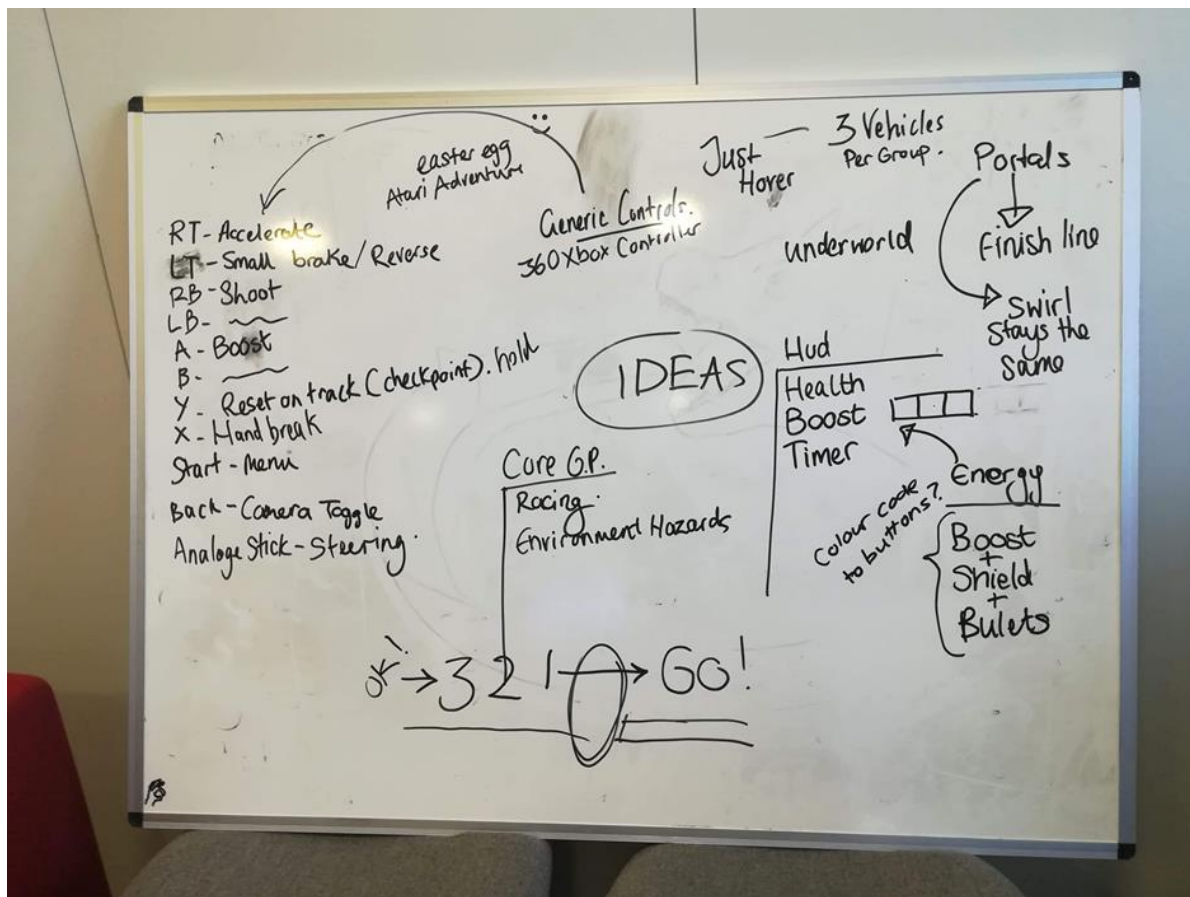


PRODUCTION DIARY

MODULE: M5X01568

JOSEPH BLANCHARD 1702480

4TH OCTOBER



As a class we had a group meeting discussing the ideas of our hover-based racing game. We talked about general ideas, such as the Hud, health and boosters and timer, we also thought about shields and bullets. We talked about the core gameplay and that we wanted a competitive racing game with hazards if possible.

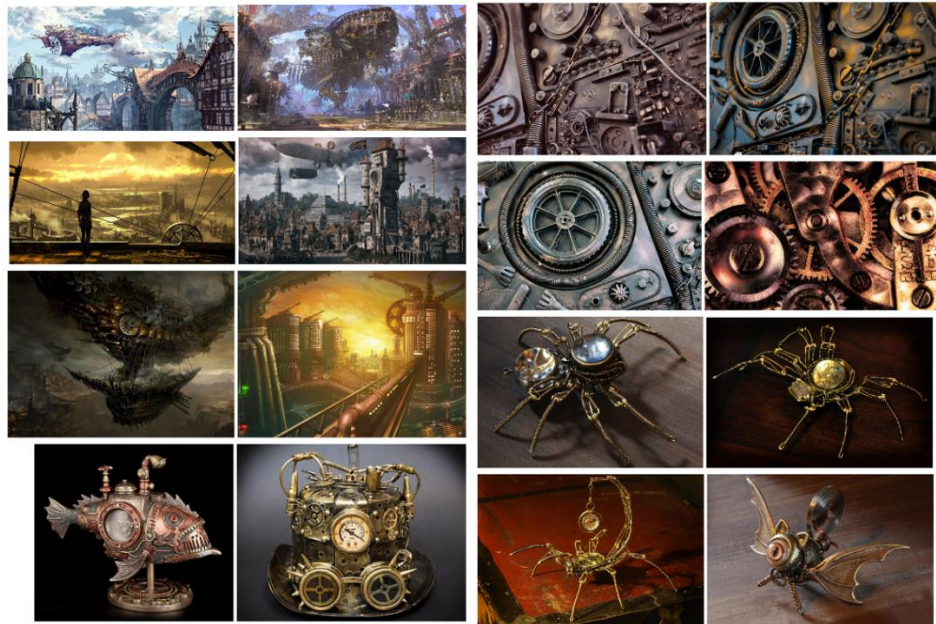
We wanted 3 separate vehicles, representing fast, medium and heavy. We talk about generic controls and how we wanted an Xbox 360 controller over keyboard and mouse. We threw around ideas of later stages, such as Easter eggs, as we were trying to keep things creative.

We also wanted a core idea of a portal to end the level and we'd want a rolling start of coming out of the portal into the level. The process of going from loading up the track to starting the race would be: wireframe, basic textures on the car, portal exit/view of track, on track, go! All of this would be happening while the player's car is already in motion, leading to a rolling start for the race.

6TH OCTOBER

Carrying on from our discussion on the 4th October, we decided that each level should have its own theme. This was decided as the idea of the central hub being a part of a virtual reality stuck.

Some of the themes that we discussed included: Steampunk, Neo-Tokyo, Apocalyptic, Fantasy, Lava/Hell/Fire, Sci-Fi/Cyberpunk. Each of these themes were allocated across the group. See my mood board below.



Above you can see the mood board I presented to the class; I feel the above images show the core elements of steampunk itself. Looking at the left hand images, you can see a running theme of steam powered flying contraptions; I feel like these are a staple idea with steampunk. Another running element are the brassy tones and colours, that match with the designs of cogs, mechanisms and the like. The last images I have use are those of small bug like contraptions, an idea that came along with those was having a swarm that could either be a hazards on the level or something that pursues the player.

Everyone presented their own mood-boards, offering their intended themes to the rest of the group, including some concepts of hazards and obstacles that could be included in level design.

We decided on three separate levels each with different themes, as follows: Steampunk, Neo-Tokyo and Apocalyptic. With the themes chosen we were split into teams to work on the specific levels. See the teams below.

Unreal	Neo-Tokyo	Steampunk	Apocalyptic
Nathan	Mitchell	Harry	Joe
Connor	Jordan	Noah	Hayden
Matt		Pered	Gareth

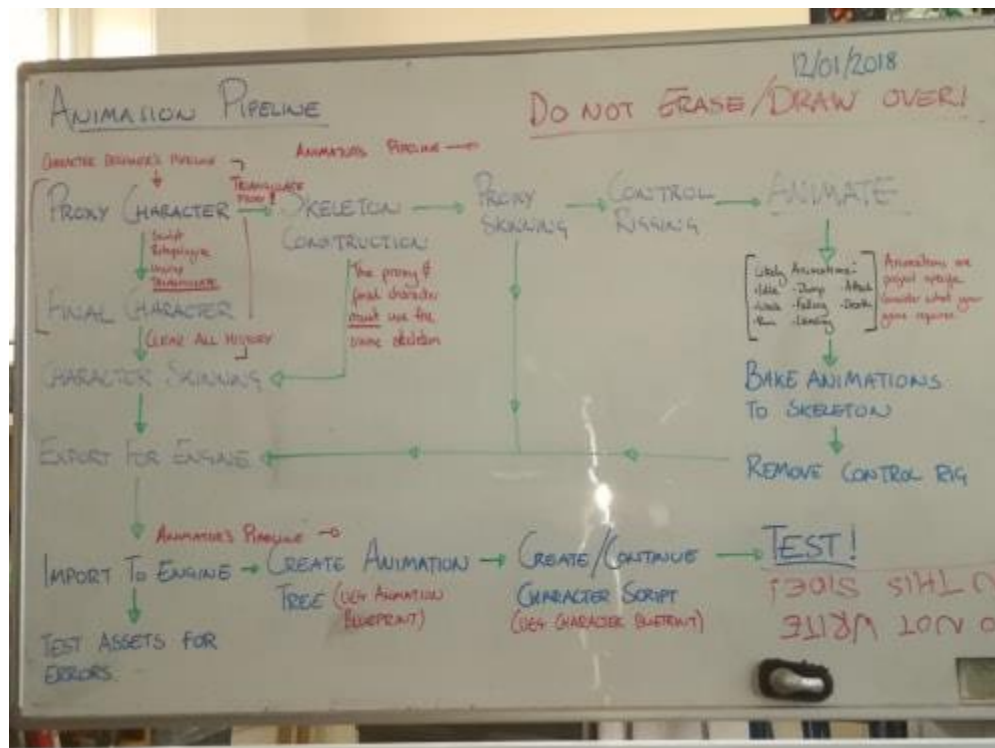
We decided to work in pods in the studio as this mirrors how people work in the industry, even though we would be working on different themes and levels. So, the engine team would sit together, the model designers would be together, etc.

After splitting off into our groups we brainstormed the basic elements that we wanted to include into the level design. These included the track breaking, a building falling onto the track, a broken bridge turned into a jump, and having the track split in places. As level designer it is my job to incorporate these events into the final design of the level.

Alongside creating the events we decided to make a basic asset list with priorities allocated.

<u>Priorities</u>	
Medium vehicle	High Priority
Track-Overgrown/broken	Medium Priority
Bridge ramp	Low Priority
Bridge	
Crumbling Road	
Falling bridge	
Portal	
Ivy	
Trees	
Bushes	
Overgrowth plants	
Abandoned cars	
Building pieces	
Fences	
Barriers	
Lamp post	
Birds	

With this all starting to come together, I was tasked with the role of creating concept art. This is mainly because the Apocalyptic team didn't have a 'resident' artist.



We examined the Asset List and Priority Lists of all the levels, to find out a way to make sure the pipeline would run smoothly for this project. From this discussion we create a simple Gantt Chart for the tasks that needed completion. This would ensure that there would be no bottleneck in production.

Early on the team noticed that I had difficulty with the Gantt Chart, so instead we created a way to keep the project on track without necessarily referring to the Gantt chart.

We used the Priority Asset list alongside a group chat created on Facebook to keep relevant updates and changes in what needed to be done by who.

<u>Priorities</u>	
Medium vehicle	~to be completed by hayden
Track-Overgrown/broken	~to be completed by Gareth
Bridge ramp	~to be completed by Gareth
Bridge	~to be completed by Gareth
Crumbling Road	~to be completed by hayden
Falling bridge	~to be completed by hayden
Portal	~to be completed by hayden
Ivy	~to be completed by Joe
Trees	~to be completed by Gareth
Bushes	~to be completed by Joe
Overgrowth plants	~to be completed by Joe
Abandoned cars	~to be completed by hayden
Building pieces	~to be completed by Joe
Fences	~to be completed by Joe
Barriers	~to be completed by Joe
Lamp post	~to be completed by Gareth
Birds	~to be completed by Joe

High Priority
Medium Priority
Low Priority

14TH OCTOBER

Today I started my research into the design for the concept art. In the studio, we had viewed some environmental concept art from the game "The Last Of Us". This was where the initial idea for the apocalyptic city came from.



1.

One thing I have always found fascinating is the way plant life grows wherever it wants to, and the concept art above really shows how if something was to be abandoned that nature would claim it back in its own eerie and beautiful way.



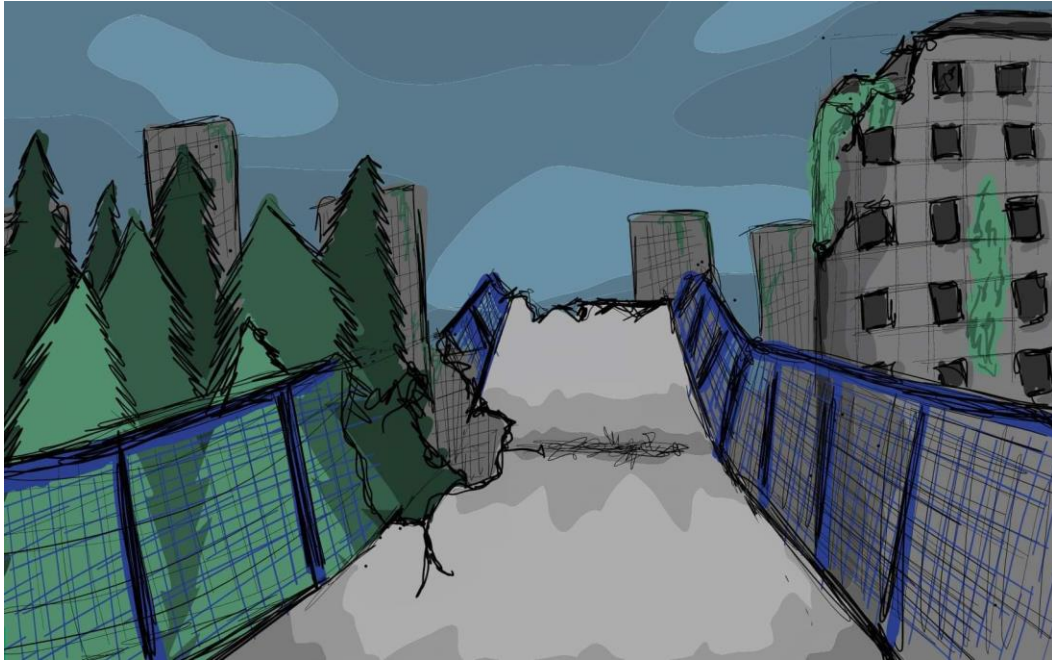
2.

After researching and finding the relevant images (seen above) I pitched the idea of changing the original idea of the apocalyptic city to maybe one that would focus more on the plant life. Something like an overgrown city, and the rest of the group were on board.

The colour and composition of the images above really showed me how to go about explaining that just because it's a forgotten place doesn't mean that it would be just grimy and downtrodden. It could be vibrant and alive.

15TH OCTOBER

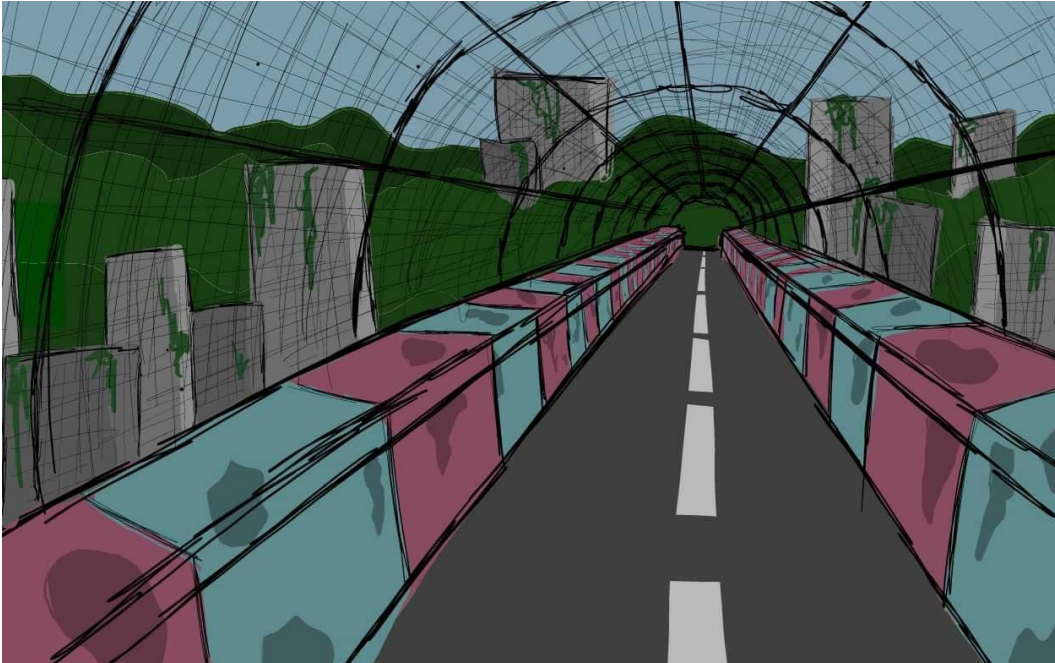
Over the last few days, I have created three different concept arts for the level. See below.



.1

These drawings show the intent of the level, of how it's more of an overgrown and abandoned city with a road that almost goes over the top to avoid it. Here you can see the idea slowly changing and developing into its own thing.

While drawing these images I used some existing photographs to help with the perspective of the designs.



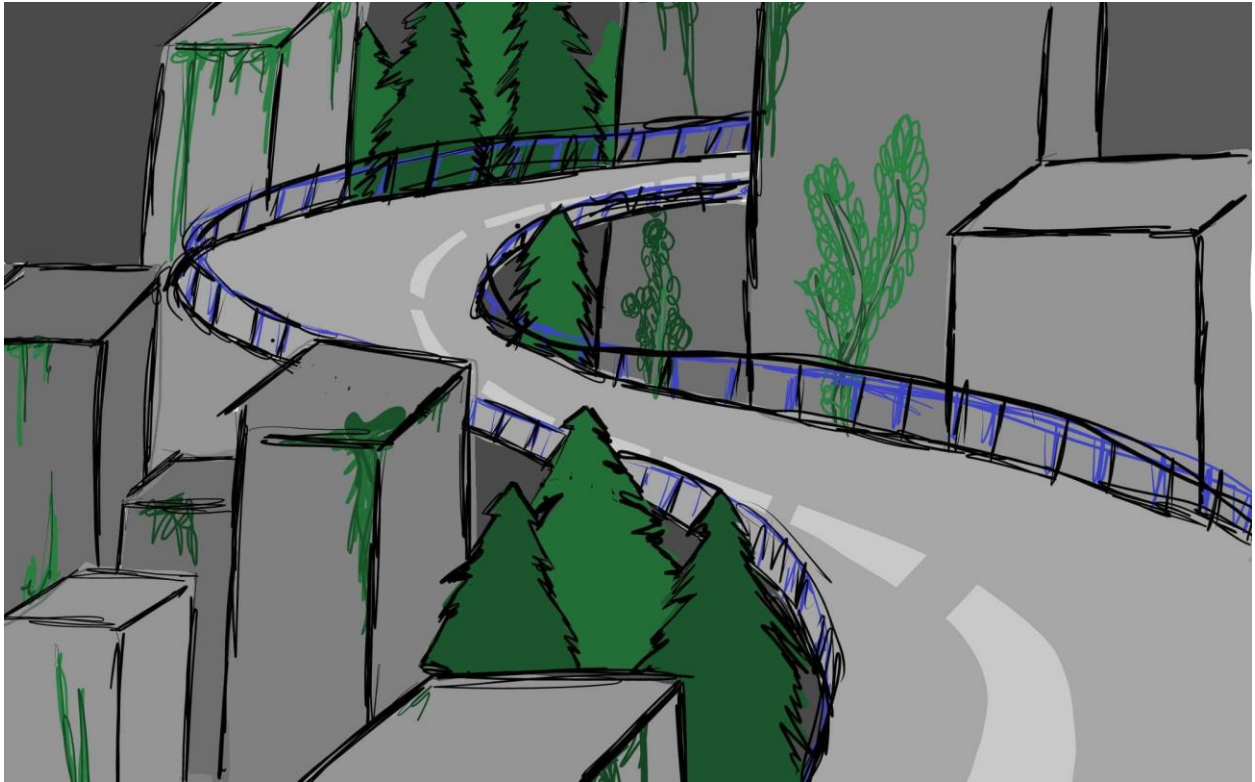
.2

The image below gave direct inspirations for the concept .2 (above), having an enclosed space felt like the rest of the background was somehow out of reach; similar to having a save space. I wanted to incorporate it into the design as it would work really well on straight fast parts of the track.





I found the image above by searching in google images for race tracks, I placed the images onto a layer in adobe draw so I could use it for reference in my concept. I found it really helped with getting the proportions correct and making them feel like it should work.



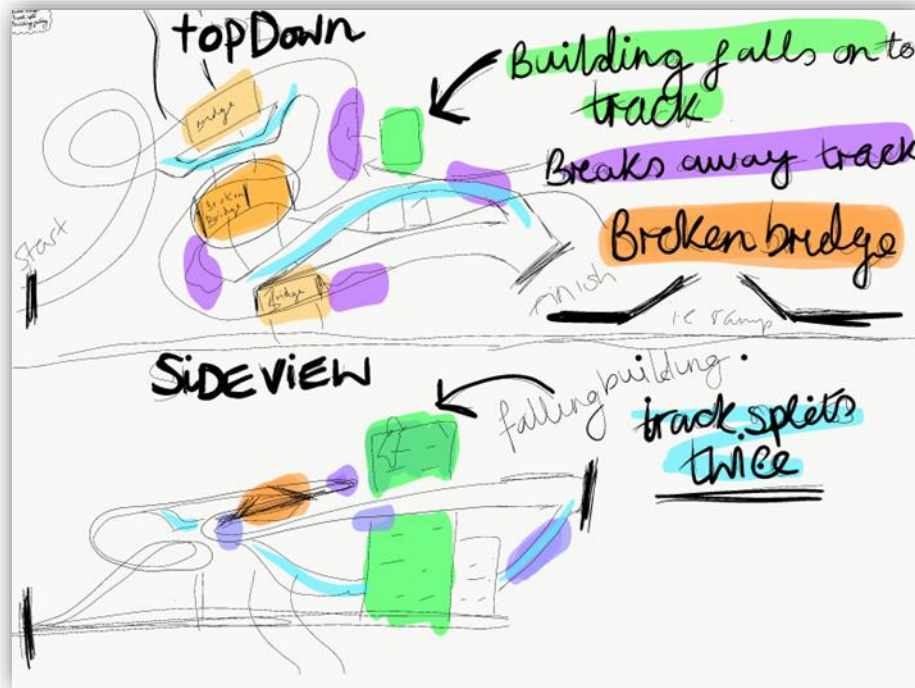
.3

All the team was notified to update File paths and references from Apocalyptic to Overgrown City in all the relevant documents.

While I was concepting the ideas, I kept referring to the last of us concept designs. Although my drawings are simple, they portray the idea of the level. Some of the elements I took from the last of us was in our concept .2 the barriers have some sort of water and weather damage from not being cared for. This is clearly seen in the last of us, concept 2. the concrete barriers shown really feels old and wore, but not in a way that has been used.

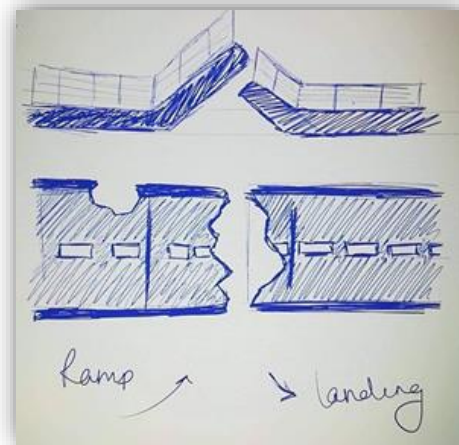
16TH OCTOBER

As my primary role is Level Designer and Animator, I worked on the first track design. Incorporating all of the events discussed on the 11th October. See below version one of the level design.



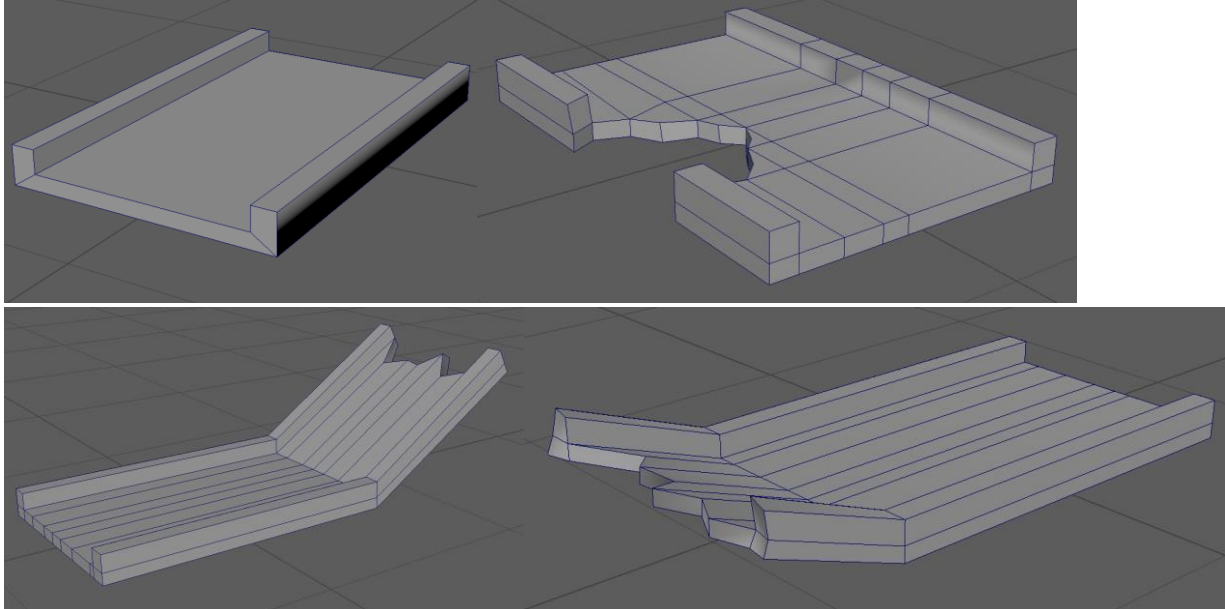
19TH OCTOBER

After revising the track pieces made by another team member, as a group we decided that they did not fit with the concept art or ideas behind it. Therefore, I spent some time creating a simple orthographic view to show the idea of the ramp (as this is one of the main events of the track).

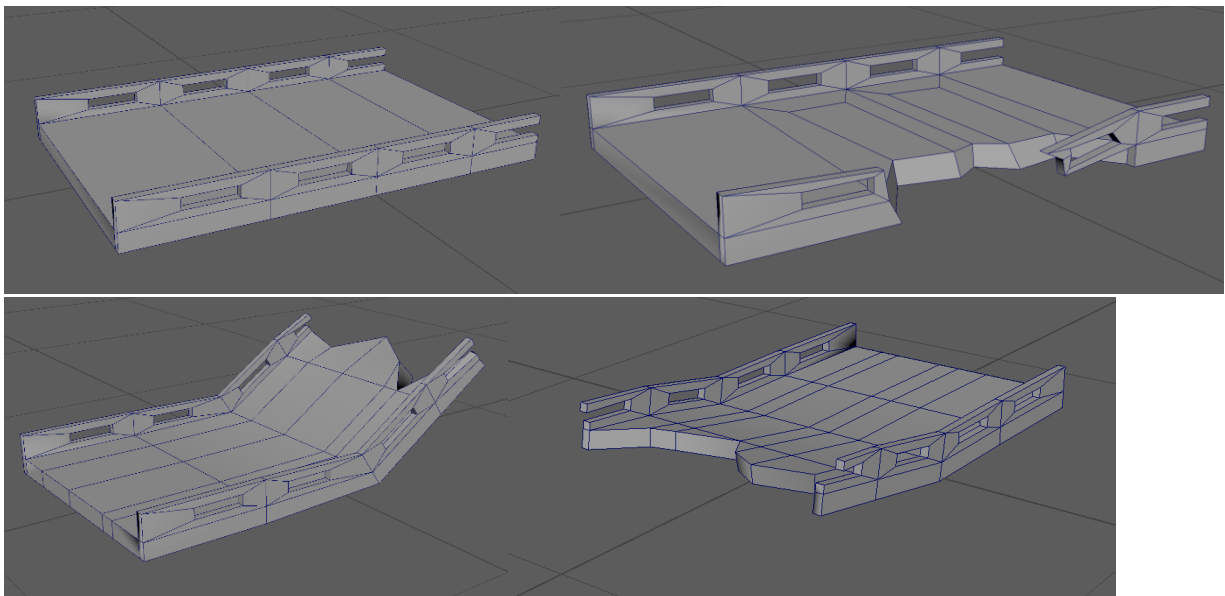


9TH NOVEMBER

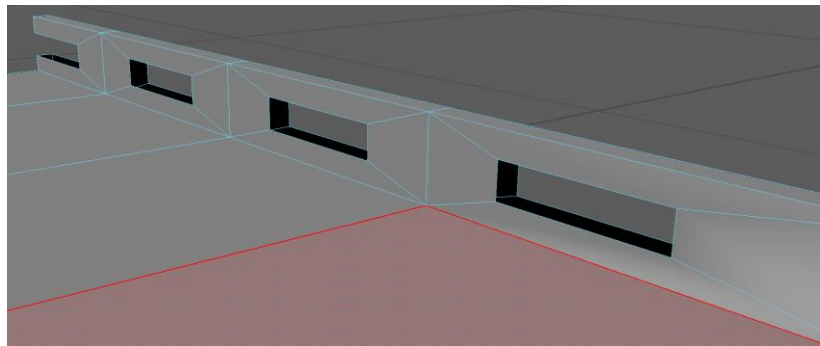
Over the past few days I have taken the time to re-make all the track pieces, ready to be used by the unreal engine pod with splines. Below you can see the result.



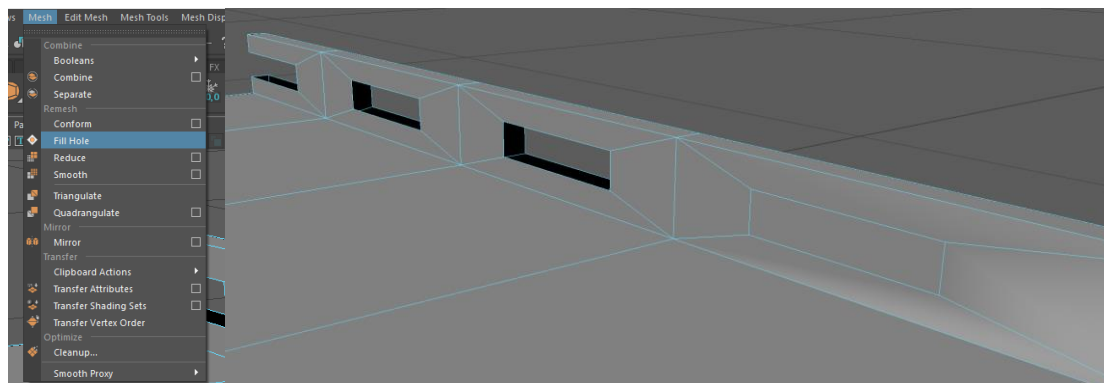
Above are the track pieces that correlate to concept .2 (15th October). The below pieces refer to concept .1 and .2 (15th October).



While creating the above pieces, I came across a problem. While I was creating the holes in the barrier, I would have to delete the middle and then fill in the gaps. See below.

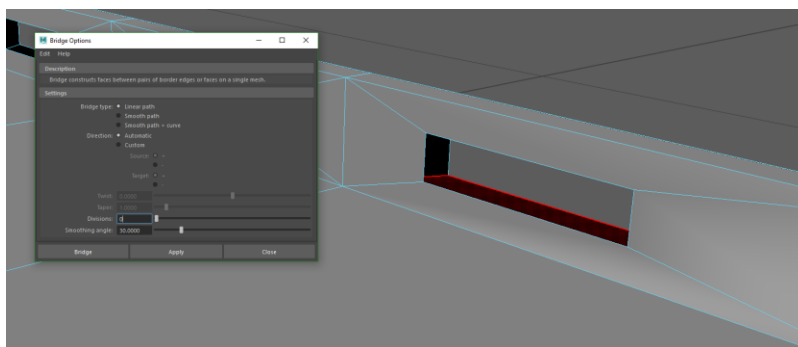


I found a tool called "fill hole" but it didn't do what I expected it to, what I wanted was to create a hole to look through the fence. However, the fill hole tool would only fill the gap where I had deleted it originally. Like this:



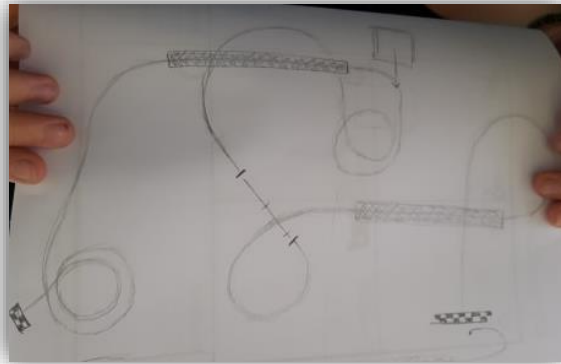
I played around a bit and found a long work around by making a plane, putting it close to where it was needed, combining the objects, then target welding the points into place. This was not a time friendly way to work around the problem, but I used it until I could talk to my lecturer about how else to go about it.

After talking to my lecturer, I found out about the tool called "bridge gap" this was the tool I had been looking for to complete the rest of the gaps in the models.

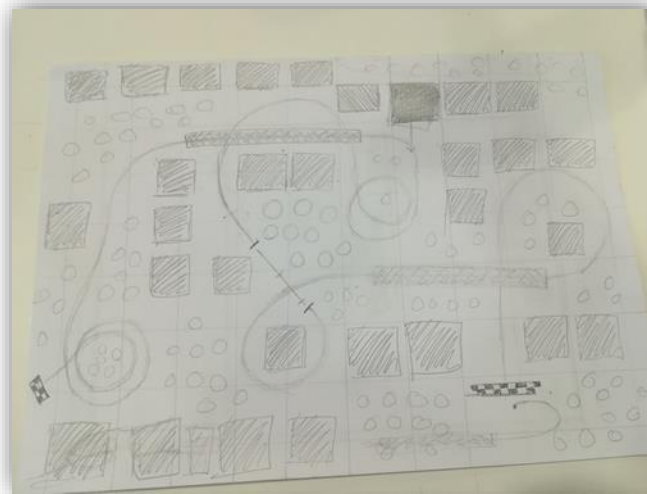


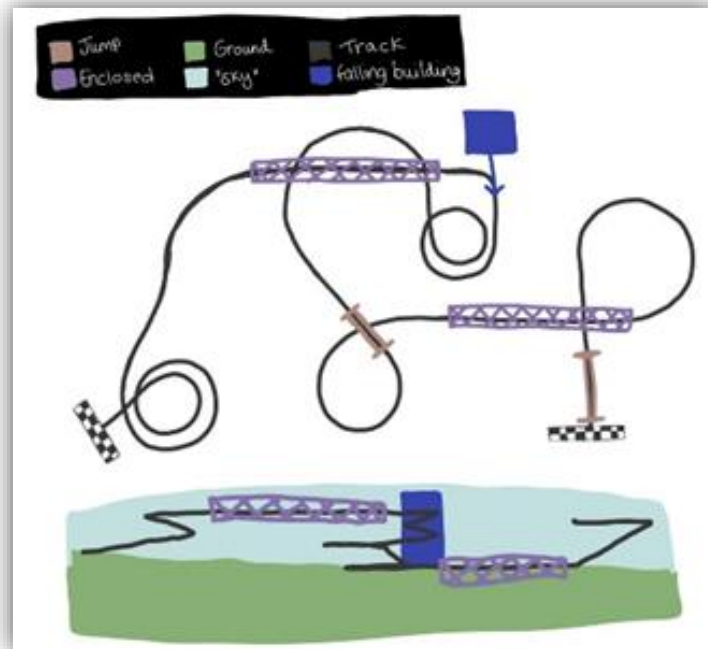
13TH NOVEMBER

The initial track design was too short, therefore the design had to be revisited. At the time I only had access to pen and paper, so the design was corrected by hand so that the unreal engine team could start with the changes to design.

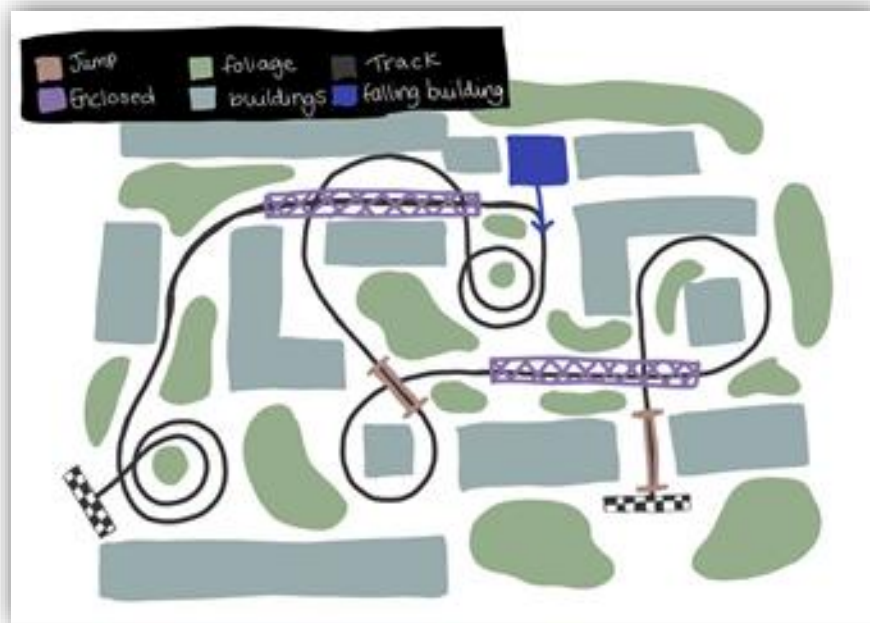


After agreeing with the team on track layout I showed the design to Connor as he was working on splines of each level. He felt that the track was good enough but needed help where placement of foliage and buildings would be, so I created a simple pencil drawing to show layout.



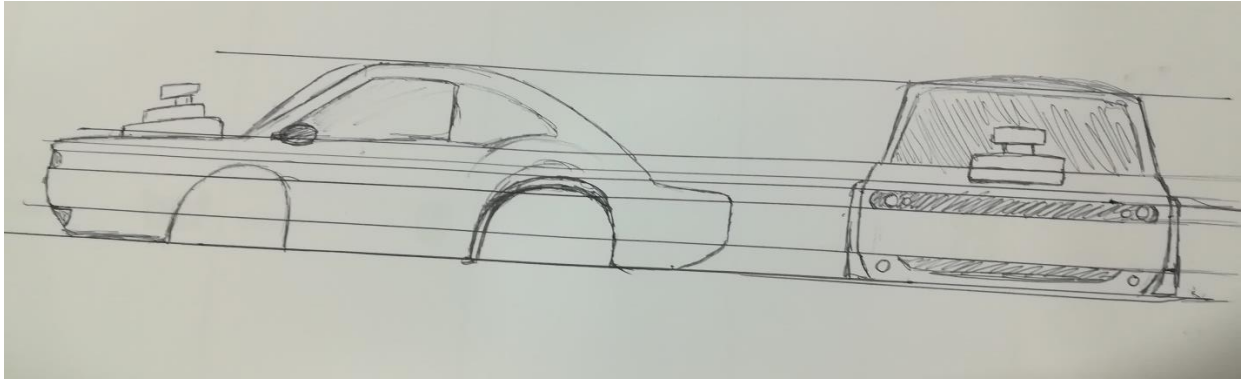


These are the final designs, from the ones created on the 13th November. With keys to make them easier to understand, and the designs cleaner.



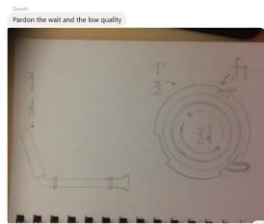
17TH NOVEMBER

I spent some time hand drawing an orthographic of the vehicle for our level, the concept was created by the artist Mitchell. The finalized orthographic would also be done by Mitchell.



20TH NOVEMBER

Gareth showed us the first concept of the portal, which we discussed and critiqued as a team, falling back to the original design as the ideas didn't fit the theme.



Gotta get all my concept cleaned up and sorted.
But basically, a simple sphere, rusted texture planned for it, with pieces of panel missing and exposed wiring and such.
Give over the idea that it's just barely functional, and left to the elements.

I'm sorry but I thought it would be more complicated... bringing in concepts of the level... is broken building part with Overgrowth.

So inside a building?

Not necessarily, more just elements of something that was built for it being broken.

I don't know what you mean, I've got the cylinder of the Portal with sections missing from it, some exposed internals of the outer ring. I can complicate the design with some additional components, but we do kinda need to stick with a cylindrical portal.

I don't think I understood your drawing this.
Are they supposed to be going inside or?

No. The portal is just a floating cylinder. The arrows are there just to show the interior light or texture or whatever we've got for the portal effect rotating on the inside of the portal ring. The Portal Ring itself is just a floating ring. It's not like a ramp down in to the centre or something.

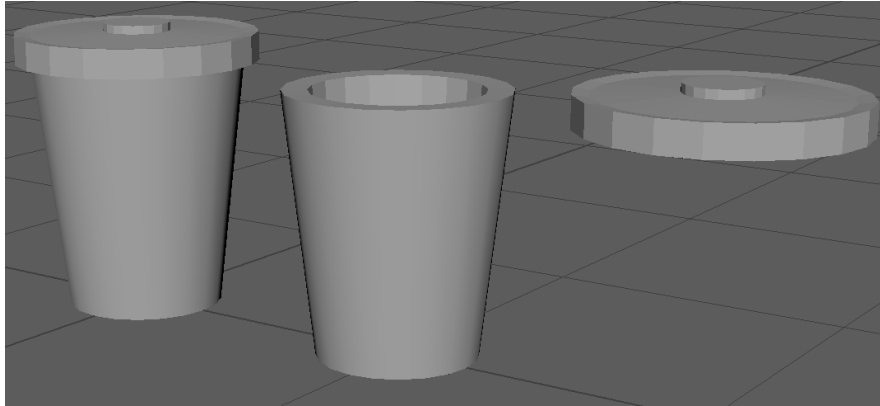
Is that what you thought it might have been?



I don't know if I get it.

I figured something along the lines of this?

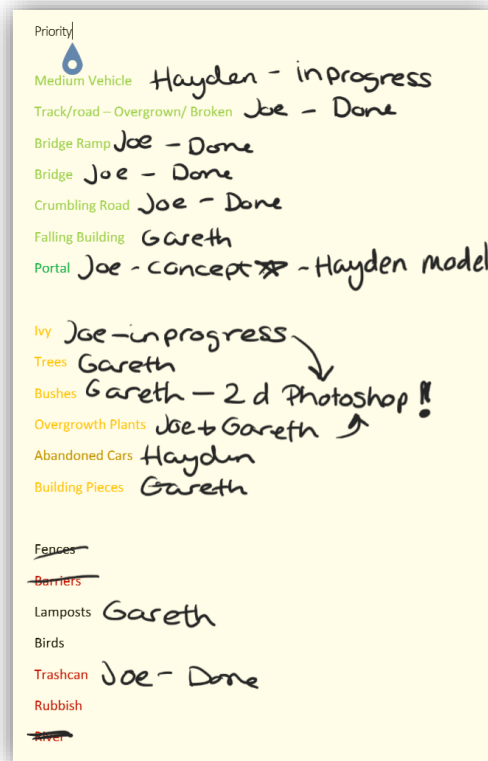
That's kinda more like an ancient Archway Portal. Clashes a bit with an overgrown abandoned cityscape.



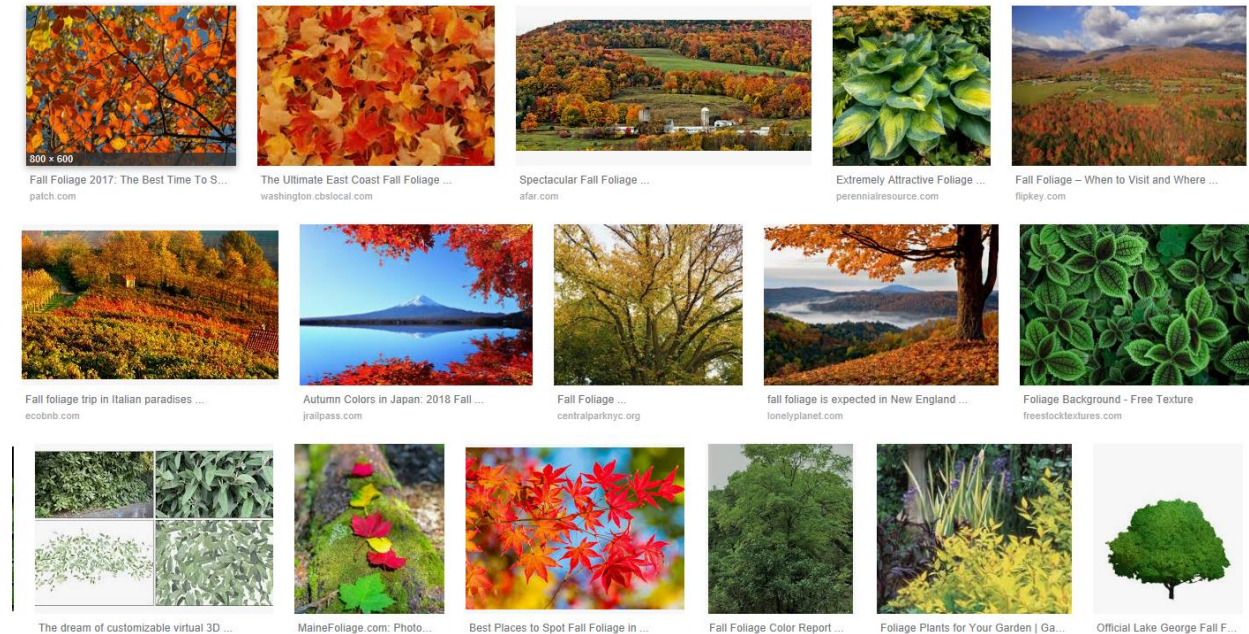
I also spent the time to create two versions of the Trashcan for the level. One is a complete mesh the other is a two piece model that could be driven into so that the rubbish could fly out.

21ST NOVEMBER

A significant change to the Priority Asset list was agreed today, Hayden had been having difficulty with needing to restart the car model meaning the other models intended for Hayden to create had to be allocated to other people in the group.



Over the last few days I have been researching foliage by looking at images of plants online. This has given me some idea of how to go about the drawing ready for adding into the map.



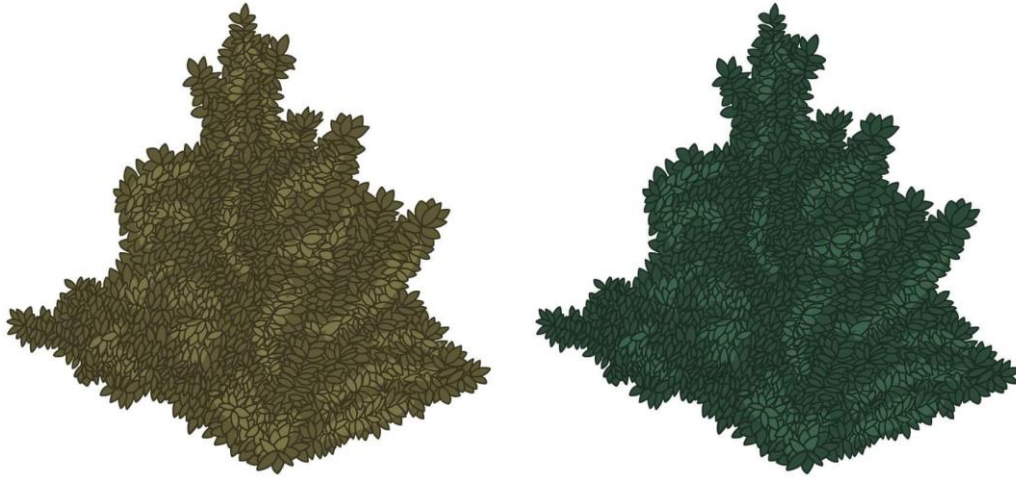
The images above were used because of the colours, looking back to the last of us concept art it follows the same idea of the vibrance of the plants. The shapes of the leaves give a nice texture to the images, making them feel quite tactile in nature. I wanted to bring that idea across into the design for the foliage.

Here is the first design for the foliage, it was critiqued by the group and it was decided that the first coloration was too comic book styled. Therefore, I took the drawing into Adobe Lightroom to edit the hue and saturation so that the colour would be less vibrant and unrealistic. This was one thing that I wanted to carry on from the reference material, but due to my art style it made the leaves feel flat and fake.



24TH NOVEMBER

Here is another design for the foliage. Following the same process of the last.



29TH NOVEMBER

On the 23rd November, I was told that there had been a bottleneck found on the NeoTokyo Level. The animator for the monster we had found that creating the rig took longer than intended therefore, didn't have enough time to create the three intended animations.

The animations were then allocated as such:

- Jordan – Attack Animation (The monster using its arm to destroy part of the track)
- Noah – Idle Animation (The monster looking around and roaring at something it had seen)
- Joe – Walk Animation (The monsters basic walk cycle, making it feel large and ominous)

These animations are just to show the basic movements of the monster and to get a feel for how the level would play out.

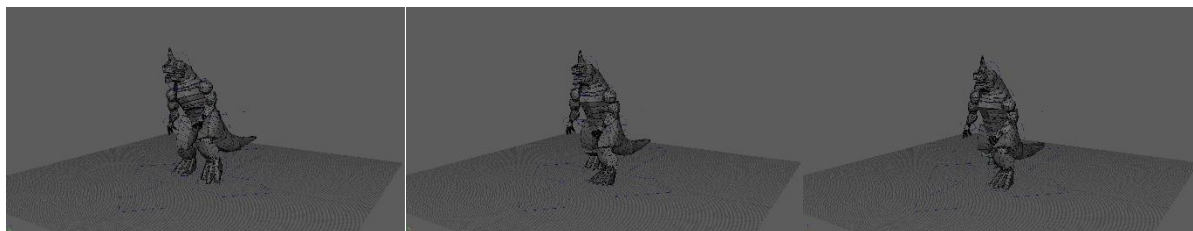
Today I managed to finish the key frames needed for the walk cycle, images as followed.



Contact

Down

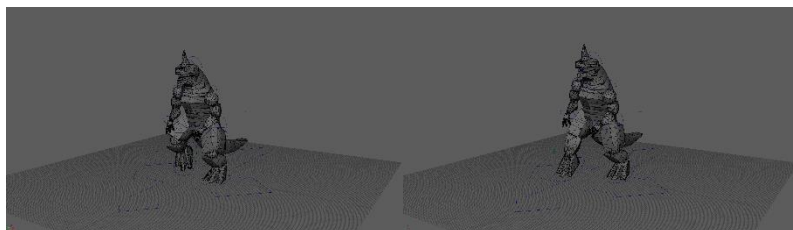
Pass



Up

Contact

Down



Pass

Up

Repeat