

From: TRUSS, Elizabeth [mailto:elizabeth.truss.mp@parliament.uk]
Sent: 12 November 2012 21:20
To: PS/Owen Paterson (Secretariat)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Strattons Waste, Walsoken

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Elizabeth Truss MP

Member of Parliament for South West Norfolk

The Limes

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Dear Owen,

Over the past two years Walsoken Parish Council in my constituency has contacted me about an ongoing concern with a septic tank and waste disposal operation. For many years the strong odours have created a number of concerns for local residents. The Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council has issued abatement notices to Strattons Waste to address these concerns. Both the Environment Agency, which issue the permit to Strattons to operate, and the Borough Council have committed a number of resources trying to address residents concerns, with the Borough Council regularly sending out Environmental Health Officers to conduct site inspections when complaints are received. This summer exhaustive studies have been conducted on site by the Borough Council. However, it has recently become apparent that in order for any decisive action to be taken by the Environment Agency, which issues the permit for operation, any breaches of the permit by the waste operator needs to be witnessed firsthand by the Environment Agency. I have been informed that they will not accept the expert opinion from the Environmental Health Officers of the Borough Council. This provides many challenges as generally the complaints peak during the evenings and at weekends when only skeleton staff are on duty. Due to the size of the area the Environment Agency cover in the East of England, based at Ely, an Environment Agency officer may not be able to attend or will only arrive many hours after the first reports of a strong odour.

I would ask that you investigate the possibility of the expert opinion of the Environmental Health officers from the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council being used by the Environment Agency. This surely must provide better value for money and may assist in resolving the situation sooner rather than later.

Best wishes

Elizabeth Truss MP