Appendix A

Cover letter for the interview and interview questions

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a research student in the School of the Built Environment at Herriot-Watt University in the UK, conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Graeme Bowles and Dr. Zhen Chen. I am researching better management of variation orders in the Saudi public construction projects at the design stage.

The lack of knowledge about management of variation orders in Saudi Arabia and the limited published work in relation to variation orders in the Saudi construction industry, have led the researcher to carry out a series of exploratory interviews. The aim of the exploratory research is to better understand current practice of variation orders management at the design stage of public sector construction projects in Saudi Arabia.

Please, I respectfully ask you to answer the interview questions through recorded phone calls to speed up the process of the research, as the research is carried out in the UK and the research case is in Saudi Arabia. Please e-mail me back at your suitable time to make the call. Be assured that the data collected will be kept confidential and no firm, organisation or individual will be identified in the thesis or in any report or publication based on this research. A copy of the summary report will be made available if required.

I would also like to assure you that this study has been reviewed and received ethics clearances through the office of research ethics at Heriot-Watt University.

Thanks in advance for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Jawad Al Suliman

E-mail: ja169@hw.ac.uk

(A)   Personal background:

1.   Name (optional):

2.   Work organisation: (   ) Public client   (   ) Private consulting firm

3.   Position:

4.   Years of experience: (   ) 0-5 years   (   ) 6-10 years   (   ) 11-15 years (   ) 16-20 years   (   ) more than 20 years

(B)   Management of variation orders in the design stage:

  5.   How do variation orders negatively affect the design stage?

  6.   How do you manage variation orders in the design stage?

  7.   What are the problems associated with managing variation orders?

(C)   Existing models/frameworks to manage variation orders:

8.   Do you use a model/framework to manage variation orders in the design stage? (If yes, go to Q10)

9.   What are the reasons behind not using a model/framework to manage variation orders? (Go to Q13)

10.   What is the model/framework do you use?

11.   Have you faced any problems with this model/framework? (If no, go to Q13)

12.   What are these problems?

13.   From your experience is it necessary to have a model/framework to manage variation orders?

14.   If yes or no, what are the reasons?