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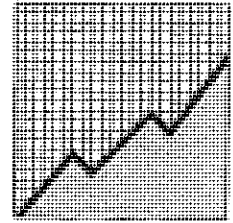
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**SCOTIA
TOURISM
SERVICES**

**MARKETING
SELLING
DEVELOPMENT**

-THE FERRYBOAT-

A MARKETING STRATEGY

for

A VISITOR CENTRE ON ULVA

June, 1988.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The island of Ulva lies off the western seaboard of Mull. It is approximately five miles long, by about a mile and a half broad. The island's population is approximately twenty and of the families living on the island, all are actively involved in the agricultural activities of Ulva Farm (hereafter termed the Estate).

1.2 The island divides almost naturally into two areas. The first includes the broad area containing the ferry, the Church, the Heronry, Ulva House and the farm's Bracadale Steadings (termed by us for the purposes of this study: The Ferry Triangle). The second is the remainder of the island, which one can nevertheless further sub-divide in order to differentiate between the south facing coast and the north facing side of the island, through which the long track to Gometra passes.

1.3 Ulva Farm as a business operation currently makes a loss of between £5,000 and £10,000 annually. Much of this is attributable to the burden of the ferry.

1.4 The island is somewhat unique in a Highland context for its lack of self catering properties (there are none) and also an absence of the many facets associated with the Tourist Industry. One of the households on the island is starting a Bed and Breakfast operation this year.

1.5 The Senior Partner in the business Mrs Howard, has always encouraged visitors to the island. Her son, Jamie Howard and the other Partner in Ulva Farm, introduced a regular ferry sailing to the island in 1987. This ensures that the public can visit the island when they so wish.

1.6 Off the western tip of Ulva lies the island of Gometra. It is separated by a narrow channel across which a stone causeway has been built. It is owned by an absentee landowner, who has fenced off part of the island in which he restrains a herd of Red Deer. Formerly, Gometra belonged to the Howards, but was sold off to defray Death Duties.

1.7 As part of the exercise in the settling of Death Duties, Ulva Farm entered into an Agreement with the Inland Revenue and the Countryside Commission for Scotland, to encourage greater use of the island by the public. The creation of the proposed Visitor Centre is the culmination of this process and the first step in making the island a feature for greater numbers of visitors to enjoy, when on holiday in Mull.

1.8 Scotia Tourism Services, the consultancy arm of Hospitality Scotland Ltd has been asked to provide a Marketing Strategy for the Visitor Centre. Given that the marketing of the complex is in our opinion inextricably linked to the type of facility to be provided, this Report will also deal in some detail with the actual requirements for the Visitor Centre.

1.9 The other key element in ensuring the appropriate development of the Visitor Centre, is to understand that the Centre cannot be seen in isolation from the remainder of the island. Our view is that Ulva is one large Visitor Centre, of which the proposed building is the start and finish point.

1.10 The proposal as submitted to us, is for a small building to be built onto the gable-end of the existing ferryman's house. On the ground floor will be a tearoom and toilets. Upstairs will be housed an informative interpretive display. The latter, combined with a detailed booklet on the island, will provide the visitor with sufficient information to understand and hopefully enjoy this rather unique island experience.

2.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Few visitors today can come over to this island and not wonder at the type of community that would have existed in previous decades. Most will discover the Church, Ulva House, the Farm Steadings and of course the Ferryman's House. The more energetic will be astonished to find the ruins of numerous houses, many grouped together into small communities.

2.2 The island exhibits evidence of the Megalithic Peoples and of Viking settlements. Indeed, it is from the latter settlers that the name Ulva is derived (Ulffur, meaning wolf island).

2.3 The Clan MacQuarrie held sway over the island until the late 18th century, when it passed through various ownerships and into the hands of one Francis Clark in 1835. It is with him and his exploits that, the visitor is most likely to receive answers to the numerous questions about the old way of life on Ulva, as evidenced by the many ruins on the island.

2.4 Without wishing to be over-melodramatic about the subject, Ulva is capable of giving the visitor a depth of feeling about the de-population of the Highlands, which many other areas may rarely achieve. The reason for this, is that there are no vehicles on the island to disturb the tranquility and intrude upon one's imagination, as the mind seeks to grapple with the fact that the island had a population approaching 600 persons in the period around 1835. As we shall see however, this figure had risen rapidly from the base population of approximately 100 at the beginning of the 19th century.

2.5 The various activities of weavers, tailors, blacksmiths, boat carpenters and merchants, combined with all those working the land and kelp beds, would have given the appearance of a very busy community. Not only would there have been many people in and around the area now occupied by the Church, Ulva House and the Ferry, but the more distant settlements of Ormaig and Craigaig would self evidently have been bustling townships. The location of the schoolhouses, east of centre on the island and opposite Gometra, bears testimony to the spread of the population.

2.6 The gradual erosion of the Clan system had already begun before Culloden, as rents were introduced in place of allegiance to the Chief and Tacksman. The form of land tenure now became the ubiquitous feudal system, hitherto confined to the territory outwith the Highlands. The sale of Ulva in 1777 by the last landed Clan Chief, heralded the inexorable process of depopulation of the island; a situation interrupted only by the artificial economy created in the Highlands by the Kelp Industry, during the early 19th century.

2.7 By 1840, when the Kelp Industry collapsed and the Potato Famine had struck, the land ownership under Clark was such that the greatest financial return had to be derived from the land for the benefit of the landowner. The net effect was to introduce sheep, in a vain attempt to derive an income from the same area of land which had once provided sufficient rent from the activities of Kelp and general agriculture.

2.8 Turning the island over to sheep however, required the lands used by the existing population to be transformed into sheep pastures. Consequently, in a process repeated in various forms throughout many parts of the Highlands at this time, life became so intolerable for most of the population that, by 1851 only 150 persons remained on Ulva.

2.9 Thus in the space of some fifteen years the whole nature of the island's economy had been transformed. Ownership of the island stayed within the Clark family until 1945. The land was then sold to Lady Congleton. It is her daughter Mrs Howard, who is the Senior Partner today in Ulva Farm.

3.0 THE ISLAND TODAY

3.1 The principal activities of the Estate relate to farming and in particular the beef cattle herd of 90 - 100 Luing cross. There is also a small herd of Highland Cattle. Two cows supply the island's population with milk from the Farm's Dairy. There is also a Shetland Pony Stud, whilst one of the families on the island has a few riding horses. Independently from Ulva Farm, a sheep farmer resident on the island runs a flock of 1500 sheep.

3.2 The principal crop on Ulva is silage. There is a limited production of oats, potatoes and turnips.

3.3 The Estate has its own Timber Workshop in which the various requirements of the Estate can by and large be met. The varied stock of deciduous and coniferous timber on the island ensures that little timber has to be imported for day-to-day use. The absence of a drying kiln however, precludes maximum utilisation of the island's timber reserves.

3.4 Investigations are currently in hand to establish a small fish farm off-shore.

3.5 The "roads" on Ulva are ideal for modern soft tyred vehicles, of which the three-wheeled powered tricycles seem eminently suited. Landrover vehicles, generally find the basaltic rock surface to be too severe on their suspension. The net result is that most of the island's vehicular tracks, appear slightly narrower than the normal farm track.

3.6 The walled garden of Ulva House is a profusion of colour at certain times of the year and produces a variety of fruit and vegetables for consumption by the island's residents. It provides an idyllic setting not far from the pier.

3.7 The island has a notable Heronry and although not a designated Reserve, it is clearly one which ought not to be disturbed by encouraging visitors to penetrate into the wooded area during nesting periods. Other striking species seen on the island include the golden and sea eagles; peregrine falcons; woodpeckers; wood warblers; redstarts; tree pipits; common and arctic terns. Barnacle geese over-winter at Ulva Ferry

3.8 Other interesting wildlife on the island include otters; red deer and rare species of moth and dragon fly. There is generally a considerable variety of wildflowers to be seen, the most common of which are roseroot, rock cress, sea campion and sea pinks.

3.9 The architecture of the buildings on Ulva has drawn the attention of the Historic Buildings Council and a number are "listed". Indeed, the rebuilt Ulva House (replacing that destroyed by fire in the 1950's) is one such.

3.10 Perhaps the three most likely to catch the eye of the visitor are, the Bracadale Steadings with their old byre (complete with stalls); the horse and cart sheds near to the turn-off for Gometra, and the Church. The latter, constructed by Thomas Telford is fascinating for its sheer size and the intriguing history of the period that led to it being built in 1828. Inside the church is a particularly interesting and valuable map of the island, which ought to be protected from further damage by inadvertent mis-handling.

3.11 The visitor to Ulva cannot help noticing very soon that, there are next to no vehicles on the "roads". Indeed it is highly probable that most people will not encounter any vehicle at all, as they walk along the rocky, rutted tracks which are the island's roads. At most, he is likely to see the tractor at work in the fields, or perhaps one of the tricycles in use by estate staff, or possibly a Landrover carefully picking its way along the roads. The resultant effect is to create an environment quite different to that left behind when the visitor parked their car at the other side of the ferry.

3.12 The juxtaposition of this serene setting with the evident presence of 20th century habitation, as one moves from the surroundings of one house to the next, creates a most unusual and pleasant atmosphere. Combined with the lush tree cover in the Ferry Triangle, there is unquestionably a sense of being in a different world from that left behind on Mull and certainly from that to which one is acquainted on the mainland.

3.13 Providing a further key element in the Ulva experience, is the contrast provided for the more energetic visitors, as they break out of the Triangle and into the heather moorland and coastal seascapes towards the west of the island. In this more typical Highland terrain, one is then confronted with the wealth of evidence relating to history, from the time of Megalithic man to the more immediate 19th century.

3.14 In summary therefore, we have on Ulva today, a commercial farming enterprise using some of the most modern agricultural techniques. We have an unusual environment for the Western Highlands and finally we have the almost complete absence of vehicles. These qualities together with the flora, fauna and history of the island, are what visitors value. The fact that the public are free to roam almost anywhere on the island, is an added and priceless bonus.

4.0 THE FERRY SERVICE

4.1 The Estate operates its own private ferry and employs a full-time Ferryman for the purpose. The ferry is an essential link for the community, providing an hourly sailing between 9am and 5pm on Tuesday to Saturday inclusive. On Mondays, the mail and school-children continue to be ferried at set times. This summer timetable is replaced in winter by a flexible coloured board, which is uncovered to draw the attention of the Ferryman. The quarter-of-a-mile crossing takes only a few minutes. The nature of the pier on Ulva precludes the possibility of landings by the pleasure cruise boats plying to and fro to Staffa. It should also be noted that the piers are unsuited to the handling of wheelchairs.

4.2 The maximum seating capacity of the ferry vessel is twelve. In addition to the passenger ferry, the Estate also operates a "barge" for the occasional trans-shipment of livestock, vehicles and other assorted commodities not capable of fitting readily into the passenger launch. The Royal Mail and School contract are vital services undertaken by the ferry. Other users of the Estate's ferry services are the owners of Gometra; the Inch Kenneth Fish Farm and Ulva's Sheep Farmer.

4.3 The ferry currently operates at a loss of approximately £5,400.00 per annum (see Table below).

FERRY PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT (1987)

INCOME	
Visitors at £1.00 return fare x 1,500	1,500.00
Gometra Traffic	500.00
Inch Kenneth Fish Farm	1,000.00
Schools' Contract	100.00
Mail Contract	200.00

	3,300.00
EXPENDITURE	
Ferryman's Wage	6,500.00
Coal to Ferryman	500.00
Rates/Community Charge	300.00
Fuel for ferries	1,000.00
Depreciation on three ferry vessels	800.00
Insurance	100.00

	9,200.00
OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS)	(5,900.00)

4.4 Given that most visitors to Ulva will be resident holidaymakers on Mull (rather than daytrippers across from the Scottish mainland), the movement of ferry passengers will be closely linked to Occupancy Levels in holiday accommodation on Mull. There are no published statistics for the flow of resident tourists on Mull.

4.5 We have calculated the number of tourists ourselves, based upon the bedspace availability as defined in the Area Tourist Board's Brochure (1988). This indicates approximately 1,430 bedspaces in hotels, guest houses, B & B, self catering and static caravans. The projected actual numbers of touring caravanners and campers (1,760) are not included. The result is a conservative estimate of 154,152 resident tourists on Mull from April to October inclusive.

4.6 To obtain the distribution of these tourists over the seven months, we have adopted the most recently available statistics on Bedspace Occupancy levels, for Hotels in the Oban/Mull area in 1986 (source HADB). The figures are shown in the following Table.

Overnight Resident Tourists In Mull

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
% Bed Occ.	23	50	59	65	71	62	55
No. of Trsts	9209	20020	23623	26026	28428	24824	22022

4.7 To transform the above figures into meaningful statistics for the purposes of this Report, it is necessary to assume a likely volume of visitors to Ulva in 1988. It is known that approximately 1500 came in 1987, but there are no documented figures available from the Estate. Consequently we shall adopt a prudently low figure and assume 2000 in 1988.

4.8 The projected total of 2,000 visitors, represents 1.3% of the total overnight resident tourists from the above table. As a result we are able to show the possible distribution per month of visitors to Ulva in the Table below.

Potential Flow of Visitors to Ulva (assuming 2,000 per year)

	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
No.p. month	120	260	307	338	369	322	286
No.p. day	7*	16	19	21	23	20	18
No.p. sailing 1**		3	3	4	4	3	3

* although the ferry sails Tuesday - Saturday incl., it is known that few sail on a Saturday. Hence in this calculation we assume a four day week.

** although sailings are hourly from 9 - 5 with none at 1pm, it is known that few sail at 9am or 12 noon. Hence for the purposes of the above Table, we assume a pattern of 6 return trips per day.

4.9 In reality the distribution of passengers per sailing will be nothing like the above Table. However the Table gives a useful pointer to what will happen on a daily basis throughout the season. Indeed, the Table demonstrates a surprising finding and that is, that there is no real anticipated marked peak in the months of July and August. Demand is seen to be fairly even from June to October, with an obvious increase in August. This is contrary to the more normal marked July/August surge associated with much of the tourist traffic elsewhere in Scotland.

4.10 Using the above Table as our baseline for further projected passenger traffic flows, we are able to postulate the likely impact on the ferry of increased demand, as successful marketing brings more visitors to Ulva. Thus it is obvious that if traffic trebles, the ability of the ferry to carry everyone on the existing hourly sailing pattern, becomes highly questionable, during July and August.

4.11 To summarise therefore, it is evident that the current loss of some £5,000.00 per annum, may be reduced significantly as passenger traffic increases. If the ferry is run to its maximum capability during peak demand, rather than to a set hourly pattern, the financial loss may be capable of being greatly reduced.

4.12 For example, increasing the number of passengers to 6,000 per annum would see the current loss outlined in the Table at para. 4.3, reduced to something approaching £1,000 (allowing additional extra expenditure of £200 for fuel). However there is also the realisation that at such operational levels, a larger vessel will most likely be required.

4.13 Finally, we cannot conclude this section without stressing the absolute importance of the Ferryman to the successful development of Ulva as a visitor attraction. It is he who will be the stranger's first contact with Ulva. From this first impression, visitors will be conditioned for their trip ashore. Whoever is at the helm will be as much a salesman as a mariner and this fact is of inescapable significance in ensuring that all visitors go into the Visitor Centre.

5.0 THE VISITOR CENTRE

5.1 Replacing the present lean-to shed at the gable end of the Ferryman's House, the Visitor Centre will be a two storey building with a floor space measuring eight by 4.5 metres (9m if external stair). It is divided into two parts, with the upstairs devoted to an Interpretive Display and the downstairs area used for a tearoom and seating area. At the downstairs level are toilet facilities. The two levels are connected by an internal staircase.

5.2 The Visitor Centre will be open throughout the period April to October inclusive and at all times when the Ferry is operational. A range of quality souvenirs will be available for visitors to purchase and distributed from the tearoom will be the detailed booklet, "A Visitor's Guide to Ulva".

5.3 The Visitor Centre will have a type of person moving through it unlike many other similar establishments elsewhere in Scotland. It is envisaged that nearly all who cross over to Ulva will opt to explore at least one of the trails. Consequently most people entering the building will progress further into the island, or will already have been around part of the hinterland.

5.4 The Centre is therefore seen as only a part of the total visitor experience on Ulva. In fact the true visitor centre is the total area of the island into which the public has access. This relates to almost the whole island, other than an obvious desire to prevent any intrusion of privacy in the grounds of each occupied house.

5.5 The visitor will be able to gain a useful introduction to the island from the Centre, prior to setting out to explore the island. Returning from their outing, people will be able to glean further information on specific points which they have seen in the course of their wanderings. The ability of the person in charge of the Centre to answer the innumerable questions that will inevitably arise, will be central to the visitor's complete enjoyment.

5.6 From the Centre the public will be able to follow a series of six trails of varying distance and duration. The key to their understanding will be provided in the booklet "A Visitor's Guide to Ulva".

5.7 Financial support for the establishment of the Centre may be available from the Countryside Commission for Scotland (CCS) and from the Highlands and Islands Development Board (HIDB). The former may give Grant on up to 60% of the costs towards the upstairs Interpretive Display and 30% Grant towards the cost of the downstairs toilets.

5.8 The HIDB may give Grant on up to 35% of the costs of the tearoom facility with an additional loan on 15% at 7.5% rate of interest (repayable over 5 years). There would also probably be a one year deferment on repayment of capital.

5.9 The estimated capital costs of the development are:

Interpretive Display (including proportion of structural costs)	£ 8,000.00
Toilets	3,000.00
Tearoom (including proportion of structural costs and all fixtures/fittings/equipment)	15,000.00
Visitors' Guide Book (6,000 print run)	9,420.00
	TOTAL: 35,420.00

5.10 Consequently, grant aid from the CCS may total £4,800.00 and from the HIDB £8,547.00. This potential package of £13,347.00 would require the Estate to inject £22,073.00. The HIDB scheme might allow a loan on 15% of the £24,420.00 eligible i.e. £3,663.00, so leaving (£22,073.00 - £3,663.00 = £18,410.00) for the Estate to fund, if it accepts such an offer of loan from the Board.

5.11 As has been indicated in the previous Section, visitor numbers to the island in 1987 have not been specifically recorded. It is known from the "honesty box" in operation during the year that some £1,500.00 was earned in revenue. Assuming the previously quoted figure of 1,500 passengers, it would seem reasonable to project 2,000 visitors to the island in 1988.

5.12 Publicity and marketing of Ulva has so far been almost non-existent and therefore the 1989 figures for visitors, when the Centre is open for the first time, should hopefully increase well beyond this level. It is therefore essential that during the 1988 season, an accurate record of passengers using the ferry is kept by the Ferryman.

5.13 In order to try and gain a better understanding of the possible numbers likely to visit Ulva, our investigations have established that the Old Byre Visitor Centre at Dervaig, attracted some 7,000 visitors last year. In its early years at the beginning of the 1980s, it was attracting approximately 10,000 at its operating peak. The current owners hope to be able to bring visitor numbers back towards this level by re-introducing the aggressive marketing of earlier years.

5.14 Discussions with the two competing pleasure cruise operators who run trips from Ulva Ferry to Staffa, would seem to suggest that some 5,000 persons are making this trip during the tourist season. Neither operator however is prepared to be very specific.

5.15 From these very limited findings we are prepared to suggest that it would not be unreasonable to expect the Visitor Centre to attract around 6,000 persons during the season, once it has become established. The speed with which this operating level is reached, will by and large be determined by the thoroughness of Marketing. To a lesser extent it will also be conditioned by the ability of the Estate to overcome momentary bottlenecks of passenger movement, so that visitors do not drift away from the pier because of a lack of ferry service.

5.16 The tearoom will generate revenue for the Estate from sales. These can usefully be divided into food and beverages, plus books and souvenirs. To avoid wasted resources from stock in hand at the end of the season, every care will require to be taken to order on a sale or return basis whenever possible. The initial print run for the Visitors' Guide should be sufficient to cover the first year's anticipated visitor traffic. We are however recommending a print run of 6,000 in the first year, in order to take full advantage of the best financial package. It is probable that exclusive "up market" souvenirs are the most likely to find favour with potential customers, who after all will have had ample opportunity to make purchases during their holiday elsewhere in Scotland.

5.17 The financial viability of the Visitor Centre can therefore be seen from the following projected Profit and Loss Account assuming 3,000 visitors in 1989, the first year of operation.

Tearoom: Projected Profit and Loss Account (1989)

INCOME from 3,000 visitors	£
3,000 x £1.00 (teas/food)	3,000.00
3,000 x £1.00 (souvenirs)	3,000.00
1,500 x £2.00 (booklet)	3,000.00
EXPENDITURE	
Wages	2,000.00
Marketing (incl. ads + stnry)	1,000.00
Fuel/Electricity	600.00
Rates/Community Charge	200.00
Phones & Postage	100.00
Interest on £3,663.00 loan (say, at 7.5%)	274.73
Repayment of loan (1st of 5 instalments)	732.60
Depreciation (4% on £4,000.00 of contents)	160.00
Insurance	100.00
Purchases of souvenirs and foodstuffs	3,450.00
Repairs	200.00
VAT	782.61

	9,599.94
Projected Profit/(Loss)	(599.94)

NOTE: the following paragraphs assist in the interpretation of this Table.

5.18 The expenditure figures shown above are erring on the pessimistic side to ensure that this side of the account is adequately covered. Costs can be trimmed on a number of fronts and certainly once operational, more precise figures relating to fuel and electricity, for example, will be apparent.

5.19 Marketing expense can be reduced, although this is never a good idea during start-up. The cost is based on 4 ads in Am Muileach at £75; one ad at £250.00 in the New Mull Guide; £60.00 for postal distribution and £40.00 for Tourist Board Membership.

5.20 The wages bill is based upon staffed hours in the Centre from 10am - 12 noon and 2 - 5pm. This five hours per day regime over five days, gives a total of 25 hours per week, which on a payment of £2.00 per hour over 28 weeks (Apr - Oct), totals £1,400.00. This allows for National Insurance contributions and other permutations of higher staff costs, eg. a higher hourly rate, or greater hours per week.

5.21 Wages are however one area in which clear savings could be made. The Centre could be left unmanned in the mornings with reliance placed upon honesty boxes for purchases. The afternoon could then be staffed for three hours from 2.30 - 5.30. This would have the effect of trimming wages to approximately £1,000.00. The implications are however that a considerable degree of catering has to be undertaken in the afternoon, if that side of sales is to achieve target.

5.22 The projected Income is based upon the assumption that every visitor buys refreshments costing £1.00. It also assumes that each visitor spends £1.00 on souvenirs and that 50% of visitors purchase a Guide Book retailing at £2.00. (Purchase of books is not entered under Expenditure, as sufficient were purchased at start of trading to last three years).

5.23 From the Three Year Projected Profit and Loss Accounts at Appendix 1, it is evident that break-even begins to occur around 4,000 visitors. Increasing visitor numbers to the anticipated target of 6,000, will have the effect of transforming the loss into a profit of £1,707.74.

5.24 It has to be said that until the unit is operational, it will not be clear how effectively the Tearoom can cope with peak demand. This is likely to be in the late afternoon. Furthermore the key to increased food sales will rest with the person in charge, who will have to achieve considerable dexterity in handling non-food sales and cups of teas etc., all at the one time. It is also the case that every effort should be made to generate sales on arrival, rather than waiting for the return of each visitor as they rush to catch the ferry. This aspect will require the exercise of some considerable skill and persuasion, but could prove crucial in maximising profits.

5.25 Finally, it will be apparent that for the Visitor Centre to be viewed in its proper financial context (vis a vis the Estate's overall finances) due recognition must be made of the impact that the Centre will be having upon the Ferry's operational loss. The latter will almost be wiped out by the time the target of 6,000 visitors is reached.

6.0 VISITOR CENTRE LAYOUT

6.1 The area around the foot of the staircase leading to the display upstairs, must have a captivating feature which makes the visitor want to explore further and therefore go upstairs for a look. We suggest a very large background map of the island super-imposed with limited sketches of flora, fauna and physical features such as the basalt columns and caves; present day activities and features such as tractors, shepherd, houses and the ruined townships. Effectively this would be a schematic representation of Ulva today. The finished surface must be protected from the constant and inevitable fingering and must be washable. With a probable size of say 3m x 3m, the cost of this wall map would be approximately £1,000.00.

6.2 The text for the above panel would be restricted to place names and a statement such as:

"Ulva was Clan MacQuarrie country. Nip upstairs and you will find out a lot more about this delightful island"

6.3 In the upstairs Interpretive Centre we suggest a central island of display paneling around which the visitor would walk (see Appendix 3). Under the eaves on either side, an array of seaweed and tools of the trade from the kelping industry, would be on display. We propose that approximately a third of the space be given to the past and the remainder, to the island as it is today. A bolder decision to make this into a centre concentrating almost exclusively on the Highland's Kelp Industry, could readily be undertaken by the Estate. This would then have the decided marketing advantage of turning the Visitor Centre into a unique attraction.

6.4 We would urge that greater use be made of sketches rather than the written word. Consequently we would start with a Viking longboat/warrior against a background of the Norse fort at Dun Bhan and a Standing Stone somewhere in the scene, with a caption:

"the Vikings lived on Ulva and found it just as fertile as their Stone-Age predecessors. Megalithic man had settled on the island over two thousand years previously. Both peoples thought it an excellent base from which to move up and down the coast. The Vikings called this "Ulffur", meaning wolf's island.

6.5 We now require to carry the story through the 4 - 5 centuries of MacQuarrie Chieftain-ship and to this end a background of Highland Clansmen might be appropriate, captioned:

"the first recorded Clan Chief (1463) was Iain MacQuarrie - the clan name derives from the Gaelic description, Guaire, meaning "noble". Ulva was the Clan's seat.

After the collapse of the Lordship of the Isles, the MacQuarries, having allied themselves to the MacLeans of Duart, found themselves decimated and their Chief killed during a military expedition on behalf of Charles 11 near Edinburgh.

Clans did not pay a rent in money. The whole basis of the system was an allegiance to the Chief and his Tacksmen (lieutenants). "Rent" as such was limited to all able bodied men being required to fight for the Chief when he decreed. The land was communally owned.

As in so many other parts of the Highlands at this time, the Clan system gradually became eroded. A number of Clan chiefs were very well educated and enjoyed the good living afforded by Edinburgh and Paris. Ultimately a number found that their high cost of living could not be met from the Clan system and the first steps were taken towards cash rents and the transformation to the Feudal system.

By 1777, the then 16th Chief Lachlan MacQuarrie, had to sell out to his creditors and the ownership went through a number of hands. It culminated in 1835 with the purchase of the island by one Francis Clark and this family retained the island until 1945."

6.6 Arguably, one of the most interesting periods on Ulva in recent history, was from the demise of the MacQuarries, until the period towards the end of the 19th century. It was an era of dramatic change. Indeed the island was in such a seriously run-down condition when sold off by the Clarks to Lady Congleton in 1945, that the latter invested heavily in re-building the roads, houses and re-cultivating the pastures. It is largely as a result of this massive re-injection of capital in the mid 20th century, that the public is able to enjoy Ulva as it is today.

6.7 To demonstrate this transmogrification we require to show scenes of bustling activity to support the following captions:

"At the turn of the 19th century the island was a hive of activity with houses dotted all around. Significant settlements (or townships) existed at Ormaig, Cragaig, Glacgallon and around the area of the present Ulva House and old ferry landings. By the early 1830s Ulva's population was approximately 500 - 600.

Families were engaged as tailors, weavers, square-wrights, boat carpenters, black-smiths, drystone masons and merchants. Most would have been pre-occupied in cultivating the land and gathering seaweed.

Ulva was a productive island. The New Statistical Account tells us that even wheat and peas were successfully grown (presumably on an experimental basis). More common crops included potatoes and oats.

Seaweed was one of the main products handled on the island. Ulva's coastline produced one of the better crops from the Western Highlands.

The weed was cut from the seabed, gathered and carefully burned in heaps to obtain the alkaline extract, Kelp. This was used in the process of soap and glass manufacture. Kelping was an exceedingly arduous occupation, considered by some observers to be worse than that of a slave or factory hand. A drastic side effect was that the seaweed was unavailable to fertilise the land and anyway the crofters were always engaged at the kelp during the summer growing season. The only crops that they could grow unattended were potatoes.

The very basis of the Highland Kelp Industry was for landowners to sub-divide holdings for tenants (crofters) to occupy. The kelpers had to keep burning seaweed, in order to pay the excessively high land rents demanded of them. It was a most profitable period for the landowners in Ulva.

During the 1830s the Kelp Industry had been foundering in the face of more modern substitutes. The price plummeted. At the same time the staple crop of the crofters, potatoes, suffered disastrously from blight. The population began to starve and of course there was no income to pay the landowner his rent. This was a plight common to many communities in the Western Highlands at the time.

The landowner's choice was stark. He could return the land to his tenants (or at the very least cease to demand rent), or he could remove them due to their inability to pay rent (principally because of the collapse in Kelp). Again, as elsewhere in much of the Highlands at this period, Clark opted to clear the land of the destitute families.

Many had no doubt left of their own accord, but there is evidence to suggest that, the then landowner speeded the process considerably. Sheep now became the island's principal product. This form of agriculture required extensive grazing areas. These could only be obtained by taking the tenants' land out of cropping and into pasture for the landlord's sheep.

This dramatic change in the economic status of the island clearly saved the landowner...their ancestors were able to retain ownership for a further 100 years....but it meant that the population, artificially buoyed-up by the Kelp boom, had no choice. They had to leave Ulva".

6.8 The above description has hopefully conveyed to the visitor something of Ulva's past. It depicts an epoch from which considerable evidence still remains. The next section of the Interpretive Display concentrates on what the visitor will see as they move around the island. There will be occasions when the history of the past comes into the scenery of today.

6.9 Because the public will see the island as two distinct units...the Ferry Triangle and the remainder.....and because the visitor may not follow any systematic route (one of the pleasures of Ulva is that there is no stipulation to follow this route or that), the modern day scenario has to be dealt with under topics.

6.10 The key topics include the ferry; Ulva Farm; the trees and fields of the Ferry Triangle; the buildings; the hill land to the west; the flora and fauna and finally the traffic free environment. Wherever possible the diagrams and text should be cross-referenced to the trail numbers in the Guide-book. This will help to ensure full comprehension and stimulate sales.

6.11 In laying out this section, considerable care must be taken to try to minimise the ageing of the text and sketches. If too great a precision is spelled out, the features may well change in a year or two, thereby making the panels visibly obsolete and consequently demanding the expense of replacing these at further cost.

6.12 Starting with the ferry, which is the public's link with Ulva a suitable background sketch would be captioned:

"The ferry is the island's lifeline. There is a much larger boat for movement of livestock and other sizeable cargoes. The Royal Mail and the island's school-children, know what it is to have a dependable ferryman. The ferry landing-point on Ulva used to be south of the existing pier. You can see the old stone pier behind the green shed that was built to house the workforce which constructed Ulva House in the early 1950s.

The adjacent building to this, is the old Ulva Inn. This was a thriving Inn during the early 19th century. Pilgrims en route to Iona and Staffa used to stay here, before the advent of steam vessels from Oban, made the local four-man rowing boats obsolete".

6.13 We now have a scene which emodies the 20th century mechanised world of Ulva Farm tday, captioned:

"Ulva today is a commercial business operation, just like any other farm on the mainland. What you see around you is the activity of a modern West Highland farm.

Cattle rearing is the principal activity. Ulva Farm specialises in the rearing of a well known modern breed of Scottish beef cattle: Luing. These are crossed with a French breed, Limousin, to produce an excellent product for the butcher.

The cattle with the huge long horns are Highland Cattle. Only a few of these are kept for bloodstock purposes. They do not make good beef cattle.

The farmer employs a cattleman to look after the herd. However the sheep that graze on the island belong to the shepherd. He is a tenant and this is his own business.

The major crop is special grass which is grown to feed the livestock during the winter. This grass is cut twice during the summer and stored either in a large pit, or an alternative method is to keep it in huge black polythene bags. Kept like this, it heats up and "cooks" to become silage. The advantage of this feed, in comparison with hay, is that you don't need to worry if it rains too much!

Turnips are also grown to supplement the winter feed, whilst potatoes are planted for the island's population. There are less than a dozen families on Ulva, so the potoatoes usually last until the following Spring.

6.14 Amongst many lasting memories to take away from Ulva, the mature stands of beech tress must surely be one. Perhaps a backdrop of the glade beside the water tank at the Heronry, would be fitting for the following caption:

"The Victorian's desire for well laid-out landscapes and a concern for the enjoyment of subsequent generations, is reflected by the mature beech trees and scots pine. In more recent times, other landowners have continued the practise of tree planting and Ulva now has a considerable age range of trees.

The trees are also most practical, not only in supplying timber for the island's needs (gates, fence-posts, fuel, etc.), but providing excellent shelter for the livestock. The strong gale force Atlantic winds in winter, are dissipated by these perfect wind breaks.

You will see a considerable difference between the fields that are ploughed and grazed today and those from the early 19th century. Look closely at some of the land away from today's fields and you will be able to see the lines of hummock-y ridges that formed the old style "lazy beds". These were the crofters' "farms".

6.15 Ulva's buildings are interesting in that the occupied ones stand out in contrast to the solitude of the island. Somehow or other, one does not quite expect to find people going about their normal day-to-day family life. A scene depicting this normal state of affairs is therefore appropriate to the following captions:

"The Church built by Thomas Telford in 1828 is a clear reminder that there once was a sizeable population on the island. It could accomodate approximately 300 at worship.

Ulva House was rebuilt in the early 1950s after the old house was destroyed by fire. In common with all the other inhabited houses, it is a home and you are asked to respect people's privacy as you move freely around the island.

Some of the steadings are fascinating. Take a look inside the byre at Bracadale. Nearby are the old horse and cart sheds. There are similar examples of horse sheds at the junction of the road leading up the hill towards Gometra.

Notice too, as you open and close some of the farm gates that, there are stone stiles to one side. Do you know why these were so painstakingly built?

6.16 For those making the effort to explore Ulva to the full, the contrast of the ruined settlements with the relative hive of activity in the Ferry Triangle, must be striking. Perhaps a background of the ruined terrace at Starvation Point would be suitable for the following caption:

"Ulva's recent history is vividly expressed in the ruins that you see around you. There's the old smiddy not far from where you are standing at this moment. The schoolhouse above the treeline on the road to Gometra, is almost centrally located, showing how widespread was the population at one time. The far flung settlement at Ormaig, no longer resounds to the strains of the MacArthurs' Piping School. The cruck mill in that township has ceased grinding corn long ago.

And if you see the nine ruined terraced houses at Starvation Point, you may be able to imagine what it must have been like to have been driven into these temporary shelters to await transshipment to the mainland, or the further shores of the Americas and Australia".

6.17 The island is readily divided into the Ferry Triangle and the heather moorland to the west. The basalt terraces rising up to the summit of the island, is therefore a fitting background to:

"If you don't have time on this visit come back again and take a stroll out along the Gometra road. You don't have to go far above the tree line to get a magnificent view back towards the ferry and the distant Ben More. But note the more immediate contrast of the heather-clad hill behind, with the lush fields and trees below you.

When you are up there find the time to have a look at the difference between the old earthen field dykes and the more modern drystane dykes that you will have noticed in and around the ferry and farm.

6.18 The flora and fauna on Ulva may well be of considerable interest to the average visitor. It is the prospect of seeing rare species that thrills visitors.

"Keep a sharp watch in the skies for eagles, sea eagles, peregrines and of course the more common herons. Ulva has a sizeable Heronry. If you go quietly you will no doubt be surprised at what you can see and those who follow you will appreciate your stealth too!

Don't be surprised either if you see red deer. As for the fawn coloured "red squirrels" without the bushy tails, these are wild ferrets! Otters may well be keeping an eye on you as you walk around the coastline and they definitely hate noisy people: so sshh!

6.19 The traffic-free environment cannot pass unremarked as the visitor circles back to the ferry and this can be captioned with:

"Speaking of which.....have you noticed yet, one of the things that is really odd about Ulva? There are hardly any vehicles at all. Not much wonder, you mutter, haven't you seen the "roads"!

The other delightful thing that so many people recall as they sail back to Mull: there's no litter".

6.20 In order to encourage as many visitors as is possible, we must take advantage of the Centre to ram home the message about return visits. An appropriate background sketch would be to show the different areas on the island, rather than the trails (the latter will be on the map downstairs) and captioned:

"You cannot expect to do Ulva in a day and even if you were so fit, you wouldn't see half the things mentioned in the booklet "A Visitor's Guide To Ulva". So next time you return, make a point of exploring another corner, or take longer to absorb the peace and tranquility of the area that you explore this time. Whatever you decide to do, you can be sure that your next visit will be even more enjoyable than this one. That's Ulva".

7.0 ISLAND TRAILS AND VISITORS' GUIDE BOOK

7.1 There are at present six identified walks on Ulva. These are briefly described in the leaflet produced by Ulva Farm "Isle of Ulva". In many respects this is an excellent little publication of its kind. However as part of a major Marketing campaign to bring more people to the island and to enhance the income from visitors, it requires replacement.

7.2 The necessity is to create a booklet which people will wish to purchase from the Tearoom. The booklet must therefore have an attractive cover so that people will want to pick it up. The contents of the book have to be such that the visitor realises that the enjoyment of their stay on the island will be greatly enhanced by acquiring and reading the booklet.

7.3 Consequently the booklet must contain easily read and easily followed material about the island. Because the visitor is walking around the island (and not always at a brisk pace....many like to stroll and absorb the novelty of their surroundings) the level of detail in the booklet has to be considerable.

7.4 Each trail requires to have a sketch map in the booklet, so that the walker can easily follow the route. Every effort should be made by Ulva Farm to avoid excessive use of signposts. Instead, the visitor should be made aware from the moment he steps onto the ferry that the easiest and most fool-proof way to enjoy the island, is to purchase a Visitors' Guide to Ulva.

7.5 Every effort should be made to avoid duplication of track and consequently the need to write about sections of track, two or three times. In practise this may prove impossible, without recourse to opening new sections.

7.6 We would suggest the creation of a new trail entitled "Starvation Point". This would go around by the Church, picking its way along the shoreline to meet the Gometra track.

7.7 This new trail could also serve as a useful alternative trail to and from Gometra. It would have the effect of keeping people off the section to Ormaig (or of course giving them an alternative route) and thereby creating the illusion that there is perhaps much to explore on the island. We consider it very important that the visitor is given the impression of much to explore on the island. There will be a real temptation for some members of the public to think that having walked over part of the island, they have mastered Ulva.

7.8 The "Basalt Columns and Castles" should make it clear that the circuit via the cave is the ideal walk, thus returning by the Water Tank. All routes can easily be cut short by retracing one's steps at any point before the half-way mark.

7.9 To keep to a simplified six trails, we would recommend dropping the Ulva peak as an identified option. Instead this could be highlighted at the end as the ultimate challenge for "Ulva Baggers". It is a route which will in any event appeal only to the hardest of day-trippers.

7.10 With regard to the Gometra and South Side trails, it may be appropriate to draw the attention of the fittest to the possibilities of completing the circle by picking one's way around the coastline to reach the beginning of the other path.

7.11 The South Side trail should perhaps be given a slightly more appealing name for example, "The MacArthurs' Piping School", or "The Old Cruck Mill".

7.12 Link routes such as that between the South Side and Gometra trails require to be drawn to the attention of the walker. In the same vein alternatives should also be highlighted, as should short-cut retreats back to the ferry.

7.13 In all instances, walking times have to assume that the average pace is approximately 2 miles per hour. This gives ample time to absorb one's surroundings and enjoy the experience.

7.14 Production of clearly set-out trail maps in the booklet, should serve to overcome most problems of route finding. The majority of visitors to Ulva will be competent map readers. Those who are not, are unlikely to be given to wandering far from the Ferry Triangle.

7.15 In setting out the trails and the various features to which the writer draws attention, the Estate will find that the visitor will be greatly influenced by what is published and equally that which is omitted. Thus for example, pinpointing the location of the Heronry would no doubt attract considerable numbers into the wood. Alternatively, when specifying a particular earthen field dyke which the visitor may wish to take a close look at, the Estate will have to be aware that a steady path may be worn in that direction and that the dyke itself may steadily be picked away by curious fingers.

7.16 Given the above observations we would suggest a possible Contents to the booklet that would incorporate

Introduction

The Six Trails each with its own detailed sketch map

The pre- Viking era

The Clan System on Ulva

A premier Kelp property

Disaster

Ulva in the 20th century..... a farm like any other business

So you think you've seen it all?

MAP (showing the inter-relation of one trail to the other)

7.17 The above layout is merely a suggestion. However it serves to tackle the first issue, viz. setting out the Trails in a clearly defined manner. That is what the visitor wants and whilst many of the features mentioned in each trail, may subsequently be touched upon in the ensuing chapters, this can only prove beneficial to the visitors overall enjoyment.

7.18 Creating the subsequent descriptive chapters after the section on the Trails, serves to put into context the various detailed features that the visitor sees. It is our view that these sections are vital to the visitors appreciation of Ulva today.

7.19 Much of Ulva's history is a microcosm of that elsewhere in the West Highlands. It has the bonus however of letting the visitor easily grasp what actually happened to one specific group of Highlanders. If we are to make the most of marketing Ulva to the public, then this advantage should be seized upon and the story told in an absorbing and refreshing manner. However we would urge that wherever possible, facts be adhered to; other than for example when the writer stresses that the source is from local legend.

8.0 MARKETING STRATEGY

8.1 Very few visitors to Mull can know of Ulva's existence, because until 1987 no publicity material was available. The printing of the free leaflet "Isle of Ulva" heralded a new era.

8.2 The aim of the Strategy is to attract as many people to the island commensurate with the ability of the island to absorb the numbers and not detract from the individual's enjoyment. This gives economic benefit to the Estate, safeguards the local population's way of life and ensures that the visitor gets value for money.

8.3 The principal mechanism by which we propose to inform the public about Ulva is by means of a widely distributed leaflet. This should be the standard 10 - 21 cms size which is ideal for racking on shelves in shops and Information Centres and other public places. It will be brightly coloured in order to attract the eye of the visitor.

8.4 The main distribution points will be to ALL tourist accommodation on Mull, with a regular re-supply service (this is essential). All shops, tearooms and other facilities on Mull frequented by visitors will be asked to take some of the leaflets (a reciprocal offer should be made to these proprietors). It will be necessary to ensure that the Tourist Information Centres in Oban and Tobermory have a constant supply for display. Macbraynes Ferry to Craignure will have similar quantities and re-supply.

8.5 The initial print run for this two-sided leaflet should be 10,000 and it is probable that this may last two seasons. Distribution will require to be most methodically undertaken.

8.6 The proposed copy for the leaflet might include:

TITLE: "An Island Paradise.....Out of This World"
ULVA

MAP: This shows Mull with the Craignure - Tobermory circuit and the feature of Ulva island strongly highlighted.

"Craignure to Ulva 35 minutes by car"

COPY (front side): below the map would be the following text

"leave your car behind for once and come across in our little ferry. You can enjoy yourself for an hour or for the whole day. There is so much to explore and the home-bakes are scrumptious! The kids will love it!"

COPY (back): Visit THE FERRYBOAT..... the island's small visitor centre where you can briefly learn about this fascinating island, have a cuppa and then set off on your own to explore the island at will.

TO DO: There are six walks to chose from, although you may find more. The shortest takes a couple of hours (some say the shortest is from the pier to the home-made scones and back again!) and the longest, all day.

TO SEE: Some of the most easily accessible and finest basalt columns in Scotland. What's more, you don't need to worry about the sea being calm enough to be put ashore: you just walk there!

The poignant remains of long-deserted settlements such as STARVATION POINT. Find out for yourself, why the island's population of 600 was decimated almost overnight.

The otters that so cheekily keep an eye on you!

The extensive range of birds, including if you are lucky, eagles and other falcons and if you should be so fortunate, the roving sea eagles.

TO ENJOY: The peace and solitude; there are hardly any vehicles on Ulva. Once you've seen the "roads", you will be glad you left you car behind!

The freedom to explore and to discover for yourself. Waymarkers and signpost are kept to a minimum. Instead, you can obtain a Visitors' Guide and enjoy the experience of learning for yourself: a refreshing change.

Most people come back again and again, because it's not possible to "do" Ulva in a day... so you don't need to be an Olympic athlete to get the most out of Ulva!

Ferry Sailings: Tuesday - Saturday inclusive on the hour at 9, 10, 11, 12, 2, 3, 4, 5 from April to October inclusive.
£1.00 return children 0.50p

Visitor Centre; Toilets and Tearoom....packed lunch £3.00 (Tel. ??....24 hours notice please, and this must be collected on or before the llam sailing)

Footwear: stout shoes/boots if walking beyond the Visitor Centre.

8.7 Advertising expenditure 'per se' should be restricted to the Island of Mull. In particular the publication "The New Mull Guide" by Howitt and McAdam commends itself and there is also the local Mull News-sheet ("Am Muileach"). The latter provides a cheap (£75.00 per page) and effective medium by which the Estate is able to inform local people on Mull, who in turn are one of the first points of contact for resident visitors to Mull.

8.8 Membership of the Oban and Lorne Area Tourist Board ensures appropriate line entries in their Accommodation Brochure. We do not consider it prudent to spend additional monies on placing an actual advertisement in that publication.

8.9 We would strongly recommend mutual marketing campaigns with associated tourist attractions on Mull: thus for example, a two centred day out incorporating the Old Byre at Dervaig. Another opportunity that must be developed is in conjunction with the pleasure cruise operators sailing from Ulva Ferry to Staffa.

8.10 The latter could perhaps take the form of a reduction on the ferry ticket cost to Ulva, on production of their used ticket from the Staffa sailing. Alternatively, it could be used to obtain a free cup of tea/coffee in the tearoom.

8.11 Specific contact should be made with the operators of specialised holidays, such as Mull Wildlife Safaris, to offer them an attractive package for a day excursion on the island. The leaflet should be sent to all Scottish Tour Operators and Handling Agents.

8.12 The Estate must develop incentives which will induce the visitor to return to Ulva, preferably during the same holiday period, but otherwise during future return visits to Mull. These can take the form of "Season Tickets" for the ferry, or perhaps an Ulva Society Membership package ("The Wolf Pack") with ferry, refreshments and booklet at a combined reduced rate.

8.13 The selling of these "offers" will be very much in the hands of the ferryman and the person in charge of the Centre. For example, few will buy a two ticket deal until they have been on the island and realise what is there. Consequently, it may be prudent to take their money on the way back rather than on the way over!

8.14 Considerable useful publicity can be derived from encouraging Press and Magazine articles to be written about the island. A number may well come quite unsolicited, but others can be generated by the Estate itself in an orchestrated Press campaign. The Clan MacQuarries themselves would be an obvious readership target.

9.0 SALES ITEMS

9.1 The Tearoom has to generate income from the sale of refreshments, publications (especially the Visitors' Guide) and from souvenirs. The refreshments, should wherever possible be home-made and indeed the Estate cannot advertise in its leaflet that such is provided, if all the visitor can buy is biscuits and bought cakes.

9.2 The various publications should where possible be bought on a sale or return basis. Suppliers such as Lomond Books of Edinburgh are a particularly good source for this type of supply. Nevertheless extreme care will be required in selecting items not on sale or return. However it may be well worth experimenting with booklets about wildlife, particularly any of the "spotting" series. These are light to carry, relatively cheap and automatically make sense to purchase on an outing of this kind. Additionally, because they will bring back happy memories of the visit, they make particularly appropriate souvenirs.

9.3 There may be scope for selling Ordnance Survey maps, especially the large scale series. However a close watch should be maintained to ensure that these are not being purchased instead of the Visitors' Guide.

9.4 It may be financially worthwhile to stock a small range of souvenirs such as leather bookmarks; celtic jewelery and of course any products such as knitwear that are made by those living on the island. However the throughput of visitors allows little room for manoeuvre and experimentation.

9.5 The food range can be extended to include a limited selection of chocolate, Mars Bars etc. and perhaps a range of soft drinks. However a prudent method of increasing sales might be to offer bottles of freshly diluted orange/lemon. A Return Deposit on the plastic bottle should be operated, both to minimise risk of litter and more importantly to ensure that the visitor comes back into the centre on their return.....another opportunity for increased sales.

9.5 The packed-lunch service is one that may be more trouble than it is worth, principally because of the hazard of uncollected lunches. There are not likely to be many alternatives to throwing it away, if it is not collected.

9.6 A small quantity of camera films makes for a very good profit margin on sales. This is the type of item which should always be sought after; the one which the visitor needs most on a trip to Ulva and which he may buy because "he might just need it and anyway it will always come in handy".

9.7 The Profit and Loss calculations in this report demonstrate just how crucial sales are. There is no doubt that if both the ferryman and the person in charge of the Centre, use all the persuasive and psychological means at their disposal to induce the visitor to buy, that this will greatly increase sales. An introverted and lack-lustre approach on the other hand, is likely to produce un-dramatic sales figures. Of course a fine line has to be drawn, because one of the charms of the island experience, is that the visitor wants to get away from the commercial world!

9.8 The Estate may wish to consider sending the ferryman's wife on a brief on-the-spot training course to one of the Area Tourist Boards on the mainland that operate aggressive sales philosophy in their Information Centres. We can certainly offer very good advice on who to contact and if done, say in September or October of this year, would inconvenience few and be of some considerable benefit. No more than two weeks would be required.

9.9 Finally, we would re-emphasise that there is little sense in trying to compete with the standard sales outlets on Mull. The principal objectives are to maximise the sale of the Visitors' Guide and push food and beverages. The purchase of souvenirs and associated products for sale, will have to be carefully controlled and is likely to prove highly experimental.

9.10 One potential additional source of sales that does commend itself to us, although not directly associated with the Centre, is the prospect of Farm Produce (particularly pre-packed frozen meat). Not only might this have considerable appeal to the resident tourist, but it could clearly become a useful money earner in selling to the local population throughout the year. However this is an aspect that would require further careful thought.

9.11 It is worth mentioning at this juncture that, developing the specialist food-market may be well worth the Estate's consideration. Whether or not the existing seaweed is of the appropriate quality is not known, but the demand for this delicacy is firmly established and we would urge the Estate to take steps to assess its potential. It would make a pleasant twist to Ulva's history, if seaweed was once again to become a product of the island!

10. OTHER POTENTIAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS

10.1 We do not intend to devote much space to this topic, because this has not been part of our brief. It is nevertheless worth remarking in passing that the island could lend itself to other forms of development. However the central point to remember in any such pontification, is that developing the island for resident tourists, is likely to induce a completely different regime to that of day visitors.

10.2 The self catering market is ripe for development on Ulva. Of that we have little doubt. The island would present a most desirable holiday retreat and in our view, top quality properties would be capable of commanding premium rentals.(£300.00 per week peak season).

10.3 A Bed & Breakfast or Guest House operation is also something that the Estate could develop. This is being started by one of the householders on the island and we shall await the outcome to see how high the occupancy levels are.

10.4 An exclusive hotel project, on the other hand would have a number of difficulties to overcome. Not the least of these, would be transportation over the bumpy roads and of course staffing.

10.5 One serious possibility that would generate useful revenue at relatively minimal cost, would be to encourage the use of Youth Camps. This could be taken a stage further and provision made for Bunkhouse accommodation. The former has the advantage however, of generating cash with the minimum amount of investment. The principal drawback would be control of behaviour.

10.6 The Bothies may be best left un-promoted and simply "let" by word of mouth to those booking in advance and making payment of fx per night/week. Widespread marketing of these facilities may attract an undesirable element.

10.7 The terrain on Ulva is ideally suited to the use of the modern Mountain Bikes. These highly versatile machines and their considerable robustness, makes them increasingly popular amongst all age groups. Whether or not the Estate would wish to encourage their use, either by specific hire, or by the public being allowed to bring their own across on the ferry, would require a policy decision. The foot traffic to Ulva might be less than pleased at the prospect of silent cycles hurtling downhill and around corners, as they endeavour to enjoy the peace and solitude of the island that they have chosen to visit.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND COSTS

11.1 A leaflet (flyer) should be produced to act as the principal marketing tool. A 20,000 print run will cost approximately £350.00.

11.2 A very detailed "Visitors' Guide to Ulva" should be produced. This will have a print run of 6,000 and should last three years. The application for grant aid should be made on the same HIBD form as that for the BUILDING WORKS. The booklet should be distributed throughout Mull, through retail and other outlets. Cost: £9,420.00.

11.3 Advertising should be restricted to Mull publications and the Oban/Lorne Tourist Brochure: cost £590.00.

11.4 An evening sailing to the mainland at 1900 hours during July and August, should be considered. This would allow a full day on the island for energetic families.

11.5 The ferryman and his wife will require to indulge in a hard sales drive, from the outset.

11.6 It may be prudent when issuing the leaflets to the various businesses on Mull, to send an invite to an inaugural party. It would require to be on an R.S.V.P. basis and could prove a most useful Public Relations exercise.

11.7 If a logo motif is to be used, it should be kept simple and eye-catching eg. a wolf's head, or the MacQuarry Clan crest.

11.8 Formal trails should be limited to six and one of these should be a new route to Starvation Point.

11.9 The old map in the Church, should be removed to the safety of the Visitor Centre, or into another place of safe-keeping and treated for protection against handling.

11.10 The Visitor Centre should be given an attractive name, such as "The Ferryboat" and the term visitor centre, used merely as an adjective.

11.11 Serious consideration should be given to sending the Ferryman's wife to an aggressive sales orientated Tourist Information Centre on the mainland, for a two week familiarisation visit: cost; travel + board + donation.

11.12 Historical fact should be adhered to wherever possible, when creating the display and writing the booklet.

11.13 The financial implications for the Ferry and the Visitor Centre must be considered together, when analysing the impact of the Centre. The two are inextricably linked.

12.0 ACTION PROGRAMME

12.1 AN IMMEDIATE APPLICATION SHOULD BE LODGED WITH THE COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND. THE DRAFT STATEMENT SUPPLIED BY US ON 24TH MAY, SHOULD BE THE BASIS FOR THIS APPROACH.

12.2 AN APPOINTMENT SHOULD BE MADE TO SEE THE H.I.D.B. MEMBER OF STAFF IN OBAN, WITH A VIEW TO COMPLETING THE NECESSARY APPLICATION FORM TO OBTAIN GRANT AID.

12.3 STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO SECURE AS MUCH FACTUAL WRITTEN AND PICTORIAL EVIDENCE REGARDING THE HISTORY OF ULVA, AS IS REASONABLY PRACTICABLE.

12.4 TO OBTAIN A COMPETITIVE PRICE FOR THE DESIGN OF THE GUIDEBOOK, AN EARLY MEETING WITH THE LIKES OF MADDERS AND SNOW, PRODUCERS OF THE EXCELLENT BOOKLET ON THE WILDLIFE OF MULL, IS CALLED FOR.

12.5 SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE BOOKLET AND "FLYER" SHOULD BE SENT TO PRINTERS FOR PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES.

12.6 THE SECTION RELATING TO THE COPY FOR THE VISITOR CENTRE SHOULD BE SENT TO A SELECTION OF SPECIALIST FIRMS. WE WOULD HOWEVER CAUTION THE ESTATE IN CHOSING THE MOST SUITABLE. IN OUR OPINION, THE CHEAPEST MAY HAVE TO BE FORESAKEN FOR THE COMPANY CAPABLE OF DEMONSTRATING THE GREATEST EMPATHY WITH THE TOPIC. IN THIS RESPECT, WE WOULD URGE THE ESTATE TO ENSURE THAT THE FIRM UNDERTAKING THE PROJECT, SEND THEIR DESIGNER TO ULVA AS PART OF THE TOTAL COST.

12.7 A LOG OF FERRY SAILINGS AND NUMBERS AND TYPES OF PASSENGERS CARRIED, SHOULD BE KEPT AT ALL TIMES. FROM THIS FACTUAL ACCOUNT, MANY FUTURE POLICY DECISIONS CAN BE MADE WITH THE ASSURANCE THAT THE STATISTICS ARE VALID.

12.8 THE COPY FOR THE BOOKLET SHOULD BE COMMENCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THIS WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE REVISION BEFORE FINAL PUBLICATION

12.9 ADVERTISING SPACE IN THE SPECIFIED PUBLICATIONS SHOULD BE BOOKED NOW. CERTAIN OF THESE MAY WELL HAVE LONG LEAD TIMES AND IN THE CASE OF THE MULL VISITORS' GUIDE, SPACE MAY BE LIMITED.

12.10 INVESTIGATIONS INTO CERTAIN OF THE OTHER POTENTIAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS AND IDEAS SUCH AS SEAWEED FOODSTUFFS, SHOULD BE EXAMINED FAR IN ADVANCE OF IMPLEMENTATION.

12.0 CONCLUSIONS

12.1 We have formed the opinion that Ulva presents an exclusive holiday experience. It is our contention that every effort be made to retain the pleasures of the island as they are.

12.2 It is our view that visitor numbers can quickly be brought to the critical 6,000 level. This may well be achieved by year three, although year five is probably more realistic.

12.3 Much of the financial success of the venture will rest with the suitability of the ferryman and Visitor Centre operator to be the ambassadors and salesmen for Ulva.

12.4 Bottlenecks at the ferry and tearoom will require to be resolved as quickly as possible if trade is not to be lost. Fortunately most who venture over to Ulva, are likely to be of a fairly tolerant disposition.

12.5 There is every possibility that during the peak season periods, the ferry timetable will become somewhat extended to cope with demand. The alternative will be to lose trade.

12.6 The increased access afforded to the public will inevitably bring a demand for purchase of property on the island. The Estate may wish to formulate a policy in advance, to cope with this situation, especially if the aim is to increase the number of younger residents on Ulva.

12.7 The creation of a Visitor Centre with a predominant theme relating to the Kelp Industry of the Highlands, would not only provide a unique subject matter of interest to visitors, but it would help to guarantee the longevity and popularity of this visitor attraction.

APPENDIX 1

PROJECTED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT YEAR 1

INCOME from 3,000 visitors	£
3,000 x £1.00 (food & beverages)	3,000.00
3,000 x £1.00 (souvenirs)	3,000.00
1,500 x £2.00 (booklet)	3,000.00
EXPENDITURE	
Wages	2,000.00
Marketing (incl. ads + stnry. + distribution)	1,000.00
Fuel/electricity	600.00
Rates/Community Charge	200.00
Phones and Postage	100.00
Interest on £3,663.00 loan (say at 7.5%)	274.73
Repayment of loan (1st of 5 instalments)	732.60
Depreciation (4% on £4,000.00 of contents)	160.00
Insurance	100.00
Purchases of Souvenirs (0.75p)	2,250.00
Foods (0.40p)	1,200.00
Repairs	200.00
VAT	782.61

	9,599.94
PROJECTED PROFIT/(LOSS)	(599.94)

APPENDIX 1

PROJECTED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT YEAR 2

INCOME from 4,000 visitors	£
4,000 x £1.00 (food & beverages)	4,000.00
4,000 x £1.00 (souvenirs)	4,000.00
2,000 x £2.00 (booklet)	4,000.00
EXPENDITURE	
Wages	2,100.00
Marketing (incl. ads + stnry. + distribution)	1,050.00
Fuel/electricity	630.00
Rates/Community Charge	210.00
Phones and General Postage	105.00
Interest on £2,930.40 loan (say at 7.5%)	219.78
Repayment of loan (1st of 5 instalments)	732.60
Depreciation (4% on £4,000.00 of contents)	160.00
Insurance	105.00
Purchases of Souvenirs (0.79p) x 4,000	3,160.00
Foods (0.42p) x 4,000	1,680.00
Repairs	210.00
VAT	1,043.48

	11,400.86
PROJECTED PROFIT/(LOSS)	599.14

APPENDIX 1

PROJECTED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT YEAR 3

INCOME from 5,000 visitors	£
5,000 x £1.00 (food & beverages)	5,000.00
5,000 x £1.00 (souvenirs)	5,000.00
2,500 x £2.00 (booklet)	5,000.00
EXPENDITURE	
Wages	2,205.00
Marketing (incl. ads + stnry. + distribution)	1,052.50
Fuel/electricity	661.50
Rates/Community Charge	220.50
Phones and General Postage	110.25
Interest on £2,197.40 loan (say at 7.5%)	164.81
Repayment of loan (1st of 5 instalments)	732.60
Depreciation (4% on £4,000.00 of contents)	160.00
Insurance	110.25
Purchases of Souvenirs (0.83p) x 5,000	4,150.00
Foods (0.44p) x 5,000	2,200.00
Repairs	220.50
VAT	1,304.35

	13,292.26
PROJECTED PROFIT/(LOSS)	1,707.74

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

NOTES

1. Annual alterations have been kept to a constant 5% increase
2. Marketing is based upon £550.00 for advertising; £350.00 for the leaflet and £60.00 for Distribution (50 leaflets x 200 outlets x 0.30p per package).
3. The purchase price of the Booklet is that AFTER grant has been taken into consideration.

LOWE

BACK

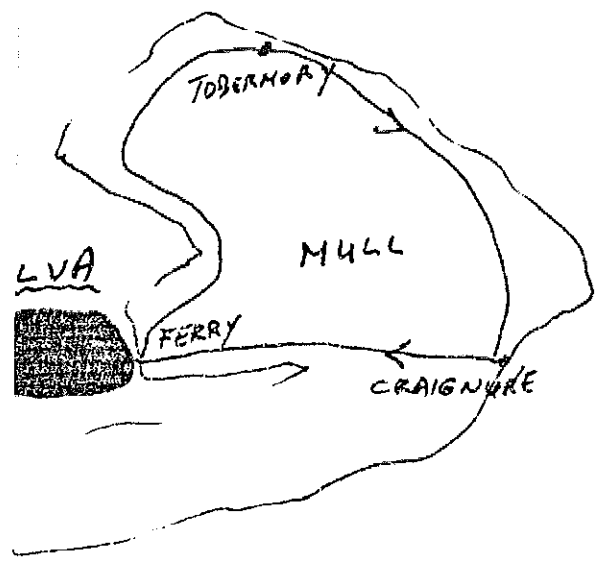
APPENDIX 2

AN ISLAND PARADISE
..... OUT OF THIS WORLD

VISIT

THE FERRY/BOAT

ULLVA



TO DO: _____

TO SEE: _____

OSAN TO ENJOY _____

CRAIGNURE TO ULLVA
ONLY 35 MINUTES BY CAR!

ave your car _____

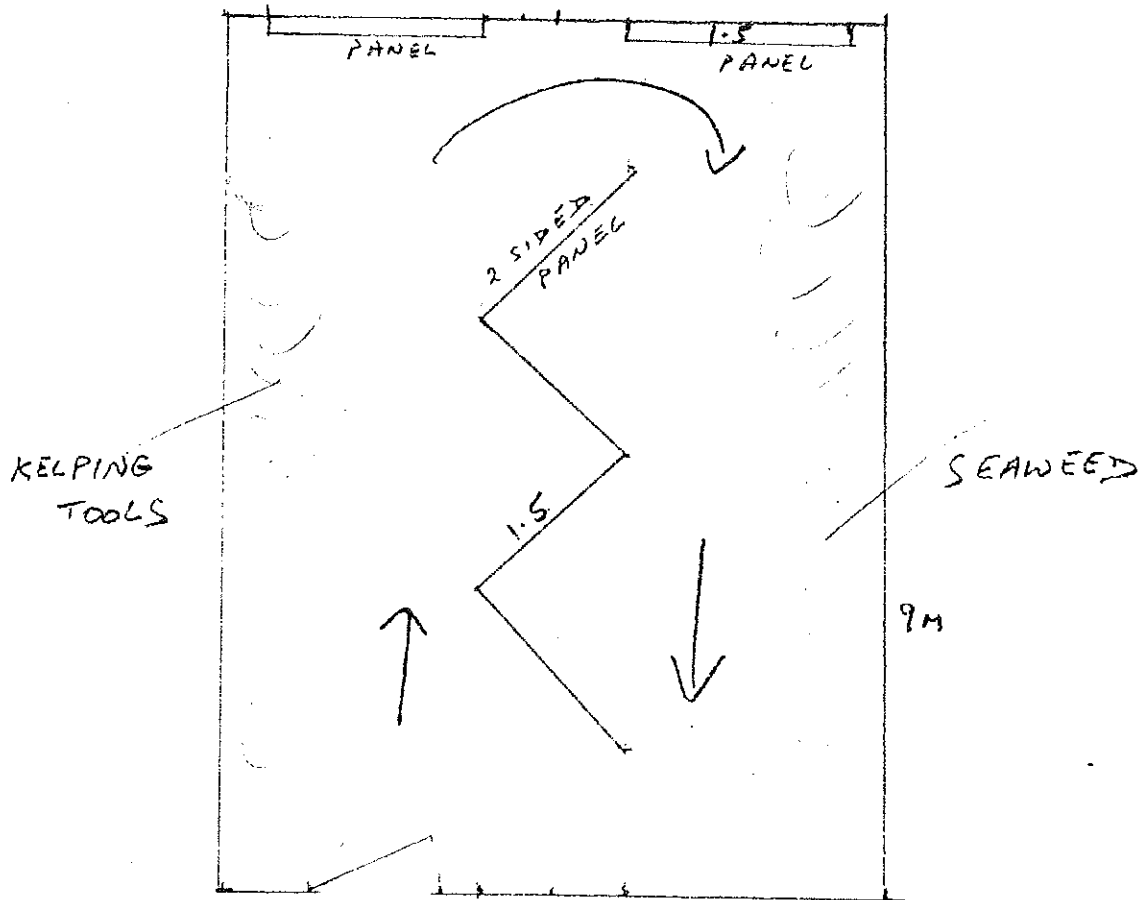
_____ love it!

FERRY SAILINGS _____

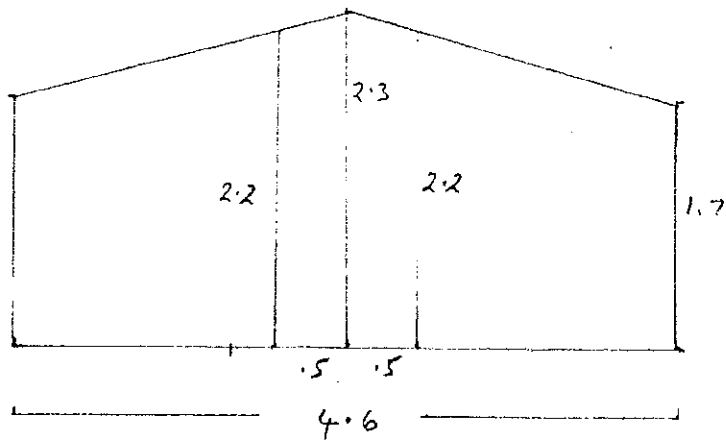
FOOTWEAR: _____

VISITOR CENTRE:

SKETCH LAYOUT



SCALE: 1:50



Possible Production /Design Houses for Manufacture of Display

Peter Blood, "OSPREY", Guards Road, Coldstream, Berwickshire,
TD12 4EE Tel. 0890 3127

(this company can do everything and is strongly recommended.
Examples of their work can be seen if contacting Fort William and
Lochaber Tourist Board)

Janet Munslow, "J.M. Studio", 43 Smithton Park, Inverness,
Tel. 0463 791185

(highly skilled and her work can be seen for example at the
Rogie Falls near Garve. She too would then handle the complete
process of lamination and screenprinting. She is unquestionably
worth speaking to.....away during July).

Mounting of panels would be done by the Estate.

Colour scheme of panels and interior of upstairs Visitor Centre
must be complimentary.

Draft Statement to Accompany Application for Grant Aid To
Countryside Commission for Scotland

for:

Visitor Centre Facilities and Toilets at The Ferry, Isle of Ulva,
Aros, Isle of Mull, PA73 6LZ.

Introduction

This statement accompanies Form G1 and is provided to assist the Commission staff in a fuller understanding of the proposed project. It should be read in conjunction with the attached Architect's Drawing and also the previous correspondence and discussions with your Messrs Turner and Prior, both of whom have visited the site and discussed the project with me.

The intention is to provide a building in which visitors to the island can learn about Ulva, thereby developing a fuller understanding of the island and hopefully derive greater enjoyment from their visit. This is the key element in starting to make Ulva slightly more open to the public and in the process encouraging a diversification in the Estate's economy and ultimately perhaps the introduction of more permanent young families to the island. The benefits to this small community through the judicious handling of this development could be far ranging.

Access to the island is controlled by the Estate's Ferry. This can carry a maximum of 12 passengers and runs on the hour from 9am - 5pm. There are breaks at lunch time and additional runs for the Mail and school children. At the height of the summer season, the frequency will be increased to meet demand.

During the 1987 season some 1,500 visitors came to the island. We are aiming to attract 6,000 and consider this to be feasible by about year five. Much however will be depend on the extent of marketing undertaken.

The Proposal

The Visitor Centre consists of an upstairs and downstairs area. The interconnecting staircase was originally shown as external to the building, but we have now decided to position this internally. This should encourage greater numbers to venture upstairs to see the Interpretive Display.

Downstairs, are two toilets. The toilets will be open at all times when the public have access to the island and will not be dependent upon the opening hours of the tearoom.

Also located downstairs, is an area for serving teas and snacks. From this point will be dispensed booklets telling the visitor in some considerable detail, all about the island.

It is intended that the downstairs area may have some wall display features regarding the island, with a particular emphasis on encouraging the visitor to go upstairs for a fuller explanation.

The upstairs area will house the Interpretive Centre. This will have a display which explains to the visitor the vibrancy of the island economy in the early 19th century - some 600 persons lived on the island engaged in agriculture and with trades such as weavers, blacksmiths, stonemasons, tailors, carpenters, etc. It is intended that the proportion devoted to this epoch, will be approximately one third.

The remaining two-thirds will concentrate on Ulva today. Now an island of less than a dozen families, it presents a fascinating day out for the visitor to the Highlands. The almost total absence of vehicles (the roads are so non-existent, as to necessitate the use of powered tricycles) is one of the first things to strike the visitor.

One of the other key features about the island, is the profusion of deciduous and coniferous trees, many of considerable maturity, but others of a much younger age. Indeed such is the wealth of timber that the Estate run their own timber workshop, manufacturing gates, posts and other necessities for the island.

By contrast to the wooded and relatively fertile area of the island (two crops of silage annually), which is all located around the area of the Church, Ulva House and the Ferry, the remainder of the island is more typically the rugged West Highland landscape. It is in some of these areas that the remnants of the once sizeable settlements can still be seen.

The island displays a wealth of flora and fauna, much of which will be of interest to the type of visitor likely to visit the island. Some of this such as the Heronry will be drawn to the attention of visitors, but the specific encouragement of people into such vulnerable habitats will not be undertaken.

We will have a series of some five or six trails leading throughout the island. These will give the visitor the opportunity to see fascinating features within a short two hour stroll around the Ferry area. By contrast the more energetic will be able to see the full contrasts of the island, by spending the whole day walking around the island on the trails.

The trails will have a minimum of markers. Instead, we propose to rely almost entirely upon the distribution of the detailed booklet referred to above. We envisage that many visitors will elect to return for a second visit within the same holiday period. This will be one of our objectives in our Marketing Strategy.

The Estate will be committing a significant sum towards the costs of drawing the visitors' attention to the island (some £2,000.00 is currently being ear-marked for this purpose).

Proposed Costs **

Toilets: £3,000.00 30% Grant Applied For: = £1,000.00
(inclusive of structure and fittings)

Visitor Centre
Upstairs Display £8,000.00 60% Grant Applied For: = £4,800
(inclusive of proportion of structural costs and display). The intention is to have greater recourse to graphics rather than the written word, when putting across the message.

Trail Waymarkers
and External Display Panels these may be the subject of a separate application for grant aid

** These figures are our best estimates at this moment in time. We are currently obtaining detailed costings and accurate figures will be forwarded to you as soon as these are to hand.

FOOTNOTE: an application is shortly to be made to the HIDB for grant on the Tearoom and marketing publications.

24th May, 1988.