Issued on behalf of Stena Line

Date: 31st October 2016

**Stena Line welcomes opening of M6 Link Road**

The much anticipated £130m M6 Link Road officially opened on Monday 31st October.

The scheme, which has been under construction since 2014, will connect the Heysham peninsula directly to the M6, providing better access to Morecambe and industrial areas that include the Port of Heysham and the Heysham power stations.

The new road, soon to be known as the Bay Gateway, will make the area more appealing for businesses by reducing travel times and increasing connections to the regional and national road network. It will also reduce congestion and help people to get around the area as well as opening up new job opportunities.

The main part of the Bay Gateway scheme involves constructing a 4.8km dual carriageway from the A589 between Morecambe and Lancaster to an upgraded junction 34 on the M6, with additional measures to improve transport in the city, including a major new park and ride site at junction 34. Heysham Port, the third largest in the North West, is developing as a hub for services to Ireland. It is the supply base for major offshore gas fields and wind farms.

Richard Horswill, Stena Line’s Head of Freight for the UK and Ireland said: “The strategically important M6 Link Road scheme will provide fast access to and from the M6 to Heysham Port saving valuable time and fuel. With the opening of the Bay Gateway, Heysham Port is now effectively 20 minutes closer to any destination on journeys via M6. The time saving could even be greater than a 30 minute saving during peak morning and evening rush hour traffics.

Richard concluded: “I have no doubt hauliers will see immediate benefits in transport planning and efficiency and at Stena Line we would like to congratulate all those involved in the planning and construction of this major improvement to the UK road network infrastructure.”

**NOTE TO EDITOR: For further information, please contact Lawrence Duffy of Duffy Rafferty Communications on Belfast (028) 9073 0880.**

