**Profound Misunderstanding**

## Game Concept Document

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# 1.0 Introduction/Product Overview

## 1.0.1– Introducing Alkaid

Alkaid is a unique and exciting experience that promotes freedom and rewards intuitive thinking. Featuring a unique adaptive challenge system that syncs with real world time, the player faces new challenges every time they play. Choose to join the "Concerned Citizens of Alkaid" in overthrowing the tyrannical oppressors, or prioritise your own swift egress from the city. With Alkaid's branching plotlines the choice is yours.

## 1.0.2– Game Data

**Title:** Alkaid

**Game Type:** Single Player Platformer / Adventure hybrid

**Number of Players:** 1

**Game Camera:** 2D side on

**Target Age:** 11+ years old

**Violence Level:** Cartoon violence, Blood & Gore

**Number of Areas/Environments:** 7+ split into many smaller platforming sections

**Platform:** Nintendo DS / DSi

## 1.1 Special Features & Unique Selling Points

### 1.1.1– Unique Selling Points

- **E.R.I.X** allows the player to communicate with NPCs through the stylus.

- **R.E.M.S** delivers unique and varied enemy behaviour, providing a different gaming experience each time.

- **A.C.D.N.S** - A time system in sync with the DS. Different game options appear depending on the time of day.

### 1.1.2– Special Features

- Talk to friends, talk to enemies! Enemies can be taunted, bullied and tricked into doing the player's bidding.

- The denizens of Alkaid are nocturnal in nature and extremely sensitive to light – there are fewer enemies in daylight but the bad guys may have left several surprises for players seeking to take the easy route.

- Branching narrative provides extensive replayabilty.

- Players can expand and develop their repertoire of "talk topics" as they progress through the game.

- A living, breathing industrial city brought to life on the DS's dual screens.

## 1.2 Game Modes

### 1.2.1– Story Mode

The player begins a new journey through Alkaid, free to choose whatever path they wish to reach one of several diverse game endings. Friendships are formed and broken as the unique story unfolds.

Platforming sections test the player's wits as he overcomes the many obstacles and adversaries in his way. Hub sections bustle with activity and communicating with the populace is key to progression within Alkaid.

The player is afforded the opportunity to join the bad guys, escape the city, overthrow the regime or even steal power for himself.

### 1.2.2– Free Mode

The player gains access to this mode after completing the game once, achieving any ending. In this mode the player can freely explore the city, with no set objective. It is impossible to complete the game in this mode

### 1.2.3– Character compendium

The player gains access to this mode after completing the game once, achieving any ending. This keeps track of all NPCs the player has interacted with. The player can view all the characters you met or interacted with within the game and is able to view the character graphics and view their profile.

### 1.2.4– Cutscene / Ending Recap

The player gains access to this mode after completing the game once, achieving any ending. The player is able to watch cutscenes and endings that they have unlocked in the main game.

### 1.2.5– Options

The player can change various options. These are:

*Control configuration*

The player can alter the default button assignments.

*Audio settings*

The player can adjust:

- o Master Volume
- o BGM Volume
- o Sound Effects Volume

*Screen settings.*

The player can adjust screen brightness.

## 1.3 Gameplay Mechanics

### 1.3.1– Overall gameplay
- Gameplay is broken up into two distinct styles:

  - *2D Side-on platforming sections* – *the majority of the gameplay comprises these segments.*
  - *2D Side-on exploration sections* - *these sections act as "area hubs" which the player uses to access the 2D Platforming sections.*

### 1.3.2– Mechanics: Platforming sections
- 2D side on platforming sections form the main substance of the game.

- **Actions the player can perform:**
  - Walk
  - Run
  - Swim (paddle only)
  - Short hop (small jump while standing still)
  - Running jump
  - Run into a roll
  - Hoisting up onto platforms
  - Lowering oneself down from a ledge (hang and drop)
  - Freefalling (from any height, ie: walking off a ledge)

### 1.3.3– Mechanics: Hub sections
- **Hub section overall concept**

  - These sections are used to provide a change of pace to the player, and also facilitate side quests.

  - The player uses the "hub" area in each city sector to access one of the many "platforming" levels associated with that sector.

  - They allow the player to gain information about the city and learn about which routes are currently open to them.

  - Hub sections are also the staging point for many of the game's scripted cutscenes.

## 1.4 Story & Setting

### 1.4.1– Story overview

Alkaid, a dystopia filled with mutants, freaks and monsters. Situated in an area known as the Badlands, the city stands as the final sanctuary for all walks of life. But the ruthless Tiger-Lily, one of the upper echelons of the Alkaid Preservation Society, has become drunk on power. Systematically ousting her political enemies from power she now reigns over the city, controlling Alkaid's key resources from her lofty perch atop the Core Tower, to further her own selfish ambition.

Tiger-Lily's iron-fisted/despotic rule over the city is not without opposition. The Concerned Citizens of Alkaid, an organisation comprised of those no longer willing to bow down to Tiger-Lily's rule works in the shadows of the city, seeking to restore the harmonious balance that once existed within Alkaid.

The recent death of Thax, leader of Concerned Citizens of Alkaid has struck a decisive blow to the organisation, and has left its remaining members in turmoil. One such member, Hiro, former apprentice to Thax, is now on the run from the authorities.

With a crack team hot on his heels, Hiro must decide whether to stand and fight or run for his life.

### 1.4.2– Setting overview

o Alkaid features an abstract and unusual game world. The game is set in a huge citadel-esque city, with walls that tower over the buildings and completely surround the place. It is a monstrous edifice; a blight on the already desecrated landscape.
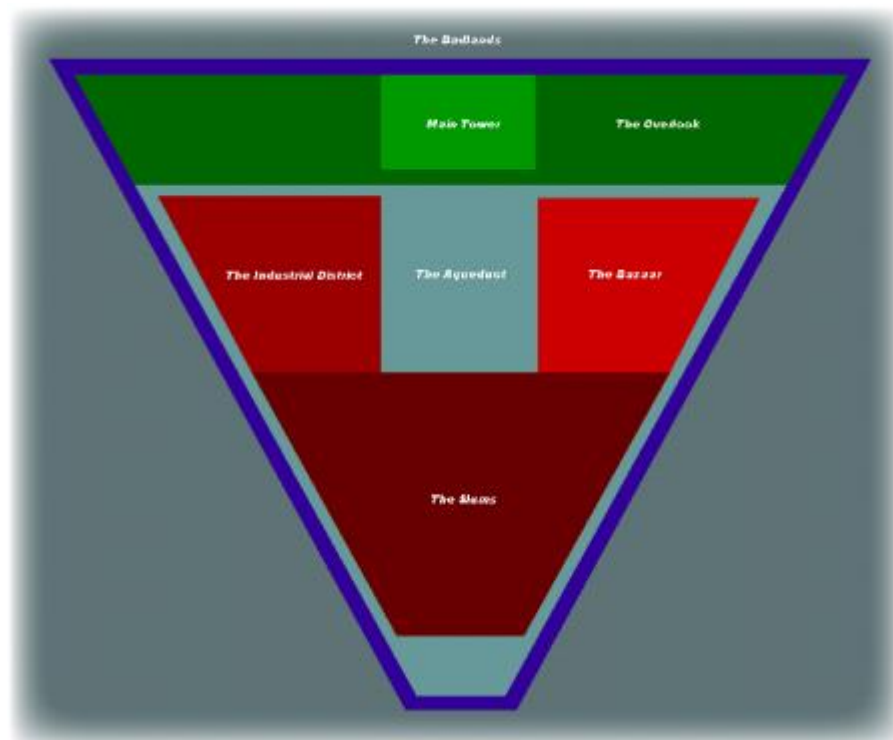
### Level 1 – The lowest elevation

**The Slums** – The residential area for the vast majority of people, it is vastly over populated. Many buildings lie in ruins and the streets are covered in filth.

### Level 2 – Mid level elevation

**The Bazaar** – The city's trade district. Working class citizens deemed unfit to serve in the Industrial District make their living here.

**The Industrial District** – The city's industrial district, it supplies the city various resources. A thick cloud of smog lingers throughout this district. The turning of gears and clashing of metal can be heard all day, every day.

**The Aqueduct** – The city's source of water. From the outside world, far beyond the Badlands, fresh water is pumped into the aqueduct.

### Level 3 – The Overlook & Tower

**The Overlook** – The residential area for the middle class citizens, which make up around 9% of the city's population. It is a well-maintained, well-ordered district, with a thriving community.

**The Core Tower**– The residential area for the upper class citizens and the headquarters for the city's government. At the very heart of the core, a large tower rises far into the sky.

### Outside the City:

**The Badlands** – An area known as the Badlands surrounds the city. A cruel and harsh land, devoid of life, it is one of the reasons nobody ever leaves the city.

## 1.5 Characters

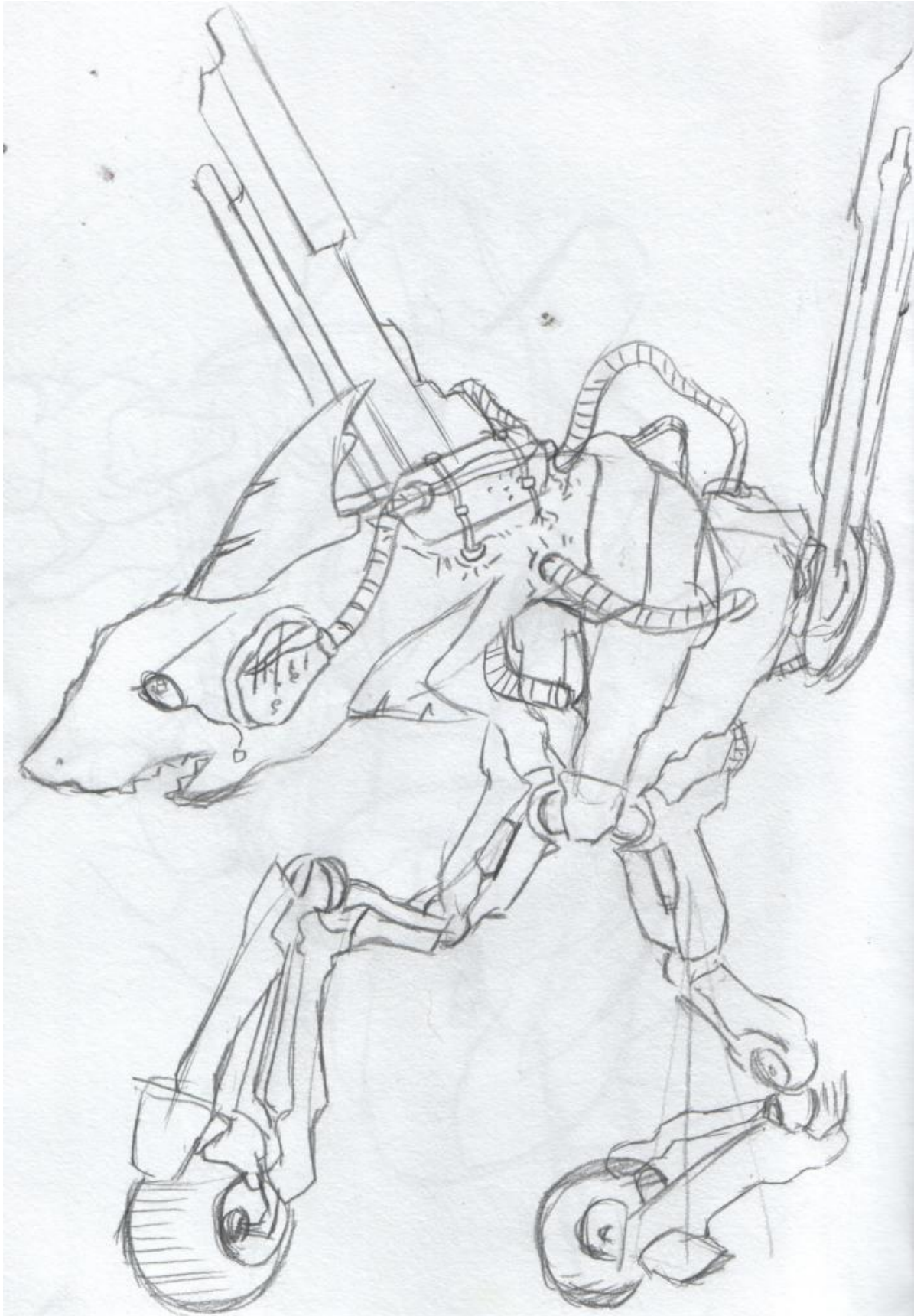### 1.5.1– Characters: Protagonist: Hiro

- o **Age: ??**
- o **Weapons: None**
- o **Special skills: "Silver Tongue"**
- o A long time resident of Alkaid. He becomes swept up in the tumultuous events gripping Alkaid and seeks to escape the city.
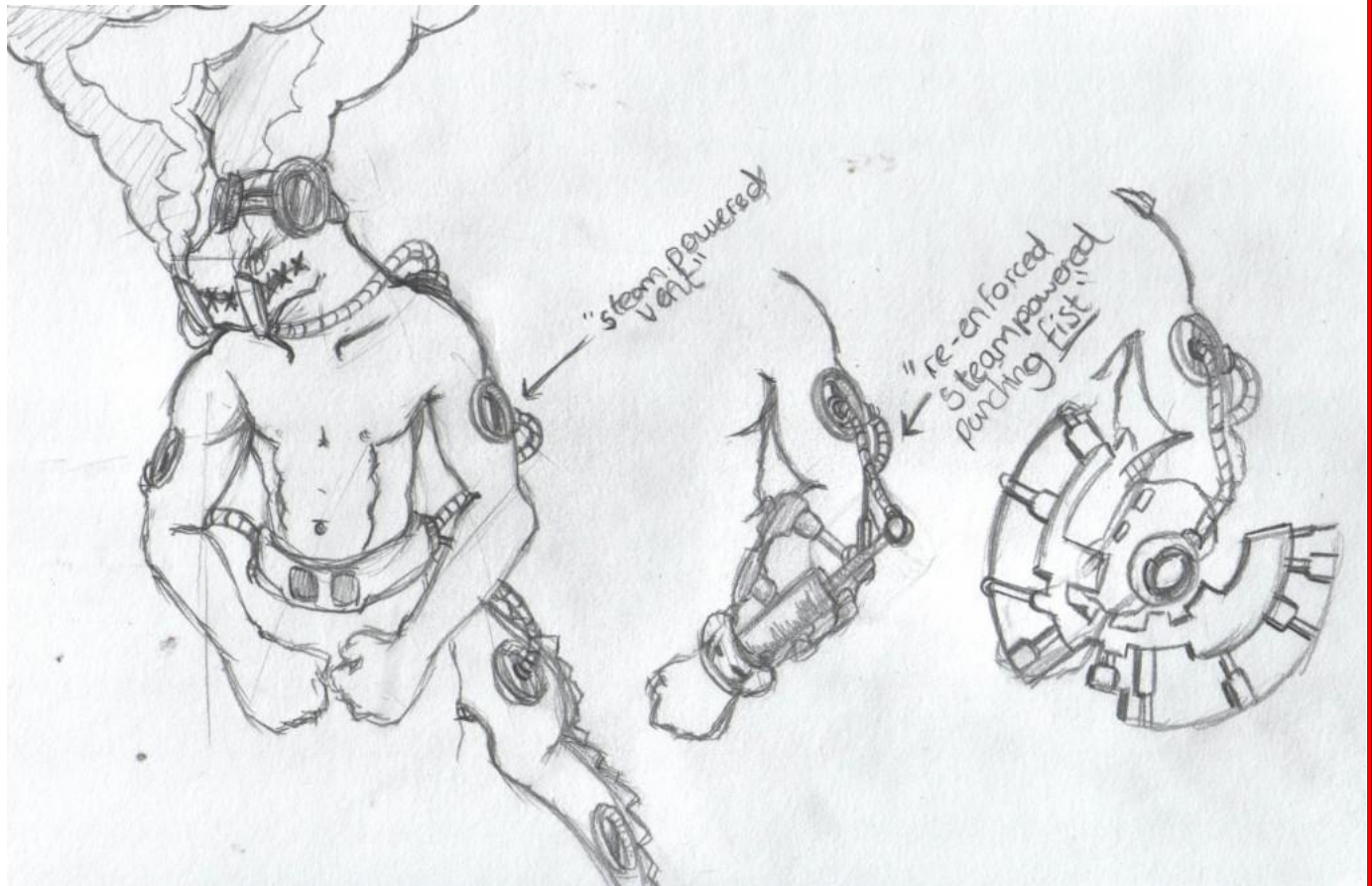
**Smashmouth**
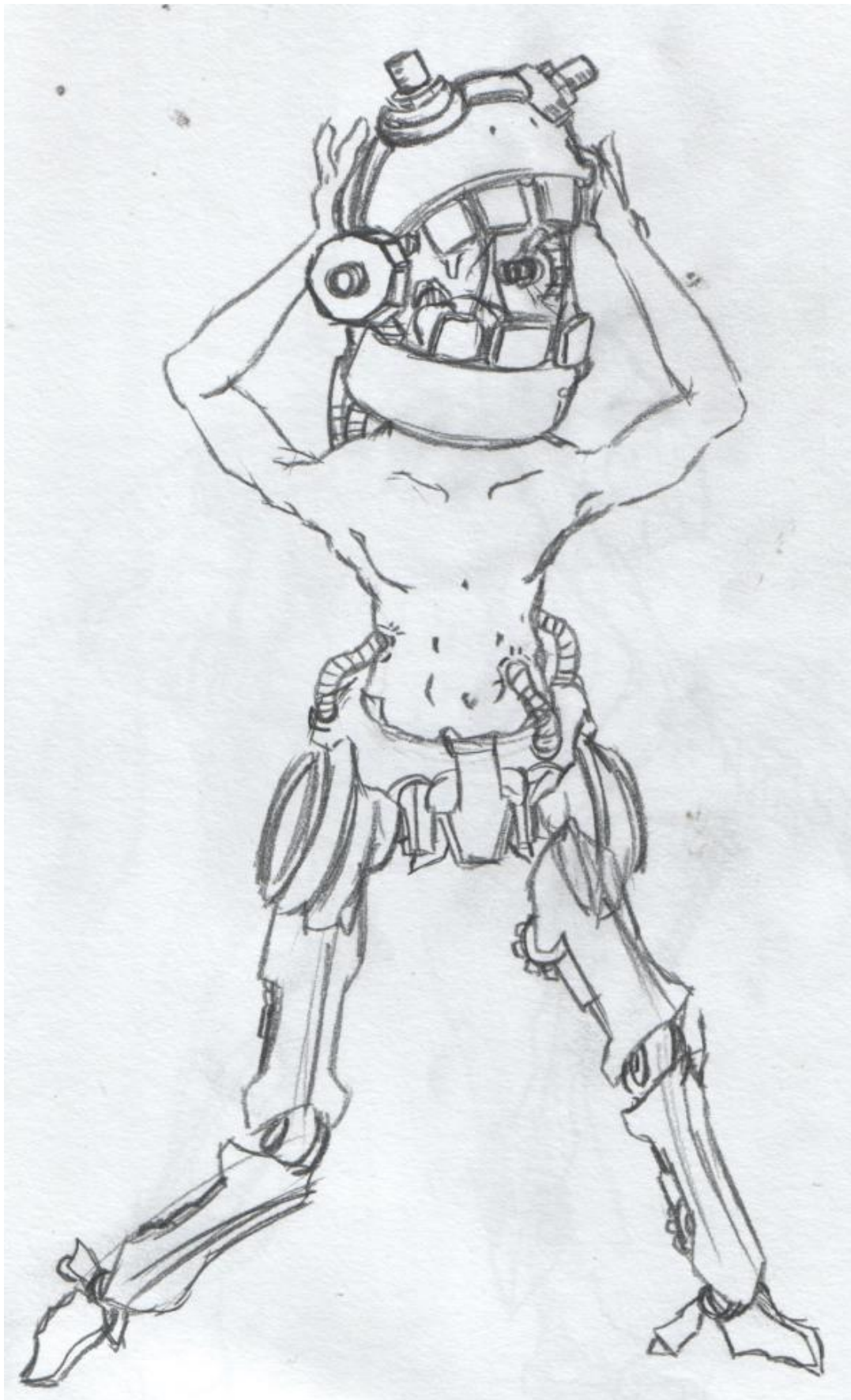
## 1.5.9– Characters: Baron Talon



Baron talon

### 1.5.10– Characters: Antagonist: Tiger Lily

### 1.6 60 Second Gameplay Example

#### 1.6.1– 0 – 10 Secs

o Following a brief scripted cutscene the player assumes control of Hiro, having just evaded his pursuers. The player follows a linear path which introduces basic platforming controls.

#### 1.6.2– 10 – 25 Secs

o Moving onto the next screen, a scripted event occurs, and control is taken away from the player. A Crocdillia on a higher elevation confidently patrols the upper platform.

o The bird-like sound of a Strawk plays and a Strawk enemy appears on screen. An argument breaks out between the Strawk and Crocdillia, causing the cowardly Crocdillia enemy to run away from an enraged Strawk. Control returns to the player.

o The player learns the ability to mimic the sound of a Strawk, and is shown a brief tutorial screen, detailing the E.R.I.X axis system.

#### 1.6.3– 25 – 30 Secs

o Moving onto the next screen the player encounters the same cowardly Crocdillia, who is now impeding his path. The Crocdillia's mood is now "worried" and the enemy nervously glances from side to side to convey this to the player.

o Taking advantage of this, the player uses the DS stylus and presses the tip against the Crocdillia. Gameplay pauses and the E.R.I.X axis appears under the stylus's point of contact.

#### 1.6.4– 30 – 35 Secs

o The player drags the stylus over the "Mimic" menu branch, which expands into a new mini-axis.

o The player moves the stylus over the "Strawk" option and removes the stylus from the screen. Hiro will now utilise his new ability and imitate a Strawk, producing a bird-like noise.

o Hearing this, the enemy Crocdillia is forced into a "frightened state" and will run off the screen in response. The player is now able to hoist up onto the higher platform and proceed to the next screen.

### 1.6.5– 35 – 45 Secs

o   Upon entering the next screen a huge door slams shut behind the player, preventing his retreat. A siren wails and the immediate area is illuminated by a reddish glow as the alarm sounds.

o   A muscular Crocdillis enemy enters the screen from the right hand side, noticing the player, he laughs and begins powering up his attack. A huge burst of steam is released from the enemy's powered up arm as he charges toward the player.

o   The player runs toward this enemy, executing a roll just as the Crocdillis comes within range.

o   The enemy's "clothesline" style attack misses and he continues to charge forward, knocking himself out on the door to the left of the screen. The player continues moving right, onto the next screen.
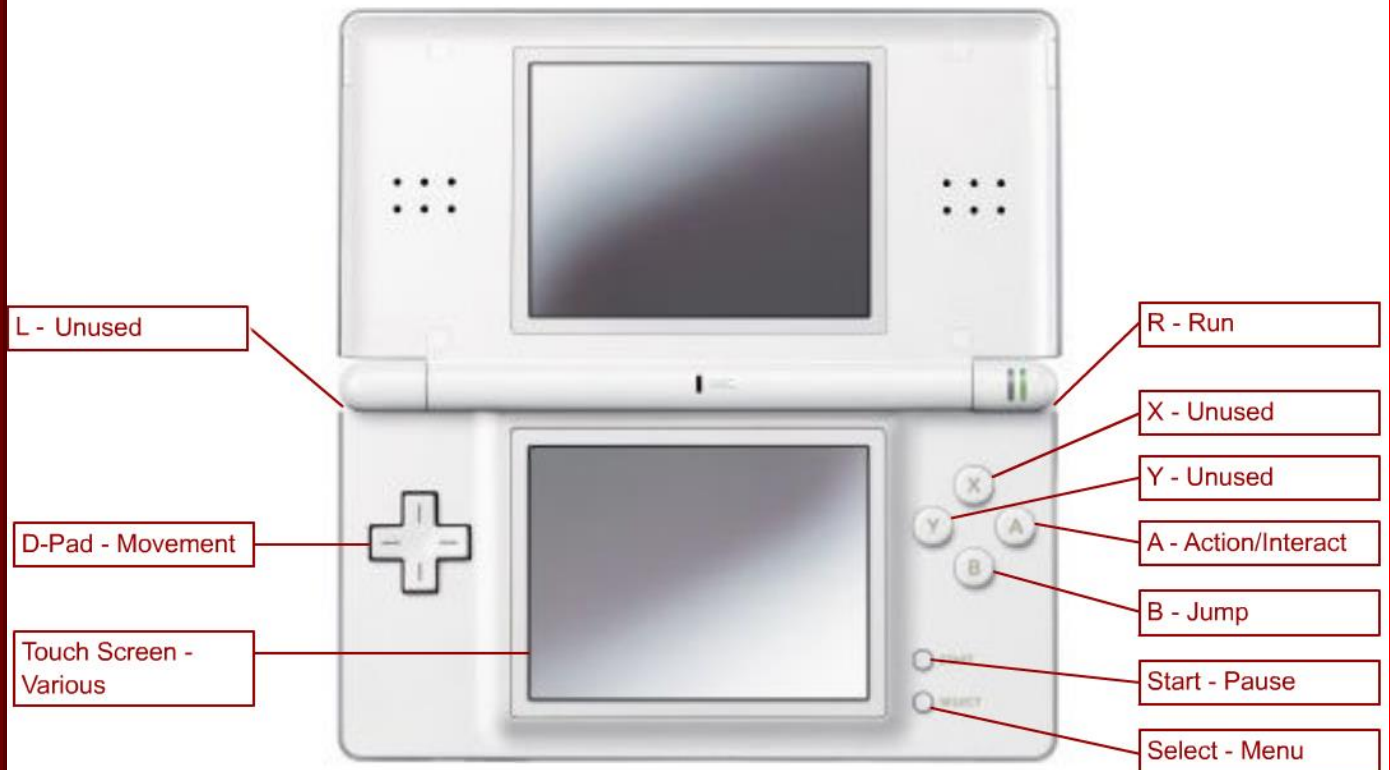
### 1.6.6– 45 – 55 Secs

o   A loud sound of clanging iron is played as enemies break down the door from the previous screen. The player continues to run to the right, eventually he is forced to jump into the flowing stream of water. The player is quickly swept downstream by a forceful current.

### 1.6.4– 55 – 60 Secs

o   The player is dumped unceremoniously in a run-down section of the slums, the gameplay "style" switches to hub exploration. Many citizens bustle around him, and small popup boxes display conversation snippets as the player walks around.

o   After a few seconds a scripted cutscene takes over and the player eludes his pursuers by slipping into the crowd.

## 1.7 Game Controls

### 1.7.1– Control map

L - Unused

R - Run

X - Unused

Y - Unused

D-Pad - Movement

A - Action/Interact

B - Jump

Touch Screen - Various

Start - Pause

Select - Menu

### 1.7.2– Game Controls breakdown

- How the player controls the protagonist:

    - **D-Pad** – Character Movement, Crouch, Hoist, Lower self, Menu Navigation

    - **A** – Action, Interact

    - **B** – Jump

    - **X** – Unused

    - **Y** – Unused

    - **L** – Unused

    - **R** – Run

    - **Start** – Pause game

    - **Select** – Menu

    - **Touch Screen** – Various

## 1.8 Competitive Analysis

### 1.8.1– Oddworld

- The core game idea for Alkaid is heavily based on a popular series of Playstation One game's called Oddworld in various ways. We wanted our game to have the ability to allow the player to move and attack using unconventional methods; in which the player would take care of an enemy or puzzle by using the environment to his advantage rather than a set of weapons that the player would usually collect as they progress through the game.

  Alkaid will be quite similar to the Oddworld series in a few distinct ways; we like to think of Alkaid as our own 'reimaging' of the series for a more modern day audience. Firstly the movement system within Alkaid is reminiscent of Oddworld as the player can move their character in a variety of ways throughout the environment by hoisting themselves up onto platforms, performing dodge rolls and jumping over small gaps. The simplicity of the controls would allow the player to perfect their skills quicker and allow us to create more diverse puzzles.

  If the player starts to run to a certain platform or drop down from one while an enemy is nearby the enemy would be able to hear the footsteps.

### 1.8.2– Oblivion

The elder scrolls series of games are built around the premise that while the player has an overall storyline within the game world, they are still let loose to explore and find their own way to solve or defeat a particular enemy this sense of freedom empowering the player is something we took into consideration while designing Alkaid.

The branching conversations which take place between the player and the NPC's in the Elder Scrolls games are similar to that which we have developed for use in Alkaid, giving the player more choices in what they would like to say to an NPC evoking different reactions from them which could alter the way in which the games story pans out.

## 1.9 Appendix

### 1.9.1– Process of Design

Attached.

### 1.9.2– Work Diaries

Attached.

### 1.9.3– Concept imagery (environment)

Miscellaneous concept images for use within the game.
Attached.