# Development Management Sub Committee

## Wednesday 4 March 2020

## Application for Planning Permission 19/04116/FUL at Forth Rail Bridge, Hawes Brae, South Queensferry Development of a Forth Bridge Walk Reception Centre, new sections of bridge access system, new viewing platforms, associated car parking, landscaping, servicing and alterations to existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses.

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| **Item number** | |
| **Report number** | |
| **Wards** | B01 - Almond |

## Summary

The development complies with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it preserves the character and setting of listed buildings and preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

It is considered that the proposed development to accommodate the bridge experience is acceptable in principle. The loss of trees on the site will have a short term localised impact and the success of restoring the woodland cover is reliant upon adherence to the Tree and Woodland Management Plan for a minimum period of ten years post construction.

The approach to the built development has been sensitive ensuring that that the scale and design of the new built form protects and enhances the character and appearance of the Queensferry Conservation Area. The interventions to the listed structures, the Forth Rail Bridge and Dalmeny Battery, are minimal thus ensuring that the character and setting of the listed building is protected. Adequate on site car parking and key links to sustainable modes of transport will be formed with adequate on site cycle spaces.

## Links

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| **Policies and guidance for this application** | LDPP, LDES01, LDES03, LDES04, LDES05, LDES06, LDES07, LDES08, LDES09, LEN01, LEN03, LEN04, LEN05, LEN06, LEN07, LEN08, LEN09, LEN10, LEN11, LEN12, LEN13, LEN14, LEN15, LEN16, LEN18, LEN22, LRET08, LTRA02, LTRA03, LTRA04, LTRA09, CRPQUE, HESSET, HES, NSG, NSGD02, NSLBCA, |

# Report

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## Recommendations

**1.1** It is recommended that this application be Granted subject to the details below.

## Background

### 2.1 Site description

The site is located to the eastern side of South Queensferry and to the north of Dalmeny Station.

The site consists of the Forth Bridge as far as the top of the first cantilever, the former Network Rail depot site at the southern end of the Forth Bridge, there is an existing access road from Hawes Brae and existing pedestrian accesses from Dalmeny Station and Hawes Brae (known as Jacob's Ladder).

The Forth Bridge is a statutory category A listed building completed in 1890. It was listed on 18 June 1997 LB40370.

UNESCO inscribed the Forth Bridge as a World Heritage Site on 5 July 2015. It has a statement of Outstanding Universal Value and a Management Plan.

The application site is accessed off Hawes Brae (B924) and incorporates Fort House, currently a residential dwelling with category A gun emplacements within its curtilage. There are outbuildings associated with the dwelling including a swimming pool and a car port. The garden area associated with the Forts is extensive and has a number of substantial trees at the western end.

The area under the bridge was formerly in industrial use. It now comprises hard standing with a secure fence. Electricity sub stations sit at the foot of the bridge piers.

To the south of the site lies Dalmeny Station with footpath links passing the west of the site, connecting into the village centre, through Ferry Glen.

Further east, beyond the site boundary, lies Dalmeny Historic Garden/designated landscape inventory added 1 July 1987, a Special Landscape Area.

This application site is located within the Queensferry Conservation Area.

### 2.2 Site History

16 May 2019 - A Proposal of Application Notice for "Proposed development of reception centre and bridge access system with associated car parking, landscaping and servicing and alterations to existing pedestrian and vehicular access", at the Forts, 3 Hawes Brae, South Queensferry, (application reference 19/02357/PAN).

28 July 2011- An Application for Listed Building Consent. The proposals involve permanent access solution for Forth Bridge to replace existing temporary access. Proposals will include a permanent access at Hawes Brae abutment from ground up onto bridge lower walkway and at the Jubilee Tower, a stair and walkway from the lower walkway up to track level, at Forth Rail Bridge, Hawes Brae, South Queensferry, (application reference 11/01747/LBC).

27 July 2015 - An Application for Listed Building Consent. The proposals are to retain the works for the removal of existing signals and installation of new signals and location box, (application reference 15/02916/LBC).

Parallel Applications

29 August 2019 - An application for Conservation Area Consent to Demolish 2x ancillary buildings of residential property to make way for proposed development of Forth Bridge Experience at Forth Rail Bridge, Hawes Brae, South Queensferry, (application reference 19/04117/CON).

29 August 2019 - An application for Listed Building Consent for Installation of bridge access system on Forth Bridge and installation of glazed capping to Dalmeny Battery at Forth Rail Bridge, Hawes Brae, South Queensferry, (application reference 19/04118/LBC).

## Main report

### 3.1 Description of the Proposal

The application proposes a bridge walk experience enabling access out on to the Forth Rail Bridge.

The development proposed includes the following;

- a new footpath link from the Dalmeny Railway Station platform to a new footpath link running parallel to Ashburnham Loan,
- a replacement bridge across the existing cyclepath,
- the Bridge Walk Reception Hub to the west of the railway bridge piers,
- footway connections between the Hub to the bridge access system
- viewing platforms on the bridge,
- office and ancillary buildings,
- visitor and staff car parking,
- vehicular access upgrade,
- pedestrian access upgrade,
- upgrading of the Dalmeny Battery.

The proposal is presented as a rail based visitor experience and focusses on enhancing connections to the Dalmeny Railway Station.

Footpath/cyclepath links

The proposal includes a new entrance to the Dalmeny Rail Station platform at approximately 50.5 metres A.O.D. This new path, at 1.5 metres in width, would contour down the embankment to connect with the southern element of the existing footpath at approximately 47 metres A.O.D. and would run at contour approximately 2-3 metres to the east of the existing path. The existing woodland buffer along the western edge of the path would be retained and enhanced. The existing path would be removed and planted up to reinforce the planting buffer between Ashburnham Loan and the new path.

The path would meet at a junction with access to Ashburnham Loan, a stepped access down to the existing core path/national cycle route with a cycle ramp. A replacement bridge is proposed across the core/cycle path linking to the Reception Hub running in a direct north to south route allowing for direct links north through Ferry Glen, connecting into an existing footpath which heads west into Queensferry centre.

The proposed bridge would be set back south east from the existing dwellings on Ashburnham Loan, five metres further east than the existing footbridge, at a distance of more than 10 metres from the dwellings. It would provide an at-grade crossing of the cycle path at 36 metres AOD, at a span of 20 metres. The existing footbridge is two metres higher, stepped up to a height of 38.1 metres AOD.

Reception Hub Building

The proposed Reception Hub Building will be located to the west of the railway bridge piers, on land previously used as a works compound in association with the rail bridge. Visitors will access the building from the east and once through the reception will hook onto a secure wire mechanism and access the bridge via a ramp circling anti-clockwise from west of the building up to first floor roof level heading north east to the bridge access staircase. The ramp access is shielded by a 1.1metre parapet.

The Hub will provide a space for groups to arrive and check in, receive safety clothing and safety briefing. Groups of around 15 walkers at a time will exit the building onto a ramp leading up onto the building roof and connecting to the bridge itself. From the start of the access ramp, walkers will wear a harness which will be attached to a continuous running safety line.

The Hub building design has been inspired by the forts that are prevalent along the River Forth.

The proposed building would have an irregular footprint form of a maximum of approximately 32 metres in length by 28 metres in width. On the western side it will be single storey at 3 metres in height rising to two storey on the eastern side.

The building will be finished in concrete with elements of perforated corten steel screen. Vertical slot windows and louvre vent panels will provide interest to the west facing elevation, the east facing elevation has a large area of frameless glazing and sliding windows providing a welcoming entrance. The roof would be largely sedum finish.

Separate plant, transformer and refuse buildings will be located to the east of the main hub building. These proposed structures are small, single storey buildings, which follow the same material palette as the Hub. The refuse building would be constructed from dark grey painted render brick walls with perforated corten steel panels and some galvanised mesh screen. The roof would be sedum. The bike shelter would be a steel structure with sedum roof and corten steel bike stands.

Bridge Walk

A new access stair is proposed linking the Hub building onto the bridge gantry. A new staircase is proposed up the eastern side of the Jubilee Tower. This would connect visitors onto the access track. Six over bridge accesses are proposed over key cross member structures of the bridge.

Two new viewing platforms will be provided at either end of the top of the southern steel tower to allow clear views across north and south. The platform would measure approximately 7 metres by 6 metres. Visitors will walk up the eastern side of the bridge and down the western side, descending back at Jubilee Pier.

Office Building

To the east of the railway lies the Forts, a residential property. The application proposes to convert this into office space for staff associated with the Forth Bridges Experience. The existing conservatory along the front of the building would be removed and internal alterations would be carried out. Two of the four existing outbuildings will also be retained and upgraded to provide equipment storage and drying areas. A parallel application has been submitted for conservation area consent to demolish the existing swimming pool and car port within the garden grounds (application reference 19/04117/CON).

The proposal will involve the loss of a substantial number of trees in the garden of the Fort to accommodate car parking for the facility, parking for 78 vehicles including 8 electric car charging points and 4 disabled spaces is proposed. The car park surface would be permeable and is proposed as reinforced gravel surface. An additional 11 spaces are proposed for staff parking close to the office at the astern end of the site.

A total of 54 cycle parking spaces will be provided both close to the Hub building for visitors and next to the Fort office building for staff.

Access

The existing vehicle access would be widened and improved, it would be a porous asphalt surface. A barrier system is proposed which would restrict access to the car park for customers that have pre-booked the Bridge Walk Experience. This would be managed on a time slot provision.

A new pedestrian access link will be formed directly below the Forth Bridge to improve access between the proposed development site and Hawes Brae and the High Street. The new footpath would zig-zag up Ferry Brae, it would be constructed from steel with landing platforms to ease the gradient of the ascent. Some trees would be lost to accommodate the new footpath.

Dalmeny Battery

The Dalmeny Battery within the ground of the Forts is a category A listed building. The proposal is to leave the battery entirely in-situ and amalgamate it as a key part of the landscape proposals for the Reception Hub Building. In order to make the structure safe for visitors it is proposed to replace the existing wire mesh that is over the open sections of the structure with a glazed capping. It is also proposed to include interpretive signs for information purposes. A parallel application for listed building consent has been submitted (application reference 19/04118/LBC).

Tree Loss/landscape mitigation

A survey of 587 trees across the site has been undertaken. Of these trees 128 trees would be lost to facilitate the proposal, a total of 160 trees would be lost across the site which includes dead and leaning trees.

Extensive tree planting is proposed for the site, a selective palette of native and more ornamental broadleaf trees are proposed. Feathered and multi-stem trees will predominate over clear stem varieties. The landscape Palette highlights varieties with rich seasonal colour that reflect the hue of "Forth Bridge Red".

The open lawn spaces to the east of the gun emplacements will include new trees to help integrate the new landscape into the existing woodland. Groups of trees are included in the open lawn areas to provide enclosure to the office building.

Between the car park and the turning area a stand of trees will create a buffer to the arrival spaces. Beyond this tree planting will provide enclosure and shelter to the space.

Closer to the building low level ornamental planting with flowering lawns is proposed.

Operation

The application proposes that the Bridge Walk Experience will operate between the hours of 10am and 10pm. At peak time there would be a total of 15 people accessing the bridge with up to 4 groups heading out per hour. With the experience taking 3 hours to complete there would be a maximum of 12 groups accessing the facility simultaneously. A maximum of 540 visitors per day, equating to 36 bridge climbs per day. Communication on the walk would be via a comm system.

The application is supported by the following submitted documents which are available to vie won the Planning and Building Standards Online Systems;

- Planning Supporting Statement,
- PAC Report,
- S1 Sustainability Form,
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal,
- Noise Assessment,
- Landscape Visual Impact Analysis,
- Heritage Statement,
- Habitat Regulation Appraisal,
- Geotechnical Desk Study,
- Flood Risk Assessment,
- Design and Access Statement,
- Bat Survey Report,
- Archaeology Desk Based Report,
- Surface Water Management Plan,
- Transport Statement,
- Tree Survey Report and
- Tree and Woodland Management Plan.

The applicant also carried out a further public meeting on 10 October 2019 and submitted a post meeting letter dated 18 November 2019, seeking to address matters of concern.

The proposal was presented to the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel on 24 April 2019.

### 3.2 Determining Issues

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states - Where, in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, a planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states - special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Do the proposals comply with the development plan?

If the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?

If the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

**3.3 Assessment**
To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether:

a) The proposal will have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of any listed buildings;
b) The proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Queensferry Conservation Area;
c) The principle of development is acceptable;
d) The proposal will preserve the outstanding universal value of the Forth Bridge World Heritage Site;
e) The design is acceptable and will continue towards a sense of place;
f) The proposal will result in the loss of trees;
g) The proposal will impact upon local biodiversity;
h) The proposal raises any issues in respect of Transport and Road Safety
i) The proposal will have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents;
j) The proposals are sustainable;
k) The proposal will have an impact on flooding;
l) There are other material considerations;
m) The impacts on equalities and rights are acceptable and
n) Public representations have been addressed.

a) <u>The proposal will have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of any listed buildings</u>

Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)(Scotland) Act 1997 which states:

"In exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions in subsection (2) special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. "

<u>Forth Bridge</u>

The Forth Bridge is a statutory category A listed building completed in 1890. It was listed on 18 June 1973, ref NT 13554 79252. The description includes the following statement;

*Three giant cross-braced, steel tower structures. Each tower counterbalances two arms on either side to provide two full cantilevered spans (each being 521 metres long with a 107 metre suspended span truss to centre) and two half outer spans. Each tower structure is set on four circular - plan granite and concrete piers. Piers to South on sea-bed, central piers on shelf of rock beside Inchgarvie (Dalmeny Parish); piers to north on promontory at North Queensferry.*

*Superstructure flanked by approach viaducts supported (45 meters above water level) by tapering, rectangular-plan masonry piers. Five piers to north with three masonry arches adjoining promontory at North Queensferry; ten piers to south with four masonry arches adjoining promontory at South Queensferry. Trains pass through round-arch masonry portals at innermost piers, marking start of cantilever superstructure.*

The list entry for the Forth Bridge includes a Statement of Special Interest. The following excerpt summarises the significance of the structure:

*The internationally acclaimed Forth (Railway) Bridge is one of the most ambitious and successful engineering achievements of the 19th century. On completion it achieved the longest bridge spans in the world and was the largest steel structure, pioneering the widespread adoption of steel bridge construction. With its distinctive cantilevered design, the Forth Bridge is Scotland's most instantly recognisable industrial landmark. It has become a symbol of national identity in much the same way as the Eiffel Tower in Paris.*

Dalmeny Battery

The application site includes the Dalmeny Battery, a category A gun emplacement. Dalmeny Battery is a coastal defence battery, dating from around 1903. It formed part of the inner of three defensive lines of coast batteries established between 1900 and 1916 to defend the eastern approaches into the Forth. It was operational during the First World War.

The Dalmeny Battery was listed as Category A in 2019, NT 13866 78245. The description includes the following;

*The battery comprises two Quick Fire 4.7 inch gun emplacements, an underground magazine, and an observation post. The gun emplacements are built of reinforced concrete, with locker recesses in circular holdfasts, and semi-circular aprons to the north. Access stairs between the emplacements lead to a sunken brick-lined rectangular light well courtyard flanked with magazines, shell and cartridge stores. The interiors of the magazines and store rooms were seen in 2017. The walls are painted brick throughout. The stores are barrel-vaulted with ventilation recesses*.

The listing excludes the engine house, oil store and caretaker's quarters to the east and boundary railings.

The Statement of Special Interest includes the following:

*The twin gun battery at Dalmeny, South Queensferry, is an outstanding survival of pre-First World War coastal defences in Scotland. Operational from around 1903, it was an early and important part of an inner line of defence across the Firth of Forth that played an important part of an inner line of defence across the Firth of Forth that played an important role in defending the waters of the Forth and the key naval base at Rosyth from the threat of attach by sea by fast moving enemy vessels during the First World War. Little altered since 1917, Dalmeny Battery retains significant potential to add to our knowledge and understanding of wartime military technology and strategy in the context of the coastal defence of eastern Scotland during the First World War.*

*The survival of these monumental concrete structures provides a tangible and powerful reminder of one of the defining events of the 20th century*.

Impact of the proposed development upon the character of the Forth Bridge

The proposed development is a commercial venture which will encourage people to interact with the Forth Bridge Listed Structure, not dissimilar to the likes of the Eiffel Tower in Paris or Tower Bridge in London, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The development proposes minimal intervention on the listed structure. The detailed interventions are fully assessed in the application for listed building consent (application reference 19/04118/LBC).

The Forth Bridge is of a phenomenal scale and at any one time may have around 80 people working on its structure, in addition to trains crossing. The impact of a group of tourists (max 15 at a time) climbing up the southern span is not considered to be visually detrimental to its character. For the most part the visitors will be unseen within the complexity of steel spans.

The proposed hooks interventions on the cantilevers and the introduction of platforms to accommodate the tourists are considered so small in scale that these interventions will be lost against the scale of the bridge trusses. The development does not interfere with iconic cantilevered steel spans.

The new staircase proposed up the east side of the Jubilee Tower provides an extension from the existing staircase and by using the same materials and subtle approach it will be read against the granite pier will not impact upon the character of the listed building. The interventions proposed are reversible should the visitor experience lose appeal. It is considered that they will not be visually detrimental and the industrial landmark character of the bridge will be retained.

The application is supported by a LVIA which reveals that the proposal will not have a detrimental visual impact upon the character of the Forth Bridge.

The proposed replacement steel access stair from the compound is an upgrade to the existing maintenance stair and will be visually lost beside the bulk of the granite pier.

The contemporary design of the proposed Hub building is domestic in scale and will be set on an area of ground historically used for railway maintenance. Looking down upon it from the bridge visitors and train passengers will see a series of sedum roofs and some cordon steel structures. These are small in scale in relation to the Bridge structure and would not be detrimental to its industrial characteristic.

To the east of the bridge, tree clearance within the existing Forts garden area will be required to accommodate the car park. This will open up the view of the bridge as observed from the car park and will not interrupt longer views, the planting plan secures a diverse woodland for the long term. The car park will be laid out with porous paving and planting plots; set against the scale and grandeur of the granite pier it is not considered to be detrimental to the character of the bridge. The tree clearance allows for clear access to the Hub building under the railway.

As set out above the key characteristics of the bridge may be defined as the three giant cross-braced, steel tower structures, each at over 500m in length. It is concluded that the proposed development is small in scale and sensitively designed and as such would protect these key characteristics of this industrial landmark.

Impact of the proposed development upon the character of the Dalmeny Battery

The layout of the visitor proposal and the associated car parking and hard landscaping proposals will protect and enhance the character of the Dalmeny Battery bringing this heritage element of the site back into the public domain. The military characteristics of these monumental concrete structures will be protected by the development.

Impact on the setting of the Forth Bridge and the Dalmeny Battery

The development of the hub building, waste store and cycle parking are proposed as low key and domestic in scale and their design, materials and siting will not detrimentally impact upon the setting of the bridge. It is considered that once constructed and replacement planting has established that the development will enhance the setting of the listed building from the current rough ground compound currently on the site. The car park will be accommodated largely within the curtilage of the existing dwelling house and with the use of permeable surfacing and soft and hard landscaping will not detrimentally impact upon the setting of the listed building.

The upgrading of the Dalmeny Battery is appropriate and it is considered that the glazed roof along with the proposed hard and soft landscape will add to the heritage experience. The proposed hard landscaping works will upgrade the setting of this historic structure, which is currently hidden in a domestic garden.

It is considered that the proposal complies with LDP police Env 3 (Listed Building-setting) in that it will not be detrimental to the architectural character, appearance or historic interest of the listed building or its setting.

Historic Environment Scotland have raised no objection to the proposal.

CEC Archaeology advise that the site is regarded as being of archaeological significance primarily in terms of its 20th century military history, railway heritage and potential for prehistoric occupation and burials. It is essential that a programme of archaeological work is undertaken prior to development in order to conserve and or fully excavate, analyse and record any archaeological remains that may be affected.

Archaeology advise that whilst the proposal will require construction in and around the Forth Rail Bridge it is considered that the proposed works will not have a physical impact upon its physical historic fabric nor upon its setting or character.

Archaeology welcome the preservation of the Dalmeny Battery and its inclusion into the visitor experience subject to a detailed building survey and recording of the structure. An appropriate condition is recommended which also includes interpretation and public engagement.

b) The proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Queensferry Conservation Area

PAN 71 Conservation Area Management advises "When effectively managed, conservation areas can anchor thriving communities, sustain cultural heritage, generate wealth and prosperity and add to quality of life. To realise this potential many of them need to continue to adapt and develop in response to the modern-day needs and aspirations of living and working communities. This means accommodating physical, social and economic change for the better. Physical change in conservation areas does not necessarily need to replicate its surroundings. The challenge is to ensure that all new development respects, enhances and has a positive impact on the area. Physical and land use change in conservation areas should always be founded on a detailed understanding of the historic and urban design context."

The Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the importance of the medieval core, the settlement pattern of stone built houses with their lang riggs, and the strong Scots vernacular character of the architecture.

The Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies that;

*Visitors are a major factor in the town's activity, drawn by views of the bridges and access to the water. The Hawes Pier is used by boat trippers to the islands in the Forth and the harbour is used for private boat moorings. The Firth of Forth is one of Scotland's busiest commercial shipping channels and performs a key role in Scotland's economy given its link as major export location for Scotland's oil and gas. It is also a destination for Cruise liners which berth in the Firth and ferry passengers to Hawes Pier. In addition, a range of watersport activities take place within it. Dalmeny Tank Farm is situated in the Firth of Forth and linked by a pipeline to the tanker terminal at Hound Point. The works depot and yards adjacent to Dalmeny Station remain the main hub of activity for maintenance of the Forth Bridge.*

Having regard to the various tourist activities and attractions in this historic area it is considered that the development of a visitor experience to promote the education and enjoyment of the industrial heritage of the Forth Rail Bridge is acceptable in principle within the conservation area.

The application site lies to the south west of the conservation area. The site is an area of open space and may be defined as brownfield site given its history with the Forth Bridge construction and The Forts defence site.

The Queensferry Conservation Area Character appraisal identifies that;

*The Forth Bridge and Forth Road Bridge are the outstanding landmarks, dominating the town and the wider area with their sheer scale and presence. However, the bridges are often hidden from view within the enclosure of the High Street, allowing local landmarks to become more evident. These include the Tollbooth steeple, the Seals Craig Hotel and the spire of the parish church, viewed on the skyline from the north*

*The Hawes and the developments along Station Road are notable for their physical separation and contrasting character from the High Street.*

*Queensferry has an abundance of open space with a variety of roles and characteristics. Woodland and landscape amenity space are critical to the character of Queensferry, enclosing the historic core and providing visual breaks between contrasting areas.*

The application is supported by a Design Statement which sets out the considered approach to the development of the site within the Queensferry conservation area. The application proposes careful woodland management of the site, with some intervention required to create the pathways down to Hawes Brae and to Ferry Glen, to assist with accessibility to development site and the railway station.

The inherent features of Queensferry are derived from its topography and its historical use as a point to cross the River Forth. The proposal will allow tourists to experience that topography from the bridge crossing, views over the Forth and Queensferry village will be enjoyed sensitively with minimal intervention onto the listed structure.

It is considered that the proposed development has been designed having regard to these key characteristics of this part of the Queensferry Conservation Area. The Hub building will be of contemporary design which references the battlements of the Forth, with the scale being domestic in size and height, and sited within a large plot. The proposed use of concrete and steel for the building finishes, and the hard landscaping details are considered to be complimentary to the industrial heritage of the bridge and appropriate to the historic context. The success of the building relies on a high standard of finish to ensure the building has a quality required within such a sensitive environment. Therefore the final finishes of the walls will be conditioned to ensure the appearance of the structure is fitting within the woodland environment.

Where possible trees will be retained, in particular the boundary trees which are a key feature in the conservation area will be retained. However, a large number of trees will be lost from the garden of the existing Forts dwelling to accommodate car parking to serve the development. The woodland cover is a critical part of the character within the conservation area. The overall loss of tress is noted as detrimental to the biodiversity and amenity value within the informal woodland setting of the town. The location of the development is within a sector of woodland that has Ash die back identified in many trees so change and replanting would be required for some part of the area. The replacement tree planting and woodland plan ensures that there is age and species diversification which will ensure that the long term woodland character will be restored and protected. In the short term the loss is recognised.

The proposed Hub building will sit comfortably within the conservation area and will respect and enhance the characteristics of this part of the town, upgrading an unused hard cored site. The Hawes villas in this locality have no predominant style and many have changed their domestic use to hotels and public houses. The change of the use of The Fort house from residential to office fits with this dynamic. The upgrading of the associated outbuildings is a positive contribution to the area.

The proposal will unfence the compounded area under the west side of the bridge and will release the historic Dalmeny Battery emplacements from a private garden, bringing these spaces back into the public realm. The proposal will create a new distinctive space for visitors and residents to enjoy with the new staircase through the Ferry Glen encouraging public access to the woodland whilst remaining sensitive to the local biodiversity.

It is considered that following the implementation of the replanting plan and woodland management plan, the proposal will preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area and is consistent with the Queensferry conservation area character appraisal. The proposal aims to preserve the tree boundary of the site and upgrade existing features worthy of conservation, such as the Dalmeny Battery and the buildings in and around the Fort site. The proposal satisfies the objectives of Local Development Plan policy ENV 6.

c) The principle of development is acceptable

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) was published in June 2014 and provides a statement of Scottish Government policy on land use policy.

In terms of promoting business opportunities, paragraph 93 states that the planning system should promote business development "that increases economic activity while safeguarding and enhancing the natural and built environments as national assets" and "give due weight to net economic benefit of proposed development".

Paragraph 147 recognises that World Heritage Sites are of international importance. Where a development proposal has the potential to affect a World Heritage Site, or its setting, the planning authority must protect and preserve its Outstanding Universal Value. Para 2.8 recognises that to create successful and sustainable places, much can be gained in supporting growth in key sectors such as "the natural and cultural assets that underpin our tourism sector".

The Local Development Plan (LDP) supports leisure development in principle which supports Edinburgh's role as a major tourist destination and cultural centre of international importance.

Local Development Plan policy Ret 7 - (Entertainment and Leisure Developments) supports leisure proposals where;

- The site is or will be made easily accessible by a choice of transport and not lead to an unacceptable increase in traffic locally
- The proposal can be integrated satisfactorily into its surroundings with attractive frontages to a high quality of design that safeguards existing character
- The proposal is compatible with surrounding uses and will not lead to a significant increase in noise, disturbance and on-street activity at unsocial hours to the detriment of living conditions for nearby residents.

In response to these policy requirements the applicant is promoting the Bridge Experience as a "Rail Experience". Visitors will be encouraged to visit the experience by rail, accessing the site from the upgraded footpath/cycle path link from Dalmeny Rail Station. The existing footpath also connects directly to the public bus stop on Station Road.

Organised tours will be able to access the site by private bus and the improved footpath up through Hawes Brae is hoped to attract visitors from the cruise ships and the town centre bus stops. In the event that visitors will drive to the experience it is considered that adequate onsite parking is provided by the proposal. Visitors would be given a time slot and a barrier system would be in place.

A full assessment of Transport implications and Highway Safety is presented in section 3 h) of this report. The principle of providing adequate accessibility by sustainable modes of transport is considered to be satisfied.

Policy Ret 7 also requires that new leisure developments out with the city centre integrate into its surroundings and offer high quality deign. This is assessed in section 3 (i) of this report.

The principle of the visitor centre is considered acceptable in this location subject to satisfying the relevant policies of the Local Development Plan, these are assessed in detail in the relevant sections below.

d) The proposal will preserve the outstanding universal value of the Forth Bridge World Heritage Site

Local Development Plan policy Env 1 (World Heritage Sites) aims to protect the Forth Bridges World Heritage Site from development which would harm the qualities which justified its inscription.

The inscription as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO bestows a prestigious cultural accolade of the structure which recognises its importance and recognisable characteristics.

The inscription includes a "Statement of Outstanding Universal Value" (SOUV) which includes the following;

*This enormous structure, with its distinctive industrial aesthetic and striking red colour, was conceived and built using advanced civil engineering design principles and construction methods. Innovative in design, materials and scale, the Forth Bridge is an extraordinary and impressive milestone in bridge design and construction during the period when railways came to dominate long-distance land travel*

*The Forth Bridge is the culmination of its typology, scarcely repeated but widely admired as an engineering wonder of the world.*

*The Forth Bridge is a masterpiece of creative genius because of its distinctive industrial aesthetic, which is the result of a forthright, unadorned display of its massive functional structural elements*

*The Forth Bridge is an extraordinary and impressive milestone in the evolution of bridge design and construction during the period when railways came to dominate long-distance land travel, innovate in its concept, its use of mild steel, and its enormous scale.*

*The Forth Bridge is fully authentic in form and design, which are virtually unaltered materials and substance, which have undergone only minimal changes; and use and function, which have continued as originally intended*

*Specific long-term expectations related to key issues include maintenance of strong community support, broadening understanding in the context of world bridges, attention to development within key views, risk management and inspiring others.*

Recommendations of the SOUV include *submitting plans for any proposed visitor centre at the earliest possibility to the World Heritage for review*.

Historic Environment Scotland confirmed that UNESCO has been notified of the planning application. To date no response has been received from UNESCO in respect of the proposals.

The proposed visitor experience would meet with objectives of UNESCO to broaden the understanding of the world's iconic bridges.

The proposed Hub reception building has been sensitively designed and sited such that it will sit quietly in the shadow of the scale of the huge iconic structure and will not prove detrimental to the inscriptions.

The physical interventions to secure the pedestrian route will be of minimal change and will expand upon the facility provided for maintenance staff.

The proposal will not interrupt any key viewpoints of the bridge. The staircase around the Jubilee Tower may be seen when approaching Queensferry from the East, most probably from the river, but it is of such small scale that it would not detract from the universal value of the structure.

The loss of the boundary trees to the east of the bridge to accommodate the visitor car park are not considered to be a prominent landscape feature that contribute to the inscription of the bridge.

The proposal accords with Local Development Plan policy Env 1 in that it will not harm the qualities of inscription of the World Heritage Site.

e) <u>The design is acceptable and will contribute towards a sense of place</u>

Local Development Plan policy Env 3 (Listed Building -setting) encourages the retention of existing characteristics and features worth of retention on the site. The proposal has been designed around the listed structures on the site ensuring their distinctive characteristics are revealed by the development. The opening up of the railway compound and clearance of vegetation around the Dalmeny Battery will be enhanced by the proposal.

The loss of trees within the site is regrettable but this is required to ensure good connectivity to the reception hub building from the station and Queensferry and will thus create a new sense of place at this location. The key boundary planting will be retailed. It is recognised that the replacement planting will take time to become established, but the landscape planting proposed will eventually provide new habitat to enhance biodiversity in this locality and offers improved management of the woodland character of the site.

Local Development Plan policy Des 4 (Development Design -Impact on Setting) encourages new development to have a positive impact upon its surroundings, including the character of the wider townscape and landscape.

The principles of good connectivity were encouraged by the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel. The proposed siting of the reception building and opening up of the compound area will help repair this entrance point to the Forth Rail Bridge, it will be well connected to both the railway station and via the new footpath connections north and west to Queensferry Town centre this creating a new place within the woodland clearing.

The Edinburgh Urban Design Panel recommended that the Hub building should have a bold design and should create a sense of arrival at its entrance.

The height and floorplan of the new hub building is domestic in scale; at one and a half storeys high it sits comfortably under the granite pier of the rail bridge. The proposed material finish of the new hub building is high quality concrete and steel and its scale and form will respect the industrial heritage of the bridge. It is considered that the design has responded sensitively to its context whilst being innovative. The fully glazed east facing entrance lobby provides a focus to the Rail Bridge.

The removal of the ancillary buildings associated with the Forts; the swimming pool and car port, together with the upgrading of the existing dwelling and careful siting of the plant store and cycle store will complete a cohesive form of development and will sit comfortably within retained landscape on the site. The proposed car parking will have porous surface and will have pockets of planting distributed throughout to ensure it complements the landscape character of the area.

The Fort house and its curtilage and the site for the Hub reception centre lie within the Edinburgh Greenbelt, Local Development Plan policy Env 10 (Development in the Green Belt and Countryside) is relevant. With regards to policy Env 10, the key test for all proposals in the green belt will be to ensure that the development does not detract from landscape quality and/or the rural character of the area.

The proposal serves a unique recreational/educational purpose where its location is dictated by the proximity to the existing structure of heritage. The associated building and hard standing areas to serve the facility are considered to be of a scale and quality of design appropriate to the use. The landscape character of the area will be managed through the development of the facility and new landscape planting will become established, subsequently the landscape buffer between the town of Queensferry and the surrounding countryside will be enhanced. The proposal will not have a detrimental impact upon the greenbelt.

It is concluded that the proposed development of the site to accommodate the bridge visitor experience has been sensitively designed to ensure that the character and setting of Queensferry is protected and enhanced. The design of the building and proposed materials are appropriate in the context and the proposal will contribute to a sense of place at this location.

f) The proposal will result in a loss of trees

Local Development Plan policy Env 12 (Trees) aims to protect trees or woodland worthy of retention unless necessary for good arboriculture reasons. Where such a permission is granted, replacement planting of appropriate species and numbers will be required to offset the loss of amenity. The trees in the application site are protected by virtue of being within a conservation area. There are no Tree Protection Orders on the site.

The application is supported by a Tree Survey Report which includes a detailed assessment and comprehensive inventory of the 587 trees across the site. Approximately 20 trees will be removed due to their health; instability, leaning or dead. A further 128 trees will be removed to accommodate the development. The condition of these trees is recorded as mainly good to fair condition.

In general, the woodland on the site has been neglected over the years and it is considered that good management of the site is now required. A Woodland Management Plan has been submitted which sets out the long term management vision for the site to cover the first ten years following the completion of the Forth Bridge Experience construction phase. Ongoing annual inspection will highlight any fatally diseased trees which will be removed. The highest risk identified is Ash die back. Of the trees on the site 175 are identified as Ash trees, many of which indicate the presence of the disease.

The application includes a detailed replanting plan and also includes a root protection plan. The replanting species are diverse and will enhance the biodiversity of the site in the long term.

It is recognised that there is a significant number of trees being lost to accommodate this development. This is recognised as loss to the character locally and a loss to the biodiversity of the area. The location of the new footpath to the town centre was chosen to minimise trees loss, however there will be a loss of nine good quality trees. The location of the new building is largely on a cleared compound area however seventeen quality trees will be lost to accommodate the building, trees close by and on the boundaries will be protected throughout the building period.

In order to accommodate the parking in a coherent design solution there is a loss of over thirty trees. It is recognised that this loss will take many years to replace, and in order to achieve a suitable replacement a planting scheme is proposed that is focussed on creating a significant canopy cover in the future. The transport turning circle is requires to allow for mini bus drop off and accessible spaces for disabled visitors, to ensure accessibility by all.

The loss of trees on the site is regrettable but on balance the development will ensure long term good woodland management of site with a new tree canopy of diverse species and ages being planted which will create a more robust woodland in the longer term.

g) The proposal will impact upon local biodiversity

Local Development Plan policy Env 16 (Species Protection) aims to protect species protected under European Law.

The application site is located within 20km of four European Designated Sites. The bridge walk experience occurs over the Firth of Forth Special Protection Area and RAMSAR site. Further from the application site lies the Forth Island Special Protection Area and the Imperial Dock Leith Special Protection Area. The implications of the proposed development upon these designations has been assessed, and as required by the Habitat Regulations detailed Habitat Regulation Appraisal including and appropriate assessment has been submitted in support of the application. This work was carried out in consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage and concluded that and concluded that the proposals will not adversely affect the integrity of the Special Protection Areas. Scottish Natural Heritage support the conclusions of the report.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been submitted in support of the application which surveyed the development site. The work was carried out in April 2019 and followed the Phase 1 Habitat Survey Methodology.

The habitats on the site are mainly semi natural broadleaved woodland and plantation broad leaved woodland, some isolated trees, shrubs and hedgerows and a dried up small pond. The habitats were found to be incompatible with otter and water vole, and no evidence of badger was found.

The report identifies that there is potential for foraging and commuting bats both within the trees and buildings and therefore a detailed Bat Survey has been carried out. The Bat Report identifies a single roost in the site and therefore the development will have an effect on a European protected species, which in accordance with the Habitats Regulations 1994, will require the applicant to obtain a BLIMP licence from Scottish Natural Heritage. Prior to issuing this licence it is necessary for the applicant to be in receipt of planning permission. Therefore the planning authority must be satisfied that the three tests necessary for a licence to be issued, will be met. With information supplied by the applicant the three test have been applied to this application and it is considered likely that SNH will issue a licence.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identifies that the clearance of trees on the site could lead to the potential loss of ecological corridors. Recommendations include avoiding tree felling or tree work between bird breeding seasons on March to August.

In response to the recommendations of the report the applicant has submitted detailed planting proposals which aim to enhance local biodiversity. In addition the Woodland Management Plan aims to ensure adequate tree canopy cover is achieved across the site and will be actively monitored and managed for the first ten years following completion of the development. The smaller trees proposed for the shaded and steep embankments will allow for easier future management of the woodland whilst supporting native wildlife.

It is concluded that subject to the submission of a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure careful management of the wildlife and habitats on the site throughout development, that the proposal has the potential to improve biodiversity on the site in the long term. An informative is proposed to encourage further enhancements in consultation with the Council's Natural Heritage Team.

h) The proposal raises any issues in respect of transport and road safety

Local Development Plan policy Tra 1 (Location of Major Travel Generating Development) encourages major travel generating development to be located close to sustainable modes of transport.

The application is supported by a Transport Statement.

The vehicle access to the site utilises the existing that currently come off Hawes Brae to serve the Fort dwelling and the maintenance compound used by Network Rail. Transport are satisfied with the Road Safety Audit carried out on the access junction which demonstrates that, by removing some obstructions, an adequate visibility splay of 2.4m by 70m can be achieved. There is a major oil pipe close to the junction, the applicant is advised that Ineous will require consultation when road widening is required.

The proposal includes a series of design principles which promote walking, cycling and public transport as the primary means of access to the site. The application proposes high quality, well sign posted, linkages to the site from the surrounding active travel facilities including the railway station, bus stops and cycle path. The application proposes traffic calming measures within the site such as a single track access routes with passing places.

The main objections to the application relate to additional traffic entering the Queensferry Network causing car parking problems and pollution and disruption to the village. The key areas of congestion are identified as around Dalmeny Railway Station and along Station Road.

The application proposes a tight management of visitors by car by providing them with an allotted time slot, with access to the car park via a controlled barrier system. In this regard it is considered that the proposal should not contribute to additional car parking problems in the village.

In response to objections to the proposal from the residents in the neighbouring residential properties such as Ashburnham Loan, the applicant has advised that access to the site will be carefully managed through their booking system and the website.

Residents have asked for further measures to be carried out by the Council and Network Rail to control car parking in and around Dalmeny Station, however this is out-with the requirement of this planning application.

Transport accept that the level of visitor car parking proposed with the application is informed by peak time maximum number of cars on the site, which is calculated as a requirement for 57 spaces, based on a car occupancy rate of 2.5 to the expected 224 peak time visitors which equates to 57 on-site cars during the peak time. The proposed 78 visitor car parking spaces is considered over provision when assessed against Assembly and Leisure use class within the Council's parking standards, however the visitor centre is a unique planning proposal and on that basis the number of car parking spaces is considered acceptable in Zone 3. An additional 11 proposed spaces are provided for employees.

Transport are supportive of the provision of the 54 on site cycle spaces and the enhanced active travel links. They recommend that the applicant should develop a Travel Plan in accordance with the Council's LTS Travplan3 policy. This should include a high-quality map of the neighbourhood (showing cycling, walking and public transport routes to key facilities) and timetables for local public transport.

Transport have raised no objection to the development of the site as proposed. A series of informatives are recommended to ensure all works are to adoptable standards and comply with the relevant Traffic Regulations. Also to ensure that the construction stage does not result in the obstruction of a public right of way.

i) <u>The proposal will have a detrimental impact on the amenity of nearby residents</u>

Local Development Plan policy Hou 7 (Inappropriate Uses in Residential Area) aims to protect predominately residential areas from non-compatible uses which would affect the living conditions of residents.

The Ashburnham housing estate lies to the west of the Forth Bridge and is severed from the application site by the core path/cycle route which utilises an old railway line and a substantial landscape buffer. There is an existing footbridge over the cycle path which will be replaced at a location further away from the dwellings.

The area of the site on the west of the Forth Bridge, which is currently fenced and occasionally used by Network Rail as a compound, will become the site of the reception Hub for the visitor attraction. The proposal will potentially attract a number of visitors into an area currently only circumnavigated by local residents and the occasional visitor moving from the station to the promenade/town centre.

Vehicular access to the development will be from the existing access off Hawes Brae in the east and will not directly affect neighbouring residential properties. The former residential dwelling and garden on the east of the Forth Bridge will be developed as a car park and office, this is isolated from the surrounding residential properties.

There are currently Rights of Way which dissect through the site connecting Queensferry promenade to the station. These routes will be upgraded and signposted as part of the proposal and are therefore likely to intensify in use.

The proposed visitor experience will bring additional car movements to the area. The Transport Statement submitted in support of the application sets out ways in which this could be managed. To avoid contributing to the existing parking problems in Queensferry visitors will be provided with a time selected parking space on site. Transport implications are discussed in detail in section 3 (h) and good management measures are recommended to encourage minimal impact upon the amenity of Queensferry town.

Neighbouring residents in Ashburnham Loan, to the west of the proposal, have raised numerous objections to the development, including the principle of the use and the loss of amenity to their properties.

**Overlooking**

Of key concern to the closest properties to the development is the potential of overlooking from the Hub Building. The ramp access which circles around the south west of the building will be a minimum of 35 metres from the corner of the nearest dwelling at a point where the average eye height is greater than the external wall height. At this position the visitor will be connected to the wire link and will be moving in anticlockwise around the south west to the north east of the building and will not have the opportunity to linger and overlook neighbouring properties. In time the landscape boundaries will be reinforced to provide further screening.

Residents along the eastern side of Ashburnham Loan have expressed concern regarding the upgrading of the footpath link from Dalmeny Station to the Hub building, this will result in substantial loss of existing landscape cover along the railway embankment and the footpath will be in an elevated position on the embankment.

It is proposed to provide new planting along the boundary with Ashburnham Loan, along the route of the original footpath. This will be a mix of feathered trees and some semi mature trees planted at around 2metres in height. It is acknowledged that this will take time to establish to any rewardable depth of structure. The Tree and Woodland Management Plan identifies in para 6.2 that;

"Tree works for the next ten years will focus on maintaining the screening benefits of the existing and new cover, by removal of any stakes and ties, and the replacement of any failed trees. Thereafter any dead, dying, dangerous or fatally diseased trees would be highlighted at the annual inspection and removed. They will be replaced if space allows".

With the implementation of the Woodland Management Plan, it is envisaged that as a result of the proposed replanting that the landscape canopy will remain sufficiently dense so as not leave existing residents exposed to overlooking from aspects of the development.

## Loss of Amenity

The Hub building will be a reception centre, intended only for visitors to the Bridge Walk Experience and is not a visitor centre attraction. The applicants have advised that they do not intend to hold private functions or late night events at the premises. To protect the future amenity of neighbouring residents from late night events it is recommended that a condition be attached to any planning permission to provide control of hours of operation.

The properties on Bankhead Grove lie south off the development and are well screened by existing landscape buffers. It is considered that they will not be unduly disturbed by the development.

## Lighting

The applicant has submitted a lighting plan which will provide for low level sensitive lighting of the facility which protects the heritage value of the site and local biodiversity. This lighting plan has regard for the local residents by the careful orientation of the lighting and level of illumination. It is considered that no light pollution should disturb neighbours from the proposed development.

## Noise

The application is supported by a noise report which assesses the noise impact from the proposal upon neighbouring residential properties. The access to the visitor experience sits to the east of the railway line and as such noise from the visitors to the car park and accessing the attraction and the bridge work is likely to be minimal and unlikely to cause disturbance to nearby properties. A condition is recommended to ensure that the hours of operation of the building is controlled between 08:00hrs and 22:00hrs to ensure compatibility with the residential community.

Environmental protection advice that the proposed plant compound including one transformer and five air source heat pumps will not be detrimental to local residents even in the worst case scenario when all the plant is operating together.

## Air Quality

Many objections relate to air pollution that would be generated from the traffic visiting the site. The impact upon local air quality from car parking movements has not been assessed as the car parking spaces are below 100 spaces, the minimum standard to trigger the need for an air quality assessment.

The scale of cars at peak time, 32 two-way vehicular traffic, is considered insignificant in this location. The applicant is committed to providing electric vehicle charging points on the site and strongly promotes sustainable forms of transport to access the facilities.

It is considered that the traffic generated from the proposal will not significantly contribute to air quality in this location.

**Community Safety**

The proposal will ensure the safety and security of its visitors and surveillance over the cycle route and footpaths will be increased.

Refuse and recycling facilities, plant and services have been carefully integrated into the design layout.

**Conclusion**

The development will be sensitively integrated into the wider neighbourhood. The proposal satisfactorily demonstrates that that the amenity of neighbours will not be adversely affected by the proposal, it complies with Local Development Plan policy DES 5 Development Design amenity in that it will ensure no unreasonable noise impact or loss of daylight, sunlight or privacy.

j) The proposals are sustainable

The proposal is located close to sustainable transport provision including train, bus, cycling and footpaths. The proposal includes electric vehicle charging points to meet future demands.

The design of the supporting buildings includes sedum roofs and also includes solar pv panels on the main reception building and air source heat points to provide space heating in the reception building.

The proposal meets the essential criteria in terms of energy needs and therefore satisfies Local Development Plan policy Des 6 (Sustainable Buildings).

k) The proposal will have an impact on flooding

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and a Surface Water Management Plan.

The main risk to the site is from pluvial flooding with some potential of ground water run-off from the neighbouring field.

The application site is currently 60% hard standing, the application proposes the removal of the pond on the site and will increase porous surface drainage and include the introduction of filter drains on site.

The proposed development of the site is acceptable to SEPA. They have no record of the site flooding however they have a record of surface water runoff from an old railway cutting affecting a property on Newhalls Road.

Flooding are satisfied with the information received in respect of the Flood Risk Assessment and raise no objection to the proposed development.

l) There are other material considerations

**Archaeology**

Archaeology advise that in addition to the interest of the site in terms of its 20th century military history and railway heritage the site is in a location that was the focus for prehistorical occupation and burial dated to the 9th millennium BC. As such a programme of archaeological works will require to be agreed and a condition is recommended to achieve this.

**Infrastructure**

The removal of the swimming pool and the conversion of the domestic dwelling to office use is acceptable to Scottish Water, there is adequate capacity within the sewer system without the need for upgrading works.

m) Impacts on equalities and rights are acceptable

The application has been assessed against the Equalities and Rights. The nature of the visitor experience will require a level of mobility and fitness to ascend the bridge. The building will be accessed by the public and therefore will be required to satisfy building standards. The proposed layout and design of the building provides room for disabled access. On site disabled car parking bays are provided. The new footbridge is provided at a level grade making the route from the station more accessible by wheelchairs and pushchairs.

n) Public representations have been addressed

The application was advertised on 20 September 2019 and a site notice displayed, the time period was extended until 7 November 2019 the representations received include 2 comments, 40 letters of support and 155 objections.

The matters raised may be summarised as follows:

**Comments**

- Concern regarding the loss of trees along the path;
- The proposal will give rise to overlooking and noise and will need for further screening and/or replacement planting;
- Clarification sought of planting details;
- Queensferry needs safe parking on Hawes Brae;
- Applicant should ensure the use of Public Transport for visiting;
- Concerns regarding existing flooding of the cycle path; and
- Safety concerns and accessibility of emergency vehicles along the single track road.

**Support**

- Amazing opportunity to showcase this amazing World Heritage Site, an amazing engineering feat;
- This is an Iconic structure throughout the world it should be managed as a valid tourist attraction;
- This will be a good education resource for future engineers;
- The proposal will bring more tourism to the area/ will keep cruise liner guests in Queensferry;
- The proposal will enhance the Forth Rail Bridge World Heritage Landmark reputation;
- The proposal will be valuable to the local economy and for raising the profile of Queensferry and the Forth Bridge;
- The proposal will spread the tourism out from Edinburgh;
- The additional parking on the site will be a great asset to the town;
- A great project of good design in-keeping with the bridge structure, the scheme is sensitive in its proportions and respects its surroundings;
- Welcome the enhanced access from the Station to the Prom;
- The footpath from Dalmeny station to the cycleway is long overdue/improved amenity for locals;
- Support the management of the overgrown foliage into the footpath area;
- This is a good choice of site close to Dalmeny Station;
- The route through the wooded fringe of the railway line will be part of a positive experience revealing the bridge to visitors; and
- Welcome job creation in this location.

**Objections**

<u>Principle</u>

- Contrary to Local Development Plan policy Tra1, Hou7, Des5, Env12, Env 5 and Env 6 (addressed in assessment section 3 c)
- The Development does not appear to be in keeping with the Forth Bridges Tourism Strategy (2019-2029) (addressed in assessment section 3 c)
- The proposal should take advantage of initiatives such as CAV Forth Autonomous bus trails due to start in 2020. This has potential to create a multi-site visitor experience (addressed in assessment section 3 h)
- Disjointed approach to the project by housing the visitor centre in north Queensferry Ferry (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

<u>Transport</u>

- Lack of car parking, the proposal will lead to on-street parking congestion and impact into the neighbouring streets (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- Difficult for wheelchair users to move between Ashburnham Loan and Dalmeny Rail Station/bus stops (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- Poor level of infrastructure in Queensferry, the town currently can't cope with visitor numbers (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- Dangerous junction at A90 and B924 (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- Lack of detailed modelling for transport in the area (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- The proposal will generate 15 visitors every 20 mins, 66 spaces is not enough/ the proposal underestimates the potential visitors (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- How to manage/control the car park time slots (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- Expected 80,000 visitors a year will disrupt quiet neighbourhood (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- The proposal brings no benefit to local people, feeling pressurised
- to accept more change in the town (addressed in assessment section 3 c)

Amenity

- Increase in air pollution from the associated visitor traffic (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- Concern regarding the raised walkway and loss of privacy/amenity on Ashburnham Loan (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- The loss of trees between Ashburnham Loan and the railway line will increase noise pollution from the trains (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- Concern regarding proposed visitors using the building until 22:00hrs, should close earlier in this residential area (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- Concern that reception building will be used for other noisy events. (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- The proposal is too intrusive and commercial for tranquil area, the building should be on the eastern side of the bridge away from residents (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- Noise pollution to the properties on Bankhead Grove (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- The proposal will cause light pollution (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

Design

- Proposed reception building is ugly / an eyesore/ not sympathetic to conservation area or listed status the bridge (addressed in assessment section 3 e)

- -The development will go against the promise of sustainable sympathetic tourism. (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- -The development will threaten the striking and distinctive view of the bridge by constructing a walkway (addressed in assessment section 3 a)

- The proposed grey wall will attract graffiti (addressed in assessment section 3 i)

- The footpath to Hawes Brae is not in-keeping with the rural area (addressed in assessment section 3 h)

- No access for wheelchair/walking restricted people to get to the top of the bridge (addressed in assessment section 3 m)

- Not enough space on the ground to accommodate the proposal (addressed in assessment section 3 e)

Heritage

- Objection to the platform and building developments impacting on the World Heritage Site (addressed in assessment section 3 d)

- The wrap around stair will distract from the appearance of the category A bridge and will create a hazard (addressed in assessment section 3 a)

- Imposing a modern intervention beside the historic bridge (addressed in assessment section 3 a)

- Object to glazing of the historic battery (addressed in assessment section 3 a)

- Inappropriate development in the UNESCO World Heritage Site (addressed in assessment section 3 d)

- Non-environmental friendly materials proposed in the construction (addressed in assessment section 3 j)

- Concern regarding impact of visitor numbers on the bridge (addressed in assessment section 3 a)

Biodiversity

- Does not take account of Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan (addressed in assessment section 3 j)

- Loss of around 130 trees will impact negatively on the conservation area and species (addressed in assessment section 3 f and 3g)

Non Planning Comments

- Undemocratic consultation exercise, notification doesn't go far enough;
- Anger at Network Rail investing in this project when they should focus on a rail network fit for purpose;
- Suggest that City of Edinburgh Council propose free resident parking zones for the entirety of local residential streets and single yellow parking on more important roads such as Station Road;
- There should be a visitor attraction for all three bridges located either at Port Edgar or Hawes pier of in North Queensferry. The best way to see the bridges is by boat;
- This is not Sydney but the outskirts of a small town;
- Council/Developer lining their own pockets;
- Recommend that the Planning Committee members visit the site (a site visit was conducted on 15 January 2020);
- Recommend an escalator or a moving walkway up Jacob's ladder;
- This is an unnecessary commercial tourist enterprise;
- South Queensferry High Street has been destroyed by poor Council management, this will demonstrate the Council stewardship of this Historic town is neglect; and
- The rail service is poor, carriages missing and trains overcrowded, together with bus route is not sufficient to serve the proposal.

**Conclusion**

It is considered that the proposed development to accommodate the bridge experience is acceptable in principle. The loss of trees on the site will have a short term localised impact and the success of restoring the woodland cover is reliant upon adherence to the Tree and Woodland Management Plan (December 2019) for a minimum period of ten years post construction.

The approach to the built development has been sensitive ensuring that that the scale and design of the new built form protects and enhances the character and appearance of the Queensferry Conservation Area. The interventions to the listed structures, the Forth Rail Bridge and Dalmeny Battery, are minimal thus ensuring that the character and setting of the listed building is protected. Adequate on site car parking and key links to sustainable modes of transport will be formed with adequate on site cycle spaces.

The development complies with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it preserves the character and setting of listed buildings and preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

It is recommended that this application be Granted subject to the details below.

**3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives**

**Conditions:-**

1. Hours of operation shall be restricted to 08:00hrs to 22:00hrs.

2. i) Prior to the commencement of construction works on site:

   a) A site survey (including intrusive investigation where necessary) must be carried out to establish, either that the level of risk posed to human health and the wider environment by contaminants in, on or under the land is acceptable, or that remedial and/or protective measures could be undertaken to bring the risks to an acceptable level in relation to the development and

   b) Where necessary, a detailed schedule of any required remedial and/or protective measures, including their programming, must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

   ii) Any required remedial and/or protective measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved schedule and documentary evidence to certify those works shall be provided for the approval of the Planning Authority.

3. No development shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured and implemented a programme of archaeological work (historic building recording, excavation, analysis and reporting, publication, interpretation and public engagement) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

   The work must be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation, either working to a brief prepared by CECAS or through a written scheme of investigation submitted to and agreed by CECAs for the site. Responsibility for the execution and resourcing of the programme of archaeological works and for the archiving and appropriate level of publication of the results lies with the applicant.

4. Details of the paint colour scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority within three months of the date of this consent, or prior to work commencing on site, whichever is the sooner.

5. A detailed specification, including trade names where appropriate, of all the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before work is commenced on site; Note: samples of the materials may be required.

6. The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented within six months of the completion of the development.

7. Only the tree/s shown for removal on the approved drawing/s shall be removed, and no work shall be carried out on the remaining trees at any time without the approval of the Planning Authority.

8. The trees on the site shall be protected during the construction period by the erection of fencing, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 " Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction".

9. Full details of the proposed capped glazing rooflight to the Dalmeny Battery shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before work commences on the battery.

10. Prior to the commencement of works a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be submitted to the Planning Authority for approval, in consultation with relevant Statutory Consultees. The CEMP will detail the procedures and methods to be followed to minimise any potential adverse effects of construction on the local environment and shall include the following;

    a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities
    b) Risk assessment of tree loss on the bank stability.
    c) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
    d) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction.
    e) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
    f) The times during construction when specialist ecologist need to be present on the site to oversee works.
    g) Responsible persons and lines of communication
    h) The role and responsibilities on site of ecological clerk of works (ECow) or similar competent person.
    i) The use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

11. The footpath and cycleway connections shown on the approved drawings shall be fully implemented and open prior to the opening of the Forth Bridge Experience.

12 . No demolition shall commence until the applicant has secured the appropriate licence from Scottish Natural Heritage in respect of the bat roost within the buildings.

13. Within 12 months from the commencement of development, tree work and replanting shall be carried out in accordance with the prescriptions of the Tree and Woodland Management Plan dated December 2019. For a period ten years of commencement of the development hereby approved. An annual inspection of the trees and woodland will be carried out and submitted to the Planning Authority for review. A programme of operation should be agreed focussing on maintenance and after care. A full tree survey report shall be prepared every five

years and submitted to the Planning Authority for on-going monitoring and management of the site.

14. Prior to the development commencing, a timetabled schedule of all operations proposed in the Tree and Woodland Management Plan (December 2019) is submitted to and agreed with the Planning Authority. Thereafter the schedule of operations agreed shall be implemented in full within the next planting season and not altered unless agreed with the Planning Authority.

**Reasons**:-

1. In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents and other occupiers.

2. In order to ensure that the site is suitable for redevelopment, given the nature of previous uses/processes on the site.

3. In order to safeguard the interests of archaeological heritage.

4. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.

5. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.

6. In order to ensure that the approved landscaping works are properly established on site.

7. In order to safeguard protected trees.

8. In order to safeguard protected trees.

9. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.

10. In order to safeguards the interests of nature conservation.

11. In order to encourage sustainable modes of Transport to the recreation experience.

12. To ensure adequate protection of European Protected Species on the site.

13. To safeguard the health and condition of trees

14. To enable the Planning Authority to have regard to future amenity.

**Informatives**

It should be noted that:

1. All accesses must be open for use by the public in terms of the statutory definition of 'road' and require to be the subject of applications for road construction consent. The extent of adoptable footways, footpaths, cycle tracks, verges to be agreed. The applicant should note that this will include details of lighting, drainage, Sustainable Urban Drainage, materials, structures, layout, design and specification.

   The applicant is encouraged to produce an Access Management Plan to show how public access will be maintained and managed alongside the construction of the proposed development.

2. In accordance with the Council's LTS Travplan3 policy, the applicant should consider developing a Travel Plan including provision of a high-quality map of the neighbourhood (showing cycling, walking and public transport routes to key local facilities), timetables for local public transport.

2. Any work affecting adopted road must be carried out under permit and in accordance with the specifications. See Road Occupation Permits http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/1263/apply_for_permission_to_create_or_alter_a_driveway_or_other_access_point.

3. All disabled persons parking places should comply with Disabled Persons Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009. The Act places a duty on the local authority to promote proper use of parking places for disabled persons' vehicles. The applicant should therefore advise the Council if he wishes the bays to be enforced under this legislation. A contribution of £2,000 will be required to progress the necessary traffic order but this does not require to be included in any legal agreement. All disabled persons parking places must comply with Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 regulations or British Standard 8300:2009 as approved.

5. 15 of the parking spaces required to be electric vehicle charging bays.

6. A total of 54 cycle parking spaces to be provided.

7. The existing footway/core path on south side of the site to be upgraded to provide direct footway from Dalmeny train station to the site via proposed footbridge; the existing route is core path, the new footway should be built under RCC to safeguard its use to the public.

8. A stepped pedestrian route linking the site to Newhalls Road/Hawes Brae to the north is to be provided for improved pedestrian accessibility, and a new footway to be provided on the vehicular access road to connect the site to Hawes Brae.

9. The site access junction to be upgraded for safe access. Priority is to be provided to vehicles accessing the site and with passing places. The submitted safety audit recommended achievable access junction visibility splay of 2.4m X 70m by removing all obstructions, the applicant is required to consult with Ineous regarding the Forties Pipeline system.

10. The existing Dalmeny to Queensferry cycle route on south side of the site should be connected to the site via cycle wheel ramp stepped access.

11. The proposed footbridge is to be built to adoptable standards and is subject to the approval by the Council.

12. The applicant is encouraged to engage further with CEC biodiversity team to include measures such as bird boxes, bee hotels and greater diversity of bulb planting to enhance biodiversity of the site. The retention of deadwood within the woodlands, where possible, is encouraged.

13. The applicant is advised to consult with INEOS Forth Pipeline Systems on the design and construction scope of the junction improvements to ensure the continued safe operation and integrity of the pipelines and apparatus.

14. Clearance of vegetation from the proposed construction area has the potential to disturb nesting birds; therefore clearance should be carried out outside the bird nesting season March - August (inclusive). Should it be necessary to clear ground during the bird nesting season the land should be surveyed by a suitably qualified ecologist and declared clear of nesting birds before vegetation clearance starts.

15. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

16. No development shall take place on the site until a 'Notice of Initiation of Development' has been submitted to the Council stating the intended date on which the development is to commence. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of planning control, under Section 123(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

17. As soon as practicable upon the completion of the development of the site, as authorised in the associated grant of permission, a 'Notice of Completion of Development' must be given, in writing to the Council.

## Financial impact

**4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:**

There are no financial implications to the Council.

## Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact

**5.1** Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

## Equalities impact

**6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights. The impacts are identified in the Assessment section of the main report.

## Sustainability impact

**7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application meets the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

## Consultation and engagement

**8.1 Pre-Application Process**

Pre-application discussions took place on this application.

**8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments**

The application was advertised on 20 September 2019 and a site notice displayed, the time period was extended until 7 November 2019. The application generated the following representations;

- 2 comments
- 40 support
- 155 objections

The applicants carried out a Public Engagement Meeting on 10th October 2019 and circulated a response from Network Rail to neighbours regarding their concerns on 18 November 2019.

## Background reading/external references

- To view details of the application go to
- Planning and Building Standards online services
- Planning guidelines
- Conservation Area Character Appraisals
- Edinburgh Local Development Plan
- Scottish Planning Policy

| | |
|---|---|
| **Statutory Development Plan Provision** | Scottish Planning Policy - Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) was published in June 2014 and provides a statement of Scottish government policy on land use planning.<br><br>National Planning Framework 3 - National Planning Framework 3 is a long-term strategy for Scotland, setting out plans for development and investment in infrastructure. It supports growth in key sectors such as "the natural and cultural assets that underpin our tourism sector".<br><br>Historic Environment Policy for Scotland published in May 2019 in relation to managing change Policy HEP2 states that decisions affecting the historic environment should ensure that its understanding and enjoyment as well as its benefits are secured for present and future generations. Policy HEP4 states that "changes to specific assets and their context should be managed in a way that protects the historic environment. Opportunities for enhancement should be identified where appropriate. "<br><br>The Forth Bridge Management Plan 2014-2019 - The Forth bridges Forum is managed by Transport Scotland on behalf of Scottish Ministers and includes Transport Scotland, Network Rail, City of Edinburgh Council, Fife Council, Historic Environment Scotland and Visit Scotland. The Forth Bridge Management Plan 2014-2019 was published in 2014 with the aim to "support the future management needs of the property, to coordinate the interests of associated organisations, groups and individuals, and to maximise the benefits that might also arise.<br><br>The Management Plan supports the creation of a must see international tourist attraction and enhanced visitor facilities and interpretation.<br><br>The Forth Bridges Tourism Strategy 2019-2029 - The Forth Bridges Area Tourism Strategy 2019-2029 was published by the Forth Bridges Forum in April 2019. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Strategic Outcome 1 relates to creating a visitor destination and one of the priority activities is" encouraging the creation of a new attractions and viewpoints of the bridges to capture visitors"<br><br>Edinburgh Local Development Plan - The proposal is subject to the policies of the Edinburgh Local Development Plan. |
| **Date registered** | 29 August 2019 |
| **Drawing numbers/Scheme** | , |

**David R. Leslie**
Chief Planning Officer
PLACE
The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Jennifer Paton, Senior planning officer
E-mail:jennifer.paton@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel: 0131 529 6473

## Links - Policies

**Relevant Policies:**

**Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.**

LDP Policy Des 1 (Design Quality and Context) sets general criteria for assessing design quality and requires an overall design concept to be demonstrated.

LDP Policy Des 3 (Development Design - Incorporating and Enhancing Existing and Potential Features) supports development where it is demonstrated that existing and potential features have been incorporated into the design.

LDP Policy Des 4 (Development Design - Impact on Setting) sets criteria for assessing the impact of development design against its setting.

LDP Policy Des 5 (Development Design - Amenity) sets criteria for assessing amenity.

LDP Policy Des 6 (Sustainable Buildings) sets criteria for assessing the sustainability of new development.

LDP Policy Des 7 (Layout design) sets criteria for assessing layout design.

LDP Policy Des 8 (Public Realm and Landscape Design) sets criteria for assessing public realm and landscape design.

LDP Policy Des 9 (Urban Edge Development) sets criteria for assessing development on sites at the Green Belt boundary.

LDP Policy Env 1 (World Heritage Site) protects the quality of the World Heritage Site and its setting.

LDP Policy Env 3 (Listed Buildings - Setting) identifies the circumstances in which development within the curtilage or affecting the setting of a listed building will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 4 (Listed Buildings - Alterations and Extensions) identifies the circumstances in which alterations and extensions to listed buildings will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 5 (Conservation Areas - Demolition of Buildings) sets out criteria for assessing proposals involving the demolition of buildings within a conservation area.

LDP Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas - Development) sets out criteria for assessing development in a conservation area.

LDP Policy Env 7 (Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes) protects sites included in the national Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes and other historic landscape features.

LDP Policy Env 8 (Protection of Important Remains) establishes a presumption against development that would adversely affect the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or archaeological remains of national importance.

LDP Policy Env 9 (Development of Sites of Archaeological Significance) sets out the circumstances in which development affecting sites of known or suspected archaeological significance will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 10 (Development in the Green Belt and Countryside) identifies the types of development that will be permitted in the Green Belt and Countryside.

LDP Policy Env 11 (Special Landscape Areas) establishes a presumption against development that would adversely affect Special Landscape Areas.

LDP Policy Env 12 (Trees) sets out tree protection requirements for new development.

LDP Policy Env 13 (Sites of International Importance) identifies the circumstances in which development likely to affect Sites of International Importance will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 14 (Sites of National Importance) identifies the circumstances in which development likely to affect Sites of National Importance will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 15 (Sites of Local Importance) identifies the circumstances in which development likely to affect Sites of Local Importance will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 16 (Species Protection) sets out species protection requirements for new development.

LDP Policy Env 18 (Open Space Protection) sets criteria for assessing the loss of open space.

LDP Policy Env 22 (Pollution and Air, Water and Soil Quality) sets criteria for assessing the impact of development on air, water and soil quality.

LDP Policy Ret 8 (Entertainment and Leisure Developments - Other Locations) sets out the circumstances in which entertainment and leisure developments will be permitted outwith the identified preferred locations.

LDP Policy Tra 2 (Private Car Parking) requires private car parking provision to comply with the parking levels set out in Council guidance, and sets criteria for assessing lower provision.

LDP Policy Tra 3 (Private Cycle Parking) requires cycle parking provision in accordance with standards set out in Council guidance.

LDP Policy Tra 4 (Design of Off-Street Car and Cycle Parking) sets criteria for assessing design of off-street car and cycle parking.

LDP Policy Tra 9 (Cycle and Footpath Network) prevents development which would prevent implementation of, prejudice or obstruct the current or potential cycle and footpath network.

The Queensferry Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the importance of the medieval core, the settlement pattern of stone built houses with their lang riggs, and the strong Scots vernacular character of the architecture

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting sets out Government guidance on the principles that apply to developments affecting the setting of historic assets or places.

**Relevant Government Guidance on Historic Environment.**

**Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines**

**Non-Statutory guidelines** Edinburgh Design Guidance supports development of the highest design quality and that integrates well with the existing city. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development, including buildings, parking, streets and landscape, in Edinburgh.

**Non-statutory guidelines** 'LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS' provides guidance on repairing, altering or extending listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.

# Appendix 1

## Application for Planning Permission 19/04116/FUL at Forth Rail Bridge, Hawes Brae, South Queensferry Development of a Forth Bridge Walk Reception Centre; new sections of bridge access system; new viewing platforms; associated car parking; landscaping; servicing and alterations to existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses.

## Consultations

### Historic Environment Scotland

Recommendations of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value include "submitted plans for any proposed visitor centre at the earliest possibility to the World Heritage Centre for review"

Historic Environment Scotland confirm that this process has been actioned.

No communication has been received from the World Heritage Centre in respect of the proposal.

### Edinburgh Urban Design Panel

*1 Recommendations*

*The Panel welcomes the opportunity to provide advice on the Forth Bridge Experience at this early stage in the design process. The Panel recognises the educational and cultural benefits of enabling people to connect with bridge. This an exciting project on an interesting scale, with potential to attract large numbers of visits.*

*In particular, the Panel supports:*

- *The focus on maintaining visitor numbers at a manageable level;*
- *Enabling and encouraging people to access the Forth Bridge Experience by rail, bicycle or on foot;*
- *Improvements and extensions to surrounding footpaths;*
- *Integrating rail travel into the Bridge Experience.*

- *In developing the proposals, the Panel suggests further consideration should be given to:*
- *A bolder design for the Reception Centre;*
- *Strong emphasis on landscape design, particularly in relation to site layout;*
- *Use of 3-D visualisations to test the impact of design solutions on relevant views;*
- *Ensuring all interventions are reversible;*
- *A clear rationale for colour choices;*

- *Effective traffic and carpark management;*
- *A robust visitor booking system;*
- *A thorough approach to security.*

*2 Planning Context*

*Site Description*
*The site lies under the Forth Road Bridge. The Forth Bridge is a statutory category-A listed building. The bridge is 2.5 km long and 110m high cantilever bridge completed in 1890.*

*UNESCO inscribed the Forth Bridge as a World Heritage Site on 5 July 2015, it has a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and a Management Plan. Network Rail, the applicant, owns the Forth Bridge and is responsible for its operation and maintenance, but wider World Heritage issues are coordinated by the Forth Bridges Forum.*

*The application site is accessed off Hawes Brae (B924) and will incorporate Fort House, currently a residential dwelling with category-A gun emplacements within its curtilage. The area under the bridges formally had industrial uses and is hard cored over and currently secure fenced. Electricity substations sit at the foot of the bridge piers.*

*Planning Policy*

*In the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP), the part of the site to the west of the bridge is allocated as open-space ENV 18, it is also designated as a Special Landscape Area, policy ENV 11. The land to the east of the bridge is designated as greenbelt, policy ENV 10 is relevant.*

*Policy ENV1 Development within a World Heritage Site and ENV3 Development affecting the setting of a listed building.*

*The site is within the Queensferry Conservation Area where policies ENV 5 and ENV 6 apply. The shore area under the bridge is within the Firth of Forth Natura 2000 site and SSSI, policies ENV 13 and ENV 14 area relevant. It is designated as a Local Nature Conservation site, policy ENV 15. The site is adjacent to Dalmeny Historic Garden/designated landscape inventory NT 16488 77731, added 01/07/1987, policy ENV 7 applies.*

*Planning History*

*The applicant requested and EIA screen on 25 May 2017. There is no other relevant planning history to the site.*

*This report*

*No declarations of interest were noted.*

*This report should be read in conjunction with the pre-meeting papers.*

*This report is the view of the Panel and is not attributable to any one individual. The report does not prejudice any of the organisations represented at the Panel forming a differing view at the proposals at a later stage.*

*3 Panel Comments*

*The Panel's detailed comments are as follows:*

*Accessibility*

*The Panel strongly supports the proposed emphasis on enabling and encouraging people to access the Forth Bridge Experience by rail, bicycle or on foot, in particular proposed improvements to the pedestrian route from Dalmeny Station and Jacob's Ladder, and new paths leading to/from the shore - all of which will benefit the wider community. While the Panel accepts it will be necessary for some visitors to arrive by car or minibus, it encourages the integration of rail travel, as far as possible, into the Bridge Experience.*

*The Panel notes that the new car park will be barrier-operated, with access restricted to private cars and mini-buses, excluding coaches. A strong focus on good traffic and car park management, including staff parking, is needed to ensure the facility runs smoothly. It may be possible to locate coach parking near Hawes Pier.*

*Visitor management*

*The Panel notes that no more than 120 people, in eight groups, will be climbing the bridge at any one time, and that indoor facilities will be limited to a briefing room, changing rooms, and WCs. It highlights the importance of maintaining visitor numbers at a manageable level by operating a robust booking system focussed on attracting people who are sufficiently fit to undertake the bridge climb.*

*While it is acknowledged that a café could benefit visitors, particularly in cold or windy weather, it is likely that the absence of a café will help keep visitor numbers within manageable limits.*

*Site Layout*

*The Panel considers that the site layout lacks a coherent landscape design and is currently dominated by visitor parking. The proposed intervention within the Greenbelt (visitor car park/vehicle access/turning circle) is the least satisfactory part of the design. Addressing these shortcomings should be a priority in taking forward the proposal.*

*Design concept*

*The Panel encourages a bolder design for the Reception Centre because the current proposal appears to turn its back on the bridge.*

*Some Panellists feel an opportunity has been missed to create a sense of arrival, such as a generous view of the bridge from the building. This could, for example, enable visitors to watch climbers in action. Alternatively, if absent from the building, the view could be part of the joy of climbing.*

*The Panel emphasises the importance of ensuring all interventions affecting the bridge are reversible.*

*Impact on setting*

*Although surrounded by sensitive designations, the Panel considers this setting capable of supporting a more visible intervention. Instead of hiding the building, the developer is encouraged to create good architecture that enhances the view from land, bridge and water.*

*SNH landscape visualisation standards should be used to demonstrate impact from various viewpoints, including close-up views of facilities and infrastructure, e.g. from surrounding roadways. Analysis should also take account of the visual impact of 120 climbers on the bridge.*

*Colour*

*The Panel recommends submission of a clear rationale for the choice of colour for new infrastructure and climbing wear. Suggestions vary, including:*

- *Making walkways match the colour of the existing bridge*
- *Painting new infrastructure a drab colour*
- *Using colour to achieve a clear contrast between new/existing infrastructure*
- *Making climbing suits match the colour of the existing bridge to ensure climbers "blend" with the structure and avoid an "ant-like" appearance.*
- *Bright yellow climbing suits.*

*Security*

*The Panel encourages a thorough approach to security, ensuring use of appropriate locks, bolts etc.*

**SEPA comment - 18 September 2019**

*We do not consider we are able to add value in this instance and would ask that you seek the input of the council's flood prevention officer for their views. Should they recommend further consultation with SEPA then we would be able to review and respond then.*

**SEPA updated comment - 23 September 2019**

*Further to my email of 18 September in which I advised we have no specific comment on flood risk, I have since spoken to our hydrologist to ask if they could have a look at the details of this application.*

*We have no objection to this planning application.*

*Advice for the planning authority in relation to flood risk*

*They have reviewed the information provided in this consultation and it is noted that a small part of the application site lies within the medium likelihood (0.5% annual probability or 1 in 200 year) flood extent of the SEPA Flood Map, and may therefore be at medium to high risk of flooding.*

*The risk identified at this site is from surface water flooding only. A surface water management plan has been submitted in support of the application and the council should be satisfied with the findings of the report. We recommend, if not done so already, that contact is made with the Flood Prevention Officers within Edinburgh Council to glean any information/ local knowledge that they may possess.*

*If you require us to provide additional comments on the flood risk issue, please re-consult us and specify the nature of the perceived flood risk.*

*We currently have no record of the site having been subject to any form of flooding, however, we have a record of surface water runoff from an old railway cutting affecting a property on Newhalls Road.*

*Caveats & Additional Information for Applicant*

*The SEPA Flood Maps have been produced following a consistent, nationally-applied methodology for catchment areas equal to or greater than 3km2 using a Digital Terrain Model (DTM) to define river corridors and low-lying coastal land. The maps are indicative and designed to be used as a strategic tool to assess flood risk at the community level and to support planning policy and flood risk management in Scotland. For further information please visit http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/flooding/flood-maps/*

*We refer the applicant to the document entitled: "Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders". This document provides generic requirements for undertaking Flood Risk Assessments and can be downloaded from http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/land/planning/guidance-and-advice-notes/.*
*Please note that this document should be read in conjunction Policy 41 (Part 2).*

*Our Flood Risk Assessment checklist should be completed and attached within the front cover of any flood risk assessments issued in support of a development proposal which may be at risk of flooding. The document will take only a few minutes to complete and will assist our review process. It can be downloaded from http://www.sepa.org.uk/media/159170/flood-risk-assessment-checklist.xls.*

*Please note that we are reliant on the accuracy and completeness of any information supplied by the applicant in undertaking our review, and can take no responsibility for incorrect data or interpretation made by the authors.*

*The advice contained in this letter is supplied to you by SEPA in terms of Section 72 (1) of the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 on the basis of information held by SEPA as at the date hereof. It is intended as advice solely to Edinburgh Council as Planning Authority in terms of the said Section 72 (1). Our briefing note entitled: "Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009: Flood risk advice to planning authorities" outlines the transitional changes to the basis of our advice in line with the phases of this legislation*

*and can be downloaded from http://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/land/planning/guidance-and-advice-notes/.*

**HES comment - 25 September 2019**

*Our Advice*

*The application brings forward a range of interventions to allow visitor access to the Forth Bridge. This includes the construction of a reception centre, new additions to the bridge to facilitate access, landscaping and associated works.*

*We have provided a view in our response to the listed building consent (LBC) consultation on the likely impact of those works which would have a direct physical impact on the Forth Bridge and adjacent Dalmeny Battery.*

*In this consultation we have considered visual impacts of development on the A-listed Forth Bridge and A-listed Dalmeny Battery. We have also considered the impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Forth Bridge World Heritage Site. The importance of the bridge is derived from aesthetic well as engineering values.*
*We provided pre-application advice in April and have attach a copy as an Annex to this letter. We did not anticipate any significant impacts and, having reviewed the finalised proposals and supporting information, we retain the view that these proposals will only likely result in more minor visual impacts - on both A-listed structures and the OUV of the World Heritage Site.*

*Looking at the visual impacts of alterations on the bridge. In areas where development is likely to be more noticeable, especially the proposed external access stair to the Jubilee Tower, the impacts would be more localised in nature. We would agree with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - which some adverse impacts are inevitable, but these should not be significant. Nevertheless, due to the adverse nature of this access stair, it would have been helpful if it could have been explained in more detail why this is the best approach - we are aware that other options were considered. We can see how the design of the new features take their cue from some of the more recent access improvements to the bridge, an approach that we support.*

*Turning to the reception centre. We remain (as at pre-application) that the location and design of the reception centre (and ancillary development / landscaping) means it is likely to only have localised impacts on views of the bridge. We are satisfied these would not impact on the more important (generally distant) views of the bridge as it crosses the Forth.*

*Finally, we welcome that the proposed landscaping works intends to incorporate the A-listed Dalmeny Battery.*

*Planning authorities are expected to treat our comments as a material consideration, and this advice should be taken into account in your decision making. Our view is that the proposals do not raise historic environment issues of national significance and therefore we do not object. However, our decision not to object should not be taken as our support for the proposals. This application should be determined in accordance with national and*

*local policy on development affecting the historic environment, together with related policy guidance.*

*Further Information*

*This response applies to the application currently proposed. An amended scheme may require another consultation with us.*

**Edinburgh Airport comment**

*The proposed development has been examined from an aerodrome safeguarding perspective and does not conflict with safeguarding criteria. We therefore have no objection to this proposal, however have made the following observation:*

*Lighting*

*The development is on the approach path to the runway. We draw attention to the need to carefully design lighting proposals. This is further explained in Advice Note 2, 'Lighting' (available at (http://www.aoa.org.uk/policy-campaigns/operations-safety/) Please note that the Air Navigation Order 2005, Article 135 grants the Civil Aviation Authority power to serve notice to extinguish or screen lighting which may endanger aircraft.*

*Cranes*

*Given the nature of the proposed development it is possible that a crane may be required during its construction. We would, therefore, draw the applicant's attention to the requirement within the British Standard Code of Practice for the safe use of Cranes, for crane operators to consult the aerodrome before erecting a crane in close proximity to an aerodrome. This is explained further in Advice Note 4, 'Cranes' (available at http://www.aoa.org.uk/policy-campaigns/operations-safety/)*

*It is important that any conditions requested in this response are applied to a planning approval. Where a Planning Authority proposes to grant permission against the advice of Edinburgh Airport, or not to attach conditions which Edinburgh Airport has advised, it shall notify Edinburgh Airport, and the Civil Aviation Authority and the Scottish Ministers as specified in the Safeguarding of Aerodromes Direction 2003.*

**Scottish Natural Heritage comment**

*Scottish Natural Heritage Advice*

*The proposed works are located partly within (albeit directly above) the Firth of Forth Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Protection Area (SPA). Therefore it is possible that they could affect the special features protected by these nature conservation designations, and so the Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) process applies. In our view there are 'likely significant effects' upon the SPA, and so an appropriate assessment must be carried out.*

*The supporting document: "Forth Bridge Experience South - Habitats Regulations Appraisal: Screening and Appropriate Assessment" shows that the impacts generated by construction and operation of the Bridge Walk are comparable to baseline level of impacts generated by existing bridge maintenance activities. Furthermore it shows that SPA birds are generally not impacted by these bridge maintenance activities. We support the conclusion that the proposal will not 'adversely affect the integrity of the site'.*

**INEOS FPS comment**

*INEOS FPS operate the Forties Pipeline System which transports oil & gas fluids from the central North Sea to its process plant at Kinneil prior to export via the Hound Point facility on the Firth of Forth.*

*The application includes alterations to the existing vehicular access onto the B924 Hawes Brae. At this location a number of large diameter oil and associated pipelines, as well as a series of communication cables associated with FPS, route under the existing access road. Junction upgrade works at this location will affect these pipelines and apparatus.*

*INEOS FPS has no comment on the main application proposals but request that where this application is approved, a condition of approval ensures that INEOS FPS are consulted at an early stage on all aspects of design and construction scope of the junction improvements.*

*The reason is to ensure the continued safe operation and integrity of Forties Pipeline System pipelines and apparatus.*

**Archaeology comment**

*The application incorporates both the A-listed and UNESCO World Heritage Site of Forth Rail Bridge and adjacent early 20th Century Dalmeny Battery. In addition to these two nationally significant heritage assets, the site occupies the edge of high ground overlooking the Firth of Forth. Archaeological evidence has shown that similar locations in and around have been the focus for prehistoric occupation and burial dating to the 9h Millennium BC (see CFA DBA 3874 for details).*

*This application must be considered under the terms Scottish Government's Our Place in Time (OPIT), Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), Historic Environment Scotland's Policy Statement (HESPS) 2016 and Archaeology Strategy and CEC's Edinburgh Local Development Plan (2016) Policies DES 3, ENV4, ENV8 & ENV9. The aim should be to preserve archaeological remains in situ as a first option, but alternatively where this is not possible, archaeological excavation or an appropriate level of recording may be an acceptable alternative.*

*Buried Archaeology*
*As stated this site is regarded as being of archaeological significance primarily in terms of its 20th century military history, railway heritage and potential for prehistoric occupation and burials. As it essential that a programme of archaeological work is undertaken prior*

*to development in order to conserve and or fully excavate, analyse and record any archaeological remains that may be affected.*

*This will require the undertaking of a phased programme of archaeological investigation, the first phase of which will be the undertaking of an archaeological evaluation (min 10%) and metal detecting survey. The results from this initial phase of work will produce detailed mitigation strategies to be drawn up to ensure the appropriate protection and/or excavation, analysis and recording of any surviving archaeological remains prior to construction commencing.*

*Forth Rail Bridge*
*The proposals will require construction in and around this nationally important listed structure. However, it is considered that these works will not have a significant impact either upon the physical historic fabric of the Bridge nor upon its setting or character.*

*Dalmeny Battery*
*It is welcomed that this important military emplacement will be preserved and form a central point of new visitor centre within enhanced landscaping. However, its essential that a detailed building survey (phased plans, elevations, photographic and written survey) is undertaken prior to and during development of record all elements of this facility in order to provide a detailed permeant record of the structure and provide evidence for its development and use.*

*Interpretation & Public engagement*
*It is welcomed that the proposals will include interpretation of the not only the Bridge but also the important Dalmeny Battery which has a rich history dating back to 1903 and including both World Wars. In addition, the archaeological investigations site has the potential for unearthing important both artifacts associated with the suites operation but also prehistoric archaeological remains.*

*Accordingly, it is essential that the archaeological mitigation strategy contain provision for public/community engagement (e.g. site open days, viewing points, temporary interpretation boards), the scope of which will be agreed with CECAS but also the final details of the interpretation should be submitted to CECAS for comment and approval.*

*It is essential therefore that a condition be applied to any consent granted to secure this programme of archaeological works based upon the following CEC condition;*

*'No development shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured and implemented a programme of archaeological work (historic building recording, excavation, analysis & reporting, publication, interpretation and public engagement) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.'*

*The work must be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation, either working to a brief prepared by CECAS or through a written scheme of investigation submitted to and agreed by CECAS for the site. Responsibility for the execution and resourcing of the programme of archaeological works and for the archiving and appropriate level of publication of the results lies with the applicant.*

**Environmental Protection comment**

*We would advise that Environmental Protection has no objections to this proposed development subject to the following condition:*

*i) Prior to the commencement of construction works on site:*

*a) A site survey (including intrusive investigation where necessary) must be carried out to establish, either that the level of risk posed to human health and the wider environment by contaminants in, on or under the land is acceptable, or that remedial and/or protective measures could be undertaken to bring the risks to an acceptable level in relation to the development; and*

*b) Where necessary, a detailed schedule of any required remedial and/or protective measures, including their programming, must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.*

*ii) Any required remedial and/or protective measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved schedule and documentary evidence to certify those works shall be provided for the approval of the Planning Authority.*

*The application proposes a new reception centre, viewing platforms, a plant compound and parking on a site previously utilised as a residential property and railway maintenance compound.*

*Due to the site having previously been used as a railway maintenance compound and included battery gun emplacements, it is recommended that the site is assessed for any potential contamination from previous uses and remediated where necessary.*

*The applicant has submitted a Ground Investigation Report which is currently being assessed by Environmental Protection. Until this has been completed Environmental Protection recommends that a condition is attached to ensure that contaminated land is fully addressed.*

*A noise impact assessment has been provided in support of the application which considers noise from the proposed operations affecting nearby residential properties on Ashburnham Loan and Bankhead Grove. The application proposes a plant compound which includes one transformer and 5 air source heat pumps. The noise assessment has considered the worst-case scenario when all plant is operating together and advises that nearby internal residential noise levels will be within the limits required by this section. Noise from patron's use of the car park and accessing the attraction and bridge walk are likely to be minimal and unlikely to cause disturbance to nearby properties.*

**Scottish Rights of Way and Access Society (ScotWays) comment**

*I can confirm that the National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) shows that rights of way LC118 and LC119 are affected by the area within the redline boundary marked on the applicant's Location Plan. LC118 is the cycle route following the disused railway line. LC119 is the path which runs north from Station Road, crossing LC118 in order to pass underneath the piers of the Forth Bridge and thence descend via Jacob's Ladder to*

*Hawes Brae (B924). It should be noted that LC119 is considered to cross LC118 both by the bridge and at-grade.*

*A map is attached showing the recorded lines of LC118 and LC119 highlighted in pink and green respectively, however these are of necessity somewhat indicative at our 1:50,000 scale of mapping. The Core and Local Path lines shown on the City of Edinburgh Council Atlas may be of further assistance in this regard. As there is no definitive record of rights of way in Scotland, there may be other routes that meet the criteria to be rights of way but have not been recorded as they have not yet come to our notice.*

*You will no doubt be aware there may now be general access rights over any property under the terms of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Having consulted the Core Paths Plan (Atlas version), prepared by the Council's own access team as part of their duties under this Act, right of way LC118 has core path designation whilst right of way LC119 appears to be acknowledged as part of the Local Path network.*

*It is clear that it is intended that right of way LC119 is to be upgraded and in places realigned to improve access to the proposed Forth Bridge Walk Reception Centre:*

*- A new link from Dalmeny Station to LC119 is to be constructed, providing an alternative to the at-grade crossing of Station Road.*
*- Resurfacing/realignment of LC119 between Station Road and LC118.*
*- The existing bridge over LC118 is stepped, whilst its replacement appears to be on one level which is a welcome improvement in accessibility.*
*- LC119's intended route in the vicinity of the Reception Hub is not entirely clear. It appears it is proposed that LC119 may head north from LC118 with the Hub to the west and the Forth Bridge to the east, then descend some additional steps to reach an access road.*
*- The existing Jacob's Ladder stepped section of LC119 appears to lie outwith the site boundary. It is not clear whether the proposed new steps/platforms/walkways directly under the bridge are intended to replace the existing line of the Jacob's Ladder steps.*
*Although LC118 (cyclepath) passes through the application site, it appears less directly affected than LC119. Some observations:*
*- A (presumably) new stepped access with cycle ramp linking LC118 with LC119 (heading south) is proposed. Whilst this appears to be a replacement of like with like, it is not clear whether sloped access has been considered here instead of the proposed new steps and wheeling ramp.*
*- The intended cycle access route to the Reception Hub from LC118 is not clear, as we have found no obvious cycle-accessible link between the cyclepath (LC118) and the Hub's cycle shelter. As far as we can tell it appears the intention that cyclists gain access from the cyclepath (LC118) by ascending steps with an associated wheeling ramp, thence crossing a "pedestrian footbridge" (LC119).*

*We anticipate that this application will have been discussed with the Council's access officer and cycle team, and we hope that it is intended an Access Management Plan be devised, as the affected routes are a valued and well-used part of the area's public access network. As we have located no information regarding how public access is to be maintained and managed alongside construction of the proposed development, we must submit a holding objection at this stage. However, we do acknowledge that this application could represent an opportunity to improve public access locally. If we have*

*overlooked any relevant information, we will be pleased to have this brought to our attention and we look forward to hearing more in due course.*

**Queensferry+District Community Council**

*QDCC met with representatives from Network Rail prior to the public consultations for a briefing on the proposed plans. We found this to be an exciting opportunity for our town and in general supported the proposal although we did have a few concerns.*

*QDCC is pleased that car parking provision for walkers will be available within the site, the experience and car parking will have to be pre-booked and nobody can just turn up on the day, encouragement for walkers to travel to South Queensferry via public transport/cycling or by foot, the proposal of incentives for a combined rail and Experience ticket, improvement of paths from Station Road/Dalmeny Station to the Reception Hub and Hawes area, the use of a brownfield site for the reception hub*

*QDCC seeks*

*o That visitor numbers are maintained at a manageable level*
*o There is effective traffic and car park management*
*o A robust visitor booking system for both the experience and the car parking*
*o That there is a robust security system put in place for all the site*
*o That materials used for the reception hub are sensitive to the setting*
*o A tree and woodland management plan be set up*
*o Planting of mature trees where required for screening purposes to help with the privacy concerns of nearby residents*
*o The proposed coffee/snack bar in the reception hub building is only for the visitors to the experience and not for the public passing by*
*o Appropriate signage for the Experience and promoting what Queensferry as a town has to offer*

*Transport*

*o The single track access road can be expected to carry one vehicle of participants every 90 seconds on average, with a transit time of about 30 seconds at the speed limit of 10mph and longer for cyclists. Therefore some conflicts can be expected occasionally. Although the two passing places alleviate direct conflict, the convention for traffic leaving the site having priority over those arriving risks creating a queue of traffic onto Hawes Brae. The queuing scenario hasn't been modelled.*

*o No road signs are shown in the Transport Statement document to indicate that the access road is blocked by a barrier about 200 yards after the Hawes Brae junction. Drivers using the entrance road by mistake are more likely to reverse onto Hawes Brae when they see the barrier rather than negotiate access to the site for turning around.*

*o Outwith operating hours it isn't clear how uninvited vehicles can be turned back. If the barrier is left open overnight there is potential for the car park to attract anti-social behaviour. Experience of road barriers elsewhere in Queensferry (Ferrymuir*

*development) is that they become damaged and abandoned very quickly. A commitment to maintaining an effective access system should be sought.*

*o As noted in the Transport Statement, on-street parking is presently experienced around the access road therefore restrictions on Hawes Brae are proposed to address visibility splay concerns. However it is not clear how the displaced vehicles will be accommodated, and there are concerns that they may be moved to the junction with Bankhead Road or onto Bankhead Road itself, which is arguably more dangerous than around the access road.*

*o The application stresses that staff and visitors will be encouraged to use public transport and active travel facilities that already exist in South Queensferry. However beyond the distance-based isochrones the Transport Statement is light on detail and commitment. The area continues to witness quite high car use due to mode integration difficulties (eg bus-train-tram) and some areas of Central Scotland being impractical or expensive to reach by other means. Although direct access from Dalmeny Station's northbound platform and proximity to the 43 bus route are a great help for Edinburgh or Fife based public transport users, the problems of navigating to the site through Queensferry town from the Forth Road Bridge area remain unaddressed.*

*New Path and Steps connecting the Reception Hub to the foot of the Hawes Brae*

*QDCC recognises that this path will be a significant change and improvement to the present Jacob's Ladder steps. We ask that this new path has handrails and is constructed using non slip materials. The present Jacob's Ladder is constantly in need of repair and it is the consensus of QDCC that these steps be removed once the new path is in place although there may be others who think it should be kept as it is part of the history of Queensferry but with no one to take responsibility of the upkeep of these steps we feel unfortunately it has to go.*

*Forth Bridge Structure Additions and the Gun Emplacements at the Forts*

*We feel as a Community Council we cannot evaluate this and that the lead should be taken from HES. We do however agree that any structural changes on the Forth Bridge should be reversible and that the Gun Emplacements and the Bunker should be preserved by whatever means are possible and also as these are in the proposed car parking area it has to be made safe for the visiting public.*

*The Community Council received representations from residents objecting and supporting the application and QDCC representatives met for an on-site visit. There have been many objections voiced from over the South Queensferry area but the majority are from residents who stay in close proximity of the proposed site.*

*The main concerns from local residents are:*

*Transport and traffic congestion*
*Loss of privacy*
*Noise pollution*
*Light Pollution*
*Loss of Character of the Conservation Area and World heritage Site*
*Loss of trees, shrubs and foliage*

*Loss of wildlife*

*Some feedback is supportive of the concept but there are concerns over the impact and design.*

*The calculated parking capacity was a concern voiced by residents with the risk of adding to an existing problem in the town and in adjacent streets - NR stands by their calculations.*

*A suggestion made to provide more car parking within the site was that the turning circle in the car park area appears to facilitate drop offs and rejections. It creates a two way requirement on the single width access road.This circle could be removed and a loop through the car park employed, with entry in the west end of the car park, a drop off zone and exit to the east minimising two way traffic conflict. The significant area freed up at the circle could then facilitate additional parking capacity.*
*Signage is also proposed advising No Access to Forth Bridge Experience at required locations*

*Loss of privacy concerns were voiced from residents who live at the east end of Ashburnham Loan regarding the height of the new path down from the Dalmeny Station platform and that their homes could be overlooked by users of this path. There were also concerns raised that walkers could overlook the homes nearest to the facility from the walkway at the reception hub.*

*Light pollution although ground level lights are proposed on the paths, light pollution is a concern from the reception area - QDCC asks that no floodlights are used on the outside of the hub building.*

*Loss of Trees - the loss of 130 trees was deemed unacceptable for some residents - NR have explained that where appropriate other more attractive specimens can be introduced and that they will look to plant approx 3 trees for every tree lost.*

*The reception hub building presents a solid grey concrete wall facing outwards, concerns were raised that this could attract graffiti artists, it has been suggested that this could be softened for example by timber panels*

*Concerns have also been voiced re the hours of operation which states 10am -10pm. QDCC understands that the hours will be seasonal however residents have raised the concern that sunset and sunrise walks are expected and would like a realistic limit on the times of operation.*

*QDCC understands that Network Rail representatives have met with residents from Ashburnham Loan on site to try and give them a better understanding of what is proposed and to try and eliminate at least some of their concerns.*

*Supportive comments given:*

*We don't celebrate our amazing bridge enough and this is an important step in doing this and bringing extra income to the community.*

*The steps at the back of the Hawes Inn are in need of repair and the path from Dalmeny Station to the town has been in need of better signage/upgrading since I was a child growing up in Queensferry. I believe this development to be a positive investment in employment and infrastructure in South Queensferry.*

*It is important to note that the development is on a brownfield site.*

*The private developments over the last 10 years in South Queensferry have been large-scale residential with no investment in or benefit for employment in the town.*

*I welcome the investment in pedestrian and cycle infrastructure that this development offers, and it follows a long and community-led process within South Queensferry of upgrading and extending core paths and connectivity.*

*I welcome Network Rail's vision for the FBWC at South Queensferry, especially its sustainability aspect linking with, and encouraging, rail travel to and from the FBWC. This is a forward-thinking aspect and mirrors both the City of Edinburgh Council's and the Scottish Government's commitments to sustainability and to regional inclusive growth.*

*To enhance planting around the site is welcomed.*

*South Queensferry is a town that is growing fast and desperately needs employment and investment that benefits us all and the FBWC is a positive step in that direction.*

*QDCC has every confidence in Network Rail working with the community on this proposal.*

**Flood prevention comment**

*The applicant has not completed a designer self-certification declaration or the SWMP and FRA. Certificate B1 of the check by JBA is accepted by the Council.*

**Flood prevention updated comment**

*We accept the Arup's A1 certificate and have no further comments to address ahead of determination.*

**Roads Authority Issues**

*No objections to the application subject to the following being included as conditions or informatives as appropriate:*

*1. All accesses must be open for use by the public in terms of the statutory definition of 'road' and require to be the subject of applications for road construction consent. The extent of adoptable footways, footpaths, cycle tracks, verges to be agreed. The applicant should note that this will include details of lighting, drainage, Sustainable Urban Drainage, materials, structures, layout, design and specification;*

*2. In accordance with the Council's LTS Travplan3 policy, the applicant should consider developing a Travel Plan including provision of a high-quality map of the neighbourhood (showing cycling, walking and public transport routes to key local facilities), timetables for local public transport;*

*3. Any work affecting adopted road must be carried out under permit and in accordance with the specifications. See Road Occupation Permits http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/1263/apply_for_permission_to_create_or_alter_a_driveway_or_other_access_point;*

*4. All disabled persons parking places should comply with Disabled Persons Parking Places (Scotland) Act 2009. The Act places a duty on the local authority to promote proper use of parking places for disabled persons' vehicles. The applicant should therefore advise the Council if he wishes the bays to be enforced under this legislation. A contribution of £2,000 will be required to progress the necessary traffic order but this does not require to be included in any legal agreement. All disabled persons parking places must comply with Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 regulations or British Standard 8300:2009 as approved;*

*5. 15 of the parking spaces required to be electric vehicle charging bays.*

*Note:*

*a) 89 car parking spaces including 5 accessible bays to be provided (11 of the proposed car parking spaces are for employees); the level of parking spaces provision is informed by peak time maximum number of cars on-site. i.e. 57. It is predicted that the maximum number of visitors expected on-site during event peak time is 224 people. By applying 64% vehicle mode share and a car occupancy rate of 2.5 to the expected 224 peak time visitors equates to 57 on-site cars during the peak time. This informed the provision of 78 visitor car parking spaces. The level of car parking provision will be considered over provision when it is assessed against any of the use under Assembly and Leisure of the Council's parking standards. Without a clear Council parking guidance on the proposed development; and limited on-street parking availability in the area; the proposed number of parking spaces is considered acceptable in Zone 3. The site is within few minutes walking distance from Dalmeny train station and bus stop on Station Road (43/X43 bus stop) to the south and with good active travel infrastructure provision;*

*b) A total of 54 cycle parking spaces to be provided;*

*c) Existing footway/core path on south side of the site to be upgraded to provide direct footway from Dalmeny train station to the site via proposed footbridge; the existing route is core path and it is expected that the new footway should be built under RCC to safeguard its use to the public;*

*d) Stepped pedestrian route linking the site to Newhalls Road/Hawes Brae to the north is to be provided for improved pedestrian accessibility;*

*e) A new footway to be provided on the vehicular access road to connect the site to Hawes Brae;*

*f) Site access junction to be upgraded for safe access. Priority is to be provided to vehicles accessing the site and with passing places. The submitted safety audit recommended achievable access junction visibility splay of 2.4m X 70m by removing all obstructions (existing visibility splay is 2.4m X 43m);*

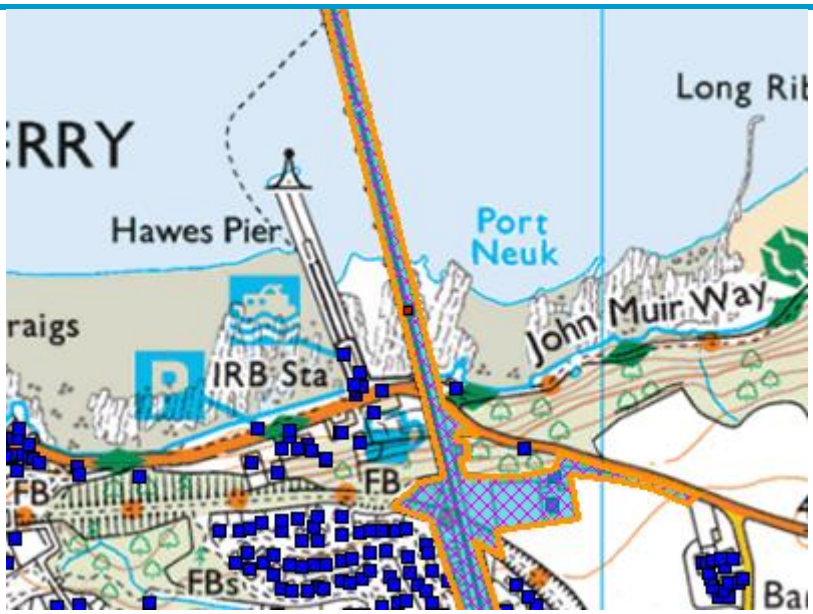
*g) The proposed development is predicted to generate 32 two-way vehicular traffic at peak event time;*

*h) Existing Dalmeny to Queensferry cycle route on south side of the site to be connected to the site via cycle wheel ramp stepped access;*

*i) The applicant by means of swept path demonstrated that refuse collection and emergency service could access the proposed development;*

*j) The proposed footbridge is to be built to adoptable standards and is subject to the approval by the Council.*

## Location Plan






**END**