

Mr Edward Mountain
Convener
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee
Scottish Parliament

16 March 2021

By email only

Dear Mr Mountain

Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee's report on the construction and procurement of ferry vessels in Scotland

I refer to the recommendations for Audit Scotland in the above report, which were reiterated in the Committee's response to the Auditor General's draft work programme.

The Auditor General has asked us to consider the potential scope of an audit with a view to preparing a report, preferably by the end of this year, under S.23 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. We have meetings planned with Transport Scotland, the Scottish Government and CMAL in the next couple of weeks to help us determine how we can add value. After these meetings, we will be in a better position to confirm what audit work we will do, and the timing for this. We will, of course, provide the Committee clerk and the successor Committee with an update on our plans.

Separate to this, we will be reviewing loans to private companies as part of the 2020/21 audit of the Scottish Government's consolidated accounts and will include any relevant findings in our audit report before the end of 2021. You may be aware that the Auditor General has previously reported this issue in the Section 22 reports on the 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 audits of the Scottish Government's consolidated accounts.

Yours sincerely,



Graeme Greenhill
Senior Manager
Investment and Economic Development