

Forth Bridge World Heritage Nomination – Realising the Potential Benefits

A BRIEFING NOTE

REBANKS CONSULTING LTD

INTRODUCTION

This short paper is the result of a commission from the Forth Bridge World Heritage Nomination Steering Group for a piece of work to identify projects through which the World Heritage nomination, and possible inscription, can be used to bring benefits to the local community and wider interest groups.

We, Rebanks Consulting Ltd were commissioned to undertake the work. This briefing paper should be read in conjunction with the presentation previously submitted to the Steering Group that summarised the key findings.

In May 2012 the UK Government announced that the Forth Bridge would be the next UK site to be nominated for World Heritage Site (WHS) listing. The nomination is scheduled to be submitted in January 2014, for consideration by the World Heritage Committee in 2015.

In recommending to Ministers that the Forth Bridge be nominated, the expert panel assessing the merits of sites on the UK Tentative List stated that more work was needed to develop community engagement as part of the nomination process and in the future management of the site. The aims of the commission were to:

- **Focus activity in relation to the designation on coordinated actions that can bring tangible benefits and are clearly linked to the nomination/designation.**
- **Harness the enthusiasm and goodwill generated by the nomination process and enable work to get off the ground quickly.**
- **Demonstrate that World Heritage status can be used to achieve tangible results for all involved and provide a model that can be followed in other Scottish sites, and internationally.**

The specific project objectives were:

- **To collate and assess the expectations and concerns about nomination within the partners, local communities and interest groups.**
- **To contribute to the development of a clear, inclusive vision for the proposed World Heritage Site and its management.**
- **To provide creative options for activity linked to the nomination and designation, which hits Scottish Government priorities, aligns with the National Performance Framework and builds on current activity or seeks to address current/potential issues**
- **To outline possible processes for undertaking the activity which can be costed and will inform strategic decision-making.**
- **To identify possible funding streams for these partnership projects beyond those of the Scottish Government**

In a six-week period late in 2012 we began the consultation on potential benefits with the local business communities (not a comprehensive process, but a scoping one to be followed up in more detail as part of the full consultation process throughout 2013. Our goal has been to understand what the potential (and desired) benefits might be, what the challenges and constraints (fears and concerns) might be. Our consultation involved three workshops, the first at Fife Council for key officers and members, the second at Dunfermline Delivers for a handful of relevant Fife businesses, and the third at South Queensferry. Our findings are as follows:

OVERVIEW OF WHAT OUR CONSULTATION REVEALED

Support for WH inscription is very strong in the local business communities, with the potential UNESCO status broadly understood to be a ‘feather in the cap’ of the local communities and an opportunity for securing benefits from global attention resulting from the nomination. Support for using this as a socio-economic opportunity is strong. **There is widespread agreement that the local communities can benefit from the potential value of WHS.**

Existing tourism infrastructure gives a strong baseline in terms of the ability to secure benefit from people wanting to see and experience the bridge. In global context, this is a highly developed tourism destination already, with a significant number of beds, restaurants, and other tourism businesses that have emerged over many decades to cater to the existing demand for people to visit the bridge. The local businesses are often already heavily focused on making the bridge a commercial experience – e.g. several restaurants have panoramic views of the bridge from their dining rooms, and local communities like South Queensferry have public realms that are already designed in part to provide viewing stations.

But, concerns do exist in the local communities about the following...

Problems with car parking and visitor infrastructure limiting potential for tourism

The fact that the Bridge is not yet a destination in its own right, e.g. you cannot actually climb or walk along the bridge, which limits its ability to engage people for a longer period of time

Potential deterioration in quality of life due to visitor flows, without resolution of infrastructure issues there is an understandable concern that more visitors would simply result in a deterioration of the quality of life of visitors and a low value tourism experience

More work is needed to understand tourism to the Bridge/Bridges. Existing data has limitations – there is a need to understand scale, quality, capacity and location of the tourism sector around the bridge.

The communities want better partnership working across the political/administrative divide of the Forth to secure the potential benefits of World Heritage Status

Delivering a progressive WHS... Addressing these issues should be part of the approach to delivering benefits through WHS... We would suggest that the WHS process should be the catalyst to an effective master planning process to solve long-standing issues in communities. The vision and objectives we have suggested, below, (which can evolve through consultation) are aimed at delivering a process that people want in their communities.

A SUGGESTED ECONOMIC VISION...

After listening to the initial consultation with the communities we would suggest that there is a vision for how the bridge might secure benefits that are desired by the communities, and in ways that address their concerns. We have tried to capture this in words to provide stakeholders with a body of words that they can either embrace and work with, or to change and develop until they are happy that it reflects their aspirations and objectives.

The Forth Bridge will be a World Heritage site that changes people's lives for the better. A World Heritage Site that brings stakeholders together to make new things possible, at a global, national, regional and local scale. A World Heritage Site that people from around the world can learn about, or visit and have a genuinely world class experience.

A World Heritage Site that is an exemplar of best practice: stimulating progressive changes to the infrastructure of local communities to ensure tourism is effectively managed and sustainable. Also, crucially, world heritage listing will benefit local communities by improving quality of life and by raising the profile of local communities as places to live, work and invest. This nomination aspires to make a Scottish icon into a global icon: a showcase of the best of Scottish endeavour, imagination, engineering and design.

It should be noted that this vision of how the bridge might secure benefit, is an economic one, and not the core historic rationale for inscription of the bridge as a World Heritage Site.

SUGGESTED OBJECTIVES...

The following socio-economic objectives emerged from our consultation:

Raising the profile of a Scottish icon to become a global icon - and utilising this to 'sell/benefit' Scotland, Fife, Edinburgh and Lothians, and local communities

Delivering better infrastructure in local communities - master planning and delivering car parks, better stations, visitor facilities, etc.

Making the bridge a destination in its own right - not just a feature on the way to other places, and widening its audience base (telling then/now Forth crossing history)

Making the bridge a gateway to Fife and the rest of the North of Scotland - from Edinburgh hub - through developing product/s and marketing

Raising aspirations - using the WHS Bridge to lift the performance of individuals, businesses and organisations to do things better

Inspiring stronger and more effective partnerships to deliver these changes; partnerships that span the Forth

THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS...

The measure of success will be whether UNESCO World Heritage listing makes things happen on either side of the Forth that have to date not been possible, with the Forth Bridge World Heritage Site understood as a piece of history that unlocks the future of its communities.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS?

The blunt answer is that it depends on 'what you do with it' (the designation). But this isn't very helpful, so we have tried to make this conversation easier by highlighting what kinds of benefits might be achievable with an enlightened and progressive use of the designation.

Potential national benefits

- Positive PR for Scotland PLC – Raises international status of a Scottish icon – a 'must see' attraction
- An opportunity to showcase Scottish design and engineering – Year of Design
- Adds value to Scottish heritage portfolio – one more reason to come to Scotland, see multiple WHS
- Potential for spotlight on Scottish design and creativity – we did this and we're doing other great things, come see!

Potential regional benefits

- Raise (international) profile of a regional cultural asset – Why should inward investors take Fife seriously? The 'liveability/culture' issue.
- Adds value to the Edinburgh cultural offer – cultural tourism etc. – Showcase Edinburgh to China, India etc.
- Can become an excellent satellite attraction from Edinburgh – Stay longer, there's more to see and do.
- A gateway to the North of Scotland - have you thought about leaving Edinburgh and travelling North?
- Raise profile of Fife – for tourism, for relocation and for tourism
- Potential to develop packages/itineraries to translate interest in bridge into wider regional experiences
- Potential to develop a package of WHS in and around Edinburgh for international market
- A focus for the region as a centre of engineering and design – selling the region to others with this interest.

Potential local benefits

- Potential to raise profile of area relative to Edinburgh – not peripheral but critical
- Potential for tourism growth in South and North Queensferry – Make the whole tourism product ready for the opportunity
- Potential for developing the bridge as a visitor attraction - climb the bridge, hear its stories, adrenalin experiences etc.
- Potential for translating car driver eyeballs into £££ - major visitor centre off main road linked to town (cars contained)
- Potential for increasing footfall on trains from Edinburgh – the best day trip from Edinburgh (foot passengers) – new services?
- Potential for increasing cruise visitor footfall – WH 'sells' for cruise ship passengers – gear up for footfall
- New focus for conservation fundraising – Lottery etc.
- New opportunities for socio-economic investment – E.g. EU trans-national projects

- with other WH partners
- New focus for community heritage projects – the story of the communities needs to be part of this WH
 - New focus for infrastructure developments in communities – car parking etc.
 - Potential to market these communities and businesses to wider world
 - Cultural glue for Forth communities – use the bridge to tell the story of the Forth through the ages
 - Potential for major education benefits – school/college/FE focus on bridge and links to other WHS
 - Opportunities for private businesses to translate and make accessible the OUV narrative – tours etc. – entrepreneurs be ready!
 - Boost to civic pride – “this thing in our community is as important and special as the pyramids”

By identifying these potential benefits we can then start to think about how you might plan to secure them:

ACTION PLANNING FOR SECURING THESE BENEFITS...

Our scoping analysis in the communities around the Bridge suggests that the following outcomes might be appropriate and desirable. The list that follows is suggestive and will be the basis of more extensive consultation in the months to come. The purpose of the following section is to suggest the work that is to be done if stakeholders want to secure the benefits we have identified as possible. The work breaks down effectively into three stages, as follows:

1. **The work that needs to be done in the pre-inscription phase (starting now-2015)**
2. **The work that needs to be done in the inscription year (2015)**
3. **The work that will need to be done in the longer-term (from 2015)**

Identifying these potential actions enables stakeholders to think about how this might be realised, with specific organizations, businesses, communities or individuals given responsibility for delivery and for securing the resources required to make them real.

1. Pre Inscription

It should be noted that benefits can, and should, be secured through the period of inscription (and can indeed be secured even for a site that might ultimately prove to not be inscribed), because of the stimulus and PR that the process can result in. Given the short timescale for the Forth Bridge potentially being inscribed this means that some actions are required now to be ready for the 2014-15 period.

1.1 Establish a Strategic Socio - Economic WHS Benefit Delivery Group

The existing World Heritage Partnership has a range of responsibilities that will task its capacity in the next two years – we would suggest that a separate working group is required to focus on the socio-economic benefits. This group would be made up of a range of public, private and third sector organizations and businesses which have the knowledge, skills, remit and capacity to make the economic aspiration a reality by implementing the rest of the actions in this section.

1.2 Map the economic stakeholders

Our scoping research has identified a wide range of stakeholders across a significant area of geography, many more than we have been able to consult with or to engage with. The first task of the Socio-Economic Working Group (see above) should be to identify the relevant stakeholders who would need to be involved to deliver the following actions. This need not be a big task, much of the information is already available.

1.3 Create a minimum of two WHS Champions to speak about socio economic model (to an agreed script)

The period starting now and ending with inscription will be a period in which the World Heritage inscription process will generate a great deal of local, regional, national and international media interest. If this is to be translated into well-informed positive messages emerging about the World Heritage process and the economic benefits that might result, then there needs to be eloquent and media-savvy World Heritage champions. We would suggest that two people are identified, and given the support required to be able to fulfill this role for the next two years.

Part of this is agreeing a short script or PowerPoint presentation, vision and some key messages that stakeholders wish to communicate about the bid and the locality. This can be as simple as taking from this short report the agreed target benefits and having a 1 sheet of A4 script ready for when it is needed.

1.4 Create a Forth Bridge World Heritage Project website

Translating media interest in the bridge and the UNESCO World Heritage process into economic benefits will require an effective online presence. A simple example will suffice: if a TV crew arrives from China to film the bridge because of the UNESCO process their images (and the champion's pushing the key messages) may result in the Bridge being brought to the attention of hundreds of millions of people – a % of them will want to go online to see whether it is possible to visit the bridge. Translating PR into economic benefit will require people to be able to immediately access packages of transport, accommodation, food and drink, retail and other cultural and heritage activities. Local stakeholders should also be able to go online and access some of the key information, so this website can have a dual function. We would suggest that a high quality website be developed that can be populated over time with different products and experiences (including packages and itineraries) – this will be a critical tool for making benefits real.

1.5 Engage Community Councils & Others in Strategy Development

This paper provides some opportunities for securing benefits from the UNESCO World Heritage process – but, and this is critically important, the first step in the process is to ensure that the communities around the Bridge want these outcomes, and that they are delivered in ways that are sustainable and not damaging to their quality of life. We would suggest that a key next step is to consult with communities, preferably using the community councils as the appropriate existing structure for this. If the socio-economic vision and outcomes are to happen they need to be understood and supported by a much wider group of stakeholders. Representatives from Community Councils should sit on the Socio Economic Group mentioned earlier.

1.6 Secure project funding to engage communities, businesses and partners

There needs to be a project development and fundraising effort to make this of the right scale and quality. This is necessary to make the actions (described below) possible. Some of the significant funding opportunities (e.g. a Lottery landscape partnership) can take between 1 and 2 years to realise – so this needs to start now. (More on this below). Some funding sources can be secured quicker than others and amounts secured need not be large to deliver some of the actions in this document. Existing funding could also be focussed on achieving WHS aspirations.

1.7 Raise the profile of the ambition for WHS through existing or planned events

The Forth Bridge does not exist in splendid isolation; it is one of two (soon to be three) bridges and is in relatively close proximity to Edinburgh etc. There are a number of events and initiatives in the next two years that are not World Heritage focused, but which might be powerful ways to spread the key messages, raise the profile of the World Heritage bid for the bridge, and might be great opportunities for engaging wider audiences in the World Heritage project. These wider opportunities should be identified and a simple strategy developed - three that we are aware of are the 50th Anniversary of the Forth Road Bridge (celebrated through a 'Bridges Festival'), the theme for 2015 for Homecoming being design,

and the development over the next three years of the Forth Replacement Crossing). These opportunities should be seen as of mutual benefit, and chances for collaboration.

1.8 Understand and know the baseline study of tourism, business and community for regular sustainability impact monitoring

In the course of our scoping research it quickly became apparent that tourism to the Bridge as a destination is difficult to understand and quantify because data is collated for a range of other geographic units: for the regions, for Edinburgh etc. We would suggest that it is a) important to be clear about the baseline situation (with an awareness of numbers of beds, occupancy rates, seasonality, quality ratings, visitor perceptions, visitor home destinations, etc. etc.) so that tourism can be managed effectively, and b) important for the future for monitoring changes (both good and potentially bad changes). Much of this data already exists and could be pulled together by partner organisations. There is also a need to make the destination management organizations aware of the opportunities this can provide, and have them ready to respond with effective coordination of the tourism product and marketing.

1.9 Masterplan for the bridgehead communities and the immediate setting of the bridge, highlighting solutions to existing infrastructure problems and constraints

Perhaps the single biggest aspiration for the World Heritage process delivering change for these communities, is that it might be the catalyst for sorting out issues that have long bedevilled South and North Queensferry, particularly parking and traffic flows. The communities are fully aware that their visitor infrastructure is already straining with current tourism numbers, and might not be fit-for-purpose for potentially increased numbers of visitors to a World Heritage site. Stakeholders are aware that securing benefit around the Bridge for communities will require a holistic approach that treats the Bridge as a destination in its own right, not two competing destinations divided by the Forth. This poses a challenge because of the administrative and political structures – it will require a partnership approach that will be relatively new. It is critical because to be an effective World Heritage destination will require a joined-up approach to where visitors are encouraged to visit, where they should, or should not park, what facilities should be provided, where these should be located, and how different spaces can perform different functions. We would suggest that the best way to address many of the issues would be to have a single masterplan for managing tourism, and providing the necessary infrastructure around the bridge/s. The masterplan should guide all investment around the site to best effect. The different stakeholders on both sides of the bridge would agree in advance to this masterplan directing the solutions.

1.10 Establish an investment plan for delivering the masterplan and site management costs

Master planning on the key infrastructure issues is one thing, paying for the proposed changes is quite another. The masterplan needs a final element: an investment plan for making it real. This cannot be done now, until the infrastructure changes are identified – but there are reasons to believe that solutions are available. There are several locations where a visitor centre or interpretation might take place, and some significant landowners and developers with an interest in providing solutions. This need not be new spend or put pressure on existing budgets, it could simply be refocused investment.

Engagement at the pre-inscription stage

Engage local communities by...

- a. Starting to develop the stories of the bridge and its communities¹
- b. Gathering peoples stories and record oral history
- c. Creating a curriculum-based education pack with local schools to explore the history of Forth crossings including the Bridge
- d. Delivering regeneration seminars on the opportunities inscription could create; citing examples of WHS leverage in coordination strategy and public sector spend
- e. Exploring opportunities for quality improvements to infrastructure which may be created by coordinated strategy in and around the proposed WHS

Engage Local Business by:

- a. Creating an information pack for tourism businesses to recount selected narratives to visitors and promote the pre inscription status of the Bridge
- b. Delivering business seminars on the opportunities inscription could create (how do you make money from the OUV), citing case study examples and introduce quality assurance principles
- c. Exploring how narratives can link existing tourism products and release more value from existing visitor numbers e.g. WHS inspired itineraries and routes

Engage Partners by:

1. Engaging with national and international WHS networks and Scottish WHS places
2. Preplanning with VisitScotland, Edinburgh and Glasgow Tourism and Network Rail, the Rail Companies & the Cruise Operators
3. Support Network Rail to create an accessible visitor attraction on and around the Forth Bridge

PR & Marketing

1. Research the audience both in terms of local, national and international media outlets as well as existing and potential visitors
2. Plan and Deliver PR throughout the campaign for inscription to create a sense of local ownership and to create awareness among a broader audience

2. Inscription Year

The potential for benefit clearly rises exponentially in the year that the UNESCO decision is made. The year falls into two halves, the first half will be full of local, regional, national and

¹ Uncover and develop the narratives relating to the 1) human endeavour involved in the creation of the bridge 2) deeper historical story of crossing the Forth 3) stories of the communities on both shores 4) war stories 5) Natural History stories 6) 3 Bridges Story 7) Engineering and design story 8) Industrial Forth story, and 9) Tay Bridge disaster and the Bridge that wasn't built

international attention as more and more people become aware that the Forth Bridge is in the running to be inscribed a UNESCO World Heritage Site; the second half of the year will be when the decision is made, at which point the attention will rise to another level, particularly from the international media and other states with newly inscribed sites will want to cover the other new sites, and many other people around the world will want to understand why these places are special, and whether they might visit or learn about them. It would be impossible to take these opportunities if there is not a great deal of preparation in the 2013-2015 period, but even with that work there is a need to scale up in the year of inscription.

2.1 Deliver celebration events designed to both engender civic pride and achieve maximum national and international publicity

There is a growing movement around the world to develop events to animate and celebrate World Heritage Sites. An example of this would be the way Hadrian's Wall has been animated through a series of arts events on the wall, including having a series of beacons lit along its entire length. Each site requires its own approach, but there is real potential to develop events around the Forth Bridge, particularly in the off-peak tourism season to lengthen the season and improve the viability of the destination year round. This isn't a new concept for destinations but a WHS can generate extra PR and add authenticity.

2.2 Invest in creativity and activity to animate the WHS site by engaging with creative industry and education partners.

Some of the most dynamic World Heritage Sites have been extremely creative. This is particularly true of some of the leading industrial heritage sites in Europe – particularly the German industrial heritage sites. We think the Forth Bridge stakeholders can learn a great deal from this approach, and that more creative and artistic partners should be engaged to change perceptions of the bridge and its location and widen its appeal beyond its traditional audience.

2.3 Launch a brand image and rebrand tourism services and products to include it, if they meet quality assurance standards. Encourage use of the brand on independent tourism, heritage, inward investment agencies and civic websites and materials.

World Heritage visitors (like other cultural tourists) often travel further, stay longer, and spend more – but critically they have higher expectations of the quality of a place and its tourism experience. There is a need to develop a brand to attract these visitors that speaks about the whole Forth Bridge destination – the distinction between Fife and Edinburgh is of less importance to these visitors than that the bridge is the centre of their experience. We suggest that stakeholders should work together to develop the brand, and rebrand or co-brand the tourism products and experiences around the Bridge. This World Heritage brand should only be associated with products, businesses and experiences that meet the values and quality of the Forth Bridge World Heritage brand.

2.4 Brand train and station exteriors with celebration images and text

We suggest that the rail links to the Forth Bridge from Edinburgh and the rest of the UK to the site are huge assets for the site and its tourism sector. Other World Heritage Sites have developed new transport services or rebranded existing ones to recognise their global status. The potential for branding trains to and from Edinburgh as World Heritage trains on the World Heritage route should be explored with the rail companies. The two railway

stations at either end of the bridge are also key gateways to the site (and huge advantages in making the site sustainably accessible to more people) and should ideally be given an upgrade in terms of branding, signage and interpretation. Everyone that stops at that station, whether they disembark or not, can learn something about the bridge if the stations are transformed.

2.5 Create a 12 Month international PR plan, to include trade and special interest group media outlets as well as international radio, TV and newspapers. This could be focused on WH-literate countries as identified in existing research.

The stakeholders should be ready for 2015 with an effective PR plan for translating the global interest and opportunities into the greatest possible economic benefit for local, regional and national communities.

2.6 Deliver inscription awareness-raising workshops within Fife and Edinburgh for both communities and businesses to ensure the WHS narrative is communicated and understood by as large a group as possible

Some of the most dynamic World Heritage sites have turned their businesses into champions and translators of the site's values. On Hadrian's Wall, for example, a series of business workshops have taken place to explain to businesses the site's narratives and the opportunities that exist for business benefit. This is crucial so that when people arrive at the destination the staff of receiving businesses can meet and greet them with an awareness of the site's unique story and values. It would be a very good idea, for example, if as many of these tourism "meeters and greeters" had been to the top of the bridge and experienced it themselves. This would make them passionate champions of the site.

2.7 Support the creation of new tourism product and services, either through direct funding or business support of social or micro enterprises

Stakeholders should support in as many ways as possible the creation of new tourism products and services. It should be noted that many of the opportunities will already have been taken over the past century or more (e.g. restaurants from which diners can view the bridge), so this is partly about supporting the growth or improvement of existing facilities, and partly about the development of new products and services. A key product/experience that is currently missing is the chance to get to the top of the bridge – stakeholders should support Network Rail in their aspiration to make the bridge itself a significant visitor attraction in its own right. We believe that being able to travel to the top of the Forth Bridge can become one of the 'must do' experiences in Scotland, for visitors and citizens.

2.8 Develop a range of products that return revenue to the community and the site, manage and license the IP

The Forth Bridge is the subject of a whole economy built around the use of its imagery – people spend significant sums of money on a vast range of products because they feature the bridge on them. We would suggest that stakeholders work with designers and manufacturers to develop a range of high quality "official" local products distinctive to the destination that are retailed at a premium. Because the bridge is a Scottish icon the products sold should be, and need to be of high quality design. The products sold linked to a World Heritage site should reflect the quality of the place. Products should clearly reference the Bridge as a World Heritage Site (although the use of UNESCO logo's are only permitted according to certain criteria that maintain the dignity of the brand, and may be licensed by Historic Scotland in the role of state party). It should also be

clear that contributions from the sale of goods are returned to conservation and restoration projects at the site.

2.9 Plan a temporary or permanent exhibition of the WHS to promote its value and raise awareness, this could be delivered across a variety of locations to encourage movement in and around the site.

A growing number of World Heritage sites have a specialist visitor centre that provides a place where the site can be explained to visitors. Whilst the traditional model for this, as a non-revenue generating museum is not necessarily the only option – there is a growing awareness that interpretation of a historic site can also be done throughout the site, or in facilities that have other commercial functions – restaurants, cafes, car parks, on buses, trains, stations, by roadsides, or in the public realm. On this site there is a complication of there being a number of gateways to the site – two railway stations, several road routes, and a jetty for cruise ship passengers. This raises a question about whether there is one ideal place for one visitor centre, or whether there would be different gateway sites for interpretation. There is also a question mark over whether a visitor reception area for car-based visitors should be at the Southern or Northern sides of the Forth. So the visitor master planning exercise suggested for the pre-inscription stage is critical to answer these questions – so that by 2015 stakeholder can provide either a permanent visitor exhibition, a series of visitor exhibitions, or simply a temporary exhibition to celebrate the inscription of the site in 2015. Any visitor centre or exhibition needs to be part of a masterplan so that it helps address other issues like visitor flows and the need to channel cars to places where they can park without creating negative impacts for local communities.

2.10 Deliver on site interpretation and branded rail and boat transport, road and street signage to reflect the new status, use this opportunity to include a key fact about the WHS to those passing through

We believe that a World Heritage site that is a key part of Scotland's working transport system needs to be an exemplar of how to do interpretation for people who are using that system. This means that stakeholders involved in that transport system need to develop interpretation materials that can communicate the values of the site to passengers on the rail system, on cruise ships and to the massive number of people using the Forth Road bridge/s.

2.11 Engage a team of WHS community ambassadors to introduce ticketed tours.

In the communities around the bridge there is a range of existing organisations and associations with a deep knowledge of the place and its history, and a passion to tell these stories and make them accessible to others. These local heritage champions should be supported to develop experiences for visitors. In other WHS volunteers lead tours and all income is returned to conservation and restoration projects in the World Heritage Site. Where this is not supported by site managers the private sector should be supported to take up the opportunity (while this has a benefit to the local economy it does not always return a direct benefit to the management of the site itself).

Longer term

1. Maintain a PR plan and build on all of the above
2. Continue to improve infrastructure as a way to preserve the heritage
3. Invest in creativity and activity to keep the brand live

4. Strengthen tourism products by refreshing the narrative and interpretation
5. Build on networks to maintain awareness in both the heritage and tourism sectors

KEY PRINCIPLES

Best use of existing resources (no additional cash)

From our consultation with community representatives, local authority staff and members and the business community on both sides of the bridge it is clear that strong and honest partnership working has the potential to add enormous value to the social-economic ambitions that have already been identified on both sides of the Forth. Coordination of activity and a focus on collaboration, not competition, would benefit communities on both sides of the bridge.

One of the most widely recognised benefits of seeking World Heritage listing for any site is the partnerships it can create. In fact, UNESCO will want to see evidence of a strong partnership in the site's Management Plan. Partnerships can cross neighbourhood boundaries, Local Authority Boundaries and in some instances they cross international borders. Frontiers of the Roman Empire WHS offers a good example of the social economic benefits that can be drawn from a more coordinated approach to delivery and action. Great work is already happening in and around the proposed Forth Bridge WHS, however we think it is fair to say more could be achieved with existing resources if collaboration is encouraged. An example of an early win would be to map all stakeholders and begin to communicate with them as one group, to draw them together for consultation and to think of them as a resource for both ideas and the delivery key WHS messages.

From our limited discussions with community and business representative we uncovered a strong desire to be included in planning for WHS and there were very positive responses to the ambition itself. Engaging community councils through consultation is essential and could release untapped resources on a small scale but more importantly the councils could become champions of the ambition.

World Heritage Status often adds value to the tourism economy of a place, if stakeholders in a site plan for it. When a strong partnership approach is taken to marketing the site and its location to visitors. This includes journeys into and out from the heart of the site. Proactive organisations responsible for WHS pull strong itineraries together for visitors and use the site's many stories that have their base in the UNESCO statement of Outstanding Universal Value to achieve this. No extra resource is needed if all partners currently involved in tourism marketing take a coordinated approach, pooling their financial and intellectual resources to add value.

An example of this is the coordinated approach the Queensferry Business Improvement District is taking, working on both sides of the Forth, on upcoming celebration events that use the bridge as their focus. These celebrations are also an opportunity for a quick win without the need for extra resource if the WHS ambition could be incorporated into the programme of planned events. Working with creative partners to reimagine the industrial and engineering heritage of the bridge could also be an opportunity to improve media coverage as the site moves towards UNESCO inscription.

As tourism businesses on both sides of the Forth begin to see the benefit of a coordinated approach and when they are aware of the potential WHS has for increasing the value of the visitor economy they can be persuaded to invest in quality improvements to their offer.

Communications (new resources)

Of course to realise the full potential achieving WHS for the Forth Bridge, new investment would be necessary. While a coordinated approach to existing tourism marketing could bring immediate benefit as the site seeks inscription a comprehensive PR and Media plan will need to be in place to gain the most benefit from the year of inscription and beyond.

Coordinated PR and marketing will be essential to achieve either an increase in visitor numbers or a shift in market segmentation to increase the value of visitors while maintaining the numbers. It will be important for the existing marketing professionals to work together but some external advice and support may be necessary to produce a marketing and PR plan all parties can deliver too. However this could be achieved in house through a cooperation agreement.

A Forth Bridge WHS Brand identity and website will need to be created. This would need to be funded through a partnership of economic stakeholders that would include the Local Authorities, the Destination Marketing Organisations and private sector sponsorship.

Developing the narratives and drawing out stories related to the statement of Outstanding Universal Value could be achieved through a series of community workshops, archival research and joint working between existing heritage interest groups. The Forth and its crossings' rich history have the potential to engage communities, engender civic pride and stimulate the market for cultural tourism. A project could be developed, with financial support from, for example, the Heritage Lottery Fund and private sector sponsors that creates new itineraries, trails, interpretation and tours for all to enjoy. Work from the project could create a temporary exhibition in 2015 as part of inscription celebrations. Scottish Enterprise funds could also be accessed by the BID to generate seed capital for social enterprises and businesses to develop new tourism service products.

Train operators and Network Rail could work together to brand services and stations en-route as part of a promotional campaign. In the Jurassic Coast WHS a rebrand of an existing coastal bus service saw a 126% increase in its use by passengers. Transport Scotland could be approached to fund and sign the major gateways into the location with appropriate WHS information. The use of the UNESCO logo is permitted on road signs in many European locations however there is no precedent for that in the UK.

Cruise operators will want to brand their itineraries with both the Forth Bridge WHS and Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS as key points of interest for passengers. Local stakeholders will have to work closely with operators to ensure economic benefit is achieved for both locations with the provision of clear offer to day visitors.

Improving understanding/research

To plan for socio and economic change it is important to understand a baseline as soon as possible. As part of the management plan for UNESCO it is essential to acknowledge the starting point and to lay out plans that clearly explain how visitor numbers and the resulting

pressure on infrastructure in and around the site will be managed. Partners will need to resource a Tourism Baseline study if it does not already exist. A baseline study will be an important planning tool if any ambition to grow the visitor economy either by numbers or value is to be achieved. Much of the data is likely to exist for different locations and a baseline study need not be an extensive piece of work.

For the private sector, including social enterprises and not for profit enterprises it will be important to offer training events which equip them to take best advantage of World Heritage Status, a series of seminars and events could cost approximately £5,000 and funding for these could be drawn down from a variety of business support funds at local and national level, in the first instance VisitScotland should be engaged as they offer a range of training events aimed at tourism business. Events like these have happened along Hadrian's Wall WHS, so a model and structure already exists.

Master planning

From the conversations we have had with resident and business representatives it is clear that one of the biggest issues facing the areas nearest to the site, North and South Queensferry is poor management of visitor and particularly private car numbers during peak periods. This problem won't go away and in fact if there is an ambition to increase visitor numbers then it's a problem that UNESCO will want to know is being tackled.

There is a strong desire for Fife and Dunfermline in particular to benefit from the international recognition of the Forth Bridge. The routes visitors take, the journeys they make and the transport they use will need to be planned for. The location of services for both tourists and residents will need to be considered and a cohesive approach taken to initiatives like visitor centres and new attractions, especially activity on the Forth Bridge itself will need to be carefully considered. This will need a masterplan for the site and surrounding areas. A plan that crosses local authority borders and makes sense of the destination. This could cost between £30k and £50k and a partnership of local authorities and Scottish Government may well be the only source of funding.

Community engagement (through projects)

We have already talked about engaging communities in developing a variety of narratives that relate to the statement of OUV and the history of the crossing and this could be funded by one of the smaller HLF grant programmes. For on-going projects that engage the wider communities of Edinburgh and Fife in the future of the WHS larger grants may be necessary. For example a HLF Landscape Partnership bid could be considered. Partnership projects could access both regional and transnational EU funding, through RDPE or the EU Culture programme for example. International recognition of the Bridge will strengthen quality funding bids.

Keeping communities engaged will keep the site and its inscription fresh and exciting, once the initial buzz of achieving World Heritage Status has faded it can be all too simple for sites to stagnate. The best WH places continually re-engage both residents and visitors in new activity and cultural events are a key part of this. Creative Scotland should be engaged sooner rather than later to gauge the appetite for the future funding of projects with the Forth Bridge WHS as a focus.

Developing infrastructure/product

One of the most exciting initiatives to be discussed during our consultation visits is the possibility the Bridge itself could be opened to visitors in a similar way to the rooftop walk over the O2 roof in London or the walk over the top of Sydney Harbour Bridge. Network Rail have indicated that it is open to this idea and investing capital in the project, including a scoping study.

Today the best museums and galleries around the world have realised the value of selling commercial products and services which can return profits for re-investment in conservation and new content etc. While a range of products already exist and have done since the Forth Bridge was completed there will be an opportunity to develop a range of products with high quality designers and manufactures that capitalise on the international recognition WHS confers. These products would share the Forth Bridge WHS brand identity and make it clear to consumers that profits are returned to invest in the site. The Brand identity could be licensed to commercial ventures that meet quality standards. A good example of where this approach is returning added value to both the private sector as local supplier, social enterprises and the site itself is Cinque Terra WHS in Italy. The partnership will need to invest in a business plan for product development and licensing. Product development with designers and manufacturers with designers would also have to be funded. This could initially be funded by using a small percentage of each existing visitor information office/ visitor centre budget for product purchasing. These centres would initially test the market.

As part of our work our brief was not to research future traffic management plans for settlements close to the site, but it soon became apparent as we have already mentioned that traffic management and car parking are in the top five of issues that communities on both sides of the Forth Bridge would like the Local Authorities to address if WHS is to have any benefit. Master planning will identify the solutions to the problems that were raised in our discussions with residents and business representative. Finding the capital investment to put those solutions into practice may prove difficult if funding has not already been allocated for improvements. This single issue would need a concerted effort by all parties if inevitable UNESCO concerns about pressures on infrastructure and visitor congestion are to be addressed.

CONCLUSION... IT'S 'WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT'

We believe that the Forth Bridge communities can benefit significantly from listing of the Bridge as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A quantifiable economic benefit is possible but further research is first required on the existing tourism market and its potential for growth. Crucially, local stakeholders need to decide what kind of benefits they wish to secure and how they want to achieve them.

A key principle of sustainable tourism is that communities need to have more control over the tourism processes that affect them. To this end it is necessary to take our suggested vision and objectives to the communities and start empowering them to address the issues they care about through the WHS process. We believe that the WHS nomination process can be a catalyst for progressive and beneficial changes that communities around the Bridge want and need.

APPENDIX A - REVIEW OF STRATEGY DOCUMENTATION

We have looked at a small selection of published economic strategies that the proposed WHS has a potential to impact on. They are:

- Historic Scotland, Corporate Plan, 2012-2015
- The Scottish Government, The Government Economic Strategy
- Edinburgh City Region, Building a Stronger Regional Economy
- Fife Economy Partnership, Fife Economic Strategy 2009-2020
- Fife Council, Finalised Fife Structure Plan 2006-2026 incorporating, Scottish Gov. proposed mods – Dec 08
- The City of Edinburgh, The City of Edinburgh Council's Economic Strategy for 2012-17
- The City of Edinburgh, Strategic Plan 2012-2017
- Almond, Local Community Plan 2011 to 2014
- The Scottish Tourism Alliance, Tourism Scotland 2020
- Scottish Executive, Scottish Tourism – The Next Decade
- Fife Tourism, Fife Tourism Strategy 2007 – 2015

There are a number of ambitions within these plans and appendix 1 gives a more detailed list. When reading these documents we have identified an ambition or strategy goal where we believe WHS has a role to play in delivery of that plan or strategy and we have based our assumption on our knowledge of a range of WHS case studies which are also identified in the appendix. Some examples are:

- Historic Scotland's Corporate Plan, 2012-2015: Enhancing the national and local sense of place through building the quality of our cities, towns and rural areas and through celebrating anniversaries and major events which showcase the historic environment. World Heritage listing of the Forth Bridge could impact on the destination's image, bring media attention and inspire culture and creativity. Examples of where this has happened are Blaenavon Industrial Landscape WHS and the Town of Bamberg WHS and the Völkingen Ironworks WHS.
- The Scottish Government's Economic Strategy: To expand Scotland's areas of international comparative advantage, we will give particular attention to building a critical mass of Tourism, with government helping to create the right environment for their competitiveness and growth. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge could impact on the destination's image and bring media attention as well as inspire creativity and culture. An example of where this has happened is the Town of Bamberg WHS.
- Edinburgh City Region's, Building a Stronger Regional Economy: We offer diversity for visitors with a choice of attractions, heritage sites, year-round events and festivals. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge could act as a 'cultural glue' and give the opportunity for new Interpretation. Examples of this can be seen in Blaenavon Industrial Landscape WHS, Völkingen Ironworks WHS and the Dorset and East Devon Coast – Jurassic Coast WHS.

- Fife Economy Partnership's Fife Economic Strategy 2009-2020: Development and expansion of social enterprises as a key part of the local economy and job market in priority areas. This support will include tailored events and support with funding applications. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge could impact on the coordination of investment through strategy, inspire culture and creativity and offer opportunities to business. Examples of this can be seen in Roman Frontiers/Hadrian's Wall WHS, Völkingen Ironworks WHS and the Dorset and East Devon Coast – Jurassic Coast WHS
- Fife Council's Finalised Fife Structure Plan 2006-2026 incorporating Scottish Gov. proposed mods – Dec 08: To support the provision of a Cross-Forth Ferry Service and associated infrastructure. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge could impact on this ambition by acting as a cultural glue, it could create new interpretation, encourage better new services and quality infrastructure. Examples of this can be found in the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape WHS and in the Derwent Valley Mills WHS
- The City of Edinburgh's Economic Strategy for 2012-17: Exploiting our international connections. As a capital city, we have a vast array of cultural, diplomatic and business connections around the world. The Council has established civic links with many international destinations. Through our close partnership with Scottish Development International, we are increasingly exploiting these links to attract more investment to Edinburgh. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge could impact on this strategy goal by assisting in the creation of a new identity and destination image and by bringing added media value; an example of this is the Town of Bamberg WHS.
- Almond's Local Community Plan 2011 to 2014: Link our schools, libraries and community groups, and increase awareness of key heritage and environmental sites and issues. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge can have a positive impact on civic pride and quality of life for residents as well as education. An example of this is The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS.
- The Scottish Tourism Alliance's Tourism Scotland 2020: In tandem with developing specific assets we also need to collaborate across assets in order to offer visitors a diverse range of authentic experiences. In other words, experiences which are underpinned by elements unique to Scotland, and therefore cannot be easily replicated by our competitors. World Heritage Status for the Forth Bridge will impact by assisting in the creation of new identity or destination image, it can add media value, inspire culture and creativity and act as a cultural glue. Good examples of this can be seen in Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands (Palmaria, Tino & Tinetto) WHS, Blaenavon Industrial Landscape WHS, the Town of Bamberg WHS and the Roman Frontiers/Hadrian's Wall WHS.
- Scottish Executive's Scottish Tourism – The Next Decade: an increase in visitor numbers of perhaps 20% by 2015, with the rest of the growth coming from increased spend per head as we get better at offering a wider variety of experiences and products to meet our visitors' expectations. World Heritage Status for the Forth

Bridge could impact by encouraging the coordination of investment through strategy, assisting to create a new identity and destination image, by adding media value and acting as a cultural glue. Examples of this in action can be seen in Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands (Palmaria, Tino & Tinetto) WHS, Blaenavon Industrial Landscape WHS, the Town of Bamberg WHS, Roman Frontiers/Hadrian's Wall WHS and in Derwent Valley Mills WHS.

- Fife Tourism's Fife Tourism Strategy 2007 – 2015: Improved and effective management for delivery of initiatives. World Heritage listing of the Forth Bridge could impact by encouraging the coordination of investment through strategy; examples of this are Collegiate Church, Castle and Old Town of Quedlinburg WHS, Blaenavon Industrial Landscape WHS and the Derwent Valley Mills WHS.