



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Dear Neil

**Re: Fair Isle Ferry - Application to UK Government Levelling Up Fund – Round 2**

Thank you for your letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 2022 regarding the Shetland Islands Council preparation to submit a bid to the UK Government Levelling Up Fund to support the Fair Isle Ferry Replacement Project. I am giving you my wholehearted support in this bid as a Member of the Scottish Parliament for the Highlands and Islands region. I understand how valuable this infrastructure project is to Shetland and that by improving both the harbours and replacing the vessel will be transformative for the communities involved.

Not only will this improved infrastructure allow for increased and variable access to the islands, allowing for vehicle and cargo transport it will enable the islands to increase and benefit economically. The increase in tourism and better services for businesses will be of a huge advantage and I believe it will enable a sound return on the investment. The Levelling Up fund provides an opportunity to invest into rural development and enable work towards netzero transport. This will enable the UK Government to demonstrate that they are indeed “committed to levelling up across the whole of the United Kingdom” and will assist the communities to the furthest regions of our nation.

We have seen this year how important and crucial it is to have clear, transparent investment in our ferries and I believe Shetland Islands Council has put forward a strong case to show how pertinent this project is to the islands and their communities, and how valuable the funding will be to the islands connectivity. After 36 years, the current vessel does not have much lifespan left and a replacement is urgently needed. I wish you all the best and give you all my support in your bid to receive Levelling Up funding and hope that the UK Government’s response will be supportive and positive.

Yours sincerely

Rhoda Grant, MSP

**Rhoda Grant**  
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