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Keith Mason
Area Law & Administration Manager
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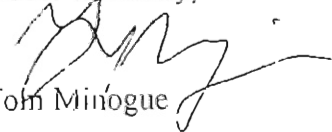
30th October 2001.

Dear Keith,

After the recent spell of inclement weather I was delighted last Tuesday when the sun broke through allowing my wife and I to take our granddaughter Millie to the seaside at Limekilns. At Limekilns a journalist asked us to pose for a photograph in front of the pier that he was photographing so as to give his subject perspective. I looked forward to opening my Courier the next day, but was disappointed to find that the photograph of the pier was in isolation; the accompanying article however was of interest. The article concerned suggested that Fife Region were considering footing the bill for repairing the Earl of Elgin's pier. As someone who has lived in the Dunfermline area for 50 years I was not amused that a wealthy landowner was to benefit from the public purse, particularly when the same landowner has recently denied the public access to the road that runs through his estate. I, like others had used this road for at least 45 years. Given the above I wrote an indignant letter to the Courier, which was published today. (See attached)

I have now had time to consider my intemperate action with the benefit of hindsight and on reflection I may have been too critical in my letter to the Courier. If Fife Region has the power to grant financial assistance to distressed genteel folk who have come on hard times it would be churlish of me to grudge them relief. Does the same discretionary financial assistance apply to commoners? As I would ask you to consider me for some assistance if it does. The project I have in mind is re-lining my flue which (like Elgin's pier) is in a dire state of disrepair after 90 years of use, and in the winter the smoke belches out of cracks and holes everywhere except the chimney pot. Could our respective surveyors meet so that we can agree the level of finance I will require? I can assure you that (unlike the laird) you will have no problem in obtaining this owners agreement to repair his old structure.

Yours faithfully,


Tom Minogue

FIFE COUNCIL LAW & ADMIN (WEST)	
Rec'd	01 NOV 2001



The pier at Limekilns with the fenced area keeping visitors away at the far end.

Courier
24/10/01

Concerns over dangerous pier

By Norrie Gray

WITH WINTER and its expected storms not far away, residents of Limekilns are concerned over the lack of action to repair the stone pier which is considered dangerous.

Believed to have been built nearly five centuries ago, the pier is a prominent feature of the shore and harbour area.

Massive stone blocks have tumbled down into the Forth at the far end of the pier. Fife Council proceeded to fence off the area which was a favourite viewing point looking over the Forth bridges to the east, the Lothians to the south and mountains to the west.

Seats have been placed along the

west side of a sheltering wall and the grass area along the top of the pier is kept cut by the council to allow easier walking.

Residents who contacted The Courier to express their concern claimed that with every tide some of the ballast and soil behind the stonework was being washed away and this erosion would become worse when the winter storms come.

"We've not yet had a high tide with the big waves that strong winds can whip up in the Firth of Forth, and we fear that the whole structure will become unstable and eventually all of it will go if something isn't done," said one local.

The pier is actually part of the Earl of Elgin's estate but Fife Council is

considering ways of finding financial assistance to carry out the repairs.

Kelth Mason, law and administration manager for the area, confirmed that Fife Council had fenced off the end of the pier some months ago after its engineers inspected it.

"Broomhall Estate's engineers have also inspected it and we are waiting for their report before deciding what should be done," he added.

"We had expected it some weeks ago, but the council can't do anything without the owner's agreement."

Mr Mason rejected the comments that the interior of the pier was being washed away, saying the pier had been designed to allow the water in and out of the stone blocks and to absorb the force of the waves.

A suitable motto

Sir—Norrie Gray's article (October 24) suggested that Fife Council might be prepared to finance the repairs of the 11th Earl of Elgin's dilapidated pier at Limekilns. The present earl has not inherited the spirit of conservation from his ancestor the 7th earl who looted and desecrated the temple at Athens on the pretext of "rescuing the marbles of the Parthenon which were at that time falling into ruin."

The motto of the present earl's clan is Fumus (We have been). If Fife's ratepayers foot the bill for this wealthy landowner's neglected pier, I suggest a suitable motto for us would be "We've been had".

Tom Minogue.
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Letters should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.
Email: letters@thecourier.co.uk

24 OCT 30 2001

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Direct Line: 01383 312700

Your Ref:

Our Ref: AS.3 KSM/TC

1st November 2001

Dear Tom

LIMEKILNS PIER

Thank you for your letter of 30th October - the Press have mentioned that you might be in touch.

First of all, the statutory position: the Council certainly have responsibilities as Coastal Protection Authority and do step in from time to time to deal with this kind of issue - it is by no means unique. However, the particular circumstances of Limekilns pier are that the public generally speaking have access rights to the end of the pier and the whole of the surface is maintained by the Council as an amenity area.

As regards the Council's undertaking works on privately owned structures, this is more unusual. It is not actually intended that Council money be used. The reference made in the press should have been to Fife Entrust funds, which are the proceeds from Landfill Tax. The Limekilns pier clearly comes within the remit of the Fife Entrust and would be a good project for them. However, an application may only be made with the agreement of the landlord and, until we know what his engineer is actually saying about the issue, no application will be made.

As regards your flue I have asked Derek Walker, the Chief Building Control Officer, for his comments.

Yours sincerely



K.S. Mason
Area Law and Administration Manager (West)

Tom Minogue Esq.
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Your Ref:

Our Ref: AS.3⁻¹ KSM/TC

16th November 2001

Dear *Tom*,

LIMEKILNS PIER

Thank you for your letter of 7th November.

You may be right in a strictly legal view but I have to take account of the wider public or Common Good as well as legal niceties in dealing with this issue.

It is factual that the Broomhall Estate has permitted public access to the end of the pier and this is generally accepted as being a public space, and therefore maintained by the local authority as such.

On the coastal erosion issue the Council have certainly tried to ensure that action has been taken elsewhere on the Fife littoral where piers or other structures have been deteriorating: expert opinion may well be correct that such structures have a detrimental effect but the fact is the pier is there, and should remain so.

As regards walking through Broomhall Estate, there would be no right of access to do so in the legal sense (since you mention the legal issue) as a right of way must go from one public place to another and exist as a matter of public right. This is not the case at Broomhall.

I am still of the view that the Fife EnTrust funds may be appropriately used for restoration of the pier and that it is an outstanding feature of the village.

Yours sincerely

Keith S. Mason

K.S. Mason
Area Law and Administration Manager (West)

10th May, 2002



Our Ref: RWE/JW

Councillor ROBERT W EADIE JP

Mr Thomas Minogue
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Electoral Ward 15:
Limekilns & Pitreavie

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your letter dated 2nd May, 2002.

I am pleased to say that I have hopes that the Earl of Elgin will finance the repair to the pier but we will have to wait on developments. I have said throughout that it was important not to send signals to the Elgin Estate that public money would be available if they failed to take action on the pier.

With regard to the asbestos – Kevin Coffey did give me some samples of this which I have had analysed – the report confirmed that the samples were indeed asbestos but not in a state which would present a health hazard to the public at the present time. However, as you rightly know with asbestos you can never be too careful. The Council Officers asked to be put in touch with Kevin Coffey which I did do in order that he could show them precisely the location on the beach where he uncovered the original samples. This is something which will be monitored in the future and any steps necessary will be taken in the interest of public safety. So far I have not heard anything back from Fife Council's Officers but your letter prompts me to contact them again.

For your information I do not think that the asbestos we are concerned about here has come from rope rather it looks like parts of corrugated asbestos roofing which was used for huts and temporary buildings.

As soon as I have any more information I will contact you.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to read "R. W. Eadie".

Councillor R.W. Eadie, J.P.