

Mr Steve Farrell
Clerk to the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee
The Scottish Parliament

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Issued by email

Dear Mr Farrell

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT COMMITTEE: FORTH REPLACEMENT CROSSING UPDATE 1

I refer to the commitment given to the Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change (TICC) Committee to provide a regular written update to the TICC or its successor regarding the status of the Forth Replacement Crossing (FRC) project. This update provides information on the following:

- Progress Update
- Community Engagement
- FRC Working Groups
- FRC Public Transport Strategy

PROGRESS UPDATE

Principal Contract

Construction works have commenced on the Principal Contract, awarded to Forth Crossing Bridge Constructors (FCBC). Initial works on site include site clearance, fencing, trial blasting and environmental works. Baseline monitoring for traffic, air quality (dust), noise and vibration and installation of permanent monitors in and around the Works areas north and south of the Forth are ongoing. Marine Ground Investigation works and the removal of the Beamer Rock Lighthouse are currently in progress.

Temporary site offices were established in Rosyth over the summer with the Employers Delivery Team (EDT) moving to site in August. The EDT will continue to be co-located with the contractor for the duration of the project. The permanent site offices are under construction, these will be located near to the Ferrytoll junction in Rosyth and will be occupied in early 2012. The satellite compound that will be located in Echline Field is currently under development.

Fife Intelligent Transport System (ITS) Contract

The contractor John Graham (Dromore) Ltd commenced construction activities in September 2011. The contractor has established a site office within the Belleknowes Industrial Estate, east of the M90 Admiralty Junction. He is working on multiple individual work areas preparing the sites of individual gantry locations. This includes detailed surveys, site clearance, soil stripping, service investigations, drainage and ducting works, and excavating and concreting foundations.

From 23 September the first of a number of traffic management measures were installed on the M90/A90, A92, and A823(M) in Fife. For reasons of safety a mandatory 40mph speed limit has been applied and is being enforced by average speed cameras.

Junction 1a Contract

Construction activities have also commenced on the works to upgrade the M9 Junction 1a. The contractor, a joint venture between John Sisk and Son and Roadbridge, have established their site compound to the west of Kirkliston and site clearance, haul road construction and site investigation works are underway.

Traffic management measures were implemented progressively on the M9 and on the M9 Spur between 3 and 13 November. On the M9 spur these works consist of the closure of the hard shoulder and one lane of the dual two lane carriageway. A 40mph speed restriction has been implemented and will be enforced by average speed cameras. The traffic management measures on the M9 spur are required to allow early works to be undertaken on the installation of gantries over both the northbound and southbound carriageways. This traffic management scheme on the M9 spur will be operational until the spring of 2012.

Contact and Education Centre

The contract to build the Contact and Education Centre, which will also house the new Traffic Scotland Control Centre, was awarded to Dawn Construction in September 2011. Construction works commenced on 25 October 2011 and completion is expected to be in early autumn 2012.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In September the project team facilitated two 'Meet the Contractor' events held in North Queensferry and South Queensferry. These events provided an opportunity for the local communities to meet the organisations delivering the Forth Replacement Crossing project. Approximately 200 people attended the events held over 2 days. Visitors were able to speak directly to representatives from the contractors and the EDT during the drop-in afternoon exhibition event. This was followed by a formal evening presentation with question and answer session.

A MSP briefing session was held in September and provided the opportunity for members to receive an update from the EDT, an introduction to each of the FRC contractors and to ask any questions on the project. A similar event is currently being organised for the local councilors within the scheme area.

As discussed at the Committee appearance in September, Community Forums have been established and these continue to be held on a regular basis. The most recent forums took place at the start of November with the next sessions scheduled for early 2012.

Engagement with the public is ongoing via the Community Liaison Officers from each of the contracts and, together with a representative from the EDT, they are available in the temporary

Contact and Education Centre within FETA's office during working hours and contactable via the project hotline and email 24hours a day to deal with any enquires or complaints. Regular project updates are also provided on an ongoing basis on the project website.

FRC WORKING GROUPS

As committed to in the Code of Construction Practice (CoCP), four Working Groups (Traffic Management, Marine Liaison, Noise Liaison and Environmental Liaison) have been established. These groups meet on a regular basis to monitor and approve the Contractors' works. The agendas and minutes for these groups are published on the project website.

The contractor is obliged to consult with the appropriate groups before carrying out any applicable works. Members of these forums consist of the local authorities and other statutory bodies such as, SEPA, Marine Scotland, Fife Constabulary and Lothian and Borders Police.

FRC PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Work is still ongoing on preparing a refreshed Public Transport Strategy. It is expected that this will be completed in early 2012.

One of the complementary schemes for the Public Transport Strategy is the Halbeath Park and Choose Project. The works are being designed and supervised by Fife Council. At present the design and contract preparation work has been completed, planning permission has been secured and the works have been notified in the OJEU.

The only outstanding issue relates to the land acquisition, which remains unresolved. Fife Council has run the voluntary and compulsory purchase order procedures concurrently. This has been successful in part, as some of the land has already been secured. However, it is still likely that an Inquiry will be required. This has been arranged to be held in Dunfermline between Thursday 8 December and Friday 16 December. It is expected that the Reporter will make his findings known by late January 2012. This is clearly dependent on the specific matters that are raised at the Inquiry. Should the Reporter find in favour of Fife Council, this will still leave adequate time to allow the procurement and construction process to be completed by summer 2013, when increased disruption is expected at Ferrytoll.

A regular written update will continue to be provided to the Infrastructure and Capital Investment Committee, along with bi-annual Committee appearances by the project team. I look forward to the Committees forthcoming site visit and I hope it provides a useful overview of the scheme.

Yours sincerely



David Climie CEng FICE
FRC Project Director