

Question and Answer Session - Mylen Leah (ML) & Melbourne Parish Council

1. What is the relationship between Mylen Leah and Statkraft?

ML was set up by Statkraft as a special purpose vehicle (SPV) for the sole purpose of this project. SOAY is another Statkraft SPV. Boom Power is separate.

2. What is the status of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects?

- Projects generating above 50mw renewable energy are classed as NSIPs. ML project is for 500mw.
- Planning applications are different as they go to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) and then to the Secretary of State. ERYC is a statutory consultee.
- There is a mechanism for compulsory land acquisition but that is a last resort – ML is planning on leasing land for the project.
- The application is not a 'done deal' – there are a number of stages. The master plan is based on preliminary knowledge about the local community. The co-design workshop will help to refine it.

3. Are there a maximum number of such projects allowed in one area?

East Yorkshire is a good site for these projects because of the flat terrain, agricultural land with separation from residential areas and the higher levels of solar irradiance in the east of England.

There is no saturation cap but ML must produce a cumulative impact assessment which will identify other renewable sites and assess the impact of the new one. This will be carried out by independent consultants who will recommend mitigation measures for visual impact issues. PINS will then review that assessment against a set of industry standards.

4. What are the criteria for defining land as suitable for solar farms?

There are no set criteria but it will include:

- Status of agricultural land
- Location of source of energy
- Local communities
- Solar irradiance levels

With regard to identifying land, it's a mixture of ML approaching land owners as well as the other way round.

5. Is this the totality of development?

No future plans from Statkraft for this area at the moment. Other companies may have different views.

6. Could SSSIs, protected land be affected?

Any within or just outside the boundaries will be identified. ML will have to carry out an impact assessment if any may potentially be affected. The grid corridor (mauve lines) on the master plan covers the area of the SSSI but there will be only 1 cable which will be underground to Thornton substation. ML must liaise with Natural England, Environment Agency before gaining approval.

7. What's the direct impact on Melbourne Parish?

Mainly on agricultural land south of Ash Lane. ML must increase biodiversity by a minimum of 10% (Biodiversity Net Gain). To provide visual screening any hedges/trees already there will be used and enhanced.

8. What about disturbance to locality during development phase.

East Yorkshire Solar Farm is already underway and it is not expected that there will be an overlap. ML will have to carry out a traffic survey on potential routes – it is noted that many of the roads are very narrow. However, they do not need a lot of access points and will keep them to a minimum. The Highways Authority will also comment and place conditions on the application.

ML said they were already aware of the issues with Ash Lane and Boundary Farm crossroads.

9. What is the project timeline?

So far, ML has launched the master plan. Next there will be consultation with non-statutory consultees and workshops to develop a scoping document. This will be submitted to PINS at Christmas. It will go out to statutory consultees and wider public consultation for comment in summer 2025. Then final application to PINS and Secretary of State at the beginning of 2026.

10. What is the project lifetime?

60 years. At the end of the life cycle the project is de-commissioned, equipment removed and land reverted back to original designation.

11. What benefits are there for local communities?

There will be a community benefits agreement but this has not been drawn up yet. ML will use local businesses where possible during the development phase. The details of this will be in the impact assessment.

12. When would wider interaction with the Parish Council take place?

We would be happy to present at a regular PC meeting if it would be useful to discuss the scheme further. If you could provide dates for your upcoming scheduled meetings we can check our availability.

13. Will some form of agriculture still be able to be carried out on the Solar Farm?

The land between the panels within the fenced area of the solar farm can continue to be made available for sheep grazing, allowing for on-going farming operation to take place alongside the operation of the solar farm.

14. Why no battery storage as part of this project?

We are not proposing battery storage as Statkraft are already developing a battery storage scheme separately, next to Thornton substation.

15. The project website states "We will be considering areas of land to be used for dedicated ecology and biodiversity enhancements and landscaping". What does this mean and can you give examples?

These areas for ecological and landscape mitigation/enhancement are shown green on the Indicative Concept Master plan on our website.