

Melanie Williamson  
Coroner's Office and Court  
71 Northgate  
Wakefield  
WF1 3BS

Contact:  
Tel: 0113

Our reference:

Dear Ms Williamson

**Inquest touching the death of Edward James SLANEY (deceased)**

I refer to your Section 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths received by Leeds City Council on the 13 January 2013, concerning the above inquest. In your report you have made the following recommendation to Leeds City Council.

“Until such time as the remedial works to ameliorate the effects of the wind created by Bridgewater Place are completed, the junction of Water Lane, Neville Street and Victoria Road should be closed to all highway users as soon as the wind in that location attains speeds of 20 metres per second

Leeds City Council is very concerned about the high wind speeds at Bridgewater Place and the impact this has on the safety of highway users; we are very mindful of the tragic death of Dr Edward Slaney and the need to put measures in place to prevent any future death or serious injury occurring. ”. As you know, we have been urging the owners to take necessary actions at the earliest opportunity. To that end a planning application is expected in Spring 2014.

To address your specific recommendation to Leeds City Council, the existing protocol for road closures during high winds at Bridgewater Place has been reviewed. Accordingly, the Council Executive Board on 14 February 2014 has agreed a revised High Winds Protocol as detailed below:

- Employing messages to all variable message signs in the city, including the Victoria Road sign which is visible to traffic entering the city centre at the approach to Bridgewater Place, giving a warning of gusty wind conditions when forecast wind gust speeds reach 15m/s (35mph);
- Close the junction to all vehicles when the revised threshold of 20m/s (45mph) is forecast to be exceeded, to remove the risk of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles;
- In addition, the Council will close the pedestrian crossing points at the Water Lane / Neville Street / Victoria Road junction. Pedestrians will be guided away



western footway of Victoria Bridge and away from the central areas of the junction and the strongest winds, channeling pedestrians around the eastern edge of Victoria Road to the formal crossing points near Asda.

- Wind speed modelling tests for this eastern route have been carried out to identify whether there are any points along it which could potentially fail wind speed distress measurement criteria in conditions during which the route would be in use. As a consequence of this work, an extended pedestrian shelter will be installed to provide further protection for pedestrians. It is expected this shelter will be in place for a period of approximately 2 years until the permanent works have been installed and proven to work. The safety and experience of pedestrians using this diversion route will be closely monitored and kept under review and further advice will be taken from the Council's external advisors if appropriate.
- Providing an alternative pedestrian route via David Street to avoid the junction.
- Providing additional traffic diversion signs to reduce potential delays on the alternative vehicular routes when the closure is in place.
- Additional and larger warning signs of wind for pedestrians.
- Continuing liaison with the managing agents for the owners and other interested parties to coordinate the management of access to / egress from the site during windy conditions and road closures.
- Access for emergency services will remain.
- Reviewing pedestrian signing in the general area to take into account the recent developments that have taken place.

The changes to the High Winds protocol were put in place immediately following the Executive Board's decision. We plan to have the pedestrian shelter in place by March/April 2014 subject to any mandatory highways, planning and procurement considerations.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me via my office.

Yours sincerely

Tom Riordan  
Chief Executive