

Baile nan Gàidheal Highland Village

MADE OF STORIES

Exhibit Design Brief

September 2021

Introduction

Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village is undergoing a 6.4 million dollar capital project. A component of this project is the creation of two large exhibit areas in the new 7700 square foot An Taigh Fàilteachais | The Welcome House Cultural Centre as well as an additional information kiosk which will be located on site.

Exhibit Spaces:

- 1) Orientation Exhibit
- 2) Exit Exhibit
- 3) Bras d' Or Lake Kiosk

The exhibit team has worked for the last two years to develop content and storylines for each exhibit and continues to refine the messaging and audio/visual components.

The exhibit team is made up of:

Lead: Katherine MacLeod, Manager of Interpretation

B.A. Celtic Studies, Canadian History, St.F.X., Adv.Dip. Museum Studies,
Algonquin College.

Orientation & Exit Exhibits

Hannah Krebs, Ban-chleasaiche

Cert. H.E. Gàidhlig is Conaltradh, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, B.A. Celtic Studies, St.F.X.

Pauline MacLean, Collections Manager, Genealogist, Archivist

Dip. Chemical Technology, NSEIT.

Shamus Y. MacDonald, Consultant

B.A. Celtic Studies, St.F.X., M.Sc. Celtic & Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh,
Ph.D., Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Bras d' Or Lake Kiosk

Ed MacDonell, Cleasaiche

B.Sc. Dalhousie, B.A. Celtic Studies, St. F.X., M.Sc. University of Guelph.

Overall Interpretive Vision for Baile nan Gàidheal

In the new exhibits being created as part of our site development project, our goal is to connect with, engage, and educate visitors on three main levels:

1) Inviting Personal Connections:

Our existing first-person animation on site, in conjunction with the development of the three new exhibits, will all have a common theme, 'Home.' Whether it's leaving home, emigration, community, culture, language, connection to place, family or kinship, we all have different experiences with what home means to us and how this may change throughout our lives. We want visitors to feel that their own story is connected with and relevant to the story of the Nova Scotia Gaels by encouraging people to think about these common human connections.

2) Our Gaelic Story:

For the past 60 years, our on-site animation has allowed our Gaelic story to be told through language, culture, folklore, traditional practices, song and personal connection. These vital elements of Gaelic culture will also be key components of the new exhibits, enabling us to provide visitors with contextual information about the Gaels. The orientation and exit exhibits will expand visitor's understanding of the Nova Scotia Gaels over the past 200+ years, up to present day.

3) Deeper Cultural Understanding:

We recognize that many different types of visitors come to museums for varying reasons. Baile nan Gàidheal strives to provide interpretation that meets the needs of all visitor types. Being a nationally and internationally recognized institution for the continuing development and representation of Gaelic Nova Scotia, we feel it is also important to provide a full range of interpretation around our key cultural themes on a deeper level.

*In accordance with our site Gaelic policy, all interpretive text must be presented in both Gaelic and English.

**In accordance with our funding contracts, interpretive text must also be made available in French (ie in a pamphlet).

***We will be engaging an interpretive writer to assist us in creating the text for the panels in these exhibits.

Exhibit Design

Orientation Exhibit

The new orientation exhibit will provide an introduction to the story of the Gaels, prior to their arrival in Nova Scotia. From the moment visitors enter this space, they will be encouraged to begin making personal connections with their own stories as they learn about the Gaelic experience. This space will provide visitors with contextual information about the Scottish Gàidhealtachd (the homeland of the Gaels), Gaelic language and culture, and socio-economic changes that led to emigration. This will provide visitors with background information to enhance their experiences on site.

Orientation Exhibit Concept:

We see this space using a mix of mediums - combining text panels, archival imagery, commissioned drawings, and audiovisual representations of Gaelic language and culture. We would like to incorporate material cultural elements in the design of this space.

Dimensions:

Ramp: approx. 3'8" wide, 29'11"

Exhibit hall: 11'8" wide, and approx. 40' 2" long.

*See attached image.

The following are design elements and audiovisual components we have envisioned for this space thus far:

Physical Design Elements:

Location: Ramp	
Orientation - Topic 0	Theme: Home
Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Large ship's mast at the base of the ramp (in the corner).
Location: Main Exhibit Hall	
Overall	
Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Canvas 'sails' attached to the mast and several cross beams in the exhibit hall will drape over the exhibit space. This will create a ceiling to help dampen sound from the adjacent reception and gift shop area.- An area where visitors can pick up a site map in the language of their choice beside the back door on the way out of the exhibit
Orientation - Topic 1	Theme: Who Are the Gaels?
Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Blackhouse facade, located to the left of the ramp landing (this will house an A/V character video)
Orientation - Topic 2	Gàidhealtachd - Where did the Gaels come from?
Design Elements	
Orientation - Topic 3	Change – Why did they Leave?
Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- An empty open ciste (wooden chest - reproduction from our collection) with the question above "What would you bring?", potentially placed under a window facade

Exhibit Design

Audio/Visual Components:

Location: Ramp	
Orientation - Topic 0	Theme: Home
Audio/Visual Components:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 2 Static projections on ramp floor (Static questions projected on ramp floor for visitors to read when entering the space)- 1 Animated wall projection (archival blackhouse image with silhouette overlay of people interacting, and an additional question)
Location: Main Exhibit Hall	
Overall	
Audio/Visual Components:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ambient soundscape (nature sounds - waves, birds etc.)- 2-4 Sound showers corresponding to themes
Orientation - Topic 1	Theme: Who Are the Gaels?
Audio/Visual Components:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Character - life size Gael speaking to visitors about the Gaels, in the blackhouse facade
Orientation - Topic 2	Theme: The Gàidhealtachd - Where did the Gaels come from?
Audio/Visual Components:	
Orientation - Topic 3	Change – Why did they Leave?
Audio/Visual Components:	

*See attached drawings for details on content locations.

**While our main concepts have been developed, we are still finalizing content and additional audiovisual needs may arise we move forward and finalize our plans for the exhibit.

Exhibit Design

Exit Exhibit

With the construction of the An Taigh Fáilteachais | The Welcome House Cultural Centre, our museum experience will be extended beyond the first-person animation found on site. This new exit exhibit's main purpose will be to fill the gap in our current narrative by continuing our interpretation of the Gaelic Nova Scotia story up to and including modern day. This space will serve as an extension of our living history site, maintaining a homey, welcoming atmosphere as much as possible. Through 5 themes - Language, Music, Home & Away, Identity, and Contemporary Gaelic Nova Scotia - visitors will gain insight into what has changed, the value cultural diversity maintains in a modern world, and how this connects to their own personal experiences.

Exit Exhibit Concept:

We see this space using a mix of mediums - combining text panels, archival imagery, artifacts/objects, and audiovisual representations of Gaelic language and culture. We would like to incorporate material cultural elements in the design of this space.

Dimensions:

Ramp: length 29'11", width 3'8"

Foyer: 8' wide, approx 20' long

1st level: 16 ½' by 17' (not including ramp width)

2nd level: 16 ½' by 24 ½' (not including ramp width)

*See attached image

The following are design elements and audiovisual components we have envisioned for this space thus far:

Physical Design Elements:

Location: Foyer in entry to space	
Exit - Topic 0	Theme: n/a
Design Elements	- A partial shingled wall (that looks like the outside of a house) with a fake window and a video showing something like a little céilidh in a kitchen.
Location: Main Exhibit Hall	
Overall	
Design Elements	- On the wall along the ramp, a big mural/collage with pictures/videos from 1920's-present, creating a kind of visual timeline running the full length of the ramp. This is a substantial wall.
Location: Main Exhibit Hall - First Level	
Design elements overall first level	- Some kind of seating in the centre of the space so folks can look at the exhibit or mural, ideally some kind of daybed/kitchen bench that fits the 'home' feel.
Exit - Topic 1	Theme: At Home and Away
Design Elements	
Exit- Topic 2	Theme: Language

Exhibit Design

Design Elements	
Exit - Topic 3	Theme: Image and Identity
Design Elements	
Exit - Topic 4	Theme: Music
Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some objects to represent the music tradition in an artifact case. - A dance interactive - "try a step" - piece of wood on the floor with an instructional video.
Location: Main Exhibit Hall - Second Level	
Exit Topic 5	Contemporary Gaelic NS
Design Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Something visually different to draw people into the space - ie. an image depicting people from an obviously different culture - A chest like the one in the orientation, (aged reproduction from our collection) and full of family heirloom type objects. - A place for people to share their own story/experience through audiovisual and/or written mediums

Audio/Visual Components:

Location: Foyer in entry to space	
Exit - Topic 0	Theme: n/a
Audio/Visual Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Céilidh video in the partial shingled wall (no sound)
Location: Main Exhibit Hall	
Overall	
Audio/Visual Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On the wall along the ramp, a big mural/collage - may have video and audio incorporated with the static images - 3-6 sound showers accompanying themes throughout the 2 levels.
Location: Main Exhibit Hall - First Level	
Exit - Topic 1	Theme: At Home and Away
Audio/Visual Components	
Exit - Topic 2	Theme: Language
Audio/Visual Components	
Exit - Topic 3	Theme: Image and Identity
Audio/Visual Components	
Exit - Topic 4	Theme: Music
Audio/Visual Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Learn a step" dance video interactive
Location: Main Exhibit Hall - Second Level	
Exit - Topic 5	Contemporary Gaelic NS
Audio/Visual Components	

*See attached drawings for details on content locations.

**While our main concepts have been developed, we are still finalizing content and additional audiovisual needs may arise we move forward and finalize our plans for the exhibit.

Exhibit Design

Bras d' Or Lake Kiosk

The Bras d' Or Lake is a UNESCO biosphere reserve, officially designated in 2011. As Baile nan Gàidheal is located overlooking Bras d' Or, providing specific interpretation about the lake will help visitors better understand this unique ecosystem, and highlight the significance of the natural landscape to the Gaels, Mi'kmaq and Acadians who have lived around the lake over time.

Bras d' Or Lake Kiosk Concept:

Information will be displayed on 4 or 5 panels, incorporating the text and images we have compiled. They will be located beside the main parking lot overlooking the lake.

Dimensions:

TBD

HIGHLAND MUSEUM Visitor Centre

Cape Breton Island
Nova Scotia



floor plan

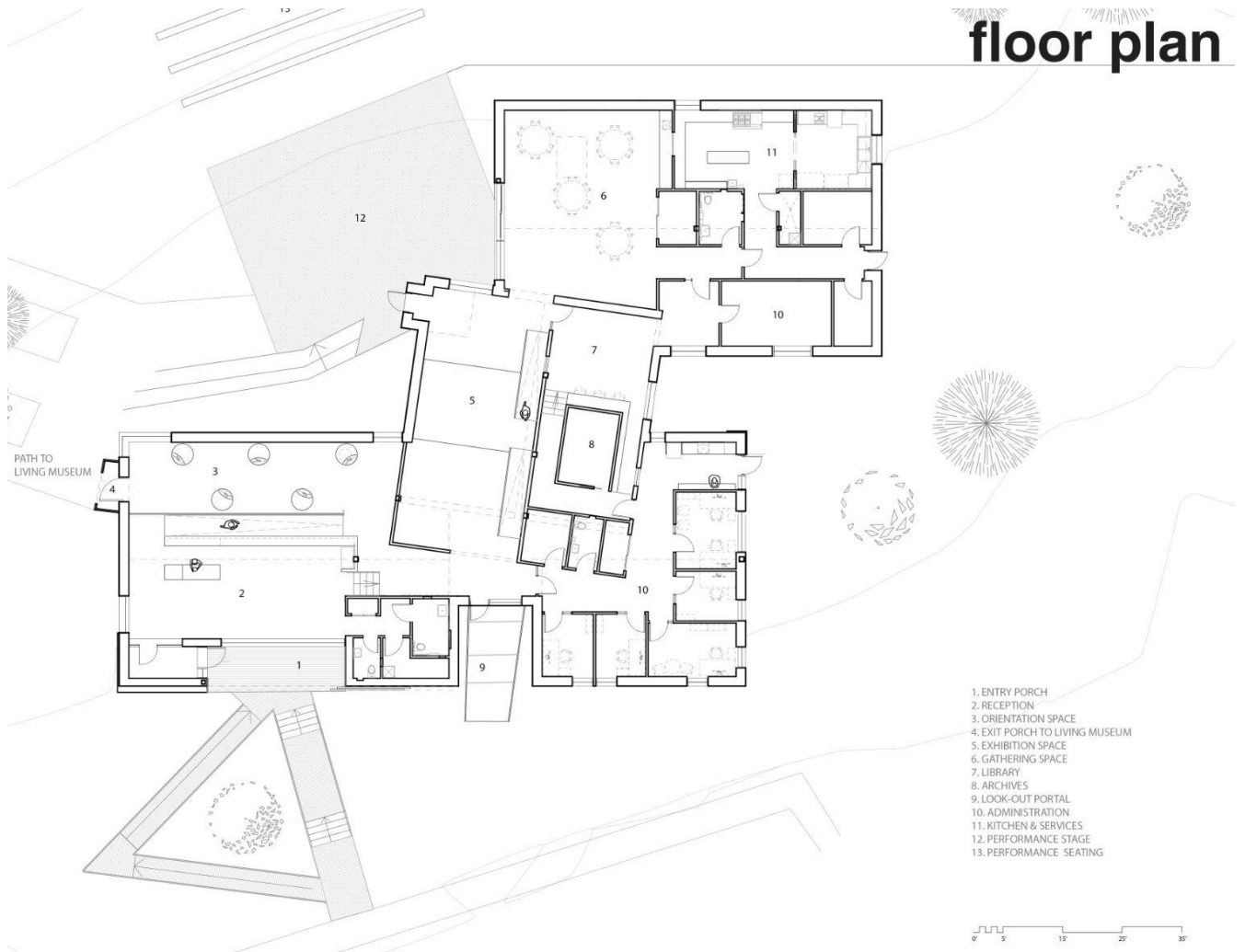
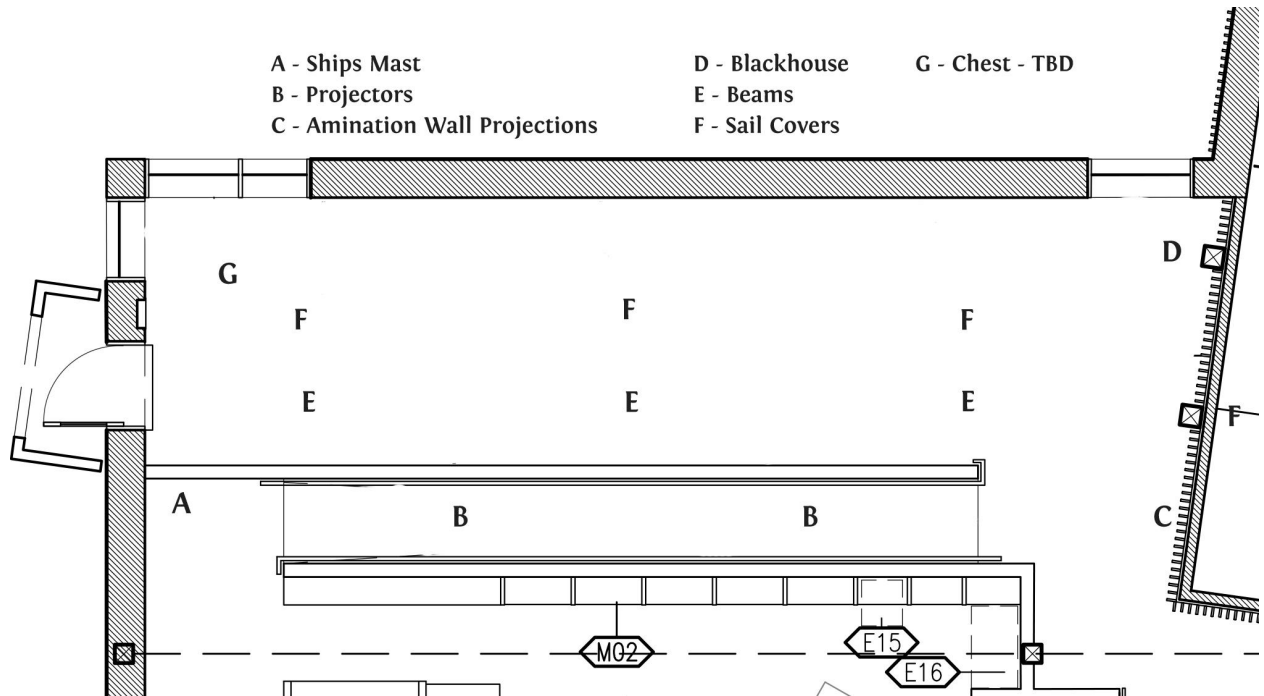


Exhibit Design

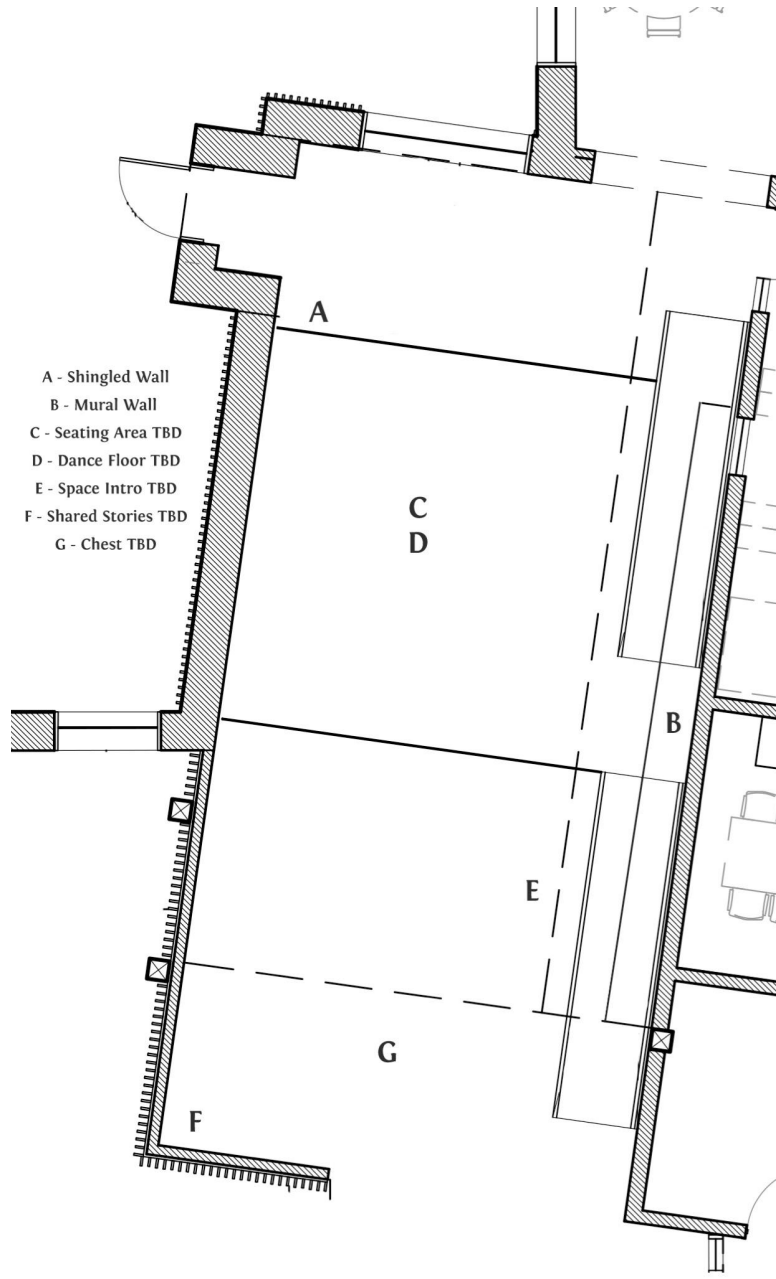
Orientation Exhibit Design Element Placement:



*TBD means location in space TBD, not element.

Exhibit Design

Exit Exhibit Design Element Placement:



*TBD means location in space TBD, not element.

Exhibit Design

PLEASE NOTE the following renderings are intended only to help visualize the physical spaces we're working with, not what the exhibits will actually look like.

Orientation Exhibit:



Exit Exhibit:

