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| Mr Steve Farrell  Clerk to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change committee  The Scottish Parliament  *Issued by email* | Our ref:  FRC/TICC/Dec  Date:  3 December 2010 |

Dear Mr Farrell

**TICC Committee: Forth Replacement Crossing Project: Update 01**

I refer to the Committee meeting on 28 September 2010 where it was agreed that the project team would provide regular brief written updates on the status of the project. This is the first of those updates and provides information on the following:

* Public Transport Workshop
* Progress of the Forth Crossing Bill
* Code of Construction Practice
* Noise Management Plan
* Project Procurement Update

**Public Transport Workshop**

A public transport workshop with representatives from the three local authorities directly affected by the scheme, SESTran and officials of Transport Scotland had been arranged for 30 November 2010. Due to travel difficulties consequent on the inclement weather the workshop was postponed. It will be held however prior to Christmas. The purpose of workshop is to determine and confirm projects and measures to be included within a refreshed public transport strategy. The workshop will determine and confirm implementation of that strategy with a key element of the strategy being the practical measures to encourage modal shift both during the construction of the Forth crossing and during its operation.

I hope to be able to provide more concrete information about the strategy in the new year.

**Progress of the Forth Crossing Bill**

The Minister wrote to the Forth Crossing Bill Committee on 12 November welcoming the Stage 2 report and provided a comprehensive response to recommendations in the committee and assessor reports (<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/forthXbill/Documents4.htm>).

The Forth Crossing Committee met on the 17 November to consider amendments lodged following the publication of the Stage 2 report. The Government moved and the committee approved all 102 amendments (<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/forthXbill/or-10/fcb10-1301.htm>).

We continue to work on issues raised by objectors, in particular, work is ongoing with Newton Community Council and West Lothian Council to identify the most preferable and suitable measures to mitigate any traffic increases, with financial assistance provided by Transport Scotland to ensure implementation. In response to concerns regarding the provision of pedestrian and cyclist routes, an additional route has been designed to the west of South Queensferry. As expected, these measures have been welcomed by the relevant communities.

**Code of Construction Practice**

The Code of Construction Practice (Revision 4) and the Commitments and Undertakings Register have been updated following the conclusion of Stage 2 and are available on the Parliamentary website:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/forthXbill/documents/FRC_CoCP_Rev4_Nov_2010.pdf>; <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/forthXbill/documents/ForthCrossingBill-CommitmentsandUndertakingsRegister-22November2010.pdf>.

**Noise Management Plan**

As a consequence of our continuing engagement with local authorities we have further developed our noise management process. The comprehensive process is now fully reflected in Revision 4 of the Code of Construction Practice. Recent process developments include the establishment of a noise liaison group involving the local authorities, removing noise thresholds, defining how compliance with the environmental statement would apply and be assessed, and the introduction of provisions regarding maximum noise levels.

At Stage 2 the Scottish Ministers successfully lodged two amendments to ensure the appropriate operation of the noise management process. The amendments, now incorporated in sections 70 and 71 to the Bill, will enable local authorities to continue to serve notice on a contractor to control noise and vibration during the construction of the works.

**Project Procurement Update**

The project procurement process remains on programme. We expect, subject to the Bill receiving Royal Assent, the Principal and Fife ITS contracts to be awarded in spring 2011 and the M9 Junction 1A contract in summer 2011. The funding for the project will be made from the capital allocation, as confirmed in *Scotland’s Spending Plans and Draft Budget 2011-12.* The quantum remains within the range stated in the Financial Memorandum to the Bill.

As requested by the committee, a further written update will be supplied in early 2011.

Yours sincerely,



David Climie CEng FICE

FRC Project Director