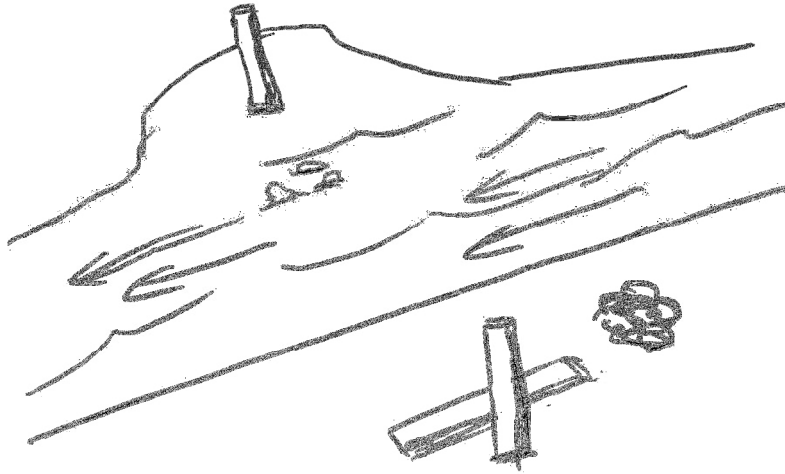
The player must use an object to rest on a pressure plate that must remain activated in order to keep the exit door open.

A torch can be used to burn away an oil slick in order to reveal a message or clue that can be used in the level.

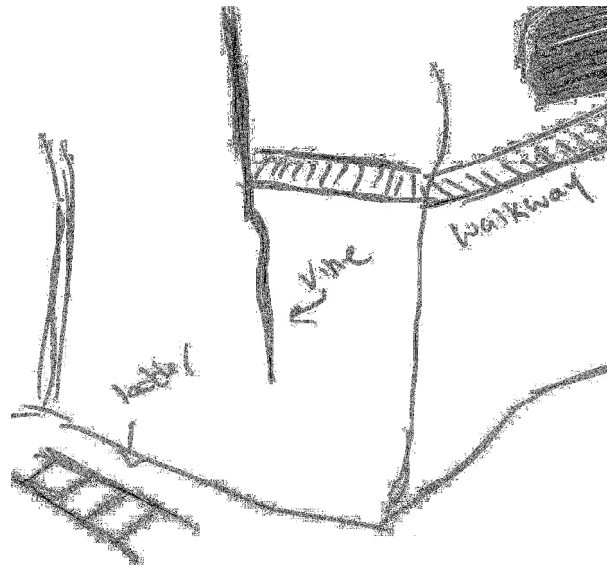
Player must decipher symbols on a map for further clues.

Other possible mechanics: The player may have an "instinct" mechanic that can alert him/her of nearby danger. Stealth must be used to defeat enemies.

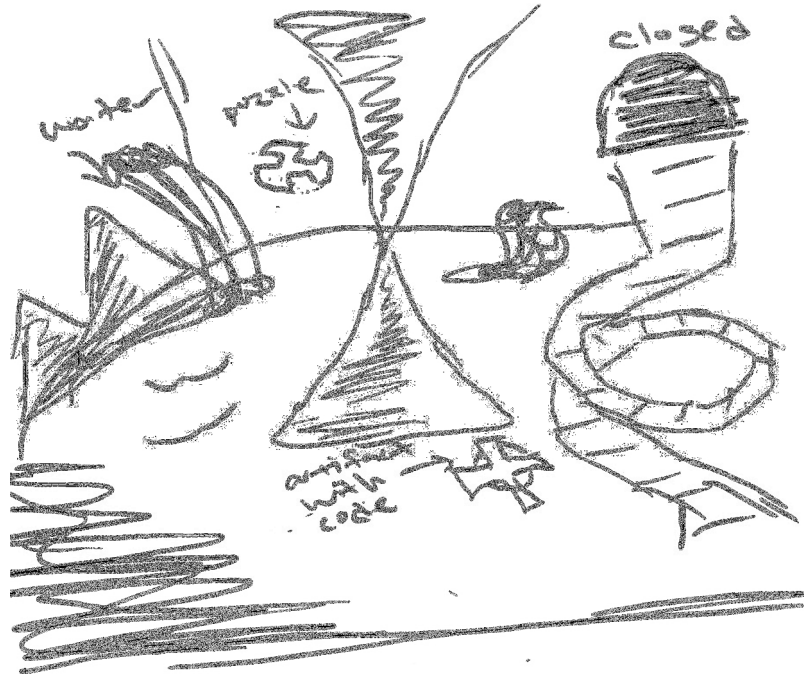
Puzzle Sketches:



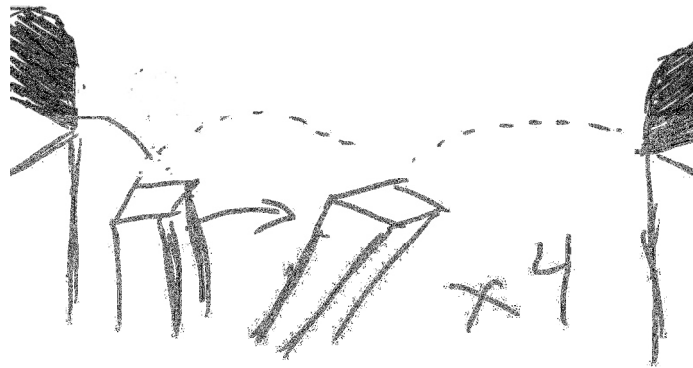
Use planks and stones to cross river



Use ladder and vine to reach walkway



Use Artifact to decipher puzzle and open door before the room is flooded



Jump across pillars quickly before they fall beneath your feet

Use Bolder to fill chasm, in order to cross

Bolder

