

Zone A: The Rarian Plain

Story, the zone as built, its enemies and minibosses, and a redesign plan grounded in Attic farmland and the Eleusinian myths

> ***THE PERIOD (set by the owner): the 5th century BCE, between 447 BC and 406 BC*** *(Periclean Athens and Eleusis, about 2,400 to 2,500 years ago). Every building, boat, prop, garment, weapon, plant and name in the redesign must fit that window: nothing modern, and nothing from a later or earlier age.*

1. At a glance

Item	Detail
Area	Zone A, the Rarian Plain (scene SCN_ZoneA_RarianPlain). The tutorial ground: wide, open, mournful, the first field ever sown, now grey and rationed.
Chapter	Chapter 1, "The Last Harvest", plays here from start to finish. Opens on leaving the Eleusis gate; completes at the First Furrow, which opens the Treeline to Zone B.
Levels / time	Player level about 1 to 8; 30 to 40 minutes on a first Mortal run.
Route	A U-shape: the Eleusis Gate, the furrows, the Threshing Floor, the drowned channel, the Boundary Herm, the far furrows and barrow-line, the First Furrow's arena, then the sealed Treeline.
Mood	A wide grey sky over once-golden fields. The land fails; it is not wrecked: swept, intact, empty.



Zone A today (in-engine): wheat furrows, the circular Threshing Floor in the middle, torches along the path.

2. Story of the area

Demeter is rationing: the harvest fails. The dead rise among the furrows because the boundary the Mysteries kept no longer closes. The old farmer mutters that the dead *"won't go down like they used to."* Chapter 1 gives Myrra a simple human task: clear the plain so the last grain can be gleaned before it fails. Chiron watches and points, never explaining. Nothing here is evil: the dead are stuck and frustrated, not cruel. Four centuries of local wars are buried along this road, and "the ground held them until it stopped."

Landmarks (fixed)

Landmark	What happens there
The Eleusis Gate	The exit from the hub; the tutorial threshold.
The Threshing Floor (halos)	A circular stone floor: the first real pack fight; the first Shrine of Demeter (regeneration and grain-find boon) beside it.

Landmark	What happens there
The Boundary Herm	A crossroads marked by a herm: the zone's first waypoint (Shrine of Hermes) and a Hestia rest point.
The Treeline	The fixed way to Zone B; sealed until Chapter 1 completes.

Connective ground (shuffled between runs)

- **The furrows**: open farmland with drainage channels, scarecrows, dead grain; light enemies; the combat sandbox.
- **The drowned channel**: a flooded irrigation ditch, a tighter path with a chest and a density spike.
- **The far furrows and the barrow-line**: where the dead are thickest; leads to the miniboss and the deep field.

Encounter flow

- First contact: one or two Keres in the open (target, attack, first kill).
- First loot: a guaranteed early Blessed drop, equipped, a stat visibly changes.
- First shrine at the Threshing Floor, then the first pack (Keres with Hoplites).
- First waypoint and rest at the Boundary Herm.
- First elite and miniboss: the First Furrow in the barrow-line.

Optional bounty-board jobs

- "A thing in the well": a small den off the drowned channel (a chest).
- "A family that cannot bury someone": an escort or clear near the barrow-line; foreshadows the Ploutonion.
- Side quests in the build: the Third Milestone (a re-consecration), the Drowned Channel (a backlog), the Granary Cellar (it turns out there is nothing).

3. Enemies and minibosses

Enemy	Category	Role	Damage / resist	Notes
Field Rats	Beast	Swarm trash	Physical; neutral	A plain animal: "a pig, at scale." Teaches area attacks. Drowned channel, granary edges.
Keres	Unprocessed	Fast melee swarm	Umbral; +Umbral, -Divine	"Small spirits of a violent death. They attend the moment and then have nowhere to be." The first enemy met.
Skeletal Hoplite (display: Unburied Hoplite)	Unprocessed	Shielded melee, small shield-line	Physical; +Umbral, -Divine	"Four centuries of local wars are buried along this road." The first thing the player kills.
Shade / Eidolon	Unprocessed	Ranged spectral bolt	Umbral; +Umbral, -Divine	"Filed in no register." Keeps its distance; phases when cornered.
MINIBOSS: The First Furrow	Unprocessed	Pack-leader and raiser	Umbral scythe sweep (telegraphed cone) and a raise-dead cast; +Umbral, -Divine	A risen field-hand at the barrow-line. Buffs and raises Hoplites and Keres: the first lesson, kill the leader, not the adds. Clearing it completes Chapter 1.

Elites are pack-leaders with one or two affixes named for the local wrong (the Ember of the Low Field, the Sergeant of the Barrow, the Thing in Kallias' Well): affixes in the game are Ember, Frost-touched, Unyielding, Fleet, Warding, Raiser and Draining. Open ground repopulates over time; landmark arenas do not. All Unprocessed are weak to Divine, which makes the Oracle feel strong early.



The Eleusis gate end of the plain, looking over the first furrows.

4. The real plain: history and myth

> *Sources for the history and myth: the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, Hesiod, Homer (Iliad and Odyssey), Pausanias book 1, Callimachus Hymn 6, Aristophanes (Acharnians), and the standard archaeology (Mylonas 1961 on Eleusis; Camp on Athens and Attica; Morrison and Coates on ships). Details are approximate and should be checked against those sources before final art is committed.*

- **The Rarian plain.** By tradition the first plain ever sown and reaped, by Triptolemos with Demeter's gift. Pausanias (1.38) records a threshing-floor and an altar of Triptolemos there. The ploughing and the first-fruits rite before sowing (the *Proerosia*) belong to this ground.
- **The land.** The Thriasian plain, bounded by Mount Aigaleos and the Kerata ranges, open to the sea at the Bay of Eleusis; barley and wheat on the flat, olives and vines on the slopes and terraces.
- **The road.** The Sacred Way from Athens through the pass at Daphni, across the Rheitoi streams and the Kephisos bridge. Shrines, tombs and herms lined it. A herm (a stone pillar with a head and a phallus) marked roads and boundaries in Attica.
- **The dead.** Tumuli and grave stelai stood by the roads; the unburied dead are a real Greek horror: Patroclus (Iliad 23) and Elpenor (Odyssey 11) cannot rest until buried. The Keres (death-spirits) appear in Homer and in Hesiod's *Shield*, with white teeth and claws, fighting over the fallen.
- **The farm.** Attic farms had stone-footed mud-brick buildings, a farm tower (pyrgos) on some, threshing floors (halos) of beaten earth or stone, stone boundary markers (horoi), terraces held by dry-stone walls, olive trees and field shrines to Demeter, Pan and the Nymphs. Ploughing used the ard drawn by oxen.

5. Redesign plan: the Rarian Plain as Attic farmland

Today	Greek redesign
Wheat furrows, torch posts, a plain circular floor	Barley and wheat in strips divided by stone walls and boundary stones (horoi). The Threshing Floor as a real *halos*: a circle of packed earth edged with flat stones, a winnowing fan and a threshing sledge beside it, a small altar of Triptolemos.
A generic crossroads marker	The Boundary Herm as a true herm on a stone base, with an offering of oil or a ribbon; a roadside well and a pyrgos (farm tower) behind.
Grey flat ground and dead olives	Terraced slopes with dry-stone retaining walls, olive groves with gnarled old trunks, fig and pomegranate near the houses, cypress at the graves; the Aigaleos ridge on the horizon.

Today	Greek redesign
Fence rows and stooks	Stone-footed mud-brick farm buildings with low tiled roofs, a rock-cut press, threshing sledges and ox-carts; stone sheepfolds.
The barrow-line	A line of earth tumuli with a stele or a krater on top, grave stelai in relief, lekythoi left as offerings; the First Furrow rises from the largest tumulus.
Skeleton-looking hoplites	Unburied dead in bronze: a Corinthian helmet with crest, a round aspis with a painted device, a doru, a linothorax or bronze cuirass, greaves; ragged burial shrouds, a coin in the mouth. They look like the dead of Patroclus's kind, not skeletons.

Enemy redesign (display only)

- **Keres**: small black-clad winged female spirits, white teeth, clawed hands, dark wings: faithful to Hesiod's *Shield* and to vase painting.
- **Unburied Hoplite**: the dead in their burial gear; a cleaner silhouette that reads as Greek at a glance.
- **Shade / Eidolon**: a thin pale outline of a person, squeaking like bats (Odyssey 24), carrying an empty hand.
- **Field Rats**: stay as plain mice and rats, a fair counterpoint to the supernatural (and an echo of Apollo Smintheus, lord of mice).
- **The First Furrow**: reframe as **Bouzyges, the first ploughman** (the legendary hero who first yoked oxen; his family cursed those who left a corpse unburied or refused fire and water, as reported in ancient lexica; verify). A risen ploughman with an ox-goad, leading the unburied he failed to bury. Names for elites follow the local pattern: *the Sergeant of the Barrow*, *the Ember of the Low Field*.

Naming table (display only)

Now	Proposed	Why
The Furrows	The Proerosia fields	the Eleusinian first-fruits rite before sowing
The Threshing Floor	Triptolemos' Halos	Pausanias names a threshing floor and altar of Triptolemos on the Rarian plain
The Boundary Herm	The Herm of the Three Roads	a herm marked a crossroads
The Barrow-line	The Tymboi (burial mounds)	Greek word for a mound
The First Furrow	Bouzyges, the First Ploughman	the legendary first plougher

Work and decisions

- Terraces, stone walls, boundary stones, a halos, a herm and tumuli are low-cost: ground, props and a terrain pass.
- The unburied-hoplite look needs a new model or a retexture of the existing skeleton: choose between a new Meshy or hand-made model.
- **Decision:** add Bouzyges as a named miniboss (new model and lines), or keep "the First Furrow" and only restyle it.
- **Decision:** keep the grey, rationed look (mournful), or paint the plain in golden barley with a grey sky (more Greek summer, less crisis)?

7. Historical dossier: the Rarian Plain, 447 to 406 BC

About the pictures: the "period reconstruction" images in this section are **AI concept illustrations** made locally for this project. They show the right kind of thing, but they are not archaeological drawings and can contain small errors (proportions, details, odd lettering). Use them as mood and shape references, not as evidence.

> ***Check before use:*** *the dates and details below come from well-known ancient sources and standard archaeology as remembered while writing, and were not checked line by line. Items marked (verify) are the least certain. Please confirm against Mylonas 1961, Clinton, Thucydides, Plutarch, Pausanias, Camp and Morrison and Coates before art is committed.*

The period: 447 to 406 BC at a glance

Year (BC)	Event	Why it matters for the game
447	Work begins on the Parthenon in Athens; about this time the building of the Periclean Telesterion at Eleusis begins (Plutarch, Pericles 13: Koroibos, then Metagenes, then Xenokles; other sources credit Ictinus with the design) *(verify)*.	Eleusis is an active building site: scaffolding, stacked blocks, masons, sledges and cranes are all in period.
431	The Peloponnesian War begins. The Spartan king Archidamos invades Attica and ravages the Thriasian plain round Eleusis (Thucydides 2.19). Building at the Telesterion slows.	The "failing fields" of Zone A have a real cause: burned crops, cut olives, farmers sheltering inside walls.
430 to 426	The plague of Athens (Thucydides 2.47 to 54): fever, thirst, sores; the dead lie unburied; funeral customs collapse; people burn their dead on others' pyres.	A real Greek source for the rising dead and the unburied: the unburied dead of the game echo the plague years.
421 to 415	The Peace of Nikias; a lull. The Sicilian expedition sails and is destroyed in 413.	A quiet, anxious time.
413 to 404	The Spartans fortify Dekeleia in Attica and hold it year-round. The land route to Eleusis is cut, so for some years the Mysteries' procession goes by sea (Plutarch, Alcibiades 34) *(verify)*.	Eleusis cut off by land and kept alive by the harbour: the two harbours and the guarded gate fit this.
407	Alcibiades leads the procession back to Eleusis by the Sacred Way under armed escort (Plutarch, Alcibiades 34) *(verify)*.	Armed hoplites escorting torch-bearers: a ready image for the hub.
406	The sea battle of Arginusae; the generals are put on trial for not recovering the dead from the sea.	The theme of unburied dead appears again; the game's window ends here.
404 to 403	Defeat of Athens; the Thirty Tyrants; the Ionic alphabet is officially adopted at Athens in 403/2.	Before this, Athenian inscriptions use the older Attic alphabet: use it on any carved text.



AI concept: terraced Attic farmland, a round threshing floor of packed earth, oxen with an ard plough, barley in the field.

The land and its work

- **The year.** Sowing barley and wheat in autumn (October to November, after the first rains and the Proerosia rite); harvest in May to June; threshing in June to July on the *halos*; grapes in September; olives in November to January. In the game's autumn setting the fields are just sown or bare.

- **Crops.** Barley (the staple) and emmer or bread wheat; olives; vines; figs; pulses; flax; pasture for sheep and goats. The Thriasian plain was the great grain field of Attica.
- **The farm.** A farmhouse of mud-brick on a stone base, with a courtyard, a tower (*pyrgos*) on a larger estate, a rock-cut or stone olive press, a threshing floor, a cistern or well, terraces held by dry-stone walls, and stone boundary markers (*horoi*), some inscribed.
- **Tools.** The wooden ard plough with an iron share (the ploughman's goad for oxen), the hoe (*dikella*), the sickle, the winnowing fan, the threshing sledge or the tread of oxen, baskets and sacks.
- **War damage.** In 431 and in the following years Spartan armies burned crops, felled olive trees and vines and carried off livestock (Thucydides 2.19 and following). The Athenians drove in their flocks and families behind the Long Walls. A ravaged plain in 431 BC is a documented fact, and a good source for the "failing fields".
- **Roads and boundaries.** The Sacred Way crosses the plain with herms (a squared stone pillar with a head and, in the Athenian type, a phallus) at crossroads and boundaries, wayside shrines, tombs, wells and a bridge over the Kephisos. Herms were mutilated in 415 BC, the scandal before the Sicilian expedition: they were everywhere.



AI concept: an Attic roadside cemetery with mounds, grave stelai and white-ground lekythoi.

The dead and how Greeks buried them

- Burial was a duty: sprinkling earth on a corpse was the minimum, and leaving a body unburied was an offence against the gods (Antigone, 441 BC; the Arginusae trial, 406 BC). The unburied dead cannot cross the river and wander (Patroclus, Elpenor).
- Graves lined the roads outside the city: mounds (*tymboi*), pit and cist graves, stone sarcophagi, marble grave stelai with reliefs of the dead, and, in the 5th century, white-ground lekythoi (oil flasks) left as offerings. Offerings were also food, wine and honey cakes. A coin in the mouth for Charon is a later custom *(verify: it is rare before the 4th century)*.
- Funeral: the prothesis (laying out), the ekphora (carrying out before dawn), burial or cremation, a feast. Mourners wore dark; hair was cut; women wailed.
- The plague (430 to 426) broke the rules: the dead were burned on strangers' pyres or thrown on top of other bodies (Thucydides 2.52), temples filled with corpses.



AI concept: an Athenian hoplite. Note: modern Flux drew a Roman-looking breastplate; the Greek one is a bronze muscle cuirass or a linen linothorax.

Soldiers: what the dead look like

- **Hoplite kit, about 450 BC.** The Corinthian helmet (or the lighter Attic or Chalcidian types that were replacing it), the aspis (a round shield about 90 cm across, with a bronze face on wood and a painted device), the doru (an ash spear about 2.4 m with an iron head and a bronze butt-spike, the sauroter), the xiphos (a short sword) and the kopis, a bronze or linen cuirass (the linothorax of glued linen layers was common), bronze greaves (*knemides*), a chiton under the armour, a cloak.
- **Not hoplite.** The sarissa (4th century), the Roman scutum, the segmented lorica, the plumed Roman helmet.
- **Unburied dead as enemies.** The restyle: not skeletons but the dead as they fell: pale bodies in burial shrouds or in the armour they died in, wounds visible, a wreath or an obol if they were buried, nothing if not; the cold grey of the gone.

Other things in period for this zone

- Plants: olive (the main tree), fig, pomegranate, vines, cypress at graves, Aleppo pine on the hills, plane trees by streams, wild thyme, sage and asphodel (the flower of the underworld meadows). **No agave, no prickly pear, no maize, no tomato, no potato.**
- Animals: oxen, mules, sheep and goats, dogs, hens (the cock came from Persia and was common by the 5th century), pigs, bees; wolves and boar in the hills. **No turkeys, no horses in ploughing**.
- Cult: Demeter and Kore; Triptolemos; Zeus Herkeios; Hermes (roads); Pan and the Nymphs (fields and caves); the Eleusinian first-fruits (aparchai) given at the sanctuary each year by Athens and its allies by decree (the 'First Fruits Decree', about 430 BC) *(verify date)*.