

**THE WHALE**  
VISITOR EXPERIENCE CONCEPTUAL BRIEF  
MAY 2019

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

9th century English poet, anon

» *My heart leaps within me,  
my mind roams with the waves  
over the whale's domain,  
it wanders far and wide* «

**The Whale will be a destination like no other.** Perched on the coastline of Andenes town, straddling the sea and sky, it will offer a unique encounter with creatures that have captured the human imagination as far back in time as stories, art, dreams and science reach.

**The Whale will be an innovative new type of cultural attraction.** Through exhibitions, installations and immersive experiences, it will tell a story of man and mammal that is as timeless and mythical as it is cutting-edge and contemporary. It will offer a window onto the extraordinary world of whales, which is at once astonishingly familiar and spectacularly mysterious. It will also testify to the human powers of scientific enquiry and creative inspiration that have driven us to draw, write, seek and study whales throughout time. At its core, The Whale will offer an 'up close', eye-to-eye encounter with whales unlike anything we have experienced before.

**By creating a ground-breaking new cultural destination, The Whale will transform Andøy.** It will place the island firmly on the world stage by offering an unmissable stop on the international tourist trail, giving visitors a reason to stay in town long enough not just to go whale watching (a tourist experience for which the town is already known),

but also to immerse themselves in the stories of these astonishing creatures, potentially staying overnight to do so. This change in visiting patterns will usher in a growth in new infrastructure: hotels, restaurants, shops and cafés will multiply.

**The Whale will further transform its local environment by creating an entirely new, sensitively scaled social space for Andenes.** The current site at the water's edge, which will feature a striking new building to house The Whale's dedicated visitor experience, also offers rich opportunities for outdoor spaces. A new Waterfront Path and social space will be integral to the design of this new destination, creating a new gathering place and hub for the local community and tourists alike.

**The Whale will be a place of global significance.** By positioning itself as a platform that enables the exchange of ideas, knowledge and information about our oceans and our planet, it will become a site of pilgrimage for scientists, campaigners and artists alike. In this way, The Whale will situate Andøy at the heart of a growing network of destinations inspired by issues surrounding the environment, ecology and our fragile ecosystems.





## WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

**This document begins to shape a strategic direction for the visitor experience at The Whale.** It articulates a concept, structure and narrative for the offer by developing an outline vision for a series of exhibition spaces. These spaces are a sample of the type of visitor experiences to be developed, and are by no means exhaustive. They should be considered as part of a wider suite of experiences.

The ideas herein have been generated and developed in dialogue with key stakeholders on The Whale’s Project Board, and from Andøy’s local community. **At this stage, all outline proposals are suggestive, and intended primarily to inform the architectural concept. Further exhibition development, including detailed planning of visitor experience and flow, will take place once architectural design is underway.**





## 2 DEFINING PRINCIPLES

### PROJECT ASPIRATIONS

The aspirations for The Whale are diverse and ambitious. They capture an emerging vision that brings art, science, poetry, technology and the natural world into new and startling relationships with one another; inspiring awe among visitors and positioning Andenes as home to a unique and innovative cultural destination.



BUILDING  
ASPIRATIONS



VISITOR EXPERIENCE  
ASPIRATIONS





## PROJECT PRINCIPLES

A world-class set of guiding principles will be invaluable in steering the course towards realising the vision for The Whale. Emerging project aspirations can be shaped into a suite of core principles that capture the ‘essence’ of this vision. These principles are intended to underpin the creative development of the project from outset to realisation, guiding and informing decision making to ensure that The Whale successfully transforms from dream to reality.

## THE BUILDING

**The Whale will be in harmony with its surroundings.** It will change with the light, with the tides, and with the seasons, and its materiality will echo the landscape around it.

**The Whale will exist in unique dialogue with the sea and the sky.** It will allow visitors to experience ocean and cosmos in new and breathtaking ways.

**The Whale will have a presence unlike anything else in Norway (and the world).** It will stand out from the houses and vernacular architecture around it, announcing itself as a new, distinctive destination.

**The Whale will be a new kind of hybrid place,** one where the boundaries between art, science and history, and between temporary exhibition, permanent gallery, performance and workshop space are blurred.

**The Whale will (re)define Andenes by creating new public and civic spaces.** It will function as town square, piazza and promenade for the use of locals and visitors alike.

## THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

**The Whale will evoke feelings of connection and wonder in equal measure.** At moments, visitors will feel that they are in intimate harmony with whales, and at others, they will find themselves totally in awe of the mystery of these ocean giants.

**In The Whale, stories will be told poetically, and with a ‘twist’.** Artefacts, artworks and ephemera – and science and cultural history – will be constantly brought into unexpected relationships with each other.

**A journey through The Whale will be a journey of discovery.** Each space will be different, and the experience won’t reveal itself all at once. Rather, the building will encourage visitors to explore and uncover the stories contained within.

**The Whale will be a place where different voices and opinions can meet.** It will be a platform for dialogue and conversation where diverse perspectives are constantly showcased.

**At its heart, The Whale will offer an unforgettable close encounter with whales in their deep-sea environment.** This encounter will reveal the sheer size and scale of these creatures in astonishing ways.



### 3 AUDIENCES

**The Whale’s project principles clearly articulate its central mission: to provide a place in which the story of whales is accessible to all. Its unique combination of art and science, and its positioning as part of a wider whale watching experience, ensures The Whale will offer an unforgettable day out for an eclectic mix of visitors.**

Now is a timely moment to launch a new attraction on Andøy. Interest in Norway as a holiday destination continues to rise in important foreign markets<sup>1</sup>, and Northern Norway has recently seen a substantial growth in overnight stays. Young travellers in particular make up an ever-increasing portion of the tourist market on Andøy.

Andenes is ideally positioned to capitalise on Norway’s growing tourist economy. The town is a perfect gateway to the diverse outdoor pursuits on offer on the island, and its reputation as one of the best whale-watching spots in the world is guaranteed to attract increasing numbers of visitors. Early market analyses suggest that The Whale will add to the appeal of Andenes, and that, in itself, The Whale is well placed to become a top attraction in Norway<sup>2</sup>.

As well as appealing to the international tourist market, The Whale will fill a gap in the local market for much needed family-friendly attractions in Andenes, providing a new place for local families to spend time together on the weekends.

The following visitor profiles take a closer look at the characteristics and expectations of The Whale’s core target audiences.

#### LOCAL FAMILIES

Anders (38), Line (36), Erik (4) and Nina (7) live in Bleik. Anders and Line studied in Oslo and miss the range of cultural activities on offer in the city. They like spending quality time as a family at the weekends, but sometimes struggle to find local pastimes to suit everybody. Since The Whale opened, they have spent regular Sunday afternoons hanging out there.

**What are they looking for?**

- An experience that’s a bit educational, but mostly fun
- Enabling them to spend time together
- Easy to navigate with good facilities for lunch etc
- Keep the kids entertained – not boring!

**What next?**

Anders and Line like to make a day of it whenever they visit The Whale. After their visit, they tend to take a leisurely stroll back down the Waterfront Path stopping in on some friends who live just along the coast. If there’s an evening event on at The Whale, they will sometimes leave the children with their friends and head back to soak up the action.



#### MATURE TOURISTS

Miranda and Brian are an American couple who have recently retired. They are visiting Andøy as part of a European tour. Brian is looking forward to going whale watching but Miranda isn’t so keen on being out on the open waters. She has decided to stay on dry land and visit The Whale, and Brian has agreed to meet her there for lunch after his trip.

**What are they looking for?**

- A ‘close encounter’ experience that is as good as a Whale Safari, but unique to The Whale
- An experience that is cultural – Brian is interested in art, but bored by science
- A place to meet for a leisurely lunch

**What next?**

After their visit to The Whale, Miranda and Brian stroll back to their hotel to freshen up for dinner. The walk only takes five minutes, but the couple take their time and browse in some shopfronts along the way. The next day, they plan to walk the coastal trail from Stave to Bleik before travelling to Bodo on an evening flight.



#### YOUNG TRAVELLERS

Sarah and Jack are both 23 and from Berlin. They love the great outdoors and are visiting Norway to hike, kayak and explore. They plan to stay overnight on Andøy to see the midnight sun and to go whale watching. After their morning whale watching trip, they make the most of their joint ticket bundle and spend the afternoon exploring The Whale.

**What are they looking for?**

- An immersive cultural experience, not a stuffy or overly technical museum
- Something unique that they could only do in Andøy
- Being able to share their visit with friends at home via social media

**What next?**

After their trip to The Whale, Sarah and Jack head to one of Andenes’ waterfront restaurants: they have heard that the fish on Andøy is spectacular, and have decided to splash out on an evening meal. After dinner, they return to The Whale to watch the aurora borealis. The next morning, they plan to go on a puffin safari before heading back to the mainland.



<sup>1</sup>Innovation Norway, ‘Key Figures for Norwegian Tourism, 2017’

<sup>2</sup>The Whale Workbook, January 2019



## 4 THE BUILDING AND ITS CONTEXT





## THE WHALE SITE

**The Whale will redefine the coastline of Andenes, announcing itself by seeming almost to emerge from the rocks, like a new natural form. Changing according to the seasons, weather and sea, it will appear different at different times of the day – and the year – as if it were as organic as its surroundings.**

The Whale's location is unique: balanced on the coastline at the heart of Andenes, overlooked by the town's iconic lighthouse, and mere miles from the continental shelf which enables whales to swim so close to shore, it is truly a gateway to the whale kingdom. Seasonally open to the elements, and facing out to the horizon, The Whale also has a unique connection to the night sky, the aurora borealis and the midnight sun.

The building will harmonise with the spectacular land, sea and skyline around it. Its surroundings will create a rhythm for the visitor journey, and views to sea and shore will define the visitor experience throughout. Early in the ticketed experience, breathtaking views out towards the continental shelf will give visitors a sense of voyaging 'out to sea'. As the visitor experience draws to a close, views towards the coastal landscape begin to guide their journey 'back to shore'. Access to a high-level viewing platform also creates a vertical connection to the sky: The Whale will be a perfect place to gather to see the aurora borealis dance across the horizon.





TRANSFORMING ANDØY

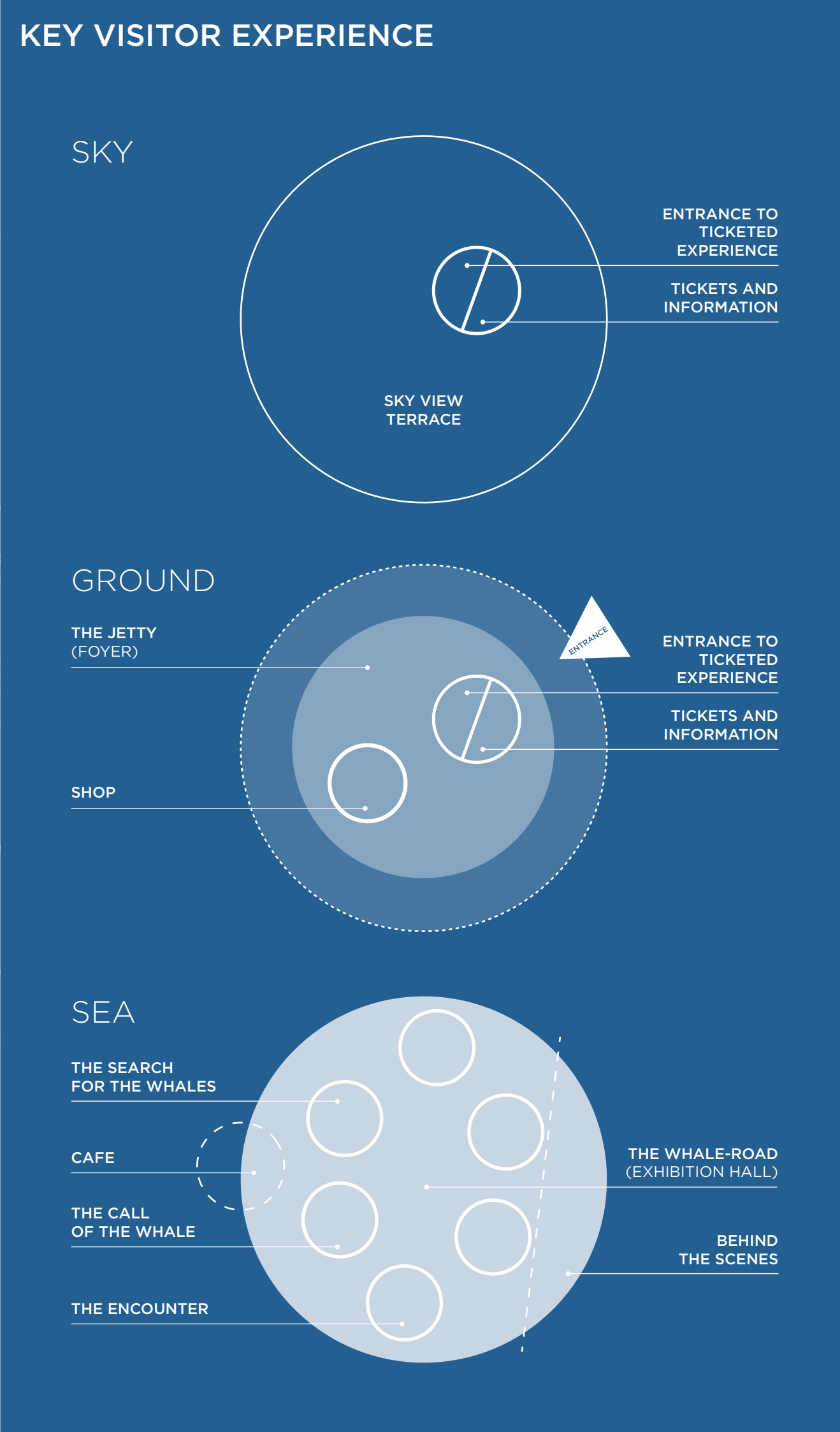
**The Whale will be an exercise in sustainable, thoughtful and locally minded place making.** A landmark project for Andenes, The Whale has the potential to truly transform its locality by creating not just a new visitor attraction, but also a new social hub. Nestled at the heart of the site, outside the pay threshold, will be a new public space. Approached via a new Waterfront Path, this space will be akin to a town square or village green, doubling as a playground, viewing platform and gathering space for locals and tourists alike. Directly accessible from the town, this space will form a new community heart for Andenes.

**The Whale will also alter the fabric of the town around it by ushering in an increase in visitation to Andenes.** The project is guaranteed to kick-start a growth in local infrastructure, including hotels, restaurants and cafes. Through careful planning and spatial orchestration, strong links can be forged between The Whale and new destinations within Andenes. Key considerations include access routes (via town and coast), parking and transport, views, vistas and potential commercial relationships between key sites across town.

**More widely, The Whale has the potential to place Andøy firmly at the centre of a growing network of destinations focussed on environmental issues, global ecosystems and sustainability.** As climate change, its impact on the natural world, and the threat posed to living species become pivotal issues of our time, The Whale is well placed to become a centre of thought, reflection and debate about these crucial topics.







## CREATING AN INNOVATIVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The Whale’s astonishing site and innovative new building will combine to create a unique visitor experience. Having been drawn to Andenes by its proximity to whales, and after a first-hand whale watching encounter, visitors will make the trip to The Whale to find out more about these fascinating creatures. Their experience at The Whale will unfold in eight distinct phases, each one different from the last.

### 1. The Waterfront Path:

Visitors approach The Whale via the Waterfront Path. Admiring views out to sea and along the coastline, they are intrigued by the building emerging from the rocks ahead. Unlike anything else around it, the building entices them to get up close and explore further.

### 2. The Water’s Edge:

Arriving at The Whale, visitors find themselves in a relaxed, open space. Partially covered but seasonally open to the elements, The Water’s Edge is a place that encourages locals and tourists alike to stop, linger and soak up their surroundings. Punctuated by sculpture, seating and astonishing views to sea and sky, this space provides a warm welcome and inclusive gathering space.

### 3. The Jetty / Foyer

A transition zone at the threshold to the ticketed experience, this will be a blended shop, seating and ticketing space offering visitors a chance to pause and orientate themselves before embarking on their journey through The Whale. This is also where they will stop to browse, buy and relax at the end of their journey.

### 4. The Whale-Road: (Main Exhibition Hall)

After crossing the threshold into the ticketed experience, visitors arrive in a bright, dynamic space, filled with contemporary arts, conversation, talks and other ‘happenings’. The Whale-Road is closely connected to the land and sea around it, and offers an insight into contemporary issues surrounding conservation, ocean habitats and the study of whale species today.

### 5. The Search for Whales:

As visitors move deeper into The Whale, they embark on their own search for whales, catching glimpses of them through eclectic stories, art and ephemera that evoke man’s diverse encounters with whales.

### 6. The Call of the Whale:

As they move through The Search for Whales, visitors will be enticed by the distinctive song of whales into a space of aural immersion. This somatic experience – in which whales seem close enough to hear, yet just out of sight – calls visitors onwards on their voyage.

### 7. The Encounter:

As visitors’ voyages progress, more about the lives of these mysterious creatures is revealed, until finally, in a breathtaking, large-scale encounter, visitors meet the whales ‘face to face’ and truly discover what it is about these animals that makes them so captivating and perplexing.

### 8. Sky View Terrace:

A destination in its own right, the Sky View Terrace will offer visitors a direct connection to the sky. Visitors will pause here to take in the stunning scenery. The Sky View Terrace will become the best place in town to see the aurora borealis and the midnight sun.



## 5 STORYTELLING AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The Whale will create a completely unique visitor experience, unlike any seen before. It will be a place that evokes inspiration and wonder in equal measure; tells stories with a ‘twist’; provides a varied and eclectic experience; and offers an unforgettable encounter with whales.

» *The overall theme of the exhibition at The Whale is whales – whale biology, whale behaviour, whale distribution, whale evolution etc. but through the exhibitions we are exploring the underlying theme of man’s relation to whales – how are we related through evolution? How do we value and worship whales? How have we hunted and persecuted whales? How do we study whales? How are whales depicted in literature and art? «*

The Whale Workbook, January 2019

### STORYTELLING AT THE WHALE

The Whale has an array of astonishing stories to draw upon. It occupies the fertile ground between science, history and human culture, and creates a space for these narratives to continually speak across to each other. Throughout its exhibition spaces, stories of biology, human endeavour and whale culture will unfold simultaneously: sometimes in dialogue, sometimes in opposition, and often indistinguishable from one another, united by a central question: what is it that is so captivating about these extraordinary, enigmatic mammals?

#### Science

The Whale’s scientific narratives are manifold: from epic stories of evolution, species differentiation, oceanography and ecology to close-up explorations of whale anatomy, biology and behaviour, there are endless opportunities to explore what it is about these creatures that makes them so similar and yet so vastly alien from us. The Whale’s scientific narratives also extend beyond the science of whales to encapsulate contemporary studies of our oceans, climate, ecosystems and global warming.

#### Cultural History

The story of whales is a story of man, too. Throughout The Whale, the cultural history of these creatures, across civilisations and through time, will have as much of a presence as the scientific story. The Whale will offer a compelling portal onto grand narratives of ocean exploration, whaling, commerce, and human endeavour, expressed through art, literature, oral testimony and material culture.

#### Contemporary Art

Contemporary artists around the world have been inspired by whales. From Andy Goldsworthy and Pierre Huyghe to Verna Lawrie and Kananginak Pootoogook, these artists offer fresh, unexpected insights into the meaning, significance and symbolism of whales today. Throughout The Whale, contemporary art will challenge, provoke and inspire visitors to think anew about their own connection to whales.



Images clockwise from left to right: skeleton of a baleen whale, The Picture Art Collection/Alamy Stock Photo; 17th century French whale bone corset, Sotheby's; Oliver for LACMA; Andy Goldsworthy whale bone sculpture, Bruce McCadam



## SHAPING THE STORY INTO A NARRATIVE EXPERIENCE

At its heart, **The Whale** is inspired by the beauty and mystery of whales, and by man’s enduring fascination with seeking and understanding them better. The visitor journey takes humanity’s enduring search for whales as its basic structuring principle. Like Ishmael in *Moby Dick*; like generations of scientists; like whalers from around the world: visitors will embark on a voyage to find whales; to understand them; and to get ‘up close’ to them. In essence, this is a metaphorical journey from shore to the depths of the ocean in search of whales.

The visitor journey in **The Whale** begins in the familiar human realm, firmly rooted ‘on the shore’. Early exhibition spaces will be defined by human culture and storytelling; here, artefacts, conversation and artworks will be framed by views out to land and sea. In these spaces, the visitor feels rooted in time and place.

As their journey progresses, the visitor feels as if they are descending ‘underwater’; away from shore, and far from human culture, they arrive in a realm that feels mysterious, darker, more sensory and increasingly immersive, until finally, in a crowning moment, they find themselves at the heart of the whale kingdom, eye-to-eye with whales.

What follows is a step-by-step walkthrough of this journey, showing how **The Whale**’s epic narrative unfolds for visitors.

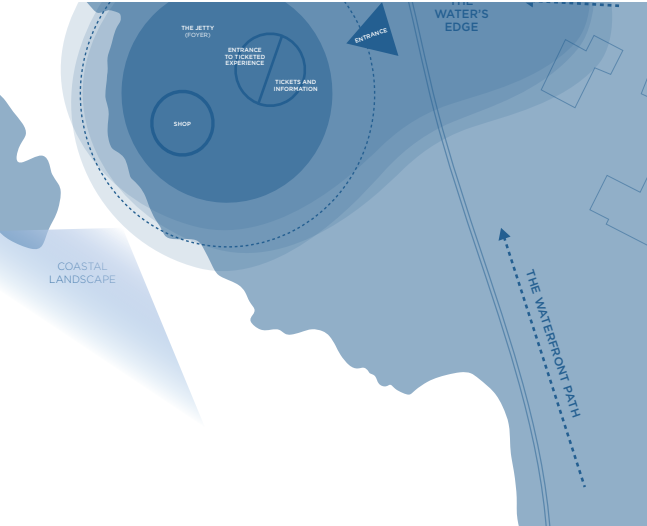




WATERFRONT PATH

The majority of visitors arriving on foot will approach The Whale via the iconic Waterfront Path. Transforming Andenes’ historic railway line into a breathtaking coastal approach, the Waterfront Path will revitalise the local shoreline. This new walkway will be easily accessible from town, and in addition to providing direct access to The Whale, it will create a new place for locals to walk the dog, enjoy a morning jog, or take an evening stroll.

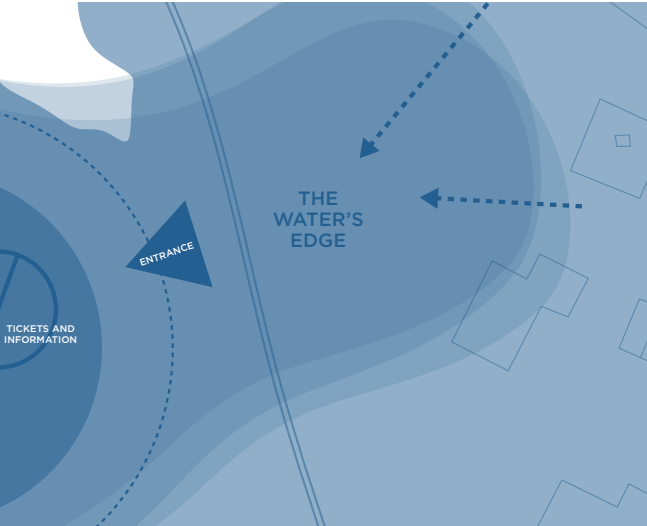
Strong connections between the Waterfront Path and The Water's Edge (see below) will create a powerful arrival sequence at The Whale. Carefully orchestrated thresholds and transition points between the two will be a key consideration for The Whale's architectural design team.



THE WATER’S EDGE

The Water’s Edge is the prelude to The Whale’s ticketed experience. Situated outside the pay threshold, it functions as a new social space for Andenes. A lively, open playspace, sculpture park and gathering point, part indoor and part outdoor, The Water’s Edge will serve locals and tourists alike, offering an opportunity to talk, sit, play and relax after a walk along the Waterfront Path.

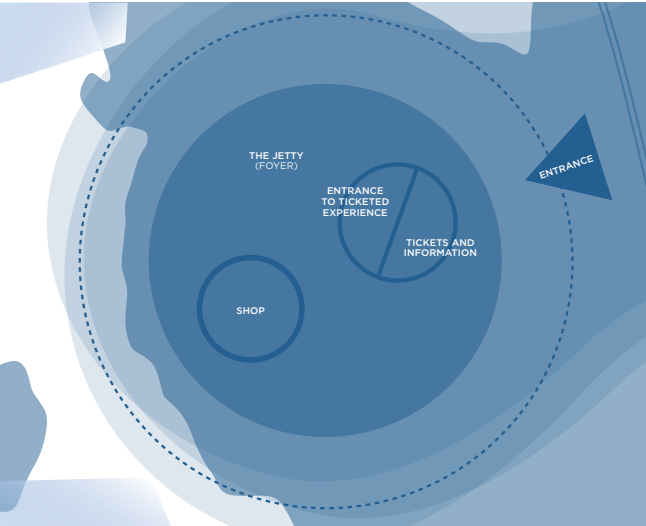
On the eastern approach to The Whale, the Water’s Edge will centre around an iconic monument: a whale model, public art piece or architectural installation. This central icon will announce The Whale, offer a unique photo opportunity, and provide a signature backdrop to events, performances and other local happenings. Further westward, between The Whale and the sea, The Water’s Edge might form a waterfront sculpture park or play area.



THE JETTY (FOYER)

The Jetty will be the threshold into the narrative experience at The Whale. Before embarking on their voyage through the core exhibition spaces, visitors will pause here to take off their winter gear, purchase their tickets, orientate themselves and plan their visit. They will also stop here after their journey to buy a memento before setting out on their onward journey across Andøy.

At The Jetty, the boundaries between social space, shop and information point will be blurred, and this space will feel more like a large-scale living room than a museum atrium. Visitors might find themselves warming their feet by the fire while they admire astonishing views out to sea, or browsing a book picked up from a stand while they relax and wait for their friends.





THE WHALE-ROAD

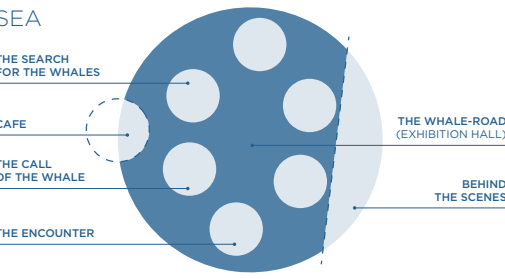
After crossing the ticketing threshold, visitors arrive on The Whale-Road. Named after the Old English word for ocean, The Whale-Road is exactly this: an ever-changing sea of activity out of which ‘islands’ – galleries, immersive spaces, cafés, shops – emerge.

The Whale-Road is a bright, open space intimately connected to the land and sea around it. Here, the boundaries between outside and inside, between architectural space and natural environment, are blurred. Breathtaking views and natural light make this a place to linger: throughout their journey, visitors can return to The Whale-Road to orientate themselves, or pause and absorb views to sea, shore and sky.

The Whale-Road acts as both a central pathway and ‘container’ for the entire visitor experience. Yet it is not just a container for other experiences and stories: it is also a destination in itself. This is where visitors can discover contemporary discussions about whales, from conservation and biology to climate change and the threat of extinction. In this interdisciplinary, social space where science and art meet, visitors can interact with installations created by the cutting-edge artists and scientists of today, engage with live events, debates and discussions, and leave feeling engaged and empowered, understanding today’s oceans anew.

STORIES

- The story of Andenes; oceanography and local marine conditions
- Climate change, marine environments and what we can do to shape the future





THE SEARCH FOR WHALES

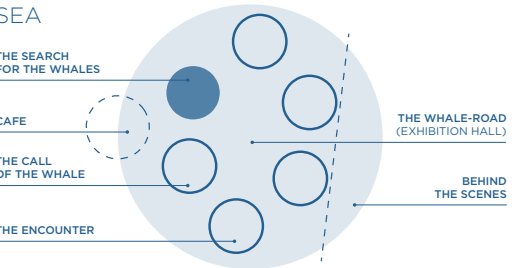
Emerging from The Whale-Road, visitors arrive in The Search for Whales. Here, they join the generations before (and after) them who have embarked on journeys to find, hunt or study whales.

Located firmly ‘on shore’, The Search for Whales feels as though it is part of a familiar human realm in which whales can be glimpsed, but never understood in their entirety. Visitors will instead be greeted by a rich anthology of people stories. From ancient Scandinavian myth and iconic literary narratives such as *Moby Dick* to modern day stories of Pacific encounters and scientific endeavours, The Search for Whales will bring our enduring fascination with whales to life. It will ask: why do we study them? Why do we hunt them? Why do we paint, draw and write about them?

The Search for Whales will take the form of a dense cabinet of curiosities, in which diverse ephemera including artefacts, oral testimonies, photography, film and art, will be showcased. In this anthology of stories, science, history and storytelling mutually illuminate each other. At the heart of the experience will be a performance space in which live storytelling takes place.

STORIES

- Whales in cultural history, from myth and legend to literature and film
- Scientific understandings of whales: biology, evolution, oceanography





THE CALL OF THE WHALE

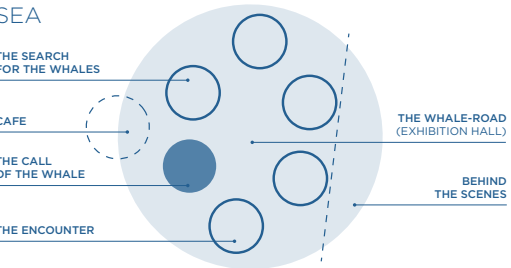
As visitors move through The Search for Whales, they will catch snippets of the distant, far-off sound of whale song. Following the sound, they arrive in the first of The Whale’s fully immersive spaces, The Call of the Whale. Arriving in this dark, somatic space will be akin to descending into the depths of the ocean. Yet, characteristically enigmatic, the whales remain just out of reach.

In The Call of the Whale, visitors’ hearing is heightened but other senses are dulled as they become immersed in an auditory encounter with whale song that encourages visitors to pause, sit, or even lie, while they are bathed in sound. At the centre of this space, a single jewel-like object – an ancient craftwork or talisman – represents humanity’s eternal fascination with whales.

Sandwiched between the ‘human realm’ and the ‘whale kingdom’, The Call of the Whale will pique visitors’ anticipation of what is still to come. At the edges of the space, the flicker of movement and shadow suggests that the whales are just beyond sight: heard but not seen, the whales seem to be beckoning visitors onward towards an anticipated, jaw-dropping final encounter.

STORIES

- Man’s fascination with whales: why are we so captivated by these creatures?
- The mystery and magic of whales





THE ENCOUNTER

The final destination in The Whale’s narrative journey is The Encounter – a dramatic, memorable finale in which the visitor finally comes ‘eye-to-eye’ with whales in a show-stopping ‘underwater’ encounter.

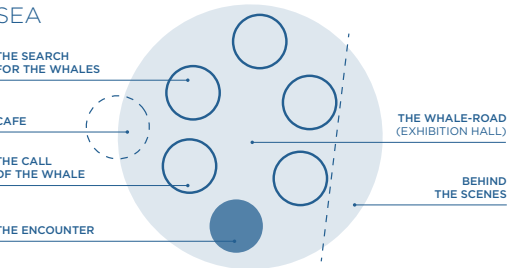
The Encounter will plunge visitors into a deep-sea realm in which life-size evocations of whales swim with their young, dive to feed on squid, come up to the ‘surface’, and interact with visitors. In this space, visitors understand life from a whale’s perspective, as they themselves become part of the whale kingdom.

There are opportunities here to use responsive technology, in which the number of visitors, or their interactions, cause the whales to multiply in number and change their behaviour or activity. In this way, visitors come to shape and generate their own personal encounter with whales.

Emerging from The Encounter newly energised by their own eye-to-eye experience, visitors return to The Whale-Road to reconnect with today’s world. With renewed interest, they will engage afresh with contemporary debate, discussion and thought regarding marine protection and whale conservation.

STORIES

- Whale behaviour, society, anatomy and biology; understanding similarities and differences between humans and whales
- Whale species; key identification features





STORY

Cross the threshold into The Whale and learn about whales in the twenty-first century: how are scientists, artists and researchers safeguarding the future of whales today?

Discovery

THE WHALE-ROAD

Dive into stories from around the world of our quest to find and understand whales. Discover why humans have always been so fascinated by the search.

Adventure

THE SEARCH FOR WHALES

Discover the mystery and poetry of whales and their song. The quest to know more will take you on a journey to meet these creatures face-to-face.

Wonder

THE CALL OF THE WHALES

See eye-to-eye with whales in all their glory, and discover what makes it's inner workings tick.

Revelation

THE ENCOUNTER

Cross the threshold into The Whale and learn about whales in the twenty-first century: how are scientists, artists and researchers safeguarding the future of whales today?

Discovery

THE WHALE-ROAD

SPACE

An interdisciplinary space in which visitors can explore contemporary thought about whales through art and science installations.

A rich, multilayered space filled with objects and artefacts, from ancient artwork to contemporary mementos. Akin to a large-scale cabinet of curiosity, this space will be an ever-changing treasure-trove of stories bringing to life man's encounters with whales.

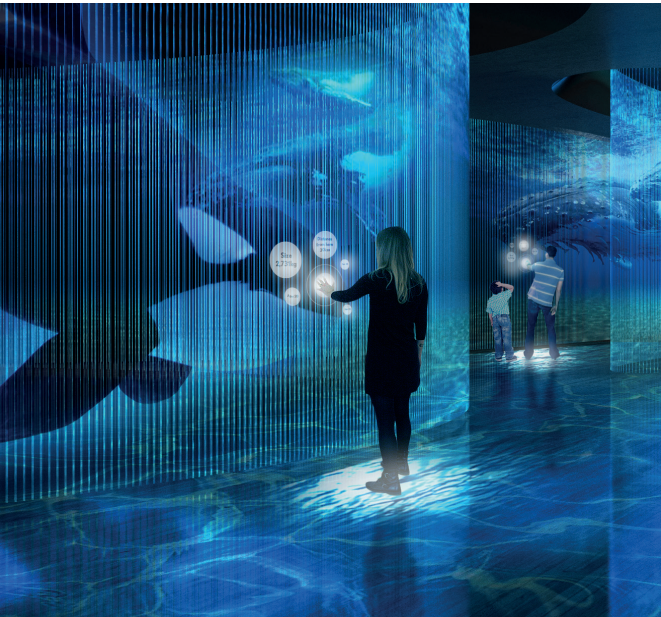
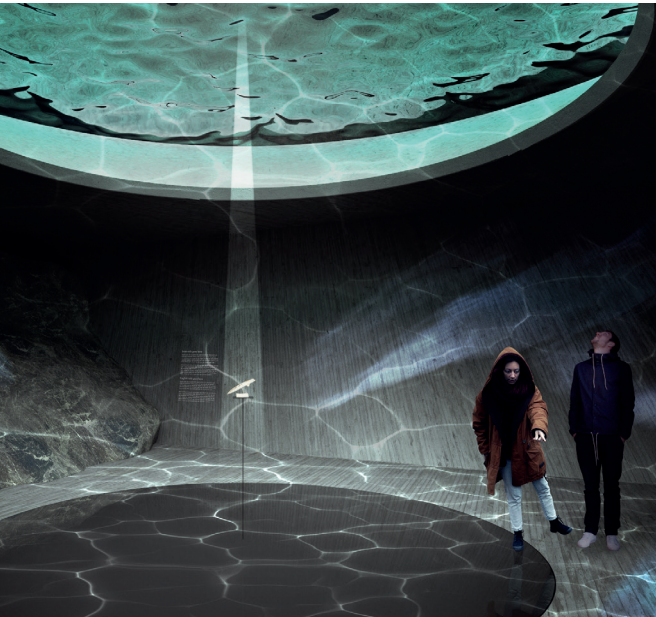
At the centre, will be a performance space hosting live storytelling sessions.

An immersive, multisensory space in which whale song sounds from afar. Plunged into darkness, the visitor can see the shadows of whales drift across the walls. The room introduces the visitor to the mystery and wonder of whales via a single ancient object that represents how humans have been fascinated by whales for centuries.

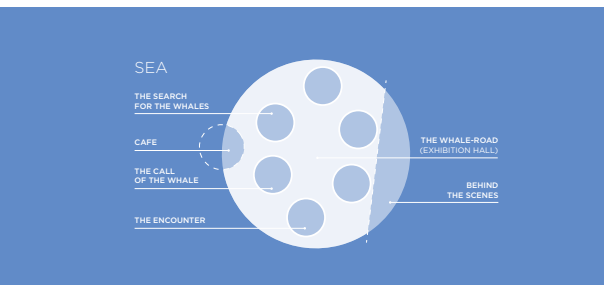
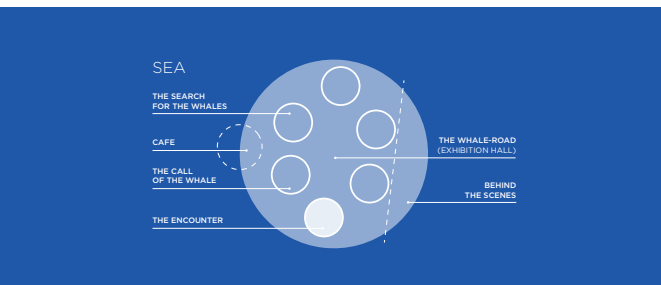
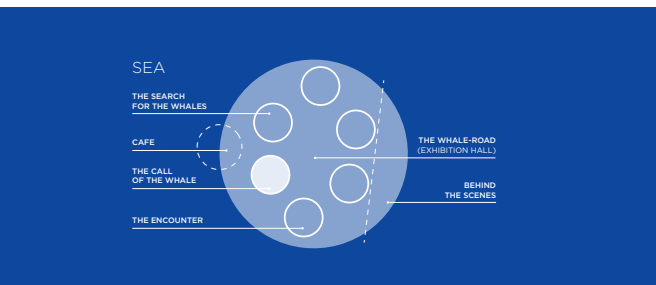
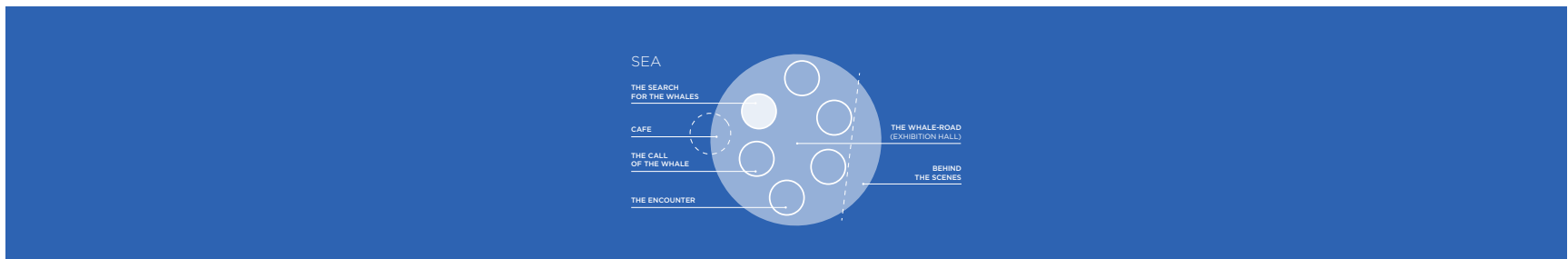
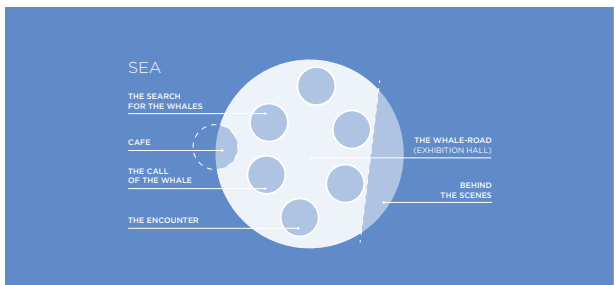
A breathtaking immersive experience that allows visitors to finally see a whale up close. Visitors will feel as if they are underwater themselves, will understand the incredible size of whales by walking amidst digital recreations of a whale family.

At the same time, visitors will get to grips with the biology and behaviour of whales – from an underwater perspective.

An interdisciplinary space in which visitors can explore contemporary thought about whales through art and science installations.



SEA

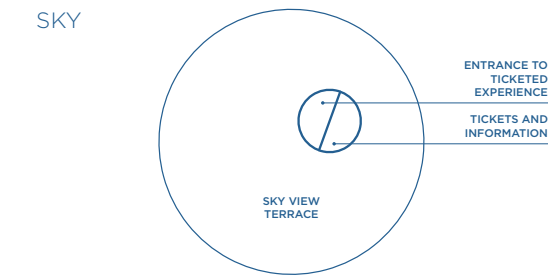




SKY VIEW TERRACE

An iconic rooftop viewing platform, the Sky View Terrace will be a place to linger before or after a visit to The Whale, allowing visitors to pause, sit and enjoy views across the sea to the horizon.

Offering direct access to the midnight sun and aurora borealis, the Sky View Terrace will become a destination in itself; tourists and locals alike will gather here after dark to watch the Northern Lights dance across the sky.





## INTERPRETATION

The Whale will attract global visitors of all ages. Throughout its exhibition spaces, children and adults alike, regardless of their nationality, background or native language, will be captivated by universal stories of whales. In order to engage all visitors equally, interpretation throughout The Whale will be personalised. Just as the visitor’s experience in **The Encounter is shaped by their own movements and interactions, so the interpretation throughout will be tailored to their own language, interests and activity.**

**Rather than traditional exhibition text panels and labels, which become cumbersome when serving a multi-lingual audience, the primary interpretive tool in The Whale will be location-enabled audio devices.** The benefit of this interpretive approach is that The Whale’s audio devices can be programmed to all major world languages, and can include a ‘family’ mode, with content tailored towards younger audiences.

In addition, location-enabled interpretation will allow for information to be tailored to a visitor’s journey, so that as they move through The Whale, audio content will be triggered by their proximity to individual displays and installations. **Crucially, content will not solely be delivered in the voice of ‘curator’ or ‘museum’, but through the multiple voices of people around the world who have stories to tell about whales, from local marine biologists to Sámi fishermen.**





VISITOR ROUTES  
AND CIRCULATION

The visitor journey at The Whale unfolds in a loose narrative form: from The Whale-Road, visitors embark on a search for whales before finally encountering them first-hand. However, this narrative journey is not prescriptive: depending on their interests, visitors are able to pick and choose the exhibition elements that most engage them. Sample routes that The Whale’s target audiences might choose include:

LOCAL FAMILIES

Anders and Line tend to buy tickets for The Whale only when they’ve heard that there’s something new to see. Otherwise, they like to spend summer afternoons at The Water’s Edge, having a leisurely coffee in the café while the kids play among the outdoor sculptures. Erik often persuades his father to visit the shop with him: this has become his favourite place to spend his pocket money.



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MATURE TOURISTS

After Brian’s Whale Safari, he and Miranda meet at The Water’s Edge for lunch. After buying their tickets for The Whale, Brian catches sight of an installation by one of his favourite artists and decides to linger on The Whale-Road while Miranda goes ahead into The Call of the Whale. The couple meet again in The Search for Whales, and spend the lion’s share of their visit here, enjoying the diversity of stories and objects on show. On their way out, they stop by The Encounter; impressed by how immersive the experience is – Brian comments that it’s 'as awesome as going whale watching!'

After their visit to The Whale, Miranda and Brian spend 20 minutes browsing in the shop: they are keen to buy a gift for their grandson, and the shop has plenty on offer. Before leaving, they stop for a glass of wine on the Sky View Terrace, where they enjoy a beautiful sunset.



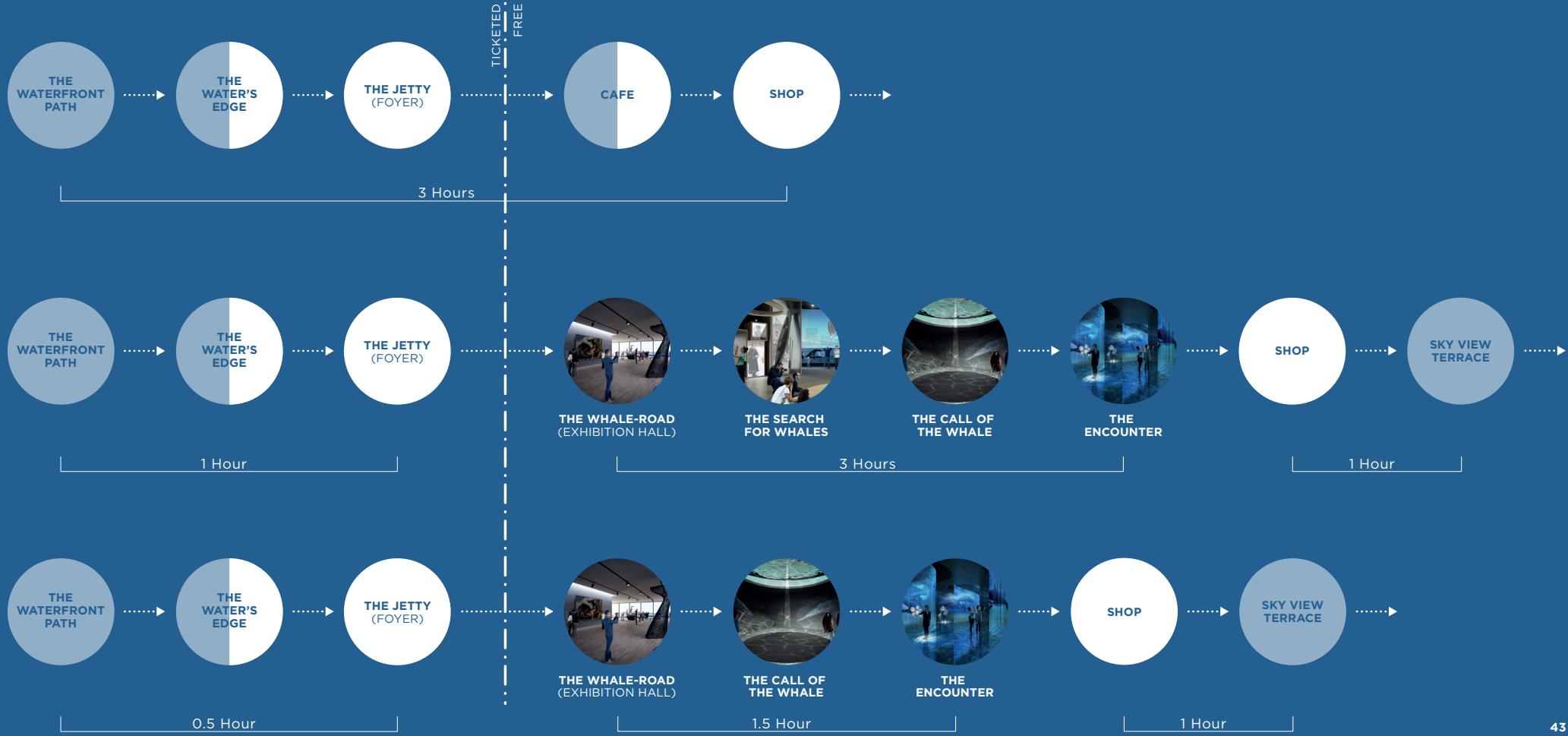
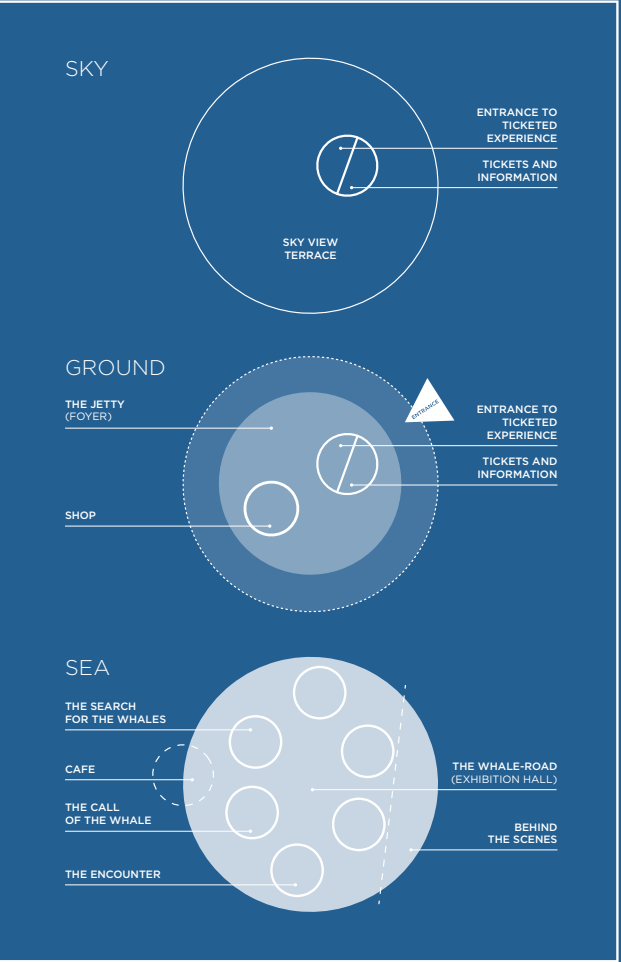
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YOUNG TRAVELLERS

Feeling exhilarated after a morning of whale watching, Sarah and Jack take a walk along the Waterfront Path before arriving at The Water’s Edge. They pause here for a quick coffee and sandwich, and to take a selfie in front of a large-scale whale sculpture. After buying their tickets, they explore The Whale-Road before seeking out the most exciting exhibition spaces. They pause in The Call of the Whale, which is nothing like they expected: they are impressed by how unlike a traditional museum space this feels. They then make a beeline for The Encounter: this is the space they have heard about on the grapevine, and they’re keen to see it for themselves. They spend over half an hour here, exploring and taking photos of their ‘encounters’ with whales. Later that evening, they return to The Whale to watch the aurora borealis from the Sky View Terrace.



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## 6 COLLECTING STORIES

**The Whale already has at its disposal the raw materials with which to create an astonishing cultural landmark: a powerful story and a breathtaking site. The next step is to generate a rich archive of assets.**

The Whale's distinctive appeal lies in its ambition to be neither a museum nor an art gallery, but an interdisciplinary space. This can be achieved through the acquisition, commissioning, or loaning of a wide variety of artefacts, ephemera and artworks straddling science, cultural, natural and archaeological history. The possibilities here are infinite; outlined below are some potential directions of travel that will help grow a unique collection for The Whale.

A detailed Collections Development Strategy should be drafted in the next phase of work to finalise a direction of travel and outline concrete opportunities for acquisitions and commissions.

### SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL HISTORY ARTEFACTS

A range of scientific artefacts, from natural history specimens to marine navigation equipment may be acquired. This collection could include complete or partial whale skeletons, but artefacts like these must be sourced mindfully: a key principle of this project is that skeletons will only be acquired if they are showcased in unprecedented, innovative ways. This is a collection 'with a twist'.

#### Example exhibition opportunities

- The Whale-Road may be host to an array of contemporary scientific equipment and specimens, inspiring an associated programme of talks, events and new artistic commissions relating to whale monitoring and conservation today
- The Search for Whales could showcase a 'deconstructed' whale skeleton that visitors can explore using Virtual Reality and projection mapping technology





## CULTURAL HISTORY ARTEFACTS

A carefully selected collection of cultural history artefacts, from ancient artworks and high-Victorian literature to whale-related commodities such as soap bars and whale-bone corsets, will illuminate key stories of man's encounters with whales.

### Example exhibition opportunities

- In The Call of the Whale, a small, jewel-like display of ancient craftwork inspired by whales could be lit beautifully in the centre of the space to evoke the timelessness of man's fascination with whales
- A 'cabinet of curiosities' in The Search for Whales might play host to an eclectic mix of cultural history artefacts. Each one could act as a portal onto an encounter between man and whale, some historical, some contemporary, some fact and others fiction



Photo: 17th century French whale bone corset. S.Oliver for LACMA

## FILM, PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOUND

The Whale will nurture a 'living archive' of stories. Film, photography and recordings of whales and their song will be acquired and commissioned on an ongoing basis from experts in the field, to build up a rich, live portrait of whales today. The Norwegian Sea, Arctic Ocean and nearby continental shelf could be a primary focus: in this way, The Whale could become a hub of local whale knowledge.

The Whale's archive could also include interviews with people from around the world who have stories to tell about whales. By conducting a dedicated 'story gathering' exercise over the coming years, The Whale can become a treasure chest of tales about man's relationship with these extraordinary creatures.

### Example exhibition opportunities

- In The Call of the Whale, locally recorded whale song might echo through the space. Ever-changing and updateable, this song could reflect the activity of whales off the shore of Andenes in any given season or year
- In The Encounter, astonishing close-up footage filmed near the continental shelf could form the basis of an immersive, interactive 'eye-to-eye' encounter with whales
- In The Search for Whales, real life stories of human encounters with whales, from the Arctic to the Pacific, could be captured and displayed as a living anthology of stories



Photo: RAA



## ART AND CONTEMPORARY COMMISSIONS

The Whale will be a truly interdisciplinary space. At every turn, art, science and history will combine to create unique and unexpected encounters. Throughout the year, a rolling programme of new and contemporary art installations will enliven The Whale’s central spaces in surprising and ever-changing ways; from sculpture and painting to performance, sound art and participatory commissions, The Whale will be a hive of contemporary artistic activity. In order to achieve these ambitions, a Contemporary Arts Strategy will be developed to explore the feasibility of the following models:

### ACQUISITIONS

From Charley Parker and Andy Goldsworthy to Inuit artist Kananginak Pootoogook and aboriginal painter Verna Lawrie, contemporary artists around the world have been motivated to produce work inspired by whales. The Whale could capitalise on the wealth of existing art on this theme to acquire a range of works into its collection for permanent display.

#### Example exhibition opportunities

- The Whale-Road could play host to a high-profile permanent exhibition of its collection of contemporary art inspired by whales

## COMMISSIONS

The Whale could devise a dedicated programme of new artists’ commissions. The benefit of new commissions is that these artworks would be unique to The Whale, and directly inspired by its stories. They could occupy each of the building’s core visitor spaces or, further, shape and define the spaces themselves.

#### Example exhibition opportunities

- The Whale-Road will be shaped around a series of permanent art installations commissioned from artists around the world, accompanied by a rolling programme of changing/temporary commissions
- The Water’s Edge could host a large-scale artwork that changes every year as the result of an annual high-profile commission
- Areas of the building could be designed in collaboration with artists and emerging designers themselves

## RESIDENCIES AND COLLABORATIONS

Andenes already attracts a diverse creative community drawn by its breathtaking surroundings, its proximity to the continental shelf, and views of the aurora borealis. The Whale could function as a catalyst for more formal residency programmes. These could take the shape of collaborative residencies between artists and scientists, or participatory residencies in which artists work closely with local community groups to co-produce artworks.

#### Example exhibition opportunities

- Seasonal ‘takeovers’ could periodically transform The Whale-Road into an installation piece created and curated by resident artists and scientists
- The Search for Whales might play host to themed pop-ups and temporary installations created by resident artists
- The central monument in The Water’s Edge could host the primary output of each residency

## TRAVELLING/TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

The Whale building could include dedicated exhibition spaces to host temporary or touring exhibitions of artists’ work from across Norway and around the world. By establishing itself as a host for exhibitions of new work, The Whale could become a ‘go-to’ destination in Northern Norway to see art by local, national and global artists.

#### Example exhibition opportunities

- The Whale-Road could have a dedicated temporary exhibition area that hosts a rolling programme of artists’ shows



Photo: Andy Goldsworthy whale bone sculpture at National Museum Scotland. Bruce McAdam



## 7 A GLOBAL REPUTATION

### WHAT VISITORS REMEMBER

The Whale will be quick to make its mark on the world: news of this innovative, unique place will spread far and wide as overseas visitors go home full of stories, experts convene, and locals bring friends and visitors to see for themselves. Each visitor to The Whale will have a unique story to tell. Sarah and Jack, Anders and Line, and Brian and Miranda all have theirs:

» *Andøy is amazing – we went there to go whale watching, but The Whale is the thing we can't stop talking about! I never normally go to museums or galleries, but this was like nowhere I've been before. It really was epic – there are so many cool things to see, including a huge, immersive digital experience where you feel like you're actually surrounded by lifesize whales. We went back there at night and saw the Northern Lights for the first time!* «

Sarah

» *When we first moved to Andøy, we really missed Oslo. We used to go out every night and visit museums at the weekends. Arriving on Andøy, we really struggled to find things to do with the kids at the weekends, and rarely had evenings out as a couple. When The Whale opened, this really changed things for us. We felt like we were at the heart of something really exciting, and there's now a place just down the road that will keep the kids entertained all day, and offers us the occasional great night out!* «

Line

» *The Whale was the highlight of our holiday. It's impossible to describe, and not at all what we expected, but we got such a fascinating insight into the history and behaviour of whales, and I was astonished to see an Andy Goldsworthy too... all in one of the most beautiful spots. We saw the best sunset we have ever seen from the roof terrace!* «

Brian

