

# CODENAME: SNOOPY

## Level Design Document

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## What Level Design Means Here

Codename: Snoopy has one map and no discrete levels. The level design is the town of Harboury Town itself — the spatial relationships between locations, the road network that connects them, the visibility lines between areas, and the way the map shapes player decision-making without explicitly directing it. This document covers how Harboury Town was designed as a playspace, not just as a setting.

## 1. Map Philosophy

### GPS Aesthetic as Design Language

The top-down orthographic camera and flat colour-coded visual language (dark roads, light buildings, labelled landmarks) was chosen for a specific design reason: it keeps the player in the mindset of surveillance rather than inhabitation. A player who feels like they are looking at a map maintains the analytical distance of an observer. A player who feels like they are inside a world starts to feel like an actor. Snoopy's emotional core requires the player to feel like a watcher — capable of detachment — right up until the moment the epilogue forces them to feel like a killer.

### Road Network as the Primary Constraint

Bon moves only on roads via NavMesh. This constraint is not a limitation — it is a spatial design tool. Roads create natural chokepoints where Bon must pass close to certain locations. The player cannot cut across districts; they must route through the road network, which naturally takes them past buildings they might not have intended to visit. Discovery is built into movement.

## 2. Location Design

### Jac's Mansion

- **Role:** Jac's home base. Start and end point of every daily cycle.
- **Spatial design:** Located at the edge of the playable area. Approaching it requires committing — the player cannot pass by casually.
- **Design function:** Not an elimination location. Its value is temporal — the player learns what time Jac leaves and returns, anchoring their daily planning.

### Residential Park

- **Role:** Morning observation point. Jac's most predictable solo moment.
- **Spatial design:** Open area. No building cover. The east bench is the specific point of interest — Jac sits there for ten minutes before his walk. The player must position

Bon close enough to plant the tracker without spooking the NPCs who also use the park.

- **Design function:** Primary player-discovered elimination window. The park visit happens before 6AM — rewarding players who are awake and positioned early.

## Harbour

- **Role:** Primary intel location. Jac's professional territory.
- **Spatial design:** Multiple sub-areas: main dock, middle pier, private east dock. The private east dock is physically separated — reaching it requires the player to move through the working harbour, past dock workers and harbour workers.
- **Design function:** Roven's arrival point. The player who invests in harbour intel discovers the night delivery operation — the clearest thread in the case against Jac that Collie built. High NPC density during Jac's 8-10AM window makes elimination difficult but not impossible.

## La Sala (Union Office)

- **Role:** Protected location. Intel-rich. Near-impossible elimination point.
- **Spatial design:** Centrally located. Jac visits three times daily, making it the most frequently active location on the map. The player will naturally be drawn here to track Jac — and will find it is always staffed.
- **Design function:** Contains the four highest-value NPCs in the game: Jac's PA, his best worker, the waiter, the cook. The location teaches the player that some places are about information, not action. 5% chance of 0 nearby in the evening creates a rare but real elimination opportunity for persistent players.

## Cemetery

- **Role:** Isolated location. Primary safe elimination window.
- **Spatial design:** Removed from the main road network. Reaching it requires deliberate routing. The isolation is physical as well as social — there is no incidental foot traffic here.
- **Design function:** 60% chance of 0 nearby during Jac's 10:30-11:30AM visit. The location is not marked as significant — the player must discover it through tracking or NPC intel. This makes finding the cemetery window feel like earned knowledge rather than handed-to-you information.

## Fish Market, Sawtly's Cafe, Bank, Lawyer's Office

These locations are not on Jac's primary schedule but are where key NPC witnesses are stationed. Their spatial distribution across the map means the player must travel the city to gather intel — they cannot cluster all investigation at one point. Each journey across the map is also an opportunity to spot Jac's car, observe unexpected deviations, and discover new patterns.

# 3. Spatial Tension Design

## The Chokepoint Problem

Bon and Jac share the road network. On a road network, paths inevitably converge. The player will regularly find themselves on the same road as Jac's car — close enough to potentially trigger the tracker ring. This creates incidental tension: moments of proximity that were not planned by the player, forcing a real-time decision about whether to attempt tracker placement now or wait for a safer window. These unplanned moments are some of the most interesting the game generates.

### Visibility and Surprise

The orthographic top-down view means the player always has full map visibility. There are no blind corners, no fog of war. This is a deliberate design choice: the tension in Snoopy does not come from not knowing where Jac is — it comes from knowing exactly where he is and not yet having the right conditions to act. Perfect information plus constrained action creates strategic tension, not the false tension of hidden information.

### The Off-Screen Indicator

When Jac is outside the camera view, an off-screen indicator shows his direction. This was added to ensure the player never loses track of Jac during camera panning or zoom operations. Losing the target in a surveillance game is not a design challenge — it is a failure of feedback. The indicator keeps the player informed without giving them any capability they did not already have.

## 4. Camera as Level Design Tool

### Zoom levels as information layers

Five discrete zoom levels were implemented rather than continuous zoom. Each level reveals a different layer of the city. At maximum zoom out, the player sees the full city, all road connections, Jac's general location. At maximum zoom in, they see individual building outlines and can precisely position Bon relative to Jac's location. The discrete steps prevent the camera from settling between useful information states.

### Edge scrolling as spatial memory tool

Edge scrolling is available to the player as a toggleable option. It allows them to pan the camera while keeping Bon stationary — useful for monitoring Jac's movement at a distance without repositioning Bon. A player who learns to use edge scrolling well gains a significant observational advantage: they can watch Jac arrive at a location, check the NPC nearby count, and decide whether to approach before committing to movement.

## 5. What the Map Does Not Have

No interiors. Players never enter buildings. This was a deliberate scope decision but it also serves a design purpose: the player is always outside, always observing, never part of Jac's world. The spatial separation between Bon and the interior spaces Jac inhabits reinforces the emotional dynamic — Bon is watching from the outside, which is where he has always been.

No stealth mechanics. There is no detection cone, no alert state, no hiding. Bon is not a spy in the traditional game sense. He is a civilian who happens to be watching. The tension comes from information and timing, not from moment-to-moment evasion. This reduces the skill

ceiling deliberately: the game should be readable by players who do not typically play stealth games.

No procedural map. Harbourside Town is handcrafted and fixed. The NPC nearby counts are procedural, Jac's schedule is time-driven, but the city itself is consistent across every playthrough. This ensures that player knowledge of the map is always valid — what worked yesterday works today. The city is the one thing the player can trust.