

APPENDIX TWO

Mrs Alexandra Longman
19 Bridge Street
Otley
LS21 1BQ

31st March 2007

Dear Ms Preston

I write to you with regard to all the furore concerning the proposed railings alongside the river Wharfe in Otley.

I am a mother of three young children aged 7 years, 5 years and 20 months, we live in Otley, approximately 400yards away from the river. Anyone who knows Otley would agree that we are very lucky living in such close proximity to fabulous facilities like the park, the skateboarding area, and the river with its ducks, with such a young family. There is something for each of them.

However we rarely visit the park due to the fact that I find it so stressful. The river Wharfe is a dangerous river, you have a sign in the park telling us so, as you walk to the swings the wall is barely 1ft high. My 5 year old boy likes to ride his bike and it makes me feel physically sick to think he could come off his bike and fall into the river, likewise I do not let my 20 month old daughter walk to the park, she has to go in the buggy, as I can't keep my eye on both of them at the same time.

I think that the proposed railings are much needed, making the park a safer place to be for young families. I know we would use it more.

On a recent visit to Cannons Healthclub, Guiesley, I was appalled to find an elderly member collecting names for her petition against the railings in the ladies changing rooms. I ask you, how often do these people actually use the park? Is it going to take a serious accident to take place before they realise the danger? Have they forgotten what it is like to have small children? How would they feel if they win their fight not to have the railings put up, and then there was a nasty accident?

I am surprised it has taken this long for Leeds City Council to consider the need for railings along this stretch of water. It is an accident waiting to happen. Probably the only reason you haven't had an incident yet is that people are staying away.

Can I just add, I realise that there is a sign as you enter the park stating NO CYCLING & NO SKATEBOARDS, but in this day and age with the roads being so congested and strange people reported to be on our streets, where are our children supposed to play? Do you not think that you should remove the sign and welcome children to get some

exercise in the park. If they were allowed to ride their bikes and skateboards they may feel as though they have somewhere to go where they won't be told off by "do gooders". If dogs are allowed to be off their leads, why shouldn't children ride their bikes.

Please feel free to circulate this letter should you wish to. I feel very strongly on this matter.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Yours sincerely

Alexandra Longman