



Strathnaver Museum

Bettyhill Café and Tourist Information Centre



Business Plan

2019 – 2022

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1.Executive Summary

1.1 Who we are

Strathnaver Museum is an accredited independent museum located in the remote rural village of Bettyhill sited close to the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre*. Located on the north coast of Sutherland, part of the popular *North Coast 500 (NC500) route*, it tells the story of the Highland Clearances, Clan Mackay and the social history of Mackay Country. The Museum serves the ancient province of Strathnaver, or Mackay Country, which comprises the parishes of Tongue, Farr, Durness and Eddrachilles and covers 2,106 sq. kms.

The Museum first opened its doors in 1976 and since then has staged a great number of exhibitions and community projects exploring life for the people of Strathnaver from modern to prehistoric times. It uses its collection innovatively to bring social, educational and economic benefits to the immediate and wider area.

1.2 What we want to do

Strathnaver Museum are asking *Highland Council* to consider transferring the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* identified in this report into their ownership by way of a Community Asset Transfer.



Image 1: Bettyhill café and tourist information centre with Strathnaver Museum in the background

Thereafter the proposed project is to develop the site as an informative heritage hub and quality catering establishment as part of the larger redevelopment of *Strathnaver Museum*. We envisage the redeveloped site to act as a destination gateway to

northwest Sutherland and contribute to the increasing success of the popular *NC500* route.

The revitalised *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre*, will provide a new focus for the village, including active and passive recreation; activities for health and well-being; training and skills development and community food production. In addition, the project would be a boost to the local economy by enhancing the image of Bettyhill and securing jobs and skills.

The project has evolved from public demand and is overwhelmingly supported by the local community as evident in the consultation exercise explored more fully in section 3. Losing the current facility is a genuine possibility as *Highland Council* have indicated the current lease is unlikely to be renewed and the present leaseholders have indicated their intention to retire in the near future.

1.3 How we intend to do it

The undernoted business case, based on *Highland Council's* requirements, outlines a sustainable solution for the future development and management of the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre*, demonstrating to the Council and potential funders, the group's ability to deliver, manage and operate this as a community asset.

Recommendations:

- *Strathnaver Museum* requires to agree to the phasing of the project, and the respective component parts based on the capital funding available.
- Subject to *Strathnaver Museum* securing ownership of the facility a catering franchise would be sought and installed as the initial phase of this project.
- *Strathnaver Museum* improves and redesigns the information display/exhibition area to encourage visitors to explore further.
- *Strathnaver Museum* embarks on a fundraising strategy taking consideration of the funders noted within this report to embark on the identified phasing of the project.

A franchise model has been selected because we see this as our best alternative working with people who understand the museum and the community needs. We have identified a potential franchise partner and opened initial discussions all on the understanding that our asset transfer request is successful. Our potential partner has experience in providing community services and a familiarity with complex community dealings.

We have discussed their business aims and their fitting with community aims. Their Social Enterprise Strategy includes stimulating local development enabling the development of stronger organisations and ensuring people are more involved in their community. They are currently freelance caterers but have a vast background experience in a wide variety of establishments which have always responded to local need encompassing the third sector, small community groups and voluntary organisations. We have discussed equality of opportunities for groups and employment of disadvantaged people and they have a track record of inclusiveness which they would bring to the partnership. This has included and will be part of the agreement, opportunities and events for youths particularly working with *Fèis Air an Oir* and senior citizens lunch clubs.

We have identified potential conflicts addressed in the Risk Assessment Analysis.

The franchisee will not have the responsibility of the TIC this will be under the control of the *Strathnaver Museum*. Pop up exhibitions, tourist information and all outlined for this aspect of the business will be managed by the museum. We would have this managed by volunteers at identified peak times and monitored by the franchisee at other times by arrangement. A similar importance of focus will be given to this aspect.

Our initial discussions have to date been exploratory as we are unable to give any commitment but our favoured franchisee is showing a long term commitment to work favourably, to continue to deliver community aims. A detailed contract would be created when a commitment would be imminent. Should our suitable franchisee not materialise we have taken this into consideration detailing all the costs in the projection as we were running the operation. The employment of a manager would be an alternative.

2. Our Organisation

2.1 Strathnaver Museum

Strathnaver Museum is an iconic visitor attraction located on the *NC500* housing several permanent and temporary displays illustrating the social, agricultural and natural history of the ancient province of Strathnaver or Mackay Country.

The museum trust has an excellent track record of running a community enterprise with innovative community outreach projects and events which have involved a diverse range of people of all ages and backgrounds.

Key achievements over the last 5 years include:

- Visitors to the museum have increased by 42%;
- Participants in activities and events up by 87%;
- 135 events held;
- Income from admissions up 65%;
- Secured pre-development funding for redevelopment of the Strathnaver Museum;
- Creation of a heritage mobile application for Caithness and Sutherland to promote its many heritage sites;
- Provided 317 training opportunities for volunteers through 77 events.

Strathnaver Museum supports the local economy through tourism development activities such as the creation of a smart phone heritage application and a current partnership project with *Mackay Country Trust* to install an interpretive trail celebrating renowned Gaelic bard Rob Donn Mackay. As one of the few wet weather activities in North West Sutherland it is also an important visitor attraction for the area. The increasing popularity of the *NC500* means the presence of *Strathnaver Museum* as part of the infrastructure for this world class route is increasingly important.

2.2 Partnerships and People

In recent years the Museum has instigated a number of partnership projects with local arts and heritage groups including *Mackay Country Community Trust* and *Fèis air an Oir*. The WWI Centenary project *Pibrochs and Poppies* with *Fèis air an Oir* was especially rewarding and we are looking to develop a Phase II project using the musical outputs from Phase I to explore our heritage through dance.



Image 2: Tunes and Tales Workshop, Tongue March 2015

Strathnaver Museum is a member of local groups and forums and regularly contributes to joint initiatives. These are local tourism groups *Venture North* and the *Caithness and Sutherland Visitor Attraction Group* as well as the *Highland Museum Forum (HMF)*.

Strathnaver Museum, as a committee member of the *HMF*, has been involved in developing a partnership project for independent museums in the Highlands to support the sectors sustainability. The project is funded by *Museum Galleries Scotland* and the *Heritage Lottery Fund* and has supported improved partnership working, cost efficiencies as a sector and identified potential future projects. Outputs to date include independent museum audits, an industry strategy and a business plan.

The museum has close links with the *Clan Mackay Society* and houses their collection in the *Mackay Room*. The museum is keen to strengthen this relationship and is developing links with Mackay's throughout the world following the successful *Mackay Goes Global* project in 2009. The potential to increase income through a virtual community around *Strathnaver Museum* is another ambition.

The Museum has worked closely with *Highland Council Ranger Service* on several projects.

The development of the education programme has also strengthened our links with the local schools and the *Highlife Highland Youth Development Officer*.

The museum has also been working with the *Peatlands Partnership Flow to the Future* project. This included a partnership project to deliver the museum's *Alan Joyce Young Environmentalist Programme* and the museum housed an interpretation panel for the project installed in 2017.



Image 3: Forward Together: North West Sutherland Voluntary Sector Leaders Forum, 23 May 2016

In 2016, in a unique collaboration with the *North West Sutherland Voluntary Sector Leaders Forum*, the museum reached out to other voluntary organisations in North Sutherland to explore innovative joint ventures to bring mutual benefit from museum developments across the wider locality. Several partnership opportunities have been identified and will inform the Activity Plan 2017-2022.

2.3 Management structure and staffing

Strathnaver Museum is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee managed by a voluntary Board of Trustees made up of 8 Directors. The Board has responsibility for the strategic leadership of the organisation, policy-making and budgetary control. Board meetings are held quarterly or more often as required. At each AGM a third of Directors who have served for the longest period of time shall be subject to retirement by rotation. Therefore, the average term of office is 3 years. Voluntary office bearers include the post of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and

Treasurer. A Secretary also sits on the Board but this person is not a Director. Three of our regular volunteers are Directors and anyone can stand for election to a Directorship.

Strathnaver Museum employs a part time museum administrator who is responsible for the operational running of the museum supported by a dedicated team of volunteers. The museum has the services of a Museum Mentor who provides professional curatorial advice on a voluntary basis. It also appoints personnel for fixed term posts for the delivery of specific projects.

Over the years *Strathnaver Museum* has delivered a varied and successful series of events and projects exploring the arts, heritage and natural history of the area. Current project staff includes a volunteer coordinator and a development officer. During 2017 a variety of contract posts were appointed to support the *Rob Donn Country* projects which include, *Threading Donn*, *Trailing Donn* and *Re-Creating Donn*.

Strathnaver Museum is an Accredited museum and as such meets national standards and has access to support and resources including training from *Museum Galleries Scotland*. The Museum Mentor ensures the requirements for accreditation are maintained. She supplies training in collections management, recording and accreditation standards. The museum has access to *CVS North*, member of the Highland *Third Sector Partnership*, which provides support and help with requirements for regulation and governance.

<p>Thomas Mackay (Chair)</p>	<p>Tommy is a recently retired engineering manager and has been involved with <i>Strathnaver Museum</i> since the 1970s. He brings a wealth of local knowledge about the local history, culture and detailed knowledge about the people who have lived in Bettyhill and the surrounding area. This brings a very personal feeling to the Museum and its activities and is something that is regularly commented on by our visitors. Tom has been involved in many <i>Strathnaver Museum</i> projects and is experienced in gathering oral histories and other research methods.</p>
<p>Anne Buck (Treasurer)</p>	<p>Anne is a valuable member of the team at <i>Strathnaver Museum</i> and regularly volunteers her time at front of house, meeting and greeting visitors and contributing to the administration of the Museum. Anne has been a key figure alongside Sonya developing special exhibitions for the Museum over the last two years which have proved extremely popular with visitors. Anne has developed a range of skills since working at the Museum in conservation practices and Museum systems.</p>
<p>Frances Gunn (Director)</p>	<p>Frances has extensive experience in the financial and voluntary sector. Currently employed as a Development Officer with <i>CVS North</i> Frances provides valuable input into</p>

	<p>the organisation with regard to volunteering, fundraising and governance. Frances has also been heavily involved in <i>Strathnaver Museum</i> research projects over the years and is experienced in gathering oral histories and other research methods.</p>
<p>Dorothy Pritchard (Director)</p>	<p>Dorothy is an experienced teacher working at primary school level and advises the Board on developing effective relationships with the local schools. Her wealth of knowledge as an educator is used when developing activities for children as part of both fun and educational activities. Dorothy is also a local crofter and brings her knowledge about the local culture and farming activities to the Museum.</p>
<p>Robert Mackay (Director)</p>	<p>Robert is a local historian who is also a Director with the <i>Armada Local History Society</i> and his knowledge of the local area and its history is extensive. Robert has delivered family history night classes on behalf of the Museum and provides advice and assistance to volunteers in genealogical research as well as carrying out research on behalf of <i>Strathnaver Museum</i>. He is also experienced in gathering oral histories and other research methods.</p>
<p>Sonya Anderson-Hughes (Director)</p>	<p>Sonya is an experienced health professional operating throughout north west Sutherland. Sonya has developed a wide ranging knowledge of the area and its history since becoming involved with <i>Strathnaver Museum</i> and has taken the lead in developing and curating special exhibitions for the Museum over the last two years. She is well versed in research methods and is adding to her skills and knowledge by taking advantage of learning opportunities through the Museum.</p>
<p>Colin McDonogh (Director)</p>	<p>After spending over 30 years as an industrial research chemist followed by 15 years as a Health, Safety & Personnel manager Colin retired from Cheshire to Tongue. He joined the museum 4 years ago, is a regular volunteer 'on the door' and also undertakes genealogy research (with others) for visitors and looks after the record keeping for the museum shop.</p>
<p>Eileen Mackay (Director)</p>	
<p>Simon Lee (Co-opted Director)</p>	<p>Simon is the Strategic Business Development Manager with the <i>Melness and Tongue Community Development Trust</i> and has extensive experience working within the voluntary sector. Simon has recently become involved with <i>Strathnaver Museum</i> and has been co-opted onto the Board to provide advice and guidance on the potential</p>

	acquisition of the local café as an asset transfer from <i>Highland Council</i> .
Elliot Rudie (Honorary President)	Elliot is a retired art teacher and brings his creativity and experience of the education sector to the Museum and its activities. Elliot has been involved with the Museum in one guise or another since its inception and has contributed artistically to the interpretation in collaboration with his pupils. Elliot is also experienced in gathering oral histories and other research methods and has appeared in a number of TV programmes talking about the Museum and the area's history more widely.
Fiona Mackenzie (Development Officer)	Fiona has a varied background having completed an MA History (Hons) in 2001 followed by an MSC in Sustainable Rural Development in 2010. With previous experience within the civil service and third sector she has been working on <i>Strathnaver Museum's</i> development plan since late 2013.
Rosemary Macintosh (Administrator & Volunteer Coordinator)	Rosemary has been a valuable member of the team since 2007, first as a volunteer and more recently as Museum Administrator and Volunteer Coordinator. Rosemary has an extensive background in volunteering and management experience in social work. Inspired by her work at the museum Rosemary is working towards a MLitt in Museum and Galleries Studies from the University of St Andrews.

2.4 Quality Control

Looking forward towards the delivery of this project and beyond, the committee recognised the need for continuous professional development, and the requirement to ensure that they had the skill set required to undertake the roles and responsibilities of planning, delivering and operating the new venture.

Strathnaver Museum has a policy of continuous professional development and operates an induction programme as new volunteers join while current volunteers are offered further training and development opportunities. The table at Appendix 1 lists the available skill set of current volunteers and identifies potential future skill requirements.

Recommendations:

- Continue to identify and recruit additional committee members and volunteers with a focus on continuing to increase the skill set and diversity within the group;
- Ensure that adequate fundraising and revenue generation is being undertaken to ensure sufficient resources and group sustainability;
- Update of job-role documents for committee members and volunteers to ensure that all members are aware of their own, and other's responsibilities, and that there is sufficient delegation of tasks, along with associated expectations and timescales.

3. Introduction to the Project

3.1 Project Overview and Objectives

Strathnaver Museum is looking to undertake a community asset transfer of *Bettyhill Café and tourist information centre* to develop and improve the relevance of the site to the needs of the local community. The site is located at NC715621 and covers 1,448.79m² of which the building makes up 188m².

Strathnaver Museum's vision is to create a diverse hub for north west Sutherland which requires leading on and addressing the social challenges which affect one of the most sparsely populated districts in Europe. Issues affecting our communities include social isolation, a lack of opportunities for skills development and economic opportunities, and a lack of resources to focus on tourism development to take advantage of opportunities presented by the increase in traffic as a result of the *NC500*.

By bringing this important facility into community ownership we would secure the future of *Bettyhill Café and tourist information centre*. It is important to secure this obvious stopping point close to the road, maintain the availability of refreshments and direct people to the Museum and other attractions. The ongoing refurbishment plans of *Strathnaver Museum* to their building and displays will be enhanced by securing the *Bettyhill café* as it acts as the gateway to the museum (Just Enterprise Report, 2016).

The Museum considers that the facility would aid and unify the community and fulfil numerous *Scottish Government* and *Highland Council* objectives. The facility would provide a further focus to coalesce elements of the diverse community, breaking down barriers of age, gender, religious belief, ethnic origin, physical ability, mental capacity and of social status. It would be fully in line with *Scottish Government* policy for community empowerment.

The community facility will help to ensure that we have a strong, resilient and supportive community, where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others. It is acknowledged that there is a lack of catering establishments in Bettyhill.

The voluntary sector in this area makes a very important contribution to cultural and social life and creates opportunities to learn new skills. The work of the voluntary sector is important for health, well-being and preventative medicine. The substantial contribution made by museums, events, exhibitions and research to the tourism product and economy is often undervalued and overlooked and it is to be hoped that this will become better understood.

This purchase would provide a strategically placed visitor reception at the eastern gateway to Mackay Country. The facility would offer catering, comfort and opportunities for rest alongside informative materials to help guide the visitor. It would promote the

importance of the history and heritage of our unique environment while directing visitors to often hidden sites of interest. This would give visitors a personalised experience and encourages them to explore “off the beaten track” to discover the stories and sites that are “hidden treasures”.

Vital community ownership of this facility will allow signposting to groups and organisations that are involved in interpreting the environment in all its guises. *Strathnaver Museum* has established links with heritage groups, both built and natural, across Caithness and Sutherland (section 2.2) and is well placed in understanding the diverse projects and work of these often-disparate groups.

The facility will be divided between the cafe/restaurant function and the information exhibition function. The restaurant will feature dining room seating for approximately 50 patrons. The cafe/coffeehouse will provide a full-service dine-in and carry-out coffee-based beverages. The intention is not for the museum to run the catering establishment but to contract this aspect to a local interest.

Our objectives:

- To successfully complete an asset transfer for a peppercorn sum from the *Highland Council* and bring the facility into community ownership under the jurisdiction of *Strathnaver Museum*;
- To secure technical services to draw appropriate plans for refit where necessary;
- To redevelop the interior of the building and have the appropriate works carried out;
- Seek funding to carry out the alterations and alleviate the potential flooding concern. Architecturally, the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* has not been designed for the current use and has been casually reformed to serve the purpose;
- To secure a local based franchise operation to continue to provide and develop catering services;
- To work in partnership with the Museum and other tourist operators to improve the information displays and promote facilities and services in the area while highlighting the potential for exploring NW Sutherland and as the eastern gateway to Mackay Country, the historic *Strathnaver Trail* and further afield. To capitalize on the popular *NC500* route;
- To develop the ideas gathered during the community and stakeholder consultations;
- To determine the operational business case allowing for financial sustainability, including small income generating activities.

4. Audience

Currently the facility is open seasonally with irregular opening times and patrons are advised to check social media for opening times. The service provided is recognised as essential but there is no local input as to the services provided. The café food is generally appreciated by patrons but reviews on *TripAdvisor* are mixed with 28% of reviewers listing the café as average, poor or terrible (as of 23 August 2018). We would make improving the service a priority by taking into account the details in the reviews.

In 2017 we revised our Visitor Survey to try and gauge how many of our visitors decided to visit *Strathnaver Museum* as they had stopped at the *Bettyhill Café and tourist information centre*. Both businesses share a car park and we believed that the potential of the café to redirect people to the museum to be significant. In 2017 just under 8% of respondents said they decided to visit the museum after stopping at the café and in 2018 this figure had risen slightly to 8.5%.

During mid to late July we conducted additional market research to evaluate customer behavior. This took the form of observations totaling 7 hours 40 minutes across 4 days. From the observations of those entering the café only about 5% go onto visit the museum while 22% of museum visitors came from the café.

When the café was open 46% of those who stopped went onto use the café but a further 18% entered the café for less than 5 minutes; most of these for less than 2 minutes. The inference is that 18% entered to use the *tourist information centre* although it is possible that some looked at the café and decided it wasn't for them. From very preliminary observations it would seem, over the period late morning to early afternoon, only 25% ordered a meal while 75% ordered coffee and cake. The reasons for this are unclear but it may be that the menu is unappealing suggesting opportunities to provide more light and healthier snacks and meals.

A sample copy of a menu currently featured at *Bettyhill Café and tourist information centre* is attached in Appendix 2. Initially the business will continue to provide a café offering but future expansion will look at expanding the menu. In particular we will look at promoting local produce, sourcing from a select group of suppliers providing high quality fresh local produce. This is in line with findings at national level where quality food and drink improves the overall visitor experience (Visit Scotland, 2015). This is exemplified by the launch of a national strategy to boost food tourism in Scotland in January 2018.

The casual dining/full service restaurant market is a growing industry on the *NC500*, with annual expected increases in revenue outpacing 5% yearly (HIE, 2017). More and more people are choosing to eat out while specialty coffee is a growing industry particularly to the growing cycling market (The Guardian, 2017).

A summary of the observational research can be found below and the findings can be found in full at Appendix 3.

Summary:

- There is a clear need for a café/ stopping point / *tourist information Centre* in Bettyhill with as much as 15% of all passing traffic stopping to use the car park;
- The *Bettyhill café* is a very important source of visitors for the museum, although it is suggested that it could be much better – this would have a significant impact on the museum;
- The museum does not appear to be particularly significant to the business of the *Bettyhill café*.

4.1 Consultation Methodology

Our community consultations were based around gauging if support existed in the community for *Strathnaver Museum* requesting an asset transfer of *Bettyhill Café and Tourist Information Centre*, to community ownership.

Our community engagement and participation related to the groups and individuals that would play an active role in identifying community need and determining better ways of working together across the proposed facilities. Three distinct approaches were undertaken:

- a public meeting held on 24th October 2017;
- door to door surveying and;
- an online survey from late October to early November 2017.

All activities were advertised by local poster, word of mouth and press adverts.

As well as these specific activities our community support and engagement is also demonstrated by:

- Museum volunteer meetings and ideas request;
- Annual Visitor Survey;
- What do they want survey;
- Market Research;
- Open discussion with previous lease holders;
- Newsletter information with feedback requests.

We acknowledge community engagement is ongoing and will continue in the context:

Inform

To provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

Consult	To obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
Involve	To work directly with the community throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
Collaborate	To partner with the community in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
Empower	To place final decision making in the hands of the community.

4.2 The Findings

Café consultation results – October 2017

Respondents identified a range of things that they liked about the café and tourist information point:

- Economic benefits delivered by the café and tourist information centre;
- The importance of having a facility serving food;
- The benefits of the café’s geographic location’
- The opportunities for heritage and culture;
- It’s general (other) importance to the community.

Overwhelmingly respondents felt the café and tourist information centre should remain but they did identify a number of improvements which should be made.

- Improvements to the facilities including changes to the layout, upgrading of facilities and better accessibility;
- Other content with the general operational nature of the business respondents cited the need for increased opening hours and suggestions for what the café should sell;
- Due to the increased number of visitors the need to improve marketing of the café was cited.

Stakeholder discussions to identify further community uses

We asked for comments on our engagement to date and invited suggestions for additional uses of the building to encourage community activity. The previous lease holders have been consulted and their input has been invaluable and crucially they have stressed the benefits of bringing the facility into community ownership. The findings have been condensed by grouping and summarised below in Appendix 4.

5. Impacts and Benefits

5.1 Competition

In general visitors (and to a lesser extent locals) complain of patchy provision in terms of eating opportunities along the *NC500*. This reflects the fact that in general the area suffers from a very short, sharp tourist season and few establishments can afford to stay open much beyond the standard Easter to October season. There are times in July and August when there is an under-supply of catering facilities.

In recent years, particularly since the inception of the *NC500*, there has been a significant increase in the number of visitors which is contributing to extending the length of the tourist season (although the shoulder seasons are still long and thin). It is hoped that this increase will continue but it is imperative that the provision of services increases to match demand if the area is to avoid gaining a reputation for a lack of services. Such a scenario is likely to undo the benefits brought by the increase in visitors thus the number and variety of catering establishments, amongst other vital facilities, must be developed.

For Bettyhill to succeed as a destination, amenities and attractions must increase to meet the burgeoning demand. *Strathnaver Museum* is acutely aware of this and is developing plans to enhance its visitor experience and the maintenance of *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* is seen as a vital element to this. It is rumored that the *Bettyhill Hotel* is considering extending its season to December which is an indication that the season is extending and a development that should be warmly welcomed.

It should be emphasized that the *Tourist Information Centre* is an integral part of this business plan and the vision of *Strathnaver Museum* is to promote all of the facilities in the area, even where this might detract from the profitability of the *Bettyhill Café* itself. Our ethos is that to survive as a popular tourist destination, Bettyhill and the wider North Coast must provide a range of catering establishments for a range of tastes and budgets. In our view it would be short-sighted of us to not point visitors to the other catering options in the area, as we want them to return home extolling the delights of the area, not bemoaning a lack of choice.

Of course this vision is likely to be contentious with the café operator but it must be something they accept and it re-inforces the point that the tourist information provision must remain in the control of *Strathnaver Museum*.

Similarly, although it is stated elsewhere that a major driver of the development will be to use the café to generate more business for the museum, we will also promote other attractions in the area.

It is in all our interests to ensure that visitors enjoy all there is on offer in the region.

Bettyhill

Farr Bay Inn (FBI) – less than ½ a mile from *Bettyhill Café*

Includes restaurant facilities and coffee shop.

It is unclear what the offering of the restaurant at the *FBI* is. Our market research observations saw no-one enter the establishment for food, although a small number tried to enter but were apparently turned away.

The *Café* at the *FBI* is a recently opened venture and has a reputation for serving quality teas and coffees. In our market research we saw no customers use the *café* although as mentioned elsewhere, one group did enter and leave immediately complaining of it feeling too enclosed.

The *FBI* suffers from a poor entrance from the main road. Signage is tired and the track to the *FBI* is in poor repair. In our market research we saw a small but significant number of vehicles slow for the entrance, or enter but then turn around and leave without getting out to look. This suggests there is a potential opportunity for the *FBI* which is being missed. *Strathnaver Museum* wants to increase its trade – particularly through use of the cemetery parking for coaches and overspill from the *café* car park. This will require upgrading of the entrance to the cemetery and *FBI* which observations suggest should provide benefit to the *FBI*.

It is hoped that an improvement in the offering of the museum, coupled with improvements to the *Café/TIC* could and should provide the *FBI* with opportunities to generate further trade.

Bettyhill Hotel – approx. 1 mile to the west.

The *Bettyhill Hotel* is a residential hotel and public house. It does a brisk trade during the tourist season providing both restaurant mid-range food and bar meals. The bar meals are much the same as the restaurant menu and are therefore on the more expensive side of bar meal provision in the area. Snacks such as soup and sandwiches are also provided during afternoons and the hotel has a fairly frequent but spasmodic touring coach trade (pre-booked and served soup and sandwiches). Since the inception of the *North Coast 500*, and the owner's special efforts to market the hotel to the German tourist market, the restaurant is close to capacity for most of the season.

The pub and restaurant is open 7 days a week during the season (Easter to October). The hotel then closes although the bar is often open at weekends during the winter months.

The *Bettyhill Hotels'* offering of substantial meals in a licenced environment is quite different from that proposed by *café* and therefore competition issues are unlikely to

be significant. Many customers, particularly in the daytime, do not want either a pub atmosphere or the more formal restaurant setting.

It is to be hoped that the development of *Strathnaver Museum* as a destination will benefit the *Bettyhill Hotel* and that their catering trade will increase as a result.

Within a 5 mile radius:

Borgie Lodge – less than 5 miles to the west

Borgie Lodge has recently re-opened as a hotel and restaurant. Similarly to the *Bettyhill Hotel* there is unlikely to be a clash of provision/competition or displacement.

Cote du nord – less than 5 miles to the east

Cote du nord is a specialist Michelin style restaurant of 6 to 8 covers which opens 2 to 3 nights per week. Its high end exclusive menu and presentation means it is not considered a competitor.

Within 16 miles radius:

Strathy Inn 9 miles East, **Halladale Inn** 13 miles to the East and **Melvich Hotel** 12 miles to the East.

These hotels provide accommodation and meals and bar meals to passing trade. We do not consider these establishments to be significant competitors for similar reasons given for the *Bettyhill Hotel*.

[REDACTED]

Ben Loyal Hotel and Tongue Hotel 13 miles to the west and **The Craggan Inn**– 16 miles west

Similar to the *Bettyhill Hotel* these establishments provide bar meals and meals in a restaurant setting and as such not considered direct competitors to the café in Bettyhill. In any case, at over 20 minutes' drive away any competitive impacts are likely to be very dilute.

Within 30 miles:

Garvault Hotel 20 miles to the South and **The Crask** – 30 miles South

These Hotels provides accommodation and bar snacks to passing trade. Both establishments offer a stunning setting and the *Garvault Hotel* in particular, although only 20 miles away, is well off the beaten track. Their main attraction is their unique and special location – well worth the journey but not considered a direct competitor.

Over 30 miles:

The Pier – 45 miles to the South, **Ferrycroft Visitor Centre** 46 miles to the South, the **Crofters Café** – 46 miles to the South, **Falls of Shin visitor Centre** – 50 miles to the south.

These 4 cafes are all located in and around Lairg and to varying degrees offer a similar experience to that envisaged for the *Bettyhill Café*. To that extent they may be considered competitors but being over an hour's drive away from the *Bettyhill Café* considerably dilutes this. In any case our market research suggests that most of these places are fairly busy most of the time (during peak season) which suggests that, at over an hour's drive away the *Bettyhill Café* will have little impact on these businesses or vice versa.

5.2 Social Benefits

As described above in section 4 we are engaging with as many stakeholders as possible, with a focus on quality of participation rather than quantity. Our ambition is to develop uses that are intergenerational with opportunities for specific groups with specific needs. Our rural community is small and dynamic, and we must be prepared to adjust activities accordingly. Long term plans must be flexible to address challenges as they occur.

Description of social benefit	Who	When	How
<p>Improving health and well-being;</p> <p>Reducing social isolation;</p>	<p>Everyone:</p> <p>Older people;</p> <p>Younger people;</p> <p>Those suffering chronic pain;</p> <p>Those feeling isolated.</p>	<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Knit and Natter: A group for anyone to share their interest in crafting.</p> <p>Crafting has been proven to have significant benefits on both physical and mental health e.g. Reduce stress, improve mood, slow down cognitive decline, help people cope with chronic pain.</p>
<p>Community cohesion;</p> <p>Reducing isolation;</p>	<p>Everyone:</p> <p>Older people;</p> <p>Younger people;</p> <p>Those suffering chronic pain;</p> <p>Those feeling isolated.</p>	<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Café Church: ‘A church for people who don’t go to church’.</p> <p>The aim of café church is to encourage neighborliness and community spirit. Create a safe informal space for those seeking support and / or a feeling of belonging.</p>
<p>Reduce isolation;</p> <p>Skills development;</p> <p>Building confidence in vulnerable people</p>	<p>Isolated people;</p> <p>Young people;</p> <p>Older people.</p>	<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Creative activities: passive recreation activities for health and well-being.e.g. yogis’ classes.</p> <p>Casual activities and pursuit of hobbies, offering advice and information to vulnerable people to improve well-being.</p>
<p>Reduce isolation;</p> <p>Skills development;</p> <p>Building confidence;</p>	<p>Young people</p>	<p>Monthly</p>	<p>Training and skills development: empower local people to use their skills and knowledge to improve the well-being of others.</p>

Description of social benefit	Who	When	How
Prevent bad choices; Improve health and well-being.			Train young leaders to support their peers to choose healthy lifestyles.
Reduce isolation; Skills development; Building confidence; Improve health and well-being.	Young people; Older people;	Monthly	Evening classes: self-improvement and knowledge sharing. A local syllabus created and leaders identified for courses.
Social opportunities for young people; Reducing isolation; Building confidence; Developing skills and knowledge.	Young people	Monthly	Drop in: for young people to access information and advice regarding mental health issues. Provide an opportunity to share ideas.

A fuller summary of the market research findings can be found at Appendix 3.

Community Investment and development promotes inclusion and builds strong communities. Equality of opportunity and inclusion recognises that certain groups within communities are more likely to experience inequality than others. Our project is addressing this to improve self-sufficiency and to become stronger and more resilient. In 2014 the Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy published their final report which endorsed the idea of citizens being directly involved in their local services. There is increased recognition that people experience better outcomes, the empowerment of a local community has been cited as a possible outcome when they are directly involved in making the decisions about things which impact on them and their communities.

As can be seen in the table above our asset transfer request involves activities which encourage participation, social inclusion and purpose which all support improved mental wellbeing. Person centred and equitable services that enable people to have control

over their lives and facilitate active involvement will help mobilise personal and community assets and enhance individual experience.

Local people at the heart of the design and delivery of services at a local level promote fairness and diversity strengthening community representation structures. People in Highland benefit from living in stronger, safer and more resilient communities.

Further to our community consultations we have asked all those involved with *Strathnaver Museum* for their ideas about any potential social benefits to the local community of the museum taking responsibility for the café. We have asked people who know the community best and can help design the services and support our community needs most and it is their responses that are reflected in the table above and at Appendix 3.

5.3 Economic Benefits

We are striving to ensure our community is a place to thrive by encouragement and assisting the regeneration. Economic growth is critical to enabling our community not just to survive, but to thrive. We will do all we can to strengthen our infrastructure for visitors out with the traditional tourist season with the growth of this existing businesses; and the retention and creation of new jobs. Tourism continues to be of massive importance to our economy and we will work to promote and develop the Highlands as a world class, year-round, tourist destination. Our work is to drive economic growth and ensure our infrastructure meets local needs and address the financial challenges with a positive vision of change focused on improved outcomes of employability, employment and skills development – this recognizes the importance of providing economic opportunities to communities as a way of addressing inequality.

Community projects improve the image of a place and attract investment. It improves investor and resident perception of an area by raising confidence in the area.

Benefits this project of asset transfer and community ownership will bring are numerous and interrelated. The existence of our locally owned, community organisations acts as 'anchors' for the process of empowerment and is about everyone living in the community having the opportunity to get involved. Empowerment helps to unlock that potential. Fundamentally, it is about people taking collective action to make change happen on their own terms.

The voluntary sector in Sutherland makes an enormous and pivotal contribution to the tourism product and generates significant economic impacts for the local area through this work.

5.4 Community Benefits

Our purpose is community benefit to serve the broader interests of the community and empower our communities to shape the places in which their people live and work. This

proposal can bring a positive impact by involving people in co-designing, transforming and delivering the services from which they benefit. Community cafés can provide healthy eating options at low cost, as well as a range of other community benefits such as reduced social isolation, skills development and increased local spending. Keeping money in the local economy through enterprise and locally owned assets is a catalyst for skills development / volunteering opportunities / job creation / business development.

5.5 Health & Wellbeing

Community wellbeing is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfill their potential.

When we look at our community as a whole we find three attributes that play a large role in wellbeing: connectedness, livability, and equity. We are addressing all three with one or more activities.

Connectedness	Livability	Equity
<p>Connection is fostered by a community’s social networks that:</p>	<p>A livable community is supported by the infrastructure, including</p>	<p>An equitable community is supported by values of diversity, social justice, and individual empowerment, where:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer social support • Enhance social trust • Support members living harmoniously together • Foster civic engagement • Empower members to participate in community and democracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Transportation • Education • Parks and recreation • Human services • Public safety • Access to culture and the arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members are treated with fairness and justice • Basic needs are met (adequate access to health services, decent housing, food, personal security) • There is equal opportunity to get education and meet individual potential
Local Comments		
<p>“Shaping the future is our responsibility. People will say things like, it will all be the same in a hundred years. Well it will be unless people change it and there are things that could be done if people would work</p>	<p>“It’s about people. It’s about folk being comfortable in themselves and in their place. It’s what makes people stay, come back or move in. It’s about learning and making friends.”</p>	<p>“I think that what’s most needed in a place like this is to create a stronger feeling of worth in the place among the people and somehow engender in them the feeling that their own history, their own landscape, their own things</p>

together and people would take an interest.”		that they do are every bit as valuable as anybody else’s.”
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5.6 Summary

Having ownership of this asset in our community will help:
1. Deliver Social & Economic Purpose, because it:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protects key local services / facilities that may otherwise be lost. • Provides a physical base for provision of local services. • Allows generation of income that can be re-invested locally. • Provides jobs, training and business opportunities. • Can reverse economic decline of area and attract investment. • Enables more intensive use of assets and services when control is closer to community. • Allows better stewardship of local assets because the community owns and uses them. • Allows groups to make major alterations / extend / re-furbish (usually the ability to carry out such works is limited in a lease)
2. Change Attitudes and Relationships, because it:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives the group credibility with funders / other stakeholders. • Heightens the group’s profile and improves perceptions of it. • Instils a renewed sense of pride and confidence in the community. • Provides local people with a meaningful stake in the future development of the place in which they live and / or work. • Can increase participation - membership, volunteering and attendance at meetings. • Encourages, through its success, further ideas and activity – ripple effect!
3. Move towards financial self-sufficiency, because:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation can generate income from the asset. • Ownership avoids rent payments. • There is incentive to invest in building to reduce running costs - e.g. energy efficiency. • It gives our balance sheet strength.
4. Build organisational sustainability through:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence / control over future of asset allowing you to make long-term plans. • Leverage, enabling to negotiate further investment.

- The development of skills and capacity locally that taking on and managing a building encourages.
- Attracting new people with additional skills.
- Building long-term support from community.

6. Proposals for Management

There are 3 properties in community ownership in Bettyhill; *Farr Edge 2000*, *North Coast Leisure Centre* and *Strathnaver Museum*. Some of those involved in this asset transfer are, or have been, involved in the aforementioned asset transfers and will share their wealth of experience with the rest of the committee and volunteers. We will develop a partnership approach to the management of the facility.

Strategic management of the facility will be the responsibility of the directors of the company advised through a *Visitor Centre* committee with representation of the interests of the development and working of the facility. There will be a clear distinction between functions of governance and management ensuring that assets are fit for purpose. We will provide effective governance with clarity of role and function and ongoing encouragement to community buy-in, with adequate democratic control. We will endeavor for a constructive approach to the asset transfer and community control of assets on the part of public bodies with a strong working relationship with local agencies.

Good management will require a strong ongoing presence in, and support from, the community with a vision and clear set of priorities determined by the local community. We are evolving an increasing focus on enterprise to develop sustainability of the asset and realise further opportunities.

When our asset transfer is approved we will create a detailed management plan based on the context below.

Accountability	Clear processes for the allocation of responsibilities to each partner including achievement of service standards and compliance with relevant laws, contractual obligations and the requirements of any regulatory bodies.
Transparency	Mechanisms to promote shared decision making so that decisions are made and implemented in a transparent manner that follows rules and regulations. Promote transparency through making information available and accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their implementation.
Consensus oriented	A focus on a consensus oriented approach that is based on a common understanding of the vision of the facility. This includes an active consideration of different perspectives so as to reach broad consensus regarding the objectives represented within the community and how they can be achieved.

Responsiveness	A commitment to responsiveness where partners and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe. Responsiveness also relates to the capacity to respond to new circumstances and changing needs.
Effectiveness and efficiency	Processes to promote effectiveness and efficiency that ensure facilities are managed in a way that meets the needs of the community while making the best use of available resources. The concept of efficiency also includes the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.
Continuous improvement	Continuous improvement processes should be embedded in the management cycle of a facility. These include planning, implementing, checking and reviewing work through community consultation, and by the establishment of performance indicators to guide and monitor continual improvement.

7. Project and work flow delivery

7.1 Project Phasing

Due to the overall scale of the refurbishment project we recognise that there will be significant challenges in securing funding to deliver the overall vision. With this in mind, we are suggesting a phased approach to the development of the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre*. The facility is presently functioning and although we are unable to obtain operating accounts we understand the business is viable with reasonable profit margins.

The property was not purpose built and has been adapted over its lifetime and the layout and serviceable areas require to be redesigned. This is proposed to meet the objectives of the group and to ensure an improved and functional operation is achieved.

Phase one – maintaining the existing facility (to autumn 2019)

- To secure the future of the premises as café and tourist information centre:
 - To successfully complete an asset transfer for a peppercorn sum from *Highland Council* and bring the facility into community ownership under the jurisdiction of *Strathnaver Museum*.
 - To franchise the operation to continue to provide catering and information services.
- To strengthen synergies of operation between the *Bettyhill café* and *Strathnaver Museum*, and to drive the development of the premises as a 'gateway' to the museum;
- To develop the café as a community resource;
- To learn through experience the limitations of the building and to explore ways of developing it that will maximize benefits to the museum, to the community and to the wider economic wellbeing of the area;
- To develop a coherent 'master plan' approach to developing the site alongside the museum and to maximize the benefits of a 'whole estate' approach;
- To secure technical services to draw appropriate plans for refit where necessary;
- To redevelop the interior of the building;
- To secure technical services to draw appropriate plans for external landscaping where necessary;
- To develop visitor flow including pedestrian access to the museum, 'bee sanctuary' and beach and to enhance parking both at the site and elsewhere on, or adjacent to, the museum 'estate';

- To secure technical services to draw appropriate plans to alleviate any potential flood risk for the building including for internal ‘flood proofing’ and external civil engineering as appropriate.

Phase two – improvements (autumn 2019 to spring 2020)

- Secure funding and carry out the alterations described above and coordinated with the development plans of the museum.
- Until we have detailed advice it is not possible to estimate the cost of the investments for the refurbishment. However our initial thinking is that renovations of perhaps up to £50,000 might be required. More ambitious plans are conceivable but such ambitions will be tempered by the reality of access to funding.

Phase three – from spring 2020 – a new beginning

- To work in partnership with the Museum and other tourist operators to improve information provision and displays:
 - To promote facilities and services of *Strathnaver Museum*;
 - To promote local recreational opportunities including:
 - North Coast Leisure Centre;
 - Invernaver Horse Riding;
 - Armadale Cycle Hire;
 - Ranger walks, quad biking, sea tours, heritage trails, local events and more.
 - To promote other ‘pitstops’ including local cafes and licensed premises;
 - To promote the wider area highlighting the potential for exploring NW Sutherland and as the eastern gateway to Mackay Country, the historic *Strathnaver Trail* and further afield. To capitalise on the popular *NC500* route.
- To reopen the redesigned café/visitor centre
 - To provide snacks and light meals with 7-day week opening for at least 6 months a year:
 - To develop a seasonal menu featuring locally sourced products.
 - To provide snacks and light meals with at least 3 day a week opening for 4 to 5 months a year;
 - To provide a ‘take-away’ menu for two nights a week for at least 48 weeks per year;
 - To provide a community venue for meetings and events for at least 5 months per year;
 - To provide bookable non-alcoholic venue for wakes, and private parties.

Increase business opportunities for tourism enterprises starts with a warm welcome to visitors by satisfying their orientation needs. The *Tourist Information Centre (TIC)* will enhance the enjoyment of the tourists' visit, entice them to stay longer, and spend more money throughout the economy. The *TIC* will also provide a venue to gain more knowledge and appreciation of Mackay Country and its people. Moreover, the stakeholder collaboration is necessary to establish and operate the information centre which will serve as a catalyst for advancing partnerships throughout Mackay Country's tourism industry and serve to better tourism services through the pooling of valuable expertise and resources.

Visitor services are probably the single most important group of activities that a community offers its visitors because these activities make the visitor feel welcome and well served. To successfully meet the challenges of providing visitor services of international quality, it is essential that we embrace three vision statements concerning hospitality, leadership and teamwork. These are:

- The Highland cultural concept of welcome, "welcome all visitors enthusiastically".
- Scotland & Mackay Country is a land of heroes, it is time to nurture & promote tourism heroes and committed volunteers "do not be afraid to lead or participate".
- Nature's conception of partnership, of the community working together for the betterment of all "all for one, one for all".

A *tourist information centre* is a necessary and vital component in the promotion of tourism. Moreover, it is widely recognised in the international tourism community that information centers play a vital orientation component by informing the visitor about the full spectrum of opportunities a destination has to offer, to address the "information anxiety" that confronts many visitors and potential visitors there is little to no provision of comprehensive tourism information.

Tourist arrivals are hugely seasonal, with the vast majority visiting during the three main summer months, although this is changing. Attracting visitors during the winter months is currently a hot topic of discussion, with special events proposed to stimulate demand.

There is a growing trend worldwide for *TICs* to be more than the traditional outlet for tourism brochures and visitor information. This new generation of *TICs* have become the showcase for their respective communities – the point of welcome for visitors, displaying history, industries, arts, crafts, and activities which are relevant to visitors and characteristic of the town, state, or country. These *TICs* play a vital role as interpretive centers. The exceptional increase in interest in genealogy is another example which is better addressed by the local touch.

8. Market

8.1 Strategy and Implementation Summary

The *Bettyhill Café and TIC's* marketing strategy is based upon targeting and serving the visitor and local population of Bettyhill.

The facility's location puts it in close proximity to a substantial market. Our value proposition is clear and easily distinguished from most others in the market. We will offer affordable and accessible menu items and information as measured by their inherently natural value, at an affordable price that will encourage regular visits.

- The first category of our sales strategy is to establish and maintain a position with our primary constituents: We will depend upon keeping these people happy with our food and beverage products and information options.
- Our second strategy is to utilize the potential of the information interpretive area.
- Our third strategy targets the visitors to the Historic Site.
- Fourth, the restaurant will target local regular lunch and dinner entertaining.

8.2 Marketing Objectives

The prime function of the *Bettyhill café and TIC* is to welcome, inform and encourage guests to visit *Strathnaver Museum* and stay and explore Mackay Country through the provision of relevant assistance and services.

- To increase the movement of visitors within the locality.
- To generate income and keep operating costs to a minimum.
- To develop networks with other *tourist information centers* and attractions.
- To enhance visitor enjoyment and encourage repeat visits and longer stays.
- Provide residents with local and national information and services to demonstrate the benefits of tourism to the local economy.
- To liaise with and support local tourism providers.
- To gauge customer satisfaction with our service.
- To promote accommodation establishments.
- To make the Café a community hub.

8.3 Who are our customers?

- Local residents
- Local stakeholders
- Day visitors
- Domestic tourists
- Overseas tourists
- VFR (Visiting friends & relations)

- Visitors in Transit

Predominantly over 45 yrs. of age, usually couples with reasonable disposable incomes, but significantly – younger families, younger tourers (cyclists and camper van hirers). The above groups are not necessarily ‘foodies’ but they are increasingly attuned to concepts such as healthy eating, provenance and vegetarianism. Locals including Bettyhill residents and day-trippers particularly from Caithness.

What do they want?

Quality

- Premium quality coffees and teas
- Good quality cakes and tray bakes (“home made”)
- Fresh meals including salads
- Distinctive local produce

However the building is altered in the renovations, the food preparation area is likely to remain limited therefore the menu should be kept small and relatively simple. A take-away menu might also be desirable – particularly on Friday and Saturday nights to support local trade and perhaps at other times when trade is not brisk enough to support employment of waiting staff and other ancillary help.

Service

Friendly, welcoming and attentive (but not fussy). Local staff wherever possible. Compare with – the friendly disposition of *Storehouse of Foulis* staff, *Falls of Shin*, *The Pier* in Lairg or *La Mirage* in Helmsdale. Informative (in line with TIC branding) – staff will need local knowledge and this implies some degree of regular staff training and updates.

Fresh clean accessible toilet facilities.

Car parking – including space for camper vans. Currently larger camper vans struggle to enter or exit the car park from or to the East.

Coach parking: *Strathnaver Museum* wishes to upgrade its attractiveness to touring coaches, however it is unlikely that the café could cater for this trade – although consideration should be given to it. Coaches heading for the museum will need to park by the cemetery and consideration should be given to improving the joint entrance to the FBI/Cemetery to this end.

Environment

Fresh, light and airy and uplifting but not without homeliness and comfort. Compare with *Falls of Shin*, *The Pier*, [REDACTED]. The opportunity to sit outside should be maintained. Consideration should also be given to the need for coziness on cold days

(compare with the living fires/wood burning stoves or living effect fires) [REDACTED], *The Pier, Falls of Shin* and the *Storehouse*.

Our market research observations show a preference for sitting outside at the *Bettyhill Café* even on not particularly pleasant days. This partly reflects the outdoors nature of many of our visitors but perhaps also the dark and cramped feel of the existing café. An interview with a group who visited but left the café at the *FBI* revealed that the group felt that that environment was too enclosed on such a nice day. However we should also recognise that there will be many days when such 'coziness' will have its appeal.

The location of the café is spectacular with dramatic cliffs to the South, and open expanse to the north including the church building (museum), sand dunes and the sea. Clachan Burn runs beside the building and this could also be a feature. Although much could be made of the traditional architecture of the existing building, it would probably be better to 'open it out' particularly its northern aspect which could afford open views without baking in sunlight. This could be done with sensitivity to the vernacular nature and setting of the current building, its proximity to the church and surrounding settlement – particularly as seen from the main road.

8.4 Services to be offered and Information operating procedure

- Information on local and national attractions and events.
- Local and national accommodation bookings, over the counter, by telephone or via email.
- Transport information – rail, coach and local buses.
- Agents for bus companies.
- Local events.
- Books and maps.
- Stamps and Souvenirs.
- Holiday information service available throughout the year.
- Distribution of literature.
- Coordinating and updating events listings.

Retail operation brings in revenue to offset the *TIC's* running costs. Items on sale range from 10p to around £20. Mark up on books and maps is 35% and other souvenir items generally carry a markup of over 100% unless recommended retail prices have been given. We will strive to review and renew our range of saleable items and to this end visit trade fairs to keep pace with new trends. We also visit other *TICs* to exchange and pool ideas on saleable ranges, pricing and best practice. Visitor guides are sent to enquirers who have the opportunity to purchase relevant literature e.g. maps, guidebooks in advance of their visit.

Summary from *Strathnaver Museum's Audiences and Market Analysis* (Strathnaver Museum, 2017):

- *Strathnaver Museum* attracts visitors from a diverse range of countries with a significant proportion of overseas visitors.
- Much can be done to target more UK visitors to come to the Museum as 81% of the total number of visitors to the Highlands and Islands are UK nationals.
- We do well at attracting international visitors but we can further enhance our services and internet presence to encourage more visitors.
- Engaging with the Scottish Diaspora through an enhanced genealogy service can generate revenue remotely and promote ancestral tourism to family history researchers.

8.5 Promotion Strategy

We will promote our company name almost more than the product itself, because to be successful we have to stand for integrity, excellent menu offerings, and first-class interpretation. Therefore, our promotion strategy includes focusing on events and messages that match:

- Advertising placed strategically and carefully
- Social media
- Web networks

8.6 Marketing Strategy

The most important element of our marketing strategy is the delivery of a quality product. Our food, beverage, and information products must first sell themselves through word of mouth. Next, the packaging of *Bettyhill Café and tourist information center's* concept and external messages must fit our positioning. Open daily and with the community encouraged to use the facility for events and learning. Our vision is a similar establishment to *The Pier* café in Lairg 40 miles to the south.

Task Details	Timeframe	Costs/Resources	Responsibility
Develop website highlighting changes and upgraded facilities– incorporate user testimonials and photographs.	One Off	Free	Volunteers
Use promotional space to promote the improvements and engage local residents.	Periodically	Free	Volunteers
Engage social media to highlight the new facilities amongst target audiences.	On-going	Free	Administrator

Task Details	Timeframe	Costs/Resources	Responsibility
Press Releases: Engage with local media to promote the improvements to the facilities and its relevance to the community.	Regularly	Free with occasional paid adverts	Local correspondent
Develop new signage for facilities highlighting the improvements	Once	Part of development costs	Development Officer
Explore running promotional events	Periodically	Cost covered through sponsorship or entry fees	Development Officer

9. Public Benefit

9.1 Direct Benefits to Highland Council

Fostering social inclusion and community development reinforces social and community values. Our proposals can act as a central focus for community activity, involvement and capacity building. This can lead to positive developments in citizenship and local pride and reduction in anti-social behavior and crime. Our revamped hub will play a significant role in providing places for social interaction for all groups found in our communities due to the diversity that can be found in these areas. As people move from one life stage to another, this leads to changes in how they perceive and use community facilities.

9.2 Justification of a reduced price.

- This asset will represent good use of public resources because our community group will be better placed to adapt and deliver services identified and required locally.
- Financially there will be savings from the community transfer body taking over maintenance and ownership responsibilities during this period of sustained and deepening cuts to public funding. The facility requires investment to ensure the continuation of the service.
- *Strathnaver Museum* can make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between effectiveness and economy.
- Community ownership can better create equal opportunities by developing activities that are all encompassing and suggested by members of the community.
- *Strathnaver Museum* because of local knowledge and a more intense local understanding will be better placed in the achievement of a sustainable development.
- A successful asset transfer will accrue in pursuing positive outcomes for a more prosperous and fairer Scotland.
 - Economic development as further investment is made in the property;
 - Regeneration of the locality integrated into the refurbishment plans of *Strathnaver Museum*;
 - Social wellbeing addressed as we implement ideas and provide an inclusive project;
 - Environmental wellbeing as the development of the area is recognised as whole with a holistic approach;
 - Reducing inequalities of outcome from socio-economic disadvantage. Centralisation is a continued dilution of local accountability and local ownership of this facility maintains a degree of local responsibility;

- Any other benefits that might arise through the alternative use of the asset which will become apparent as our project progresses.
- The costs associated with volunteers' time or where intervention can reduce pressure on municipal services through the people that can be reached, such as alleviating alcohol/drug/ smoking dependency.
- Encourages the development of sustainable, mixed communities.
- Strengthen communities, providing additional support to the places and people that need it.
- Empowering local communities and giving them more of a say in the design and delivery of services which affect them.
- Creating a stronger relationship of trust with the community.
- Supporting policy objectives like health and wellbeing, volunteering, and education.
- *Strathnaver Museum* is not in a position to pay any substantial sum for the asset. The ongoing refurbishment has budgeted all reserved funds.

9.3 Alignment to Single Outcome Agreement

A place to live:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage more engaged, better informed, more resilient, sustainable and attractive communities by helping and strengthening tenant and community representation structures. ● Identify and recognise the unique challenges of living in rural and remote areas of the Highlands and ensure Council policies and the provision of services have local people in mind. Work with the <i>Scottish Government</i> and other public authorities to do the same.
A place to thrive:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote and support Highland businesses from all sectors including traditional sectors.
A welcoming place:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tourism continues to be of massive importance to our economy and we will work with business and partners to promote and develop the Highlands as a world class, year round, tourist destination.

9.4 Links to National Outcomes for Scotland

Tackling the significant inequalities in Scottish society.

This transfer will provide the community with an asset that is promoting equality of opportunity and outcome for a region facing barriers related to remoteness and low

population. Community ownership will support the improvement of life chances showing community group leadership at a local level. The current concerns and community priorities are being undertaken by this request regarding comfort facilities continuing for travelers all the year round, catering facilities, information distribution to retain travelers for longer and social needs being delivered through heritage and arts to ensure wellbeing as part of a major Museum refurbishment plan.

We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need

We understand the needs of our community and our aims are to provide sustainable places to support people's physical and mental wellbeing. We are attempting to secure facility and services as part of a mixed diverse community. Our plans include encouraging creative activity and social interaction both through cultural amenities delivered within the larger refurbishment plans and the facilities that would be available in community ownership of the requested transfer. This facility will allow the community directly to contribute to sustainable economic growth with the individuals who live here and keep the community vibrant. We need to involve local people with the skills and talent needed to build a successful Scotland. As well as the social aspects people will feel they have a say in decision making.

9.5 Links to The Highland Community Planning Partnership

Working Together for the Highlands, the Highland Outcome Improvement Plan

- Theme: working together for caring communities
- Theme: working together for better infrastructure

9.6 The Highland Council Equality Plan: A Fairer Highland

“An equal society recognises people’s different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be”

The Equalities Review, 2007

People’s life chances are improved and not diminished by barriers. This approach recognises that:

- Equality is an issue for us all
- We don’t all start from the same place
- To create a fairer society we need to recognise different needs.

10. Where this asset transfer is coming from

- A Report to *Strathnaver Museum* – October 2016 by *HISEZ Just Enterprise* advises the museum acquire ownership of the café
- Recommended action 13 in the *Redevelopment Action Plan 2014 - 2018* Improved orientation / signage to be provided in the *TIC* and car park
- *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* will help to empower community bodies through the ownership of land and buildings, and by strengthening their voices in the decisions that matter to them. It will also improve outcomes for communities by improving the process of community planning, ensuring that local service providers work together even more closely with communities to meet the needs of the people who use them. The Bill was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 17 June 2015 and received Royal Assent, becoming an Act, on 24 July 2015.
- Approach from Highland Councilor.

11. Swot Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A locally based charity with a well-established competent board offering a wide range of individual and collective skills to take this project forward ❖ The facility is situated within a beautiful and unspoilt yet fairly accessible location on the A838 NC 500. ❖ A well-established facility ❖ A Fully fitted facility in useable condition ❖ Dedicated and committed Trustees, staff and volunteers ❖ community consultation and engagement demonstrates overwhelming local community support for the project ❖ High levels of customer satisfaction achieved ❖ Well established and trusted provider ❖ Good reputation ❖ Free parking ❖ Caters for a wide customer base and offers a wide range of leaflets and directional information ❖ The facility has public facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The facility has restricted opening times ❖ Not a modern attraction ❖ Dated information displays ❖ Lacking in technology - not interactive enough for a younger audience ❖ Isolated location ❖ challenging to secure the capital funds to deliver the whole project
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ location ❖ Increased PR activity ❖ Use of new technologies to assist with marketing and fundraising strategies and the delivery of lifelong learning activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Loss of the facility ❖ Not moving with the times ❖ Little investment in the redevelopment of the displays and visitor facilities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Redevelopment of the information displays and visitor facilities ❖ Sponsorship opportunities ❖ Third party partnerships working opportunities ❖ Outreach to community groups ❖ Lottery funding etc. ❖ Partnership project development 	
--	--

Political/Legal/Legislative	Economic/Environmental/Ecological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Employment law, e.g., Health & Safety ❖ Local economy – scale of unemployment ❖ Pensions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ State of national economy ❖ State of local tourism market ❖ State of international markets, e.g., world recessions ❖ Change in trends and visitor expectations
Social/Socio-Cultural	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Change in consumer tastes/preferences ❖ Substitution – direct/indirect competition for time and disposable income ❖ New culture – change in technology for new generation ❖ More money = less time ❖ Demographic structure – ageing population/decline in birth rates ❖ Single person culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pace of technological changes ❖ New interactive and hi-tech attractions ❖ E-commerce ❖ E-marketing

12. Risk Assessment

Although there are many benefits to community ownership we need also to be aware of the stumbling blocks that make success more difficult. These stumbling blocks can be:

Challenges	Mitigation
Failure to think through real objectives and make a plan.	Ensure input from many quarters and able to coordinate and listen to all the comments for constructive criticism and use these as part of the plan.
Acquiring an asset that is or becomes a liability.	<p>Thorough knowledge of the undertaking, understanding the history and importance of the asset to the future of local plans.</p> <p>Proper proactive building maintenance planning</p>
Resistance to asset transfer from public bodies, protracted negotiations for acquisition, lack of aftercare and unnecessary restrictions on use.	Maintain a good relationship with agencies and ensure a clarity of understanding of the requirements and concerns with adequate and evidence of their solutions.
Difficulties in recruiting volunteers, stress and burnout, and lack of support.	Strathnaver has an excellent track record in recruiting volunteers and with a volunteer management post in operation this secures a structural approach to working with volunteers. A successional program is ongoing and volunteers are encouraged to follow interests and fatigue is lessened by ensuring volunteering is seen as fun and enjoyable.
Problems attracting suitable finance	A patient and persistent approach is required. Building good relationships with grant givers and working to form funding partnerships. Fund raising is ongoing and determination to involve the diaspora where we have limited success to date.
Can't attract a suitable franchisee that allows our visionary facility	We have identified and had opening discussions with an experienced community caterer.
Their insurance doesn't allow it.	Strathnaver Museum would take insurance cover
the franchisee doesn't want to take the risk of people on the premises when they are not present,	We would ensure secure areas for franchisees equipment and materials
community use of the facility not allowed outside of business hours	This would have to be an agreement of a franchise contract

13. Finance

13.1 Budget Planning

As discussed above in Section 7 we would take a phased approach and in year 1 would continue the operation as it is with a franchise operation. Assuming we commence with ownership on February 1st 2019 we would take a modest rental of 2.5% turnover (Appendix 6).

Year 2 would see the operation closing in November to accommodate building alterations and refit subject to securing funding (Appendix 7).

Year 3 we anticipate an increase in turnover due to the improvements and due to the improvements made to the building we'd increase our rental to 4% of turnover (Appendix 8).

We have identified a number of potential funders likely to be interested in supporting our project:

- Scottish Land Fund (Only available for purchase- We anticipate this will be peppercorn sum)
- Caithness and North Sutherland Fund
- SSE
- Big Lottery
- Peoples Postcode Trust (£50,000)
- Highland Council Discretionary Fund

13.2 Scenario Planning

Impact of closure or change of ownership of café 2019 to 2020.

CLOSURE OF THE CAFÉ

Market research suggests that 5% of café visitors go from the café to the museum, this represents 22% of the total number of visitors to the museum. For the basis of this scenario this percentage is rounded down from 22% to 20%. The impact of museum closure is a **loss of £4,245** admission, on-site donation and retail sales for the year.

CAFÉ STAYS OPEN UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP WITH EMPHASISED LINKS TO MUSEUM

Proposition: Displays etc. in the café could entice more people from the café to the museum.

Currently 5% of visitors to the café go on to visit the museum. This represents 22% of museum visitors.

If this 5% could be increased to 20%, this would represent an 88% increase in visitors to the museum. For the purposes of this scenario planning this is rounded down to 80%. Such an increase would generate an **additional income of £16,981** in admission charges, on-site donations and retail for the year. Furthermore, initial business planning for the café project a rental income from the café to the museum of £2,600. **This brings the total expected benefit to the museum of taking over ownership of the café to £19,581 for the year 2019-2020.**

Three year projection Museum income:

	Total Visitors to museum	Income from visitors	Rental income from café	Total
Baseline (yr. 2017/18)	5,800	£21,307	0	£21,307
Café closure, 20% loss of visitors (2019/2020)	4,640	£17,061		£17,061
			LOSS	£4,245 PA
Café ownership transferred, café to museum transfer increased from 5% to 20% (assumed to be increase in museum visitors of 22% to 80%) (2019/2020)	10,440	£38,288	£2,400	£40,688
As above (2020/2021)	10,440	£38,288	£2,400	£40,688
Café renovated – increase rent (2021/2022)	10,440	£38,288	£5,828	£44,116

Over 3 years, income to the museum if café closes: (3X£17,061) =

£51,183

Over 3 years, income to the museum if the museum takes ownership of café (£40,688+£40,688+£44,116)

£125,492

PROJECTED GROSS BENEFIT OF MUSEUM OWNERSHIP OF CAFÉ OVER THREE YEARS

£74,309

13.3 Conclusion

The *North Coast 500* is fast becoming one of the most popular driving routes in Scotland, if not the world. *Strathnaver Museum* is an already popular visitor attraction and together with the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* is well placed to develop a destination gateway to north west Sutherland.

Following the refurbishment *Strathnaver Museum* will provide the casual visitor with a high-quality visitor experience while enabling them to learn more about the areas culture and heritage. The importance of cultural work in relation to economic regeneration within Scotland's communities has been noted at national level. Such resources are particularly of interest to the Scottish diaspora who wish to visit the areas their descendants came from and learn more about their lives. This has a significant economic benefit for the area both locally and regionally as well as at a national level. The increasing popularity of the *North Coast 500* route is a key driver for our economic prosperity and *Strathnaver Museum* provides a valuable service to visitors.

As identified by Just Enterprise and our own market research the importance of *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* to *Strathnaver Museum* is of paramount importance as it acts as the gateway to the museum. It's value to the community from both an economic and social point of view is also significant.

Despite playing a valuable role to the community *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* can be improved upon, both physically to its infrastructure but also in the services it offers. As demonstrated above community ownership of the facility will enable the community to have a say in the development of the services offered by this vital community resource.

These benefits are both social and economic and will benefit the local community widely as well as supporting the organisational sustainability of the museum. The 'bottom up' nature of the project addresses *Scottish Government* and *Highland Council* policies to encourage community empowerment. The project will apply practical, yet robust, solutions to a local problem by creating an 'estate' of the adjoining sites. This will enable the creation of a destination gateway to north west Sutherland which will be an important piece in the tourism infrastructure along the northern portion of the *NC500*.

Well-being is higher in areas where residents can influence decisions affecting their community and that well-being is higher in areas where residents have the confidence to exercise control over local circumstances.

All community ownership requires long-term community commitment, passion and ambition. Over 42 years *Strathnaver Museum* has demonstrated commitment, passion and ambition to the advancement of the area by providing economic, social and educational benefits to the people of Mackay Country. The inclusion of the *Bettyhill café and tourist information centre* into this well-established social enterprise will allow additional economic and social benefits to be delivered.

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Appendix 1: Skills Audit of Strathnaver Museum volunteers

General	Visitor Centre use	Museum Specific	Future requirements
Database entry	Communication – verbal/written	Archiving	Construction management
Design/distribution of Newsletters	Retailing	Spreadsheet designing/completion	Legal matters
Posters	Marketing	Research – general, artefacts, family history	Capital project management
Presentations	Customer Service/hospitality	Digitisation	Architecture, design and planning
Event organisation/execution	Dealing with enquiries/providing information	Clan Mackay (Scottish and international links)	Quantity surveying and civil engineering
Storytelling	Exhibitions/interpretation		
Creative writing	Arranging social activities		
Planning/chairing/ secretarial duties of meetings	Identification/meeting training needs		
Funding/fundraising	Administration & Budgets		
Budget management	Community engagement/participation		
Social media	Working with diverse audiences		
Volunteer recruitment/coordination	Employers responsibilities		
Project management	Running a business		
Strategic thinking and planning			
Capital project management			
Community engagement			
Financial management and reporting			
Procurement and tendering			
Crisis management			
Dimension training			
Working with young people and vulnerable adults			
Forward/business planning			
Contracting services			
Teaching			
Business management			
HR and business skills			
Hospitality, Catering and hotel management			
Project management			

Our food is freshly prepared to your order so please allow us a little time...Thank you

Today we have

Local Haddock in a light batter with chips and garden peas	£8.20
Scampi and chips	£8.60
Jumbo Sausage in batter and chips	£5.80
Black pudding (2 slices) and chips	£5.40
Portion of chips	£2.30

.....

Bacon Roll	£5.30
4 oz. Beef burger in a roll	£4.90
Baguettes or Toasties	£5.50
Your choice of cheese, ham, pickle, onion, and or tomato (peach is good with ham) or tuna mayo with sweetcorn	

The above are served with a side salad

.....

Baked potato – single filling – with side salad	£5.90
Your choice from cheese, beans, corned beef or tuna mayo With sweetcorn. Additional fillings 80p each	
Gammon Ham or Cheese Salad	£7.50
Prawn Salad	£8.20

If there is something you fancy that is not on the menu, please ask and we will do our best to help.

Home baking

As available

Cheese Scone	£1.90
Plain scone with jam and cream (or sultana bread)	£2.30
Victoria Sponge	£2.30
Chocolate cake	£2.30
Other cakes as available.	
Toasted tea cake	£2.20
Dish of Orkney ice cream	£2.90

We sometimes have cakes and scones available to take away – please ask for details.

Cakes also made to order.

Something to drink?

Pot of Tea per person	£1.50
Pot of Earl Grey Tea	£1.80
Assorted fruit teas as available	£1.80
Filter Coffee	£1.80
Galaxy Hot Chocolate	£2.00
Apple juice, orange juice	£1.70
Sparkling water	50p
Choice of sparkling soft drinks	£1.00
Orange squash	50p
Small cartons / bottles	80p

Appendix 3: Findings of observational research

Observation	Conclusion/inference/recommendation
Overall there was no statistically significant difference in the behaviour or character of traffic travelling from East to West against traffic travelling from West to East. However two tourist coaches were observed and both of these travelled West to East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proximity of the Bettyhill Hotel (serving food most of the time) does not impact people's desire or need to stop for refreshment (NB discussion of Farr Bay Inn (FBI) below) • Tentatively, coach traffic appears more likely to come from the west and if the cemetery car park is to be used for coaches both signage and ease of turning needs to be considered
Overall 15% of passing traffic stopped at the car park (97 out of 639)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is staggeringly high and suggests there is a need for stopping rest and refreshment opportunities in Bettyhill. The café must be maintained as a cafe!
46% of those who stopped when the café was open, went on the use the café.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
A further 18% of those who stopped when the café was open, entered the café for less than 5 minutes, and most of these for less than 2 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The inference is that this 18% entered the café for tourist information although it is possible that some looked at the café and decided it wasn't for them.
64% of people who stopped entered the café building (either as TIC or café).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
None of the 18% who entered for tourist information went on to the museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
18% of those stopping went on the enter the museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Of those entering the café, about 5% go on to enter the museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is very low. Museum ownership of the café should enable this to be increased to say 20%
78% of those entering the museum do not visit the café. 22% of those entering the museum come from the café.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there was a 4 fold increase in the number of people going from the café to the museum (i.e. from 5% to 20%) this would almost double the total number of visitors to the museum.
11% of those stopping entered the FBI. 8 of these appeared to be hotel guests the other 2 used the FBI café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FBI café is struggling to attract customers and there is an opportunity for the TIC to push more folk towards the FBI
11% of those stopping investigated the FBI but were either turned away or turned and left without leaving their vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's difficult to know why these people left but the impression is the appearance or state of repair of the track and entrance to the FBI is putting people off. • If the museum develops the entrance to the cemetery car park as coach and overspill parking these improvements should benefit the FBI and indeed could be designed to do so.

Appendix 3: Findings of observational research (cont.)

Observation	Conclusion/inference/recommendation
4% of those stopping explored the cemetery but did not enter the museum. This included 2 groups who stopped to photograph the Farr Stone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perhaps a small descriptive Board could be installed near to the Farr Stone to entice these into the museum.
22% of those stopping only used the car park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>The average group size was 2.5. However the distribution is noteworthy:</p> <p>6 groups of 1 person 34 groups of 2 people 4 groups of 3 people 7 groups of 4 people 3 groups of 5 people 2 groups of 6 people (group size was not always recorded)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although caution needs to be used in interpreting this small sample – particularly as we know that group character changes through the season (from museum entries), initially these data might imply that, in the café: For every table seating 5 or 6 people there should be 2 tables for 3 or 4 and 8 tables for 1 or 2
<p>On average, between 12 and 13 vehicles stopped per hour.</p> <p>When open, between about 5 and 6 groups per hour used the café, implying about 12 to 15 customers per hour. But this was concentrated into the period late morning to early afternoon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
General qualitative impressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
<p>People seemed to prefer to sit outside when stopping at the café – even when the weather wasn't that good</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outdoor seating area should be maintained The outdoor seating area could be improved, perhaps by landscaping or by planting (e.g. a hedge to separate parking area from seating area or planting to reduce the effect of being overlooked by the road)
<p>Many people were confused by the café/toilet entrance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simple A frame Board at the entrance would eradicate this source of embarrassment for customers
<p>Few people looked at the display Boards at the entrance to the bridge, and those that did so for less than 30 seconds. Some people may have been enticed to the museum from the displays, but most just seemed to look at them as they stretched their legs after getting out of the car</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the displays be looked at again to make them more enticing to potential museum visitors?
<p>Observations were skewed towards late morning and early afternoon, and observation of what was ordered in the café was only possible when people sat outside and even then only sometimes. But of those recorded: 4 people had coffee and cake only for every 1 that had a meal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This appears surprising as most observations were across lunch time and perhaps we'd expect more lunches to be served. This needs to be checked against other similar establishments But it might indicate that the menu in the café is unappealing to many and perhaps there is opportunity to provide more light and healthier snacks and meals.

Appendix 3: Findings of observational research (cont.)

Observation	Conclusion/inference/recommendation
There may be potential for the café to act as more of a 'hub' or orientation point, for example with signs showing routes to the bumble bee reserve, the beach and perhaps the FBI (these routes passing the museum entrance).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What other attractions could be added within easy walking distance of the café? • Improvements may be needed to enhance the accessibility of the beach at the east of Farr Bay
People like to stand on the bridge and look into the burn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perhaps, if the café was extended at the back, it could bridge the burn with a 'glass' floor!
The café was never seen to be open after 3:30, and there were often visitors trying to get in after it had closed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
When open the café seemed to have 2 waiting staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Further development of community use	Description	Practical Action	Community Benefit
Keep use as further facilities not needed.	There are sufficient other facilities in the village there is the community hall in Bettyhill and Farr Edge. Farr Edge provides good children and youth services and we are working alongside to fill gaps. The village hall is not suitable for small intimate events.	Work closely with other community organisations and facilities. This currently happens.	An integrated community infrastructure complimenting each other's role.
Knit and Natter incorporating other Craft units and groups	A group for adults to knit, chat, drink tea and eat cake in a friendly environment	Ensure facility is available and occasions organised to include transport for those otherwise willing but unable to attend Knitting, quilting, sewing, and other crafts may seem like nothing more than pleasant hobbies, but there's more to these activities than meets the eye.	It's been proven time and again through genuine scientific studies that knitting and crafting has significant benefits on both physical and mental health. Research shows that regularly engaging in crafts may have tangible health benefits. Reduce stress Improve mood Head off cognitive decline Empower women with eating disorders. Help people cope with chronic pain.
Rented for a café church one evening a week	A safe space for those deconstructing and reconstructing faith.	Café Church is attempting to place the emphasis on "service", not "Services".	A church for people who don't go to church. In an age that often lacks neighbourliness and community spirit, many find an antidote by belonging to a church or a club. The aim of Café Church is to help its local neighbourhood find that sense of togetherness where everyone knows each other's names.
Themed evening for food	Volunteers take turns in preparing a dish for others	To cast a spotlight on the richness of a diverse community and to celebrate all the richness and benefits	To raise funds for a worthy cause, bring about positive change, celebrate something special. Local events are a great way to

Appendix 4: Summary of Market Research Findings 2018 (cont.)

Further development of community use	Description	Practical Action	Community Benefit
		we get from being such a diverse community	bring communities closer together.
Funeral Teas	Aimed at small informal gatherings	At a time of sadness the need for stress free solutions to funeral arrangements is paramount	A neutral setting for gathering.
Passive recreation activities for health and well-being e.g. yogis classes	Sensitive area that requires minimal development targets isolated people and encourages them to get involved in creative activities to help improve their physical and mental wellbeing.	casual activities and pursuit of hobbies, offering advice and information on how people can improve their wellbeing,	To improve the socialization developing personalised programmes to help them to get back into employment and other activities, including volunteering.
Training and skills development	Train young leaders to help other young people make the right decisions and choose healthy lifestyles.	Volunteers and staff are equipped with the right skills to fulfil their roles and reach their potential.	Help and empower local people to understand how their skills and knowledge can be enhanced and shared to improve the wellbeing of others in their communities.
Evening meals all year round,	Currently not available	A condition of the franchise	A local service and a tourist requirement
Evening classes	The café lends itself for small informal opportunities to provide classes identified by local people	A local syllabus created and leaders for the subjects defined.	Self-improvement and knowledge sharing
Social opportunities for young people	Raising awareness across the population and opportunities to educate about mental health are important to build personal resilience and promote good mental wellbeing.	Specific drop in times for young people to receive information and advice regarding mental health issues. An opportunity to share ideas	A preventative approach is essential combined with building a broader understanding of mental wellbeing. There is a particular need to consider how this work can be prioritised with young people.
Cookery demonstrations	Community food initiatives offer cooking sessions on learning to prepare affordable, healthy meals.		
Space for outreach services of the Museum	Space is presently very limited	Creation of current displays of Museum projects	Increase opportunities for museum activities



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Bettyhill Community Consultation Bettyhill Café - October 2017

Strathnaver Museum

This consultation is been carried out by Strathnaver Museum. Strathnaver Museum is a charity run by a voluntary Board with assistance from a large number of volunteers and two part-time staff. The museum is a focal point for tourism in Bettyhill and along the North of Sutherland and tells the story of the cultural and social history of our communities.

An opportunity has arisen for the Museum to take ownership of the café in Bettyhill on behalf of the community.

We think this could be an excellent opportunity for the museum, but perhaps more importantly we are very keen to see the café remain as a café. But we want to make sure that the community of Bettyhill would be agreeable to us doing this and so we have written this consultation to collect your views.

The Café in Bettyhill – current status

The building operating as a café and Tourist Information Point is owned by Highland Council. It is currently run by Lindsay and Bob and provides a 5 day a week service to locals and visitors alike and is the venue for some community activity – such as the knitting group, in winter. Lindsay and Bob will be retiring soon, and when they do Highland Council have said they will sell the building on the open market. If the building is sold, there is no guarantee that the building will remain as a Café and there is a possibility that Bettyhill will lose this much loved facility.

Highland Council has suggested that the café could be purchased by Strathnaver Museum – thus protecting its use as a café and Tourist Information Point. The Board of the museum is keen to explore this further but to do so we feel we need to know how the community would feel about this.

Our main purpose is to ensure the café facility remains open and continues to provide a service to local people and visitors. To take on the building as a community asset we first need to gather community support and we'd be grateful if you could help us by answering a few questions.

Someone will call to collect your completed survey in the next few days – alternatively please hand the survey in to the Post Office or the Store.

Thank you!

1. Do you think the building should be maintained as a Café/tourist information point?

Yes No Not sure

2. Would you support Strathnaver Museum taking over ownership of the café/tourist information point?

Yes No Not sure

Comments: _____

3. Please tell us two things that you really like about the current Café/Tourist information point?

1. _____

2. _____

4. Please tell us two changes you'd make to the current café/Tourist Information Point

1. _____

2. _____

5. Would you like to be involved in taking forward any future plans?

Yes No Maybe

Your details (optional)

All responses will be treated in confidence and any reporting will not attribute comments to individuals. We will never pass your details onto a third party and your information will be held securely according to the Data Protection Act.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

We are fully aware that if this endeavour progresses there will be many further questions to be addressed and to this end we will keep the community informed with opportunities for involvement.

Please use this space to add any additional comments you may have:

Thank you

Registered Charity in Scotland No: SC012016
Registered Company limited by guarantee in Scotland: SC297877

Appendix 6: Budget Report Phase 1

The following business planning is designed to demonstrate the business viability of the café. However operation of the café is expected to be let to a third party and it would be for them to satisfy themselves of the viability of the operation. This planning is included to demonstrate that the café should be considered as a going and viable concern. The business plan is based upon intelligence from Elizabeth and Graham Best who ran the café before the current incumbents took tenure.

Outline Business Plan															
Bettyhill Café and TIC															
Assumed ownership secured February 1st 2019															
PHASE ONE - CONTINUED AS IS (with new operator) Open 6 days per week.															
	YR 1	NOTE! - 13 months													
		Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	
Café Income															
Food and drink sales	£104,000	£1,500	£10,000	£8,000	£10,000	£24,000	£25,000	£8,000	£10,000	£2,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,500	£2,000	
Gift shop															
Capital Investments	£10,000	£10,000													
Feasibility Plans	£8,500						£8,500								
TOTAL INCOME	£122,500	£11,500	£10,000	£8,000	£10,000	£24,000	£33,500	£8,000	£10,000	£2,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,500	£2,000	
Expenditure															
Rent	£2,600	£38	£250	£200	£250	£600	£625	£200	£250	£50	£25	£25	£38	£50	
Heat and light	£4,100	£100	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£200	£200	£200	£200	£400	
Other utilities	£2,600	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	
Insurances and Prof fees	£10,500								£2,000	£8,500					
Staff	£12,802	£192	£1,920	£1,500	£1,500	£1,920	£1,920	£1,500	£1,500	£200	£100	£100	£200	£250	
Consummables	£1,100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£50	£50	£50	£50	£100	
Cost of sales	£36,400	£525	£3,500	£2,800	£3,500	£8,400	£8,750	£2,800	£3,500	£700	£350	£350	£525	£700	
Capital Investments	£10,000	£10,000													
Total Expenditure	£80,102	£11,155	£6,370	£5,200	£5,950	£11,620	£11,995	£5,200	£7,950	£9,900	£925	£925	£1,213	£1,700	
<u>Operating profit</u>	£42,398	<u>£346</u>	<u>£3,630</u>	<u>£2,800</u>	<u>£4,050</u>	<u>£12,380</u>	<u>£21,505</u>	<u>£2,800</u>	<u>£2,050</u>	<u>-£7,900</u>	<u>£75</u>	<u>£75</u>	<u>£288</u>	<u>£300</u>	
Opening Balance		0	£346	£3,976	£6,776	£10,826	£23,206	£44,711	£47,511	£49,561	£41,661	£41,736	£41,811	£42,098	
Closing balance		£346	£3,976	£6,776	£10,826	£23,206	£44,711	£47,511	£49,561	£41,661	£41,736	£41,811	£42,098	£42,398	

Appendix 7: Budget Report Phase 2

Outline Business Plan														
Bettyhill Café and TIC														
Assumed ownership secured February 1st 2019														
PHASE ONE - CONTINUED AS IS (with new operator) Open 6 days per week.										BUILDING ALTERATIONS AND REFIT				
	YR 2	NOTE! - 12 months												
Café Income		Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	
Food and drink sales	£99,750	£10,500	£8,400	£10,500	£25,200	£26,250	£8,400	£10,500						
Gift shop														
Capital Investments	£0													
Feasibility Plans	£100,000												£100,000	
TOTAL INCOME	£199,750	£10,500	£8,400	£10,500	£25,200	£26,250	£8,400	£10,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	
Expenditure														
Rent	£2,494	£263	£210	£263	£630	£656	£210	£263	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Heat and light	£3,300	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	
Other utilities	£1,900	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	
Insurances and Prof fees	£2,000							£2,000						
Staff	£12,348	£2,016	£1,575	£1,575	£2,016	£2,016	£1,575	£1,575						
Consummables	£700	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100						
Cost of sales	£34,913	£3,675	£2,940	£3,675	£8,820	£9,188	£2,940	£3,675	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Capital Investments	£100,000												£100,000	
Total Expenditure	£157,654	£6,654	£5,425	£6,213	£12,166	£12,560	£5,425	£8,213	£200	£200	£200	£200	£100,200	
<u>Operating profit</u>	£42,096	<u>£3,847</u>	<u>£2,975</u>	<u>£4,288</u>	<u>£13,034</u>	<u>£13,690</u>	<u>£2,975</u>	<u>£2,288</u>	<u>-£200</u>	<u>-£200</u>	<u>-£200</u>	<u>-£200</u>	<u>-£200</u>	
Opening Balance	42398	£42,398	£46,245	£49,220	£53,507	£66,541	£80,231	£83,206	£85,494	£85,294	£85,094	£84,894	£84,694	
Closing balance		£46,245	£49,220	£53,507	£66,541	£80,231	£83,206	£85,494	£85,294	£85,094	£84,894	£84,694	£84,494	
Rent at 2.5% of turnover														

Appendix 8: Budget Report Phase 3

Outline Business Plan														
Bettyhill Café and TIC														
REFURBISHED BUILDING														
Open 6 days per week.														
YR 3														
Café Income		Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	
Food and drink sales	£145,700	£12,600	£10,080	£12,600	£30,240	£31,500	£10,080	£12,600	£6,000	£3,000	£3,000	£6,000	£8,000	
Gift shop														
Capital Investments	£0													
Feasibility Plans	£0													
TOTAL INCOME	£145,700	£12,600	£10,080	£12,600	£30,240	£31,500	£10,080	£12,600	£6,000	£3,000	£3,000	£6,000	£8,000	
Expenditure														
Rent	£5,828	£504	£403	£504	£1,210	£1,260	£403	£504	£240	£120	£120	£240	£320	
Heat and light	£3,300	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£400	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	
Other utilities	£1,900	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£200	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100	
Insurances and Prof fees	£3,000							£3,000						
Staff	£18,200	£2,318	£1,811	£1,811	£2,318	£2,318	£1,811	£1,811	£1,000	£500	£500	£1,000	£1,000	
Consummables	£1,320	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	£110	
Cost of sales	£50,995	£4,410	£3,528	£4,410	£10,584	£11,025	£3,528	£4,410	£2,100	£1,050	£1,050	£2,100	£2,800	
Capital Investments														
Total Expenditure	£84,543	£7,942	£6,452	£7,435	£14,822	£15,313	£6,452	£10,435	£3,650	£1,980	£1,980	£3,650	£4,430	
Operating profit	£61,157	£4,658	£3,628	£5,165	£15,418	£16,187	£3,628	£2,165	£2,350	£1,020	£1,020	£2,350	£3,570	
Opening Balance	£0	£0	£4,658	£8,285	£13,450	£28,868	£45,055	£48,682	£50,847	£53,197	£54,217	£55,237	£57,587	
Closing balance		£4,658	£8,285	£13,450	£28,868	£45,055	£48,682	£50,847	£53,197	£54,217	£55,237	£57,587	£61,157	
Rent at 4% of turnover														