

PRIVATE SCI-F- EYE

By Joshua Farrow

Private Sci - f - eye



INTRODUCTION

My project is a game that blends two opposite themes together to make an enjoying and well-made detective game, I chose to do this project because it was something I originally attempted before but couldn't be due to lack of both time and experience, it was also something I saw as an opportunity to push myself and test just how far I could go with this idea.

The problem to for this project, was with how difficult it was to successfully blend two opposite themes together to create an enjoyable and well-made detective game that revolves around the two themes, in terms of mechanics and environment.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim:

My aim for this project is to develop a fun and enjoyable detective game that uses contrasting themes in both environment and mechanics.

To do this I would

Research each theme and their environments.

Research to see what items differ between themes.

Look at other detective games and their cases.

Look at mechanics from games that fit each theme.

Objectives:

- Create a well thought out case for the game.
- Make effective use of each theme for both environment and mechanics.
- Make the level a decent size and with enough hiding spots for items, and for the player to want to look around.
- Create unique NPC suspects for the player to interact



DELIVERABLES

Level:

- Should display effective use of each theme
- Should include multiple districts, each looking unique
- Should have various hidden items
- The level should give off an atmosphere and vibe fitting of the theme
- The level and case should be user friendly enough to solve and go through.

Mechanics:

- Scanner – Scanning Items for details
- Inspect [Zoom Grab & Rotate] - To find possible hidden clues
- Item Sensor – To find Items through walls
- Journal [Note Taking] - To keep track of information and write theories
- Item Presenting to NPC's – To present the correct item and receive added information back

RESEARCH AND METHODS

The research I started my project off with, was industry of detective game and their cases, games such as Shadows of Doubt and LA Noir, I started looking between the two and saw both pros and cons between, looking at what I should take from each game.

The research methodologies that I undertook for this project was Qualitative and Action research.

Qualitative:

- Focus deeply into the subject and themes themselves rather than numerical value.
- Look at many existing examples and compare them.
- From the comparisons, make my own version.

Action:

- Plan the problem and the research approach.
- Implement my research findings.
- Collect data via feedback forms.
- Look at my feedback, and learn from it, moving forward.

RESEARCH AND METHODS

Research Influences



- Gameplay
- UI
- Tone
- Environment



- NPC Interaction
- Different scenes [areas]



- Gameplay
- Tone



- Environment
- UI

RESEARCH AND METHODS

Mood Board



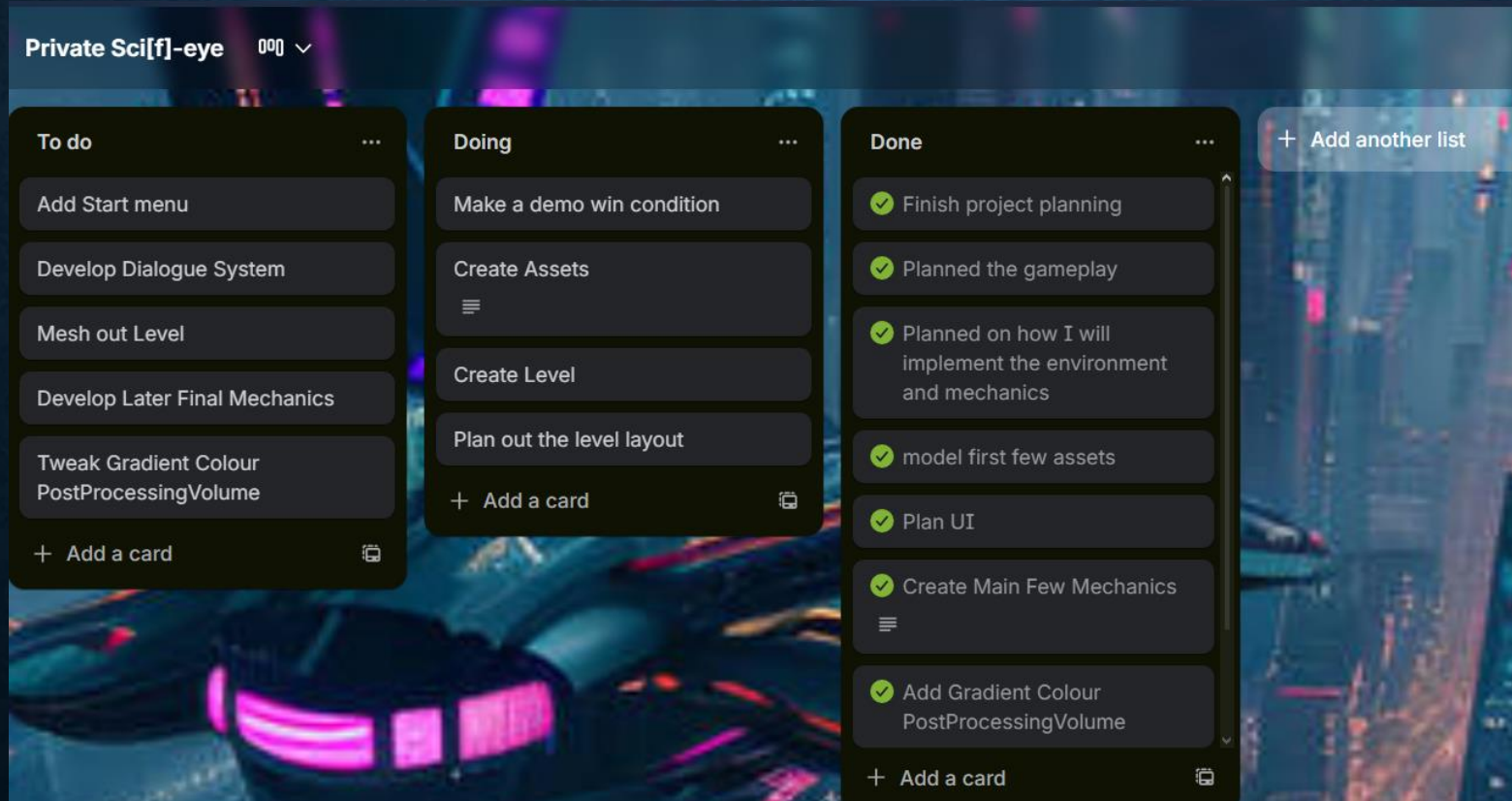
Gantt Chart

Project Start:

[illegible]

RESEARCH AND METHODS

Trello



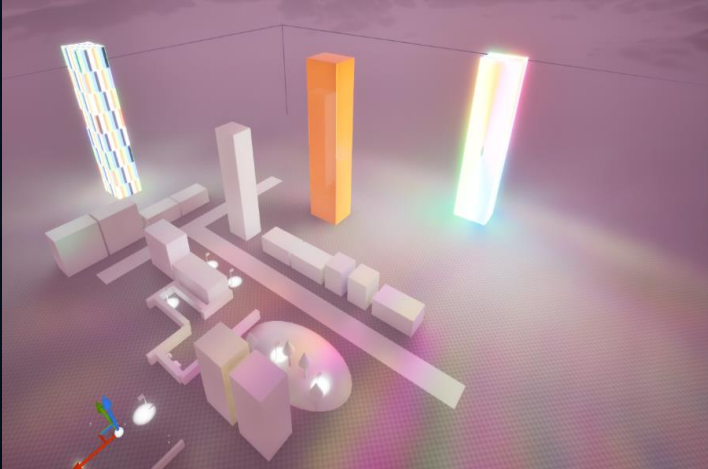


R&D

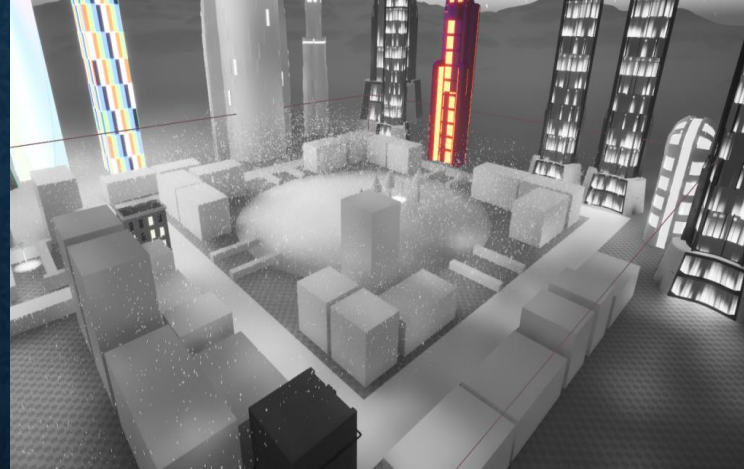
R&D

Map Layout and Block out

When designing the map for my level, it was first just going to be a city block, only later did I decide to give different districts to not only give the level more uniqueness, but also for each different suspect, as there is at least one tied to every district in a sense to stand for that district.



Version 1: Simple block out lane, with low poly lampposts.



Version 2: district block outs and sections are there and a lot bigger.

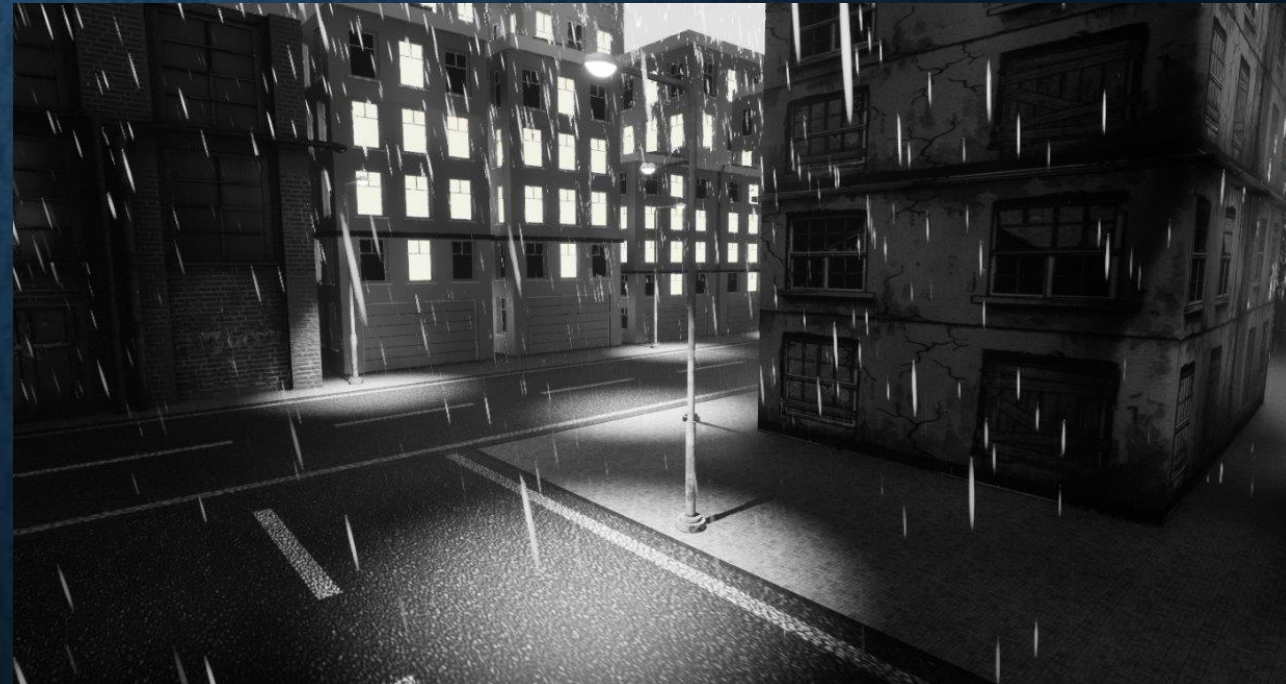


Version 3: Fully meshed out districts and level overall with trees, grass, and lampposts.

R&D

Map Layout Poor District

When designing this district, I looked at run down, abandoned, and old buildings, to really set the tone of the district and what or who can be found here.



R&D

Map Layout Rich District

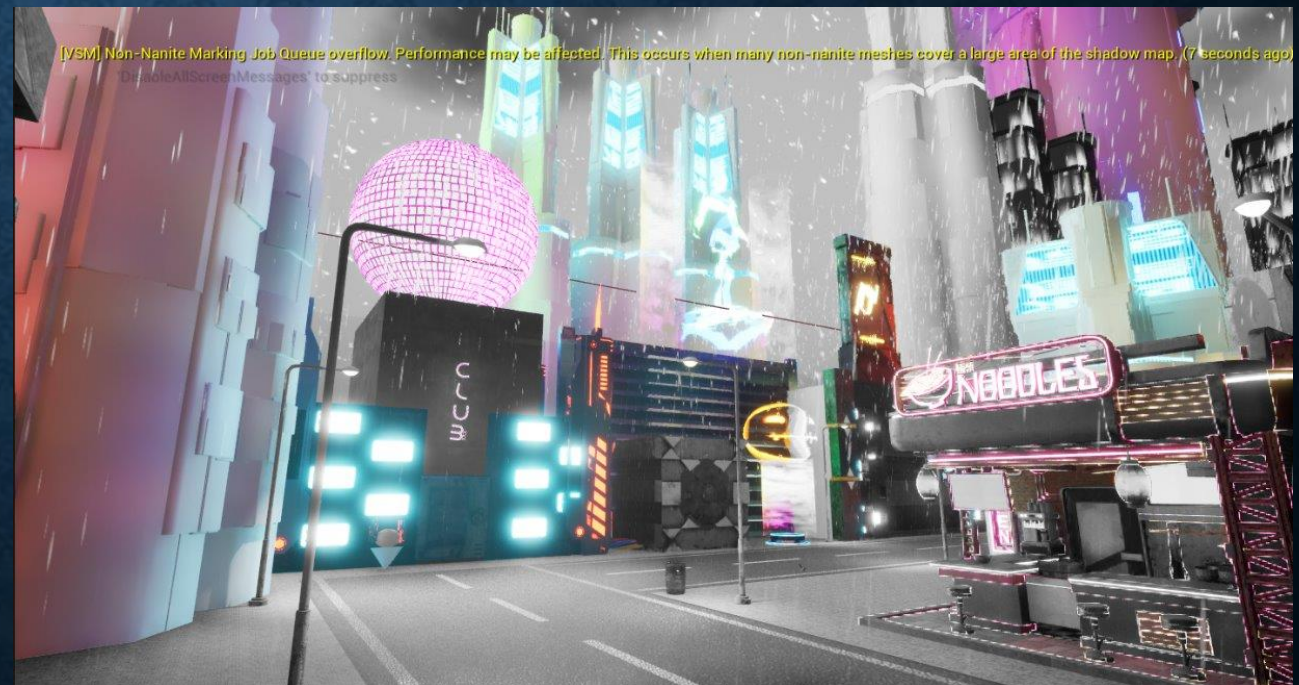
When designing this district, I looked at rich households such as mansions and modern houses compared to the poor district, I also added some cars in this area to really make it clear how different it is compared to the other districts, especially the poor district next to it.



R&D

Map Layout Night Life District

When designing this district, I looked at very bright neon sci fi cyberpunk like buildings and meshes, such as projectors, moving billboards, holograms.



R&D

Map Layout Business District

When designing this district, I looked at sci fi buildings, these were going to be the most common building asset, as it resembles a simple ceo office like building, however there is a specific tower which glows through the black and white material, it is like this because it is an important building, and with the locked door and npc next to it, indicates to the player that this building in specific is important.

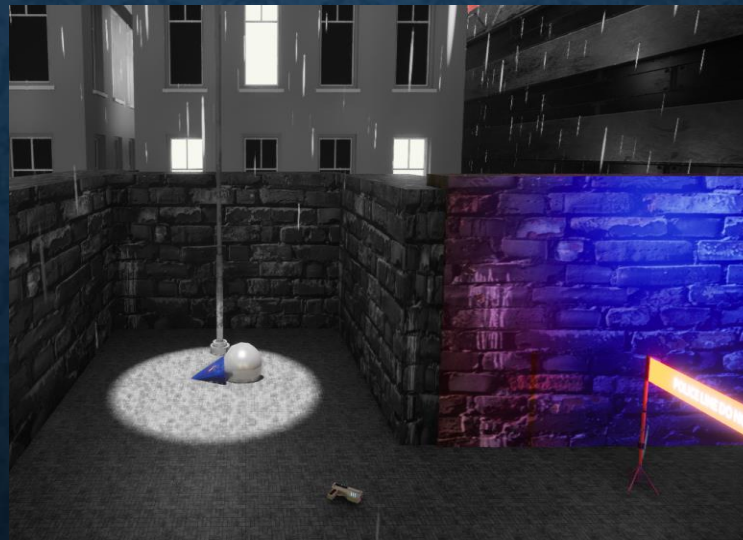


R&D

Map Layout Park and Alley

The park was a center piece for the map, a place that can be accessed from any district to help the player if ever lost, allowing them to find their footing from the center, then look at the buildings or signs to see where they want to go.

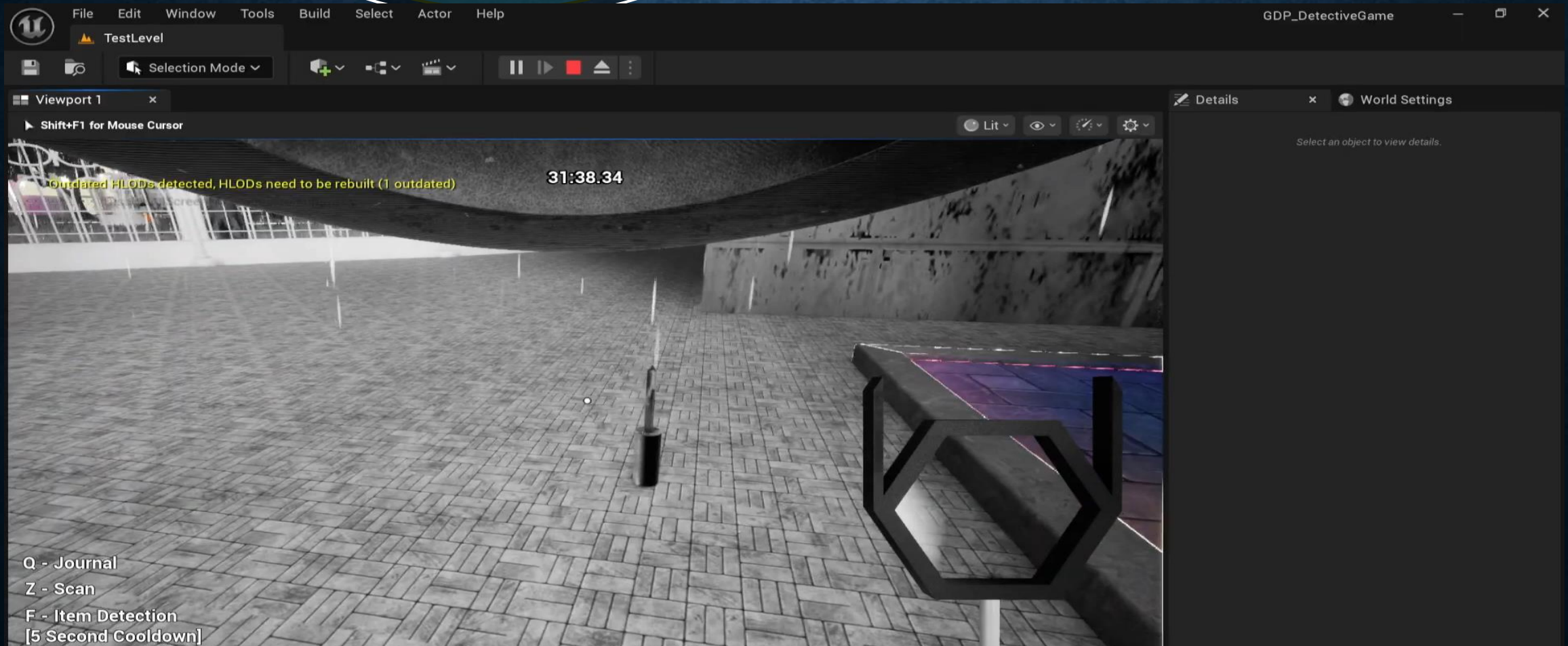
The Alley is the starting location for the player, where they will find the body and a few items, with the flashing light being over the body, it shows to the player on where to look.



R&D

Scanner

The scanner is a main mechanic for my project that allows players to get brief details and descriptions upon scanning said item.

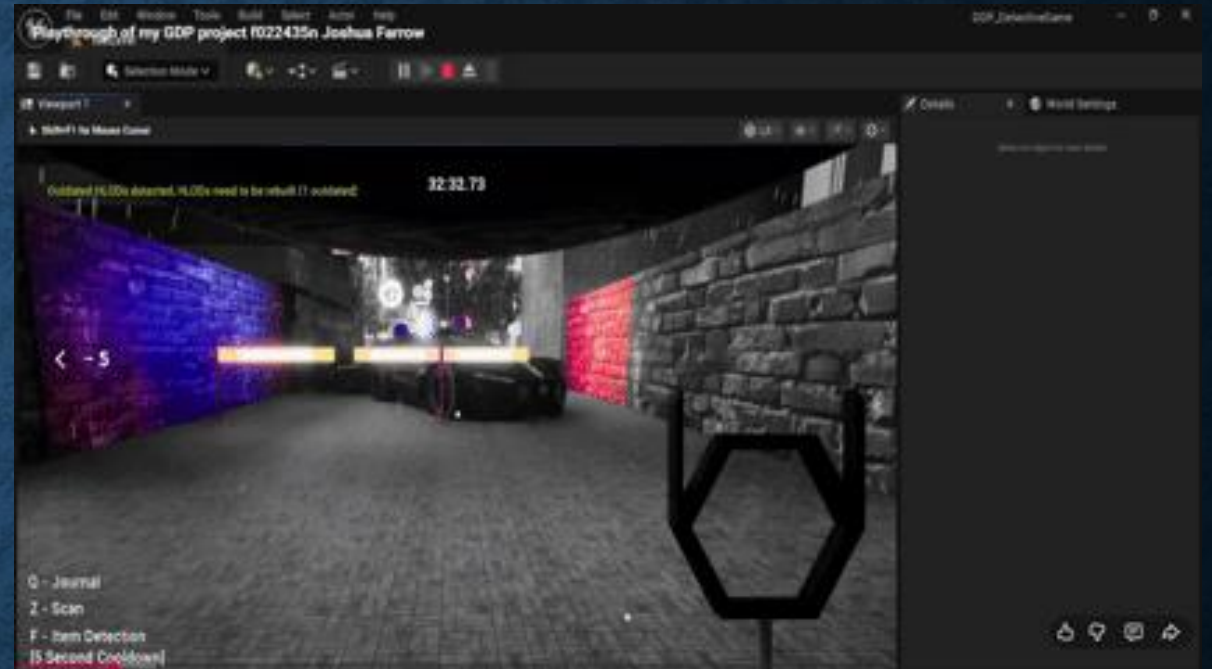


R&D

This is the item sensor, once originally the item scanner, however, to separate the two, this mechanics is purely for finding items, rather than giving any details or description.

It allows the player to find items by emitting a translucent glow that appears through walls.

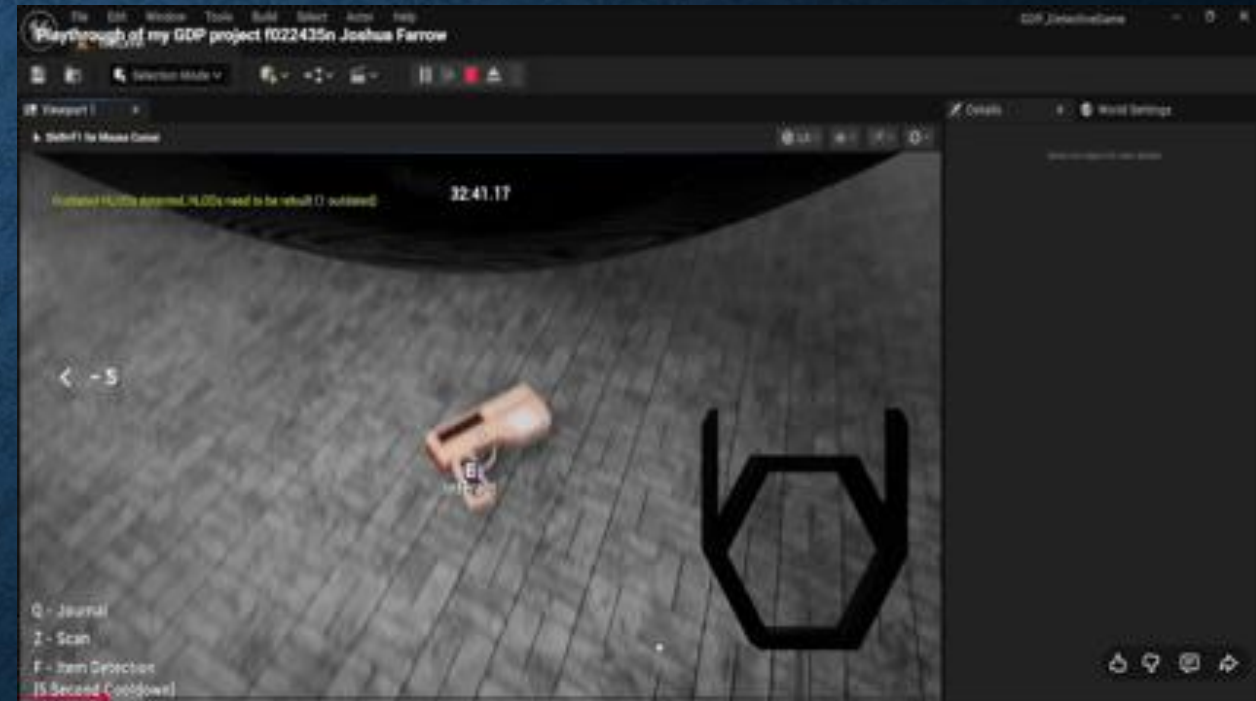
Item Sensor



R&D

Interaction [Zoom Grab & Rotate]

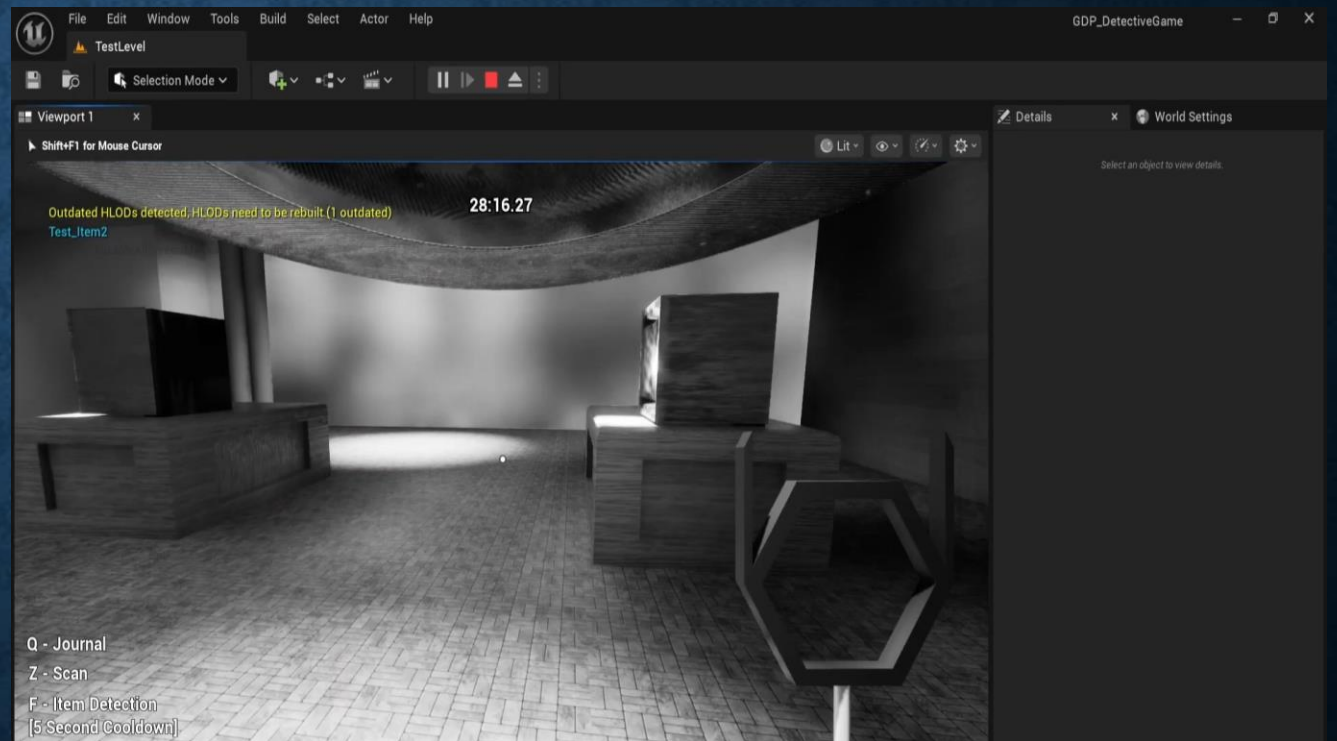
This is the interaction mechanics; it includes grabbing, rotating objects in addition with zooming to find possible small hidden features or clues.



R&D

Inventory

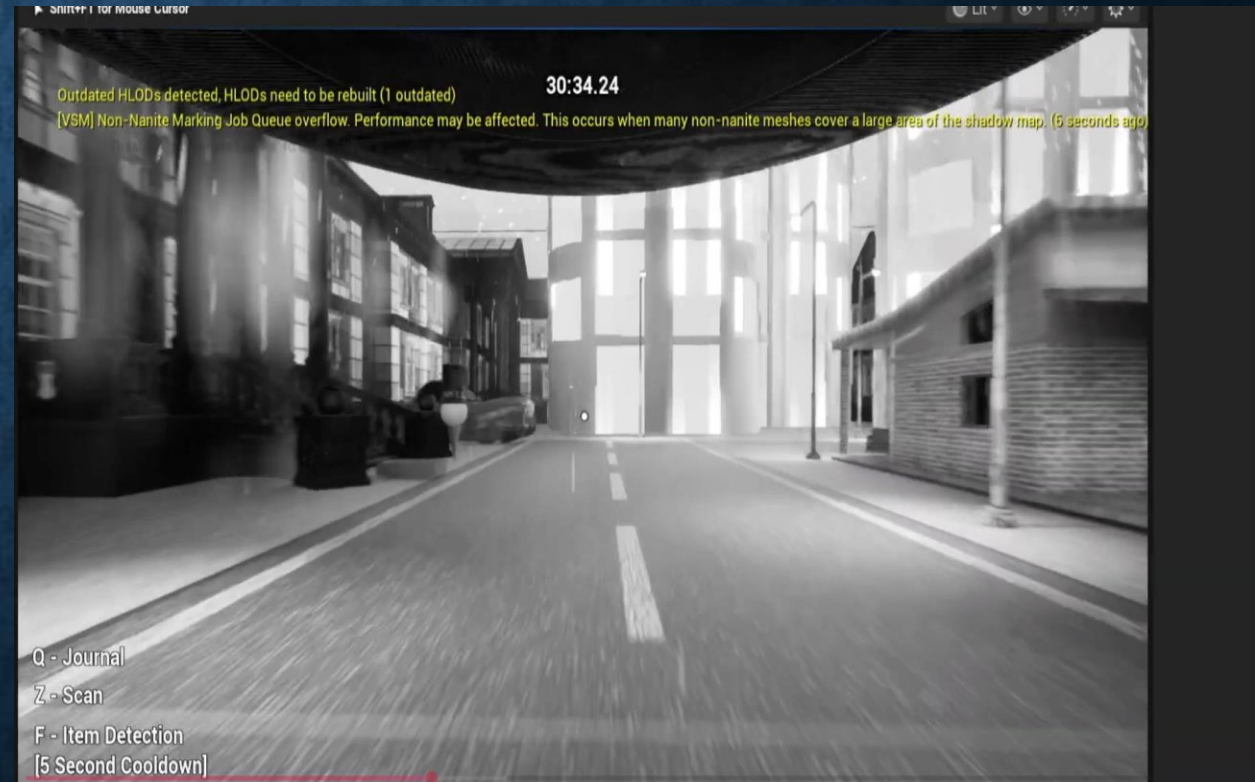
This is the inventory, from it the player can drop items and also present them to npc's



R&D

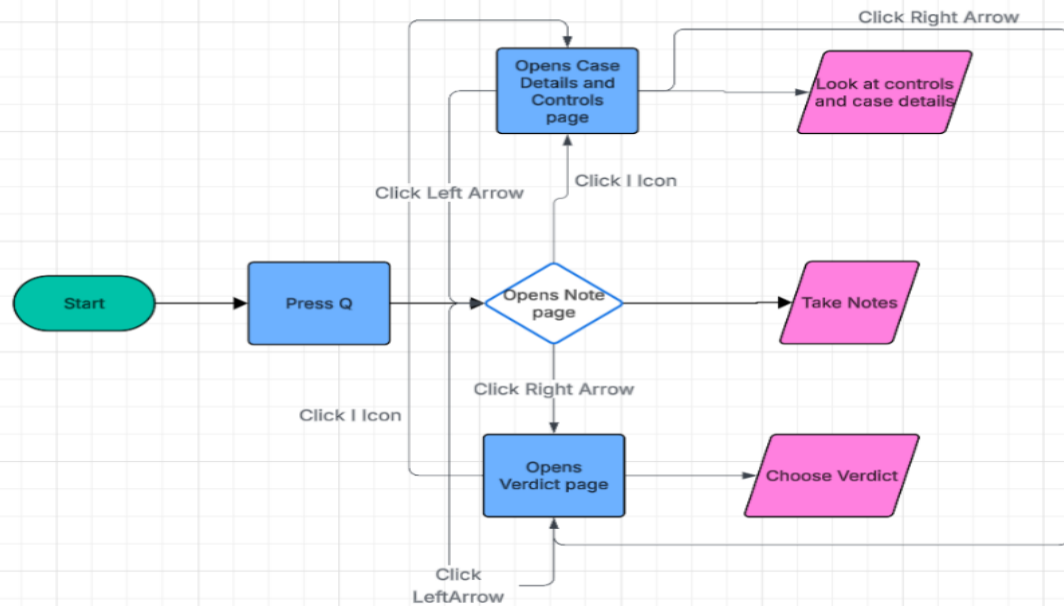
NPC's and Presenting

This is the npc dialogue and presenting features, the player can gather various information from the npc's however when presented with their wanted item, it will reveal more information as well as an item.

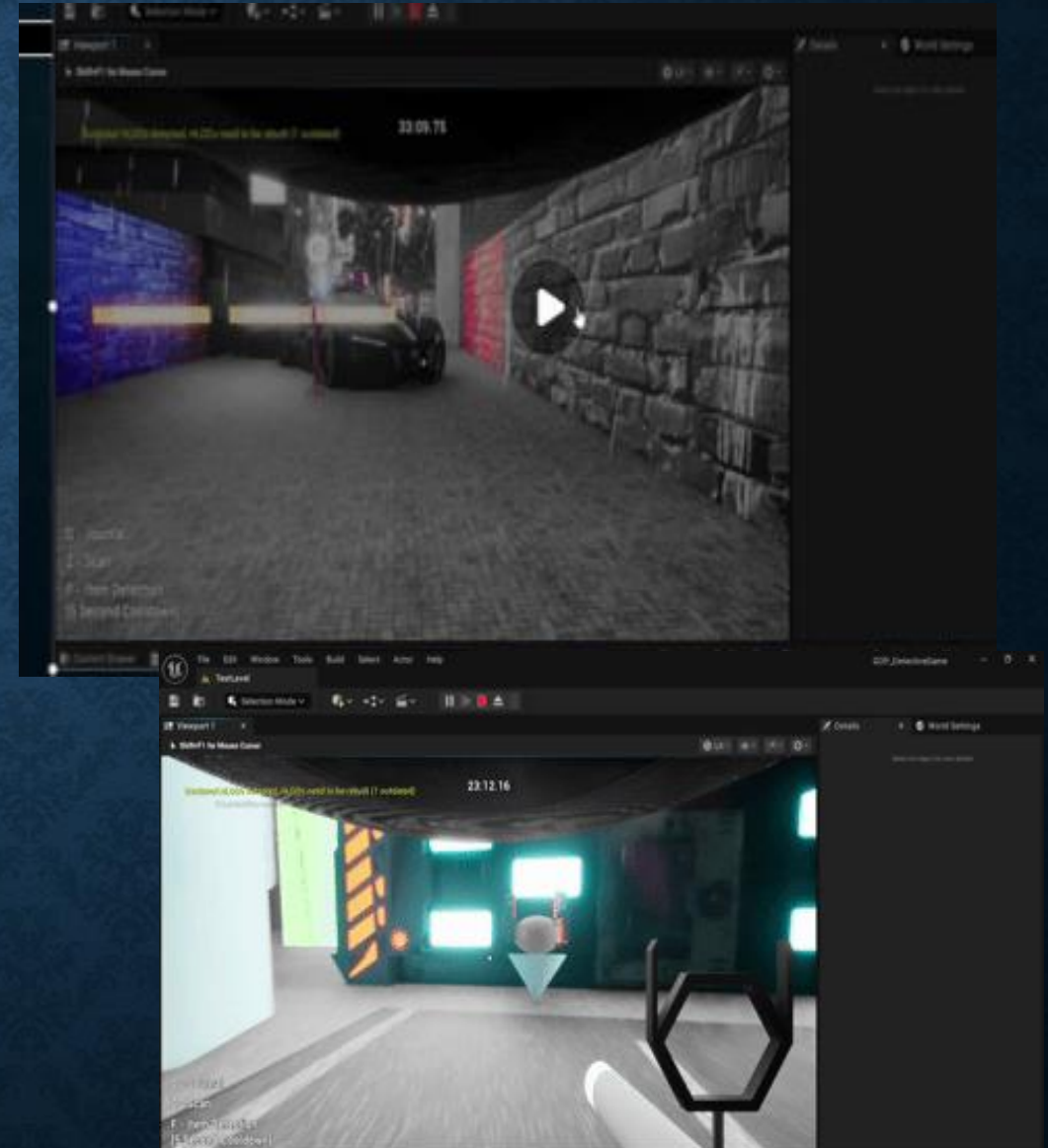


R&D

This is a diagram showing how the player can alter between the pages of the journal.



Journal and Verdict



Play Tests

R&D

1. Question 1. On a scale to 1 – 10, 1 being bad 10 being amazing, what would you rate the gameplay?

[More details](#)



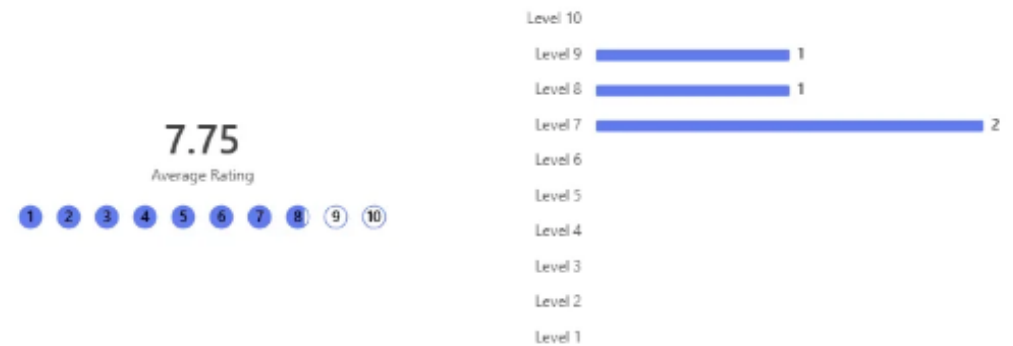
2. Question 2. On a scale to 1 – 10, 1 being bad 10 being amazing, what would you rate the mechanics?

[More details](#)



3. Question 3. On a scale to 1 – 10, 1 being bad 10 being amazing, what would you rate the level?

[More details](#)



4. Question 4. Did you encounter any bugs or glitches alike while playing the game? And if so, could you please write below what you had encountered, and how.

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1		If I drop a grabbed objects, while rotating it, then the camera locks in one direction. I was also somehow able to get an item early, meant for later on.
2		When I drop the knife on the ground it would shrink and diapered
3		Items would go through the ground The items loose their scan data after being dropped The cursor isn't always showing when it should be Rotating the object and dropping it at the same time locks the camera Text doesn't stay in the text box
4		Some issues with the UI not changing over to the mouse cursor, and the camera getting locked in place after rotating an object

5. Question 5. What were your overall thoughts on the game, you can talk about your experience, mechanics, level and or gameplay.

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1		I thought that the narrative design was interesting, it was not too obvious who the murderer was, what was the weapon and the motive. The notebook was helpful in keeping info and the NPC's were varied enough to stand out.
2		gameplay was very interesting and fun to play being able to use all mechanics and write down information you find alone the way I really like the look of. In terms of level the layout I like how close everything is and a middle section to cut travel time. only thing I struggled with was how the floor colour matches with some of the items which makes it a bit hard to see some items
3		The overall experience was interesting and requires a lot of brain power. I would just say this level in particular is a difficult one especially as a first case to solve. The mechanics felt interesting however I think the constant use of the number pad codes felt repetitive. Some mechanics felt like they were a chore to use like having to pull out the magnifying glass just to press another button just to scan an item. Giving the player a journal to use is good however this was something that I didn't use and preferred to use my memory which probably wasn't helpful.
4		I enjoyed the mystery and how much you had to think about what you were doing and the information you were being given. The mechanics all made sense for the genre. The level was good, some of the gaps between buildings are a bit big or need to be filled with something to stop the player from thinking they can go down them. The journal is great but the rest of the UI feels a bit off in comparison.

R&D

Play Tests

6. Question 6. Do you feel that the contrast between themes [Sci-fi and Old School Detective] were well implemented, and if you do, what did you like about them?

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1		Because the detective mechanics were the primary focus, the cyber theme were subtle and not the most obvious. But it did stand out in the colour contrast between the monochrome and neon colours.
2		I like how the design and style of the level was made to be of a Sci-Fi environment and the colour being noir film theme and even the characters being a mix of the two themes
3		The contrast was an interesting one however this wasn't really something that was important to the overall gameplay. the characters could've fit within any theme and the gameplay would be exactly the same.
4		Yeah I liked the blend, it being in black and white adds to the whole vibe nicely.

7. Question 7. If there are any improvements I could have made, what do you think they could be?

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1		Polish some of the mechanics, such as the magnetifying glass having a better scanning range, adding UI indicators that objects can be picked up and scatter one or two more useful objects on the ground. This way I am more encouraged to use the the cigar item detector. When the business man talks about the code that he needs, the word "password" can be highlighted yellow so players know to look for yellow numbers.
2		Fixing the mouse so it doesn't disappear when needed and maybe some of the assets could be a bit more easier to identify visually
3		I think the scan mechanic should be able to be used within the inventory so that I can find out things about items without having to drop them. Like if it was possible to hold right click to scan and when I hover over the item it will tell me that information.
4		Mostly just the UI bugs I have mentioned, and the way that the npcs give you items could possibly be changed

8. Question 8. How was the case, was it easy to solve? What are your thoughts.

4 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1		It was somewhat challenging and even though I failed, the case's difficulty was reasonable.
2		it was a challange to solve the case and I like how to solve the case it isn't decided by what you collect but the smaller details you find in the world
3		Some clues felt quite cryptic and it was difficult to figure out what was going on which could be good or bad depending on what you're going for and how difficult it should be. There was a lot of information given and a lot to go through so I didn't realise that I should have been noting absolutely everything down. I completely forgot who gave me what item, or where each item came from and how each item was relevant.
4		I liked how hard the case was, you have to pay attention to everything and figure out each element. Figuring out who the killer is was satisfying, though I think the other two elements could do with having a couple more things pointing to them. For example the DJ could mention walking through the area that you find the screwdriver.



CHANGES

Throughout the development of the project, there were a few changes.

The Item Sensor was originally just the Item scanner; however, I changed this to give the player more freedom and choice, one finds the item, and one gives a description.

The City was originally just one district, but this was changed to give the map more uniqueness and life to the city, and to help identify the NPC's that are tied to that district.

The Park was originally next to the alley at the start.

CONCLUSION

Overall, I would consider the project as a success, it solved the problem and hit numerous goals that was set, I have learnt a lot from this project, from post processing materials to developing many types of mechanics I have never before, such as scanners or item presenting.

The research definitely pointed me in the right direction, it was a straight direction for me, there was not any bumps or second thoughts with my research, leaving no doubts.

To take the project further, I would add more mechanics and gameplay aspects to the game, I would add more items, and add more to the gameplay, such as lock picking, and maybe even add stealth which was the old plan.

CONCLUSION

The pros and cons of my project.

Pros:

- Great use of blending contrasting themes.
- Well thought-out mechanics.
- Case was well planned.

Cons:

- The mechanics were heavily sided on the old-fashioned theme rather than sci-fi
- Environmental details [moving cars overhead]

RESEARCH AND METHODS

As for how I conducted my research I have looked at Tutorials and Playtests

Video Tutorials

Video Tutorial for Inventory:

https://youtu.be/b2atcZWYi3E?si=u7Vt4_p6hMt35gWH

Video Tutorial for Pickup Grab and Rotate:

<https://youtu.be/3H83UJ80Vqg?si=I14S11UpKD6Pdalb>

Video Tutorial for Keypad:

<https://youtu.be/GWOOonqhvp4Y?si=0BxbgJWg73ZTM-xQ>

Video Tutorial for Interact Icon:

https://youtu.be/kB1_qxNUi9Q?si=uzjAVnKwMqMxIGBw

Video Tutorial for Colour Grading:

https://youtu.be/nrN4LxY_J7k?si=UpcBAqONd_vBTHUa

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Q&A