

Forth Bridge to be considered for World Heritage status next month



Scotland may be about to have its sixth world heritage site.

The agenda has been published for the forthcoming annual World Heritage Committee, which will decide whether the iconic bridge is to be awarded World Heritage Status.

The papers for the committee's 39th session, to be held in Bonn, Germany from 28 June until 8 July, include a draft decision to inscribe the Forth Bridge as a World Heritage Site. It is the strongest signal yet that the Forth Bridge could be in line for a place on UNESCO's prestigious World Heritage List. This follows a recommendation from official UNESCO advisors at the international conservation body.

The Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop said:

"The Scottish Government is delighted that UNESCO has published its draft decision to inscribe the iconic Forth Bridge as a World Heritage Site, which would be Scotland's sixth site on the list.

"Together with Network Rail, Transport Scotland and the other partners in the Forth Bridges Forum, Historic Scotland has prepared a compelling nomination which presents a strong case for the Bridge's Outstanding Universal Value. This is accompanied by a Management Plan which outlines how the Bridge will be maintained in the future, together with ways in which the benefits of World Heritage inscription can be maximised.

"A great deal of work has been carried out by officials and

local community representatives to get to this point. The recent recommendation by ICOMOS and the draft decision published this week by UNESCO underlines the strength of the case that has been made.

“To have the bridge inscribed as a World Heritage Site would be a tremendous accolade for the bridge itself, for the local communities it spans and for Scotland as a whole. The bridge was nominated by the UK for inscription last year – in itself that process was a celebration of our country’s incredible engineering pedigree and ingenuity. I look forward to UNESCO’s final decision on the Forth Bridge bid in July.”

Scotland’s other five UNESCO World Heritage Sites are St Kilda – a group of remote islands and sea stacs 100 miles off the west coast of Scotland; the heart of Neolithic Orkney– one of the richest surviving Neolithic landscapes in Western Europe; the Antonine Wall – the most northerly frontier of the Roman Empire running right across central Scotland; the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh – one of the world’s most beautiful cityscapes; and New Lanark – a restored 18th century cotton mill village situated in the narrow gorge of the River Clyde and renowned for the enlightened management of the social pioneer Robert Owen.

