

HUW MERRIMAN MP
(Bexhill and Battle)



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP
Minister of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Our Ref: HM29573
Your Ref:MC2022/22913/JD

18 November 2022

Dear Mark,

Re: Tottingworth Abattoir and local abattoir provision

Thank you for your response to my request to meet.

Further to our conversation in Parliament today, and in order to set the scene for when we are able to meet to discuss the issue around abattoir provision, I believe it would be beneficial if the Government carried out a review into small abattoir provision. I very much hope you will consider conducting such a review for the good of the farming community, and consumers who rely on it. There is a desire to ensure meat production is locally produced in a manner which is best for animal welfare standards.

The review will need to address what support can be given to those who are the last remaining abattoir in a county or wide geographical location. I also believe the review should consider solutions which can be implemented in these same areas where abattoirs have already closed or owners are unwilling to continue to operate (even with such support).

As I mentioned in our conversation, in counties such as East Sussex, the last abattoir is about to close. This closure will have huge impacts on local livestock farmers and butchers. I have received a large volume of correspondence about this from farming constituents and I quote from a local farmer and farming consultant who describes the impact so well:

"I cannot over-estimate how devastating this news is for all livestock farmers & butchers in East Sussex and Kent.

Without the capacity of a large abattoir like Tottingworth, the future for livestock farming, farm shops, butchers and animal welfare (longer journeys by road) and local meat traceability is at risk."

Please reply to: Constituency Office, 29-31 Sea Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN40 1EE
Telephone: 01424 734910
Email: huw.merriman.mp@parliament.uk www.huwmerriman.org.uk

I very much look forward to our meeting and I hope that a review will urgently get underway.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'Huw Merriman'.

Huw Merriman
Member of Parliament for Bexhill and Battle