

# The Forth Bridge World Heritage Site: Key Viewpoints



Prepared for the Forth Bridge World Heritage Management Group on  
behalf of the Forth Bridges Forum, October 2016



# The Forth Bridge World Heritage Site:

## Key Viewpoints

### 1. Purpose

1.1 This report complements the Forth Bridge World Heritage Nomination dossier, submitted to UNESCO in January 2014. Following inscription of The Forth Bridge onto the World Heritage List on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2015, UNESCO requested that a limited number of viewpoints be formalised in order to ensure the setting of the property is adequately protected. This document therefore defines key viewpoints, thereby allowing them to be incorporated into planning guidance supplementary to the Local Development Plans of the three adjacent local authorities.

1.2 The Nomination Dossier (at 5.c.8 pages 97-106) details many places from which the property can be viewed within an extensive area of east-central Scotland. It took seven sample views from ranges between 3.6 and 18 kilometres distant (5.c.9, pp107-110) demonstrating that landform - hills and islands - determine longer-distance views, and the fact that only glimpses of the Bridge may be had from many locations.

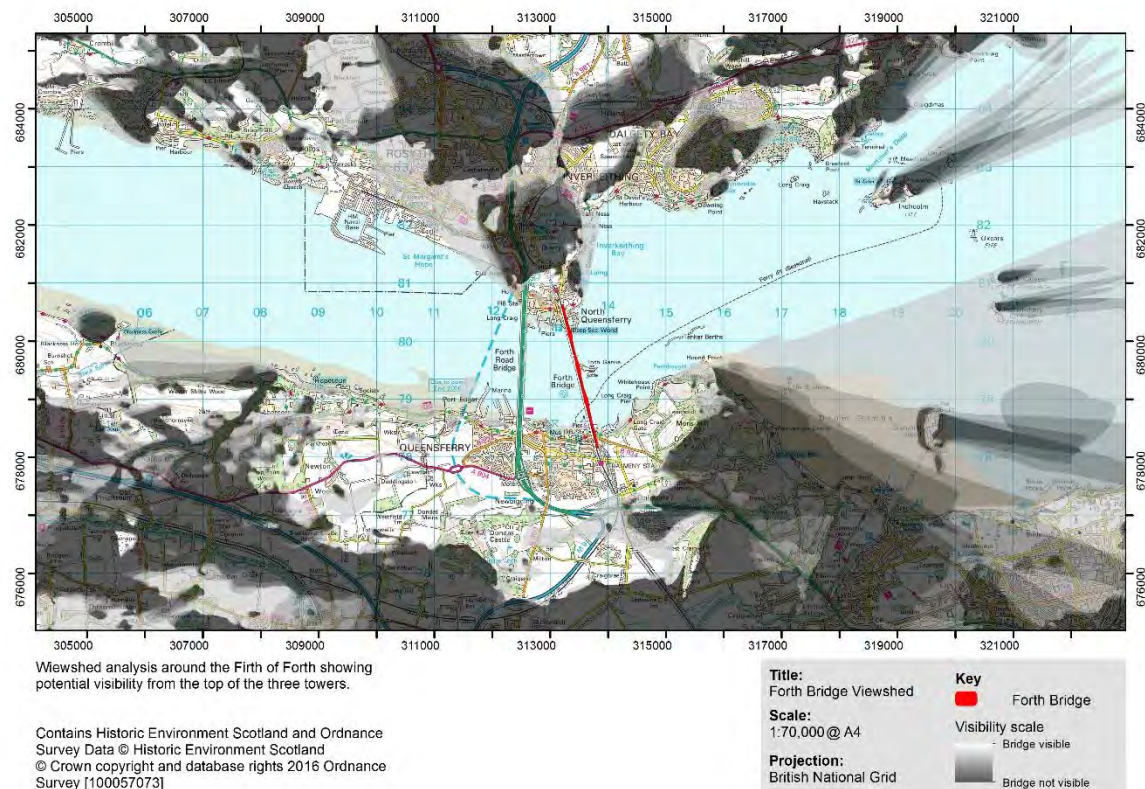
1.3 Following inscription, the Forth Bridge World Heritage Nomination Steering Group is now the *Forth Bridge World Heritage Management Group*. The new group created a working sub-group comprising representatives from the three local authorities surrounding the property and the national heritage organisation, Historic Environment Scotland. They have collaborated to identify the ten key views included here. The working group comprises representatives from the following institutions: Fife Council, City of Edinburgh Council, West Lothian Council, and Historic Environment Scotland.

1.4 This report supports the Local Development Plans in force within the three adjacent local authority areas. It is further reinforced by the formal recognition of World Heritage within Scottish Planning Policy (SPP, Paragraph 147, p35), which states that, '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.' See <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/scottish-planning-policy/>



## 2. Introduction to the Key Views

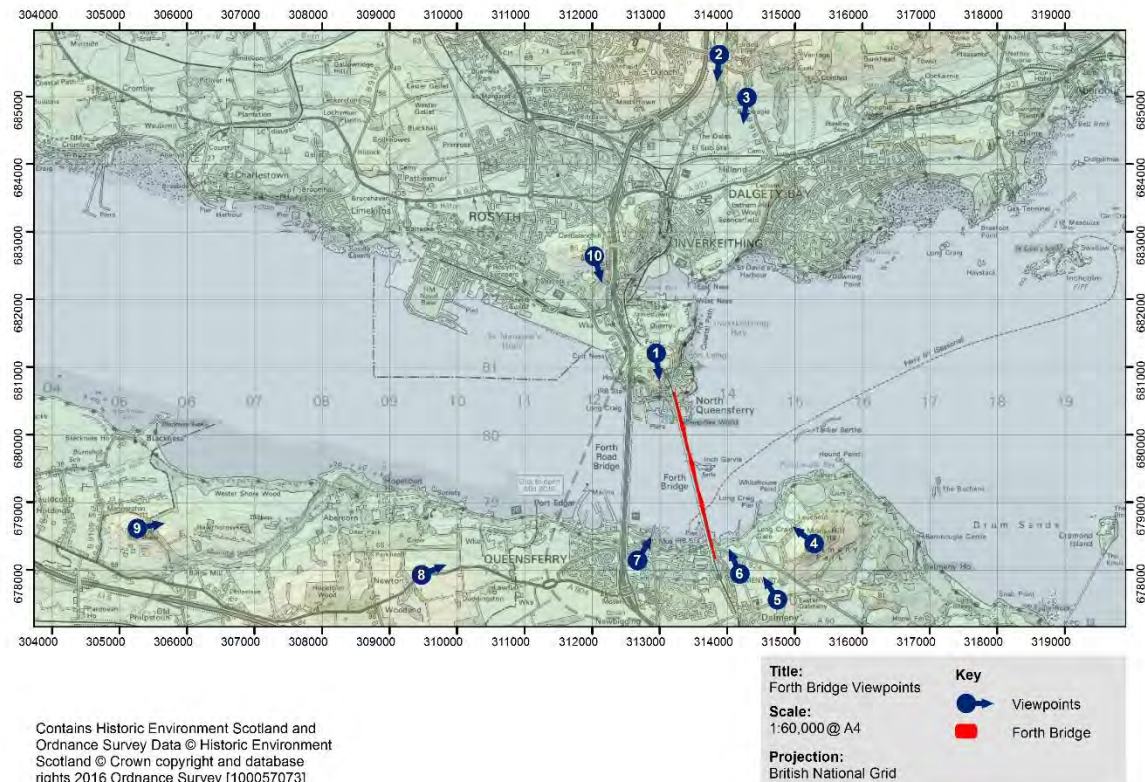
2.1. Work in 2013 for the nomination dossier (at 5.C.8 78) identified many locations from which different views of the property may be had. As some of these are only partial glimpses, this number has been reduced to ten that can beneficially be identified as protected views. This further develops part 5.c.9 of the Nomination Dossier, pages 107-110. The map below uses GIS and terrain data to define the areas from which the Bridge is most visible.



*Viewshed analysis around the Firth of Forth, with the Forth Bridge in the centre. The lighter the shaded area, the higher the potential visibility. This is key to the management of building heights that may one day intrude.*

2.2 Using this analysis, and observation in the field, the ten specific viewpoints whose viewsheds require protection within the planning process were selected. These are listed and represented in the table and map below:

1.	Ferryhills, North Queensferry, Fife
2.	B981 Above and below Balbougie Glen, Fife
3.	B9157 Clockluine Road, Fordell to Hillend, Fife
4.	Mons Hill, Dalmeny, City of Edinburgh
5.	Dalmeny Main Street near water tower, City of Edinburgh
6.	Station Road/ Bankhead Rd, Dalmeny, City of Edinburgh
7.	Forth Bridges Contact & Education Centre, Queensferry, City of Edinburgh
8.	Newton, West Lothian Council
9.	Viewing Tower at the House of the Binns, West Lothian
10.	Castland Hill, Fife



*Map showing the position of the ten agreed viewpoints designed to protect the wider setting of The Forth Bridge*

2.3 This is the best selection of views from which all three cantilever towers can be seen, and which also provide a foreground that is relatively undeveloped. The majority of these also show the bridge at sea level.

2.4 The viewpoints collectively offer a range of experiences of the bridge from both banks of the River Forth. Some are focused vistas channelled between hills. Others are panoramic views that may also showcase the collective setting of the neighbouring road bridges. In elevation, from east and west, the Bridge shows its elegant lines, while from north and south the impression is of a great mass of steel spars in three humps, so it is important that both aspects are included among the viewpoints.

2.5 The very many views obtainable from the shoreline are not included because the shore is not liable to be developed, being almost continuously covered by natural designations, and in large part also by cultural designations that are set out in the nomination dossier.

2.6 Views from within conservation areas are not included here because the key locations are already noted in conservation area appraisals, any development permitted must preserve or enhance character, and will be on a small scale that does not obstruct full or partial views that can be had nearby.

2.7 All ten chosen viewpoints are within a 15km radius. This is because at 15 km distance, the lower part of the bridge starts to disappear below the horizon due to the curvature of the earth, and at 25 km the lower half of the bridge is entirely obscured from view.

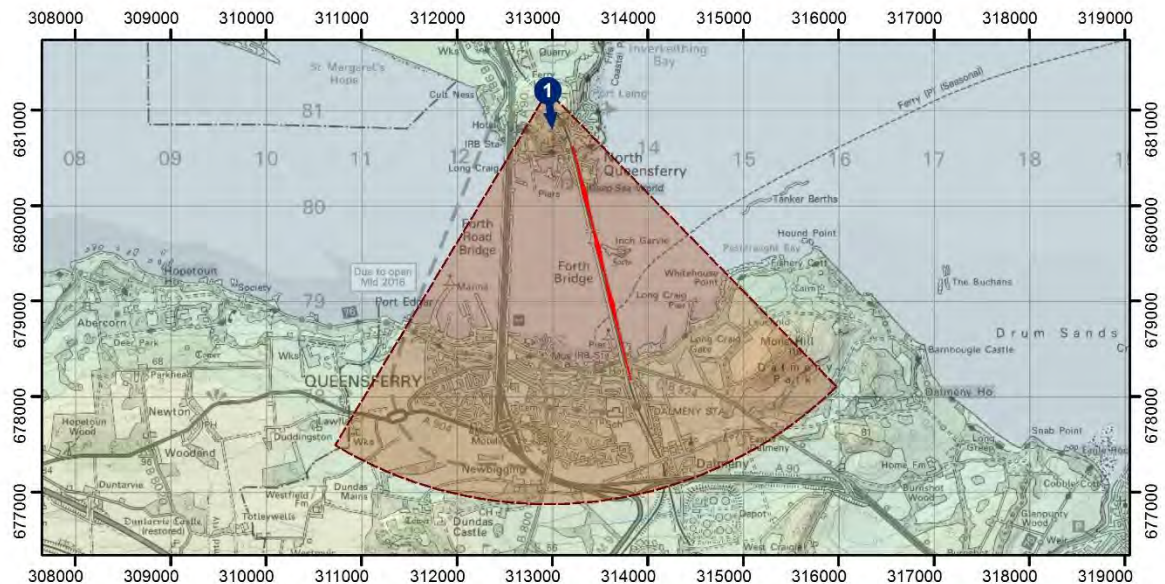
2.8 The chosen viewpoints are selected to have some relatively undeveloped rural land in front of the viewer. Where they are relatively high-up they may have the benefit of showing the bridge arching across water, so what lies beyond the bridge in those cases is considered. The silhouette may be more or less important depending on the presence of land forms, such as Mons Hill, in the backdrop.

2.9 Line of Sight analysis has been carried out for each chosen viewpoint. So, in addition to maps defining the viewsheds from each point, cross-sectional graphs show the profile of land between the bridge and a viewpoint. Red lines are points that cannot be seen from the observer's position, shown as a black dot on the left of each graph. The white line indicates what could be seen in the lie of the land, assuming that trees and buildings do not intervene (which they often do, so indication of potential interruption into a viewcone by a planned development will prompt a check made in the field).



### 3. The Ten Key Views

#### Viewpoint 1: Ferryhills, North Queensferry, Fife



**Title:**  
Forth Bridge View 1

**Scale:**  
1:60,000 @ A5

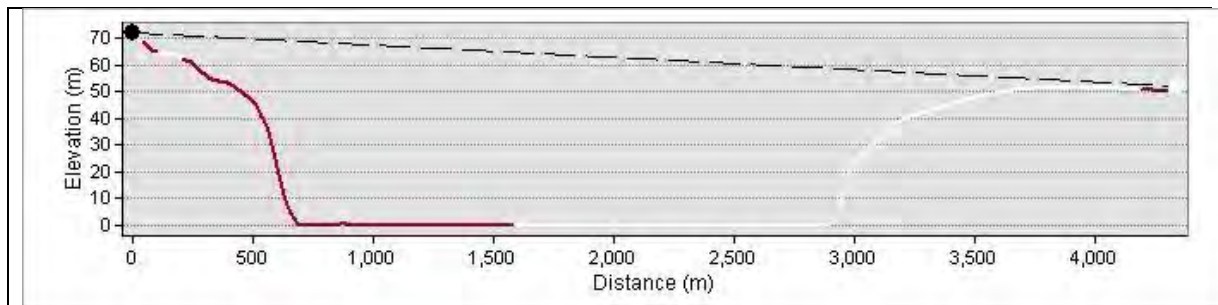
**Projection:**  
British National Grid

#### Key

-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone

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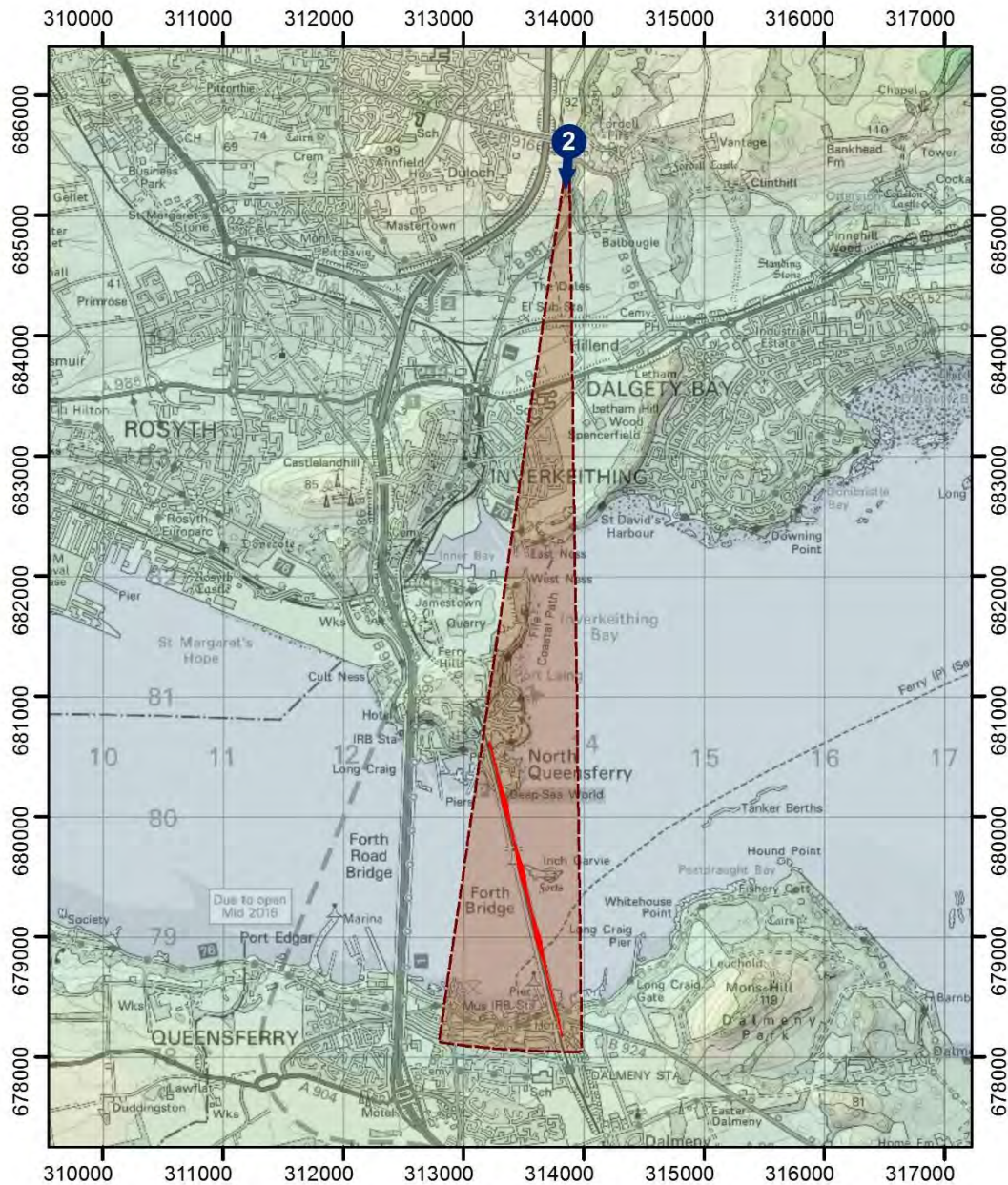




A viewpoint and bridging point formed by an outcrop of hard whinstone making the headland that separates inner and outer Forth estuaries. The white line shows the land that is visible from that viewpoint, excluding factors like trees and buildings. Parts of the foreground, uncultivated land for nature conservation, recreation and a covered reservoir, are in front of the viewer and then, as the ground drops away, the village of North Queensferry is out of sight along with some of the Forth, the red line. Trees to either side of Dalmeny Station form the south bank backdrop, while the flatter land above the escarpment recedes from prominence. All three bridges splay away from the viewer, emphasising a wide panorama. End-on, the massive steelwork of the Forth Bridge makes a formidable impression. The Road bridges are well over to the right and out of view.



## Viewpoint 2: B981 Above and below Balbougie Glen, Fife






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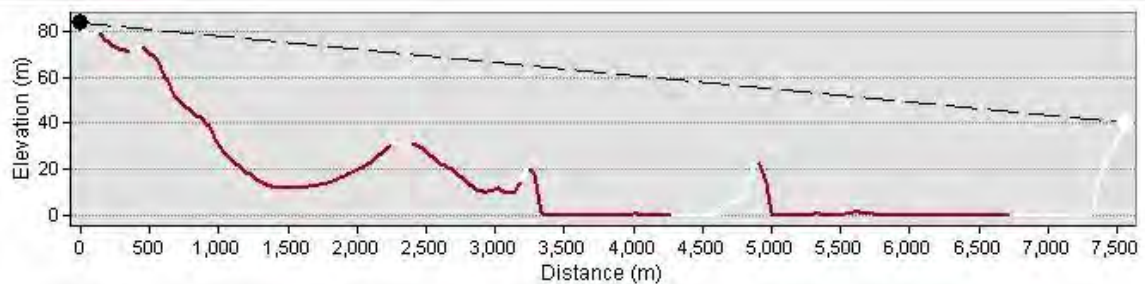
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Forth Bridge View 2

**Scale:**  
1:60,000 @ A5

**Projection:**  
British National Grid

### Key

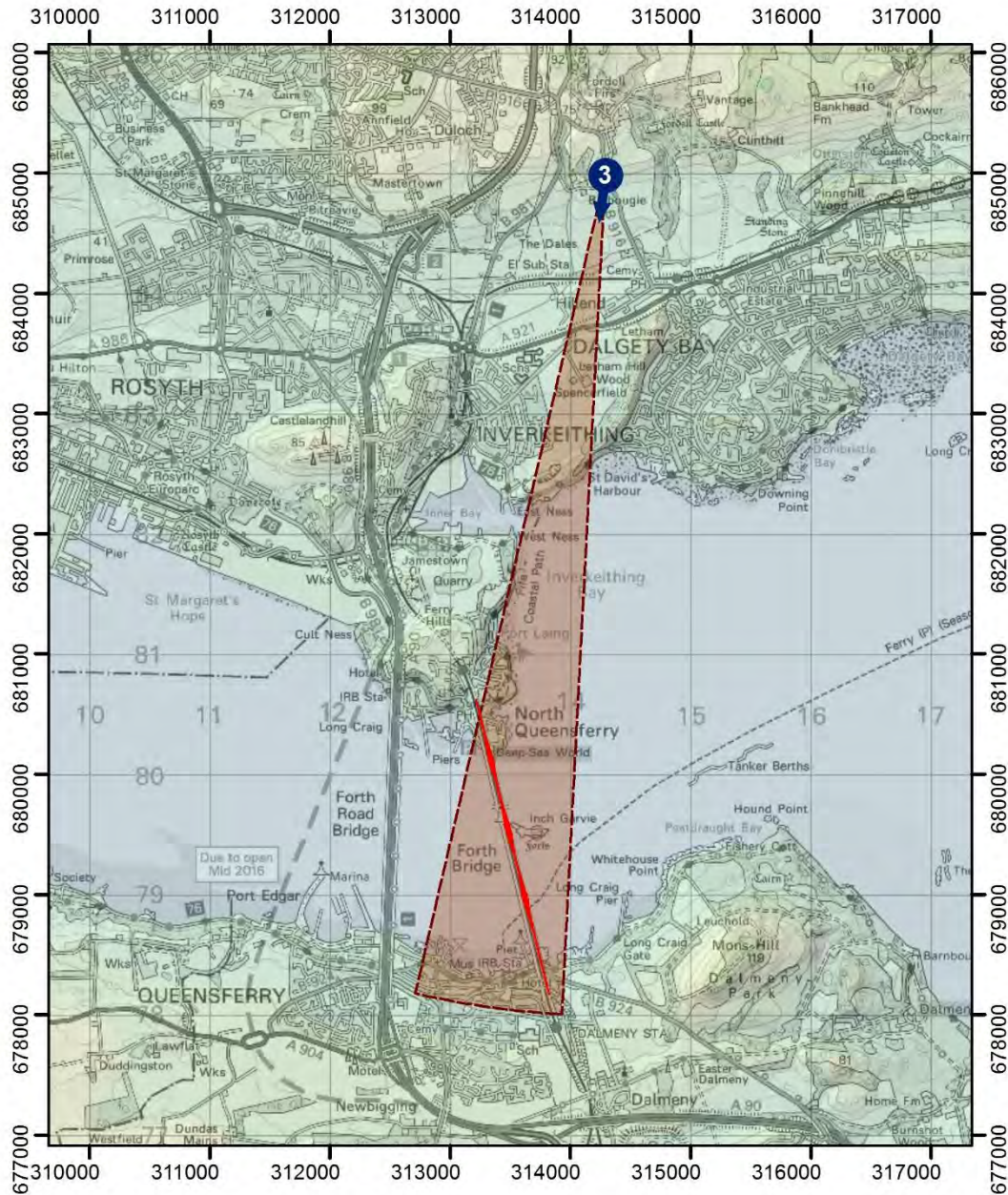
-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone



Minor roads B916 and B981 meet near the M90 overbridge, where the motorway is low down in a cutting. The town of Inverkeithing is in the lee of the slope, out of view from the higher viewpoint, and one span of the Forth bridge appears to arch over the water. Lower on the same road, and same viewshed, the river is not apparent. Inverkeithing High School (the modern building to the right) is in the vista, fields and the railway cutting connecting to the Forth Bridge are in the foreground. The Road Bridges are well over to the right and out of view.



### Viewpoint 3: B9157 Clockluine Road, Fordell to Hillend, Fife



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**Title:**  
Forth Bridge View 3

**Scale:**  
1:60,000 @ A5

**Projection:**  
British National Grid

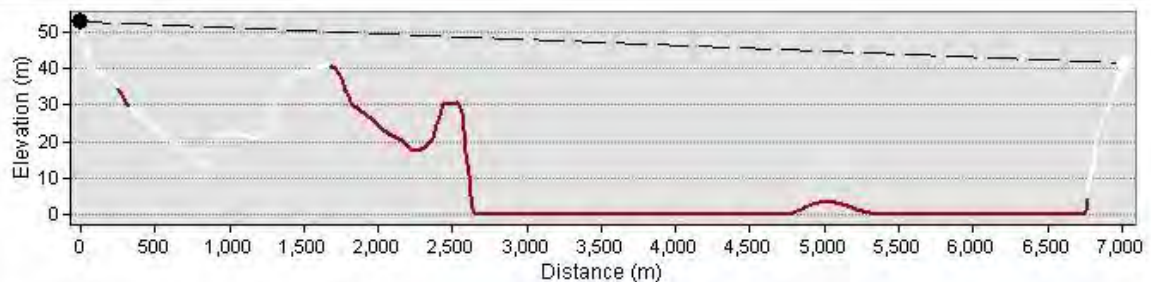
**Key**

Viewpoint

Forth Bridge

View cone





A view over rural Fife in the gap between Dalgety Bay and Inverkeithing from the B916 road and pedestrian route. Lothian (the south bank) is over 7 kilometres away and indistinct, as the sea is out of sight. North Queensferry is also hidden, except for one house. The East Coast railway line to the Forth Bridge and the A921 road and streetlights run in front of the trees around Spencerfield on the near horizon. At present the upper three cantilever towers of the Forth Bridge stand out. If/when trees are removed, more of the Forth Bridge will be visible at least as far as the suspended spans. The road bridges are well over to the right and out of view.

## Viewpoint 4: Mons Hill, Dalmeny, City of Edinburgh



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**Title:**  
Forth Bridge View 4

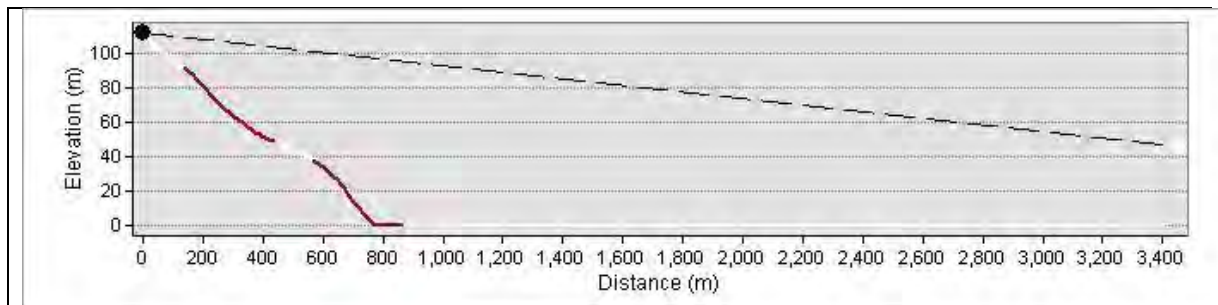
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### Key

-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone

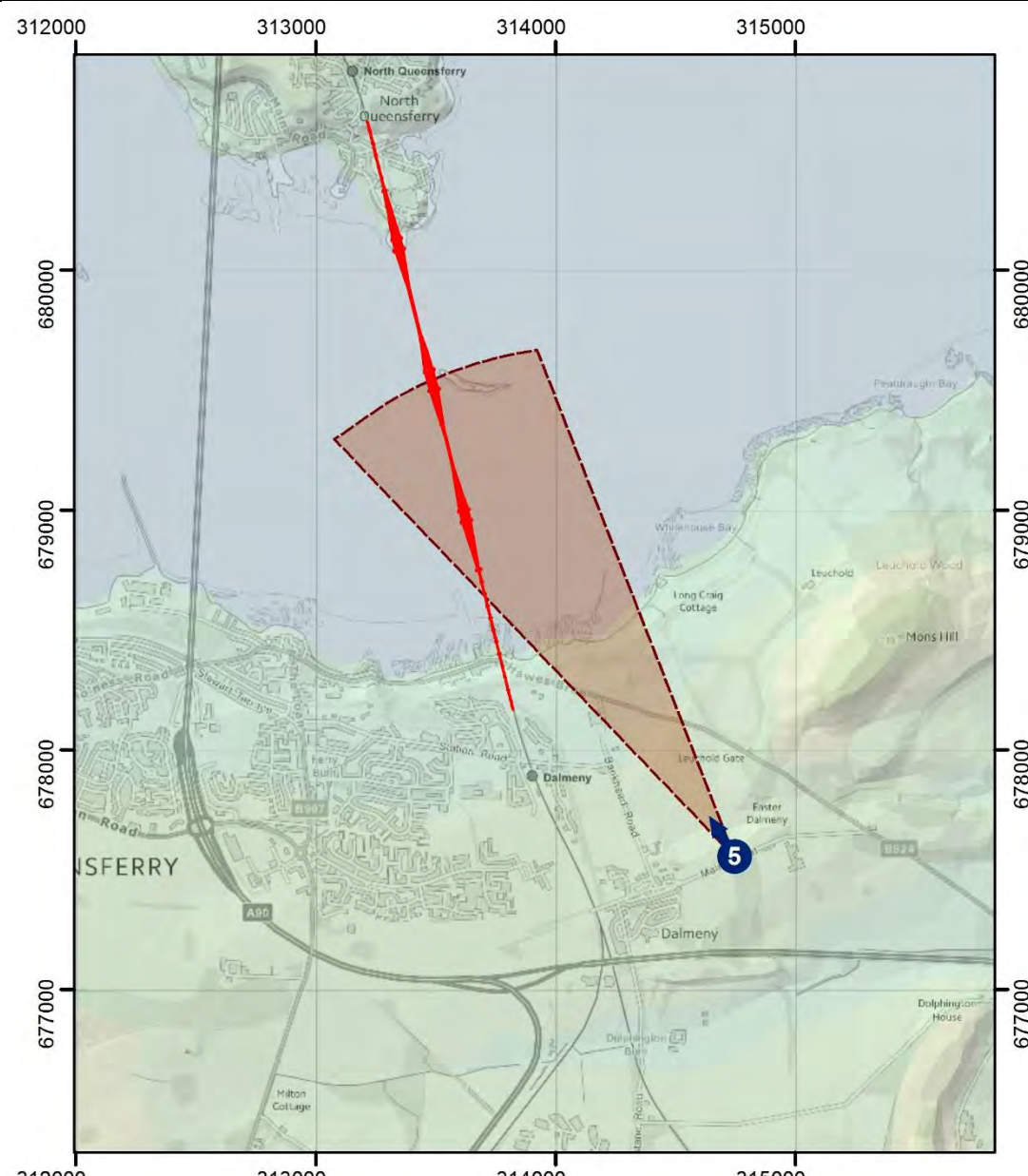




This view from the South East is from Mons Hill which shields much of urban Edinburgh from the Forth Bridge. It provides good unobstructed views of the property, across parts of a Designed Landscape, a Special Landscape Area and Green Belt, silhouetting all three bridges against the Inner Forth. At the level of Leuchold Farm the three bridge decks are aligned and the nearer of the cantilevered arches is unobstructed. A pylon of each road bridge stands beyond the north main span of the Forth Bridge but the clarity of the cantilevering over water is apparent. This view was taken in November 2016 as the Queensferry Crossing nears completion. It demonstrates how its position just beyond (to the west of) the existing Forth Road Bridge (built in 1964, and Category 'A' listed), has not had a negative impact on the setting of the property.



**Viewpoint 5: Dalmeny Main Street near water tower, City of Edinburgh**



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**Title:**  
Forth Bridge View 5

**Scale:**  
1:30,000 @ A5

**Projection:**  
British National Grid

### Key



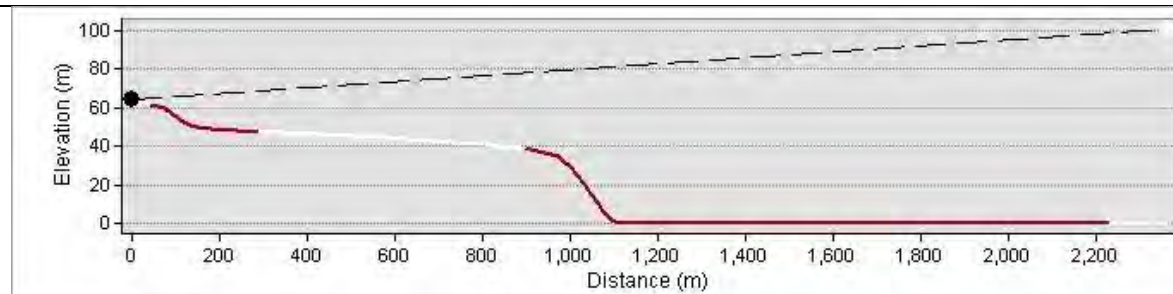
Viewpoint



## Forth Bridge



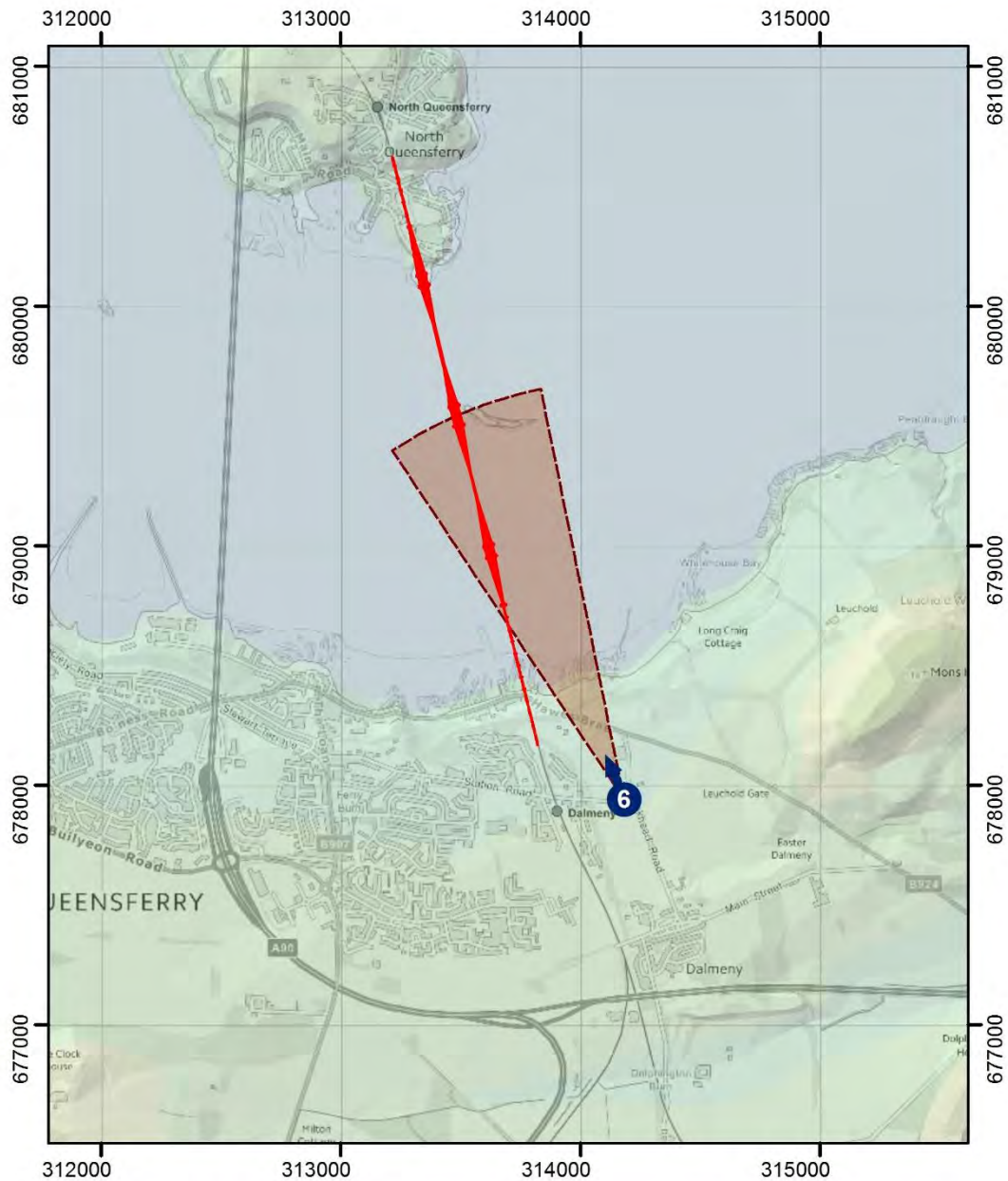
View cone



Between Dalmeny village and the converted water tower to the east, a minor public road and National Cycle Route 1 from Edinburgh city offers views to the Forth Bridge over a hedge and rolling farmland. Forth Bridge/North British Railway company housing is in the trees to the left. The near shore and much of the sea is out of sight. The two Road Bridges are beyond and to the left of the Forth Bridge, and largely hidden by the relatively tight angle taken by the Forth Bridge. Just one pylon of the new Queensferry Crossing is grouped with one of the 1964 Road Bridge over the shoulder of the Queensferry cantilever of the Forth Bridge. In this view, Fife and the road bridges are in sunlight while the Forth Bridge is in the shade, illustrating the variable micro climate at the Forth.



## Viewpoint 6: Station Road/ Bankhead Rd, Dalmeny, City of Edinburgh






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**Title:**  
Forth Bridge View 6

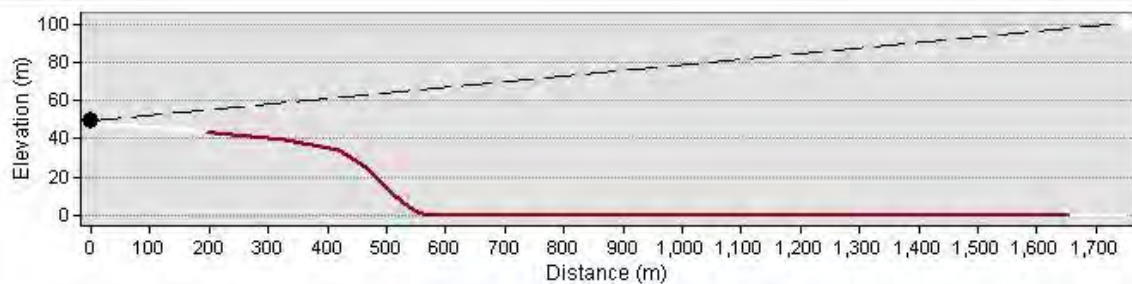
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**Projection:**  
British National Grid

### Key

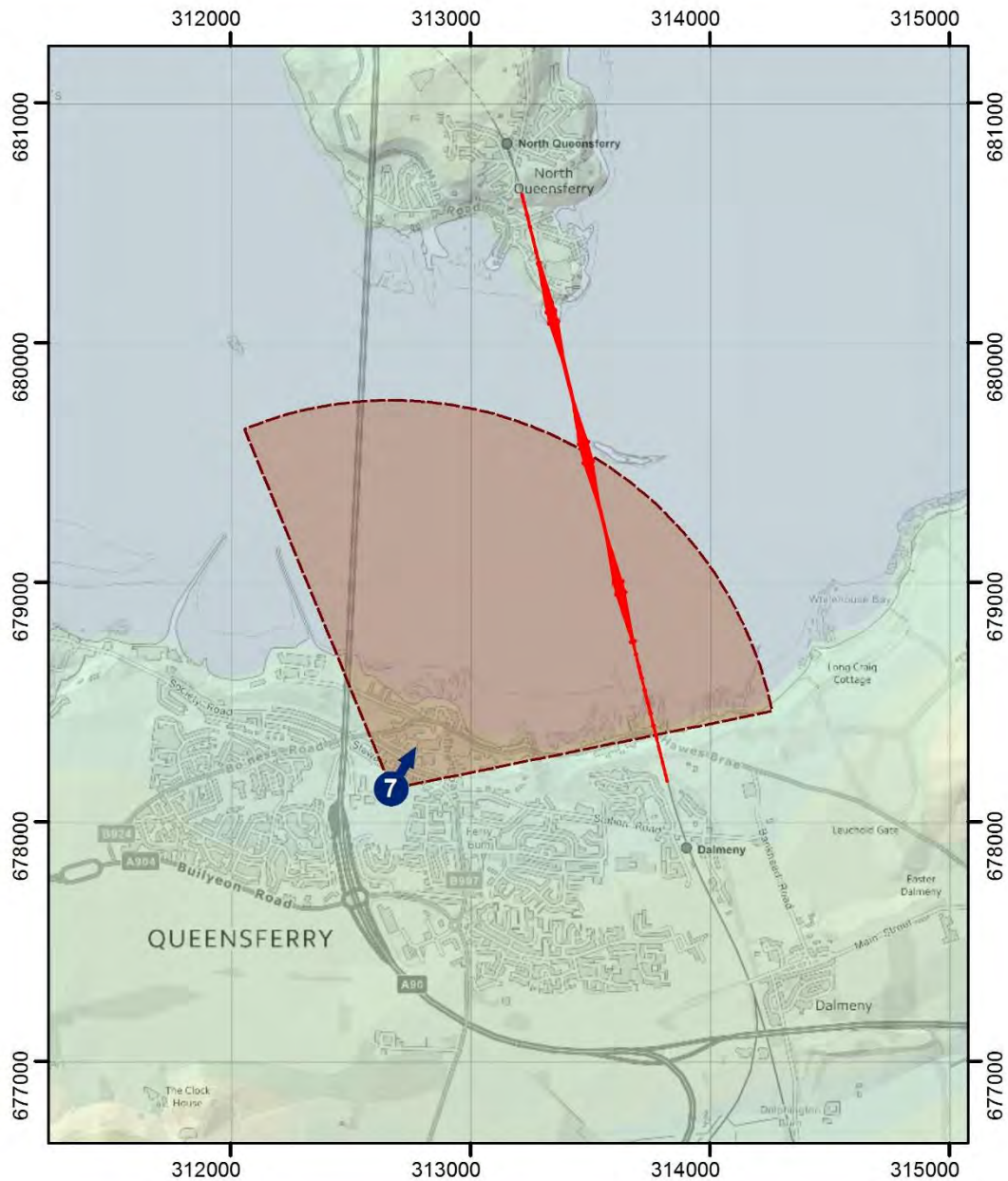
-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone





From Bankhead Farm Steading, Dalmeny, west of which was the Forth Bridge construction yard (1883-1890), since reverted to farmland. The Shore is out of sight due to the curvature of the hill and to trees. Public roads with footpaths connect Dalmeny station to Bankhead Road and the B984, bounded by a Dalmeny Estate wall (from which this photo is taken). There also is a footpath in the old railway cutting to the former Queensferry and Port Edgar, but trees conceal views to the Forth Bridge from it, except when underneath the bridge. The north pylons of the Road Bridges are masked by the bulk of the Queensferry cantilever of the Forth Bridge.

## Viewpoint 7: Forth Bridges Contact & Education Centre, Queensferry






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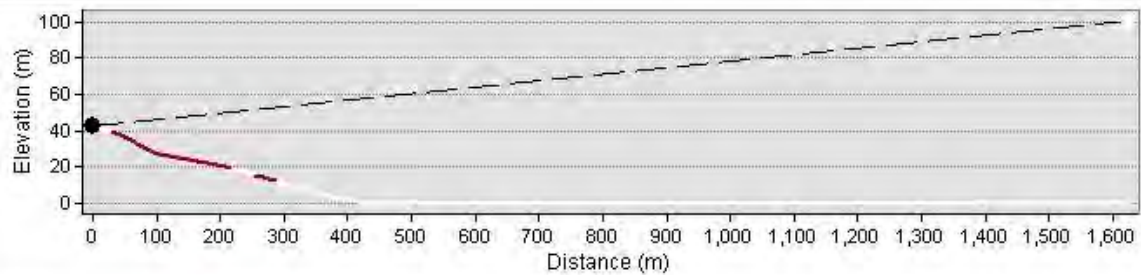
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Forth Bridge View 7

**Scale:**  
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**Projection:**  
British National Grid

### Key

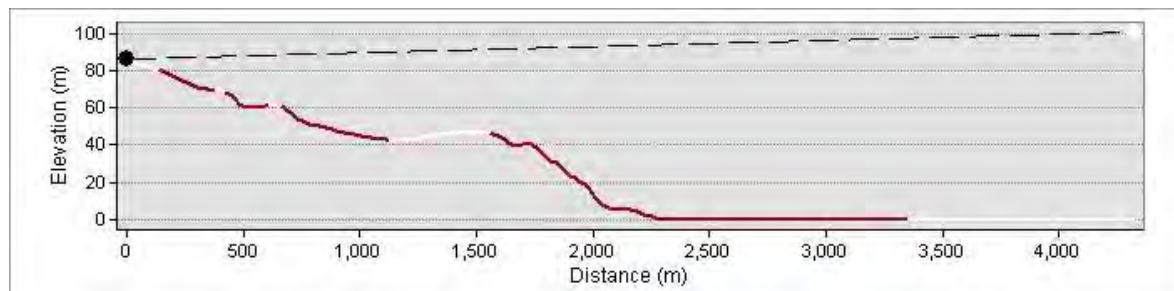
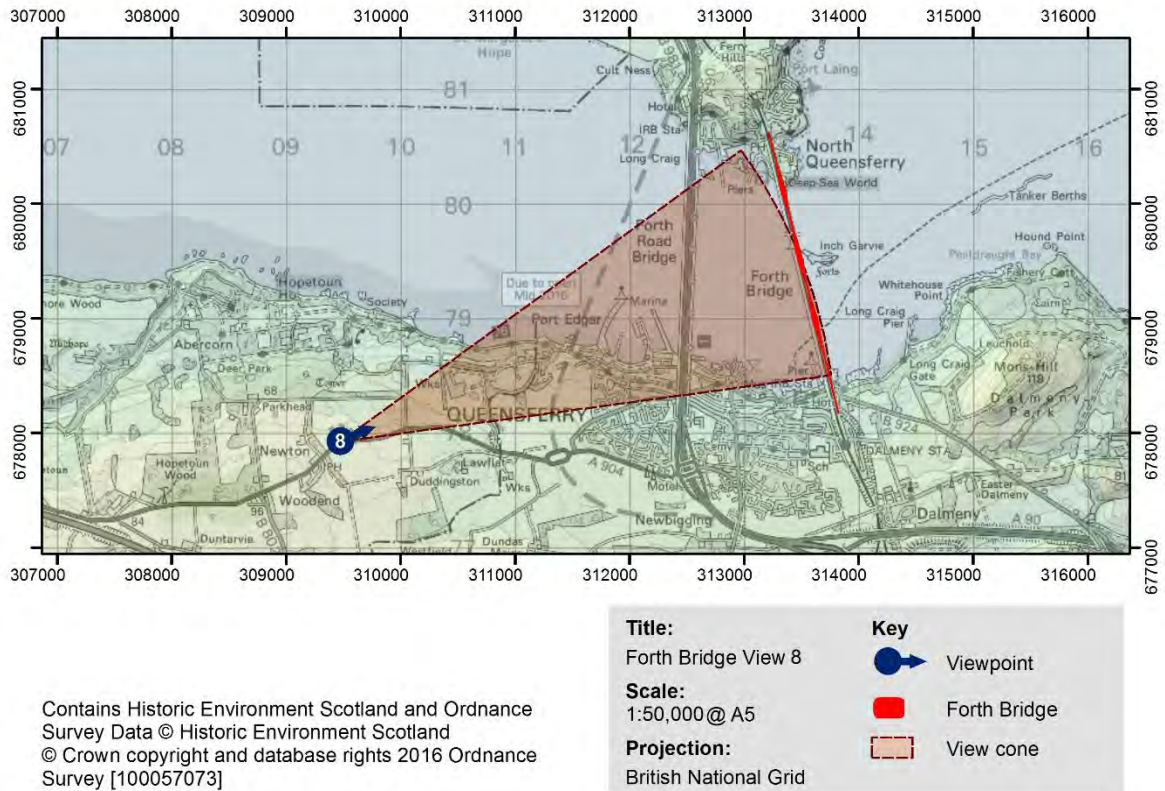
-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone



A viewing platform created in 1964 that contains monuments to the Forth Road Bridge, and some interpretation of other bridges that is exploited by visiting coach tours and also by the Contact and Education Centre for the new Queensferry Crossing. Older areas of Queensferry, shown in red, are in the lee of the viewer, but there is a clear view (the white line) of the Forth Bridge and the sea underneath, in front and beyond the bridge. The road bridges are not within that view, until viewers pan around 90 degrees to see them to the left. Trees had been getting high but have been trimmed back to benefit bridge views.



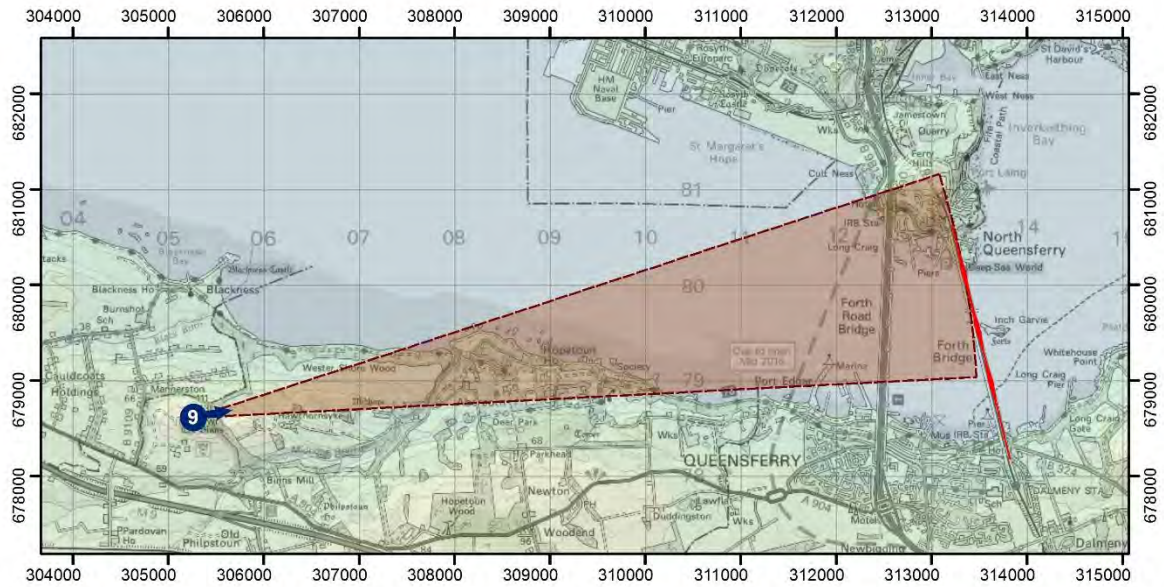
## Viewpoint 8: Newton, West Lothian Council



Newton lay-by, just inside West Lothian, provides interpretation and benches on a slight bend of the A904 single-carriageway trunk road, Queensferry to Bo'ness. A railway office building is in the mid distance, below the sight line to the Forth Bridge. Here the decks of the Road and Railway bridges are in line with the Fife shore, and the Queensferry cantilever of the Forth Bridge is seen in full elevation, the other two cantilever towers being angled away slightly. The three pylons of the new Queensferry crossing are all to the left of the cantilevers of the Forth Bridge and its deck is lower, the approach ramp being behind trees. Cable stays in front of the Fife cantilever of the Forth Bridge are more or less prominent according to light conditions.



## Viewpoint 9: Viewing Tower at the House of the Binns, West Lothian



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**Title:**  
Forth Bridge View 9

**Scale:**  
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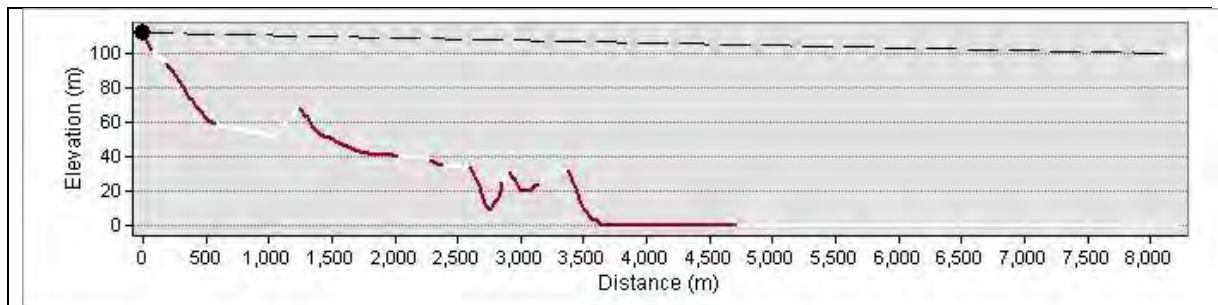
**Projection:**  
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### Key

-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone

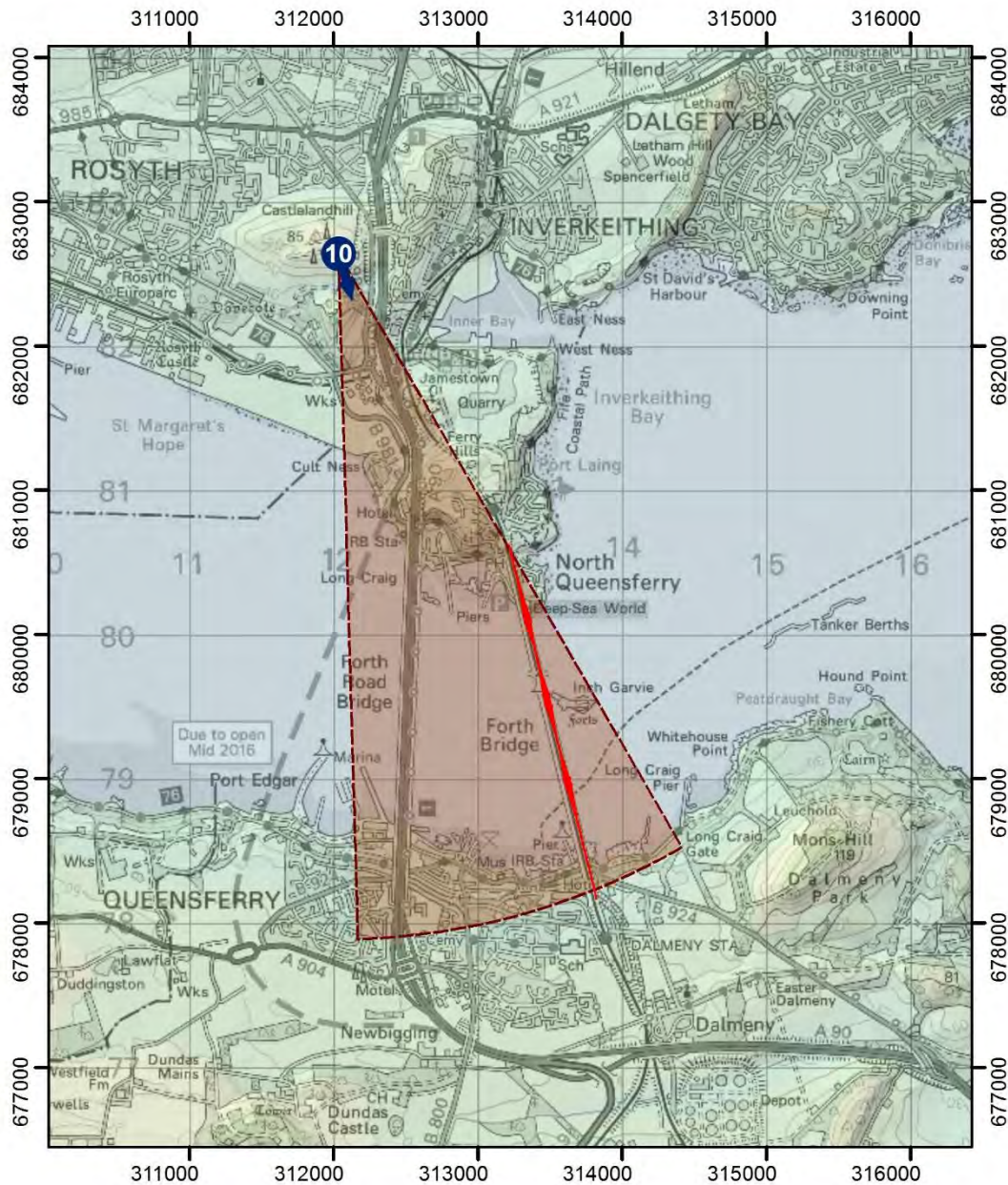






A landmark in the House of the Binns designed landscape that signposts the estate from land and sea. The Forth Bridge is in full elevation over treetops, silhouetted against sea, sky, islands and distant East Lothian. The Queensferry Crossing introduces its south pylon just left of the centre of the Forth Bridge, and its mid pylon lines up with the north pylon of the Forth Road Bridge, so limiting its intrusion. The north pylon of the Queensferry Crossing is off to the left, and so not in view. Road and railway bridge decks are aligned at their highest points with the north span of the Forth Bridge. The Southern approach ramp is lower but behind trees. Much of the land is fields or trees within the estates of the Binns, managed by the National Trust for Scotland, Midhope and the Hopetoun Trust. The foreshore is behind trees.

## Viewpoint 10: Castland Hill, Fife






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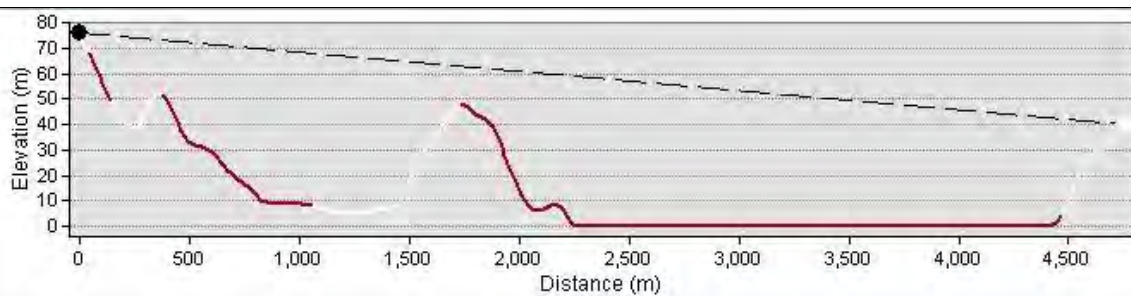
**Scale:**  
1:50,000 @ A5

**Projection:**  
British National Grid

### Key

-  Viewpoint
-  Forth Bridge
-  View cone





Castland Hill has on it a former signal station and Admiralty Cottages thanks to its location near Rosyth naval base, with views over the Forth and towards the bridges. The northern slopes of Ferryhills obscure the sea and all but two houses in North Queensferry. The backdrop to the Forth Bridge is the wooded Mons Hill and the Pentland Hills beyond. A disused whinstone quarry is on the lower hillside to the left. Trains cross a viaduct from Inverkeithing, recently painted Forth Bridge red, and then a cutting and tunnel before crossing the Forth Bridge. The M90 motorway to the road bridges is here obscured by trees on a foothill, and is well below sightlines to the Forth Bridge.