



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

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*(Please ensure that the letter reference is quoted on return correspondence).*

20<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
2 Marsham Street,  
London,  
SW1P 4DF

*Dear Michael,*

Congratulations on your new post.

Following up on our recent conversation and my letters to your predecessor (15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June), I would like to reiterate my opposition to a proposed so-called energy-from-waste incinerator in Westbury and my hope that you decide to 'call in' the decision.

The upcoming COP26 summit invites us to review our waste management. I recall your Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) and suggest old style moving-grate incinerators, such as the one planned for Westbury, conflict strongly with it. They do nothing to incentivise waste reduction and a circular economy – policies rightly front and centre in the RWS that you supervised.

The UK Without Incineration Network (UKWIN) calculates that the UK is already over-capacity, meaning there is more incineration capacity existing and under construction than available residual waste to burn.

The RWS talks of cracking down on plastic waste and pollution. A Telegraph and SourceMaterial investigation of incinerator companies' own data showed that in 2019, incinerators produced almost the same carbon emissions per unit of electricity as coal-fired power plants. This is largely due to the burning of plastics which, when burnt, emit twice their pre-burned solid weight of gas carbon into the atmosphere.

I must press the plight of Westbury's Arla Foods, a regional employer and a company of national importance whose operation is seriously threatened by the proposed incinerator next door. Arla takes a perishable product, milk, and renders it into long shelf-life dairy product such as Anchor

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butter. Recent action by the Environment Agency against the incinerator applicant for breaches at its existing waste site in Westbury give every reason to suppose its incinerator business would pose a taint threat to Arla's highly sensitive product and mean unscheduled suspension of its operations. This would pose an existential threat to Arla, gum up the entire UK dairy industry and result in perishable product from farms having to be destroyed. I cannot believe you would be comfortable with such a dire risk to the UK's already struggling dairy sector and to our country's food security.

I stand ready to discuss further and at length.

Thank you for your help.

Yours es,

Andrew.