



Planning Inspectorate

## **Mylen Leah Solar Farm – EN0110002**

### **Mylen Leah Solar Limited Section 51 Advice Log**

**Version: 29 April 2025**

There is a statutory duty under [section 51 \(s51\) of the Planning Act 2008](#) for the Planning Inspectorate to record the advice that it gives in relation to an application or potential application, and to make this publicly available.

This document comprises a record of the advice that has been provided by the Inspectorate to the applicant (Mylen Leah Solar Limited) and their consultants during the pre-application stage. It will be updated by the Inspectorate after every interaction with the applicant during which s51 has been provided. The applicant will always be given the opportunity to comment on the Inspectorate's draft record of advice before it is published.

The applicant will use this Advice Log as the basis for demonstrating regard to section 51 advice within the application.

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Date of meeting	Meeting overview
<a href="#">28 October 2024</a>	Email with feedback on the Programme Document
<a href="#">25 April 2025</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-statutory consultation &amp; feedback</li> <li>• Scoping response</li> <li>• Surveys update</li> <li>• Ongoing design development</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Programme to statutory consultation &amp; submission</li> </ul>

Project name -s51 Advice Library	
Topic	Email 28 October 2024
Feedback on the Programme Document	<p>The applicant supplied the Inspectorate with its initial Programme Document in line with the Expression of Interest process, after the publication of the 2024 Pre-application Prospectus. Having reviewed the document, the Inspectorate considers that it satisfactorily covers the expected content as set out in the government's pre-application guidance at paragraph 10, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “the date the applicant intends to submit their application</li> <li>• a comprehensive timetable of the applicant's pre-application process, the main events with dates and milestones demonstrating how the pre-application process will be completed (using the maximum target of 2 years as a benchmark)</li> <li>• the applicant's view on the main issues for resolution and activities they will undertake to address those</li> <li>• the applicant's proposals for engaging with statutory consultees and local authorities during the pre-application period and any intended financial support agreements, such as Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)</li> <li>• the applicant's identification of risks to achievement of the pre-application stage and the process by which these risks are tracked and managed</li> <li>• cross references to the SoCC required by <a href="#">section 47 of the Planning Act</a>”.</li> </ul> <p>The Programme Document provides enough detail about the proposed development, timetable and activities for the pre-application process, as well as the applicant's approach to engagement with statutory consultees and other parties. In the next iteration of the document, it would be helpful if the applicant includes the timescale for the Adequacy of Consultation Milestone.</p>
Topic	Meeting date: 25 April 2025
Feedback on non-statutory consultation	<p>The Inspectorate noted the applicant's update on early engagement with the local community and other stakeholders. It advised the applicant to ensure that the feedback received is taken into account through the project design process, and that the applicant's documents how feedback has led to changes in the design. This should include demonstrating where control mechanisms and the dDCO will be used to respond to stakeholder concerns.</p>

Response to Scoping Opinion	<p>The Inspectorate advised that the approach of scoping minerals and waste out of the EIA process but covering the relevant aspects in other documents such as management plans had been used successfully in other projects. Discussions with the relevant Local Planning Authority/ies on this approach were helpful, but the applicant should consider whether other bodies such as the Environment Agency would also need to agree the approach. All such discussions should be documented in the submitted application to provide justification for the scoping out of these issues.</p> <p>The Inspectorate also advised that it may be possible to take a similar approach regarding minerals safeguarding areas, and in this case early engagement with the relevant authority would be necessary.</p>
Landscape and design	<p>The Inspectorate queried whether there were any local policies on design or landscape character that would need to be considered through the design evolution. It welcomed the applicant's confirmation that it was meeting with the local landscape officer on site to look at how to ensure the scheme ties into wider emerging ambitions for landscape regeneration. The applicant was aware of a new design code produced by the Local Authority relating to solar, but this was more oriented towards rooftop and small-scale installations. However, the applicant would ensure that any potential implications are addressed in the application.</p>
Grid connection	<p>The applicant clarified that the existing substation at Thornton was being extended under an existing permission for development nearby, and it was this expanded capacity that the solar farm would be connecting into. The Inspectorate noted that the applicant was undertaking the expansion works, rather than National Grid, which allowed them to have more clarity on timescales.</p>
Learning from other schemes	<p>The Inspectorate provided an update on a number of other solar DCO applications which had recently been accepted for examination, and advised the applicant to keep tracking these through the system to give an indication of the issues that tend to arise at acceptance and examination.</p>
Programme	<p>The applicant explained that the programme had slipped slightly with a new submission date of September 2026, largely due to ongoing survey work. The Inspectorate advised that it is asking applicants to provide a target month for submission rather than a quarter to go on the project page for consistency of data across projects and asked the applicant whether September 2026 could be used on the project page, which the applicant confirmed. The Inspectorate reminded the applicant to ensure that the</p>

	<p>Programme Document was updated with these changes. It also advised that it would be useful for the Programme Document to include some of the other updates from the meeting, particularly to give statutory bodies sight of when their engagement would be required and what were the main issues to be discussed.</p> <p>The Inspectorate advised that due to resourcing and availability, it would be useful to have 4-6 weeks' notice of future update meetings, and noted that approximate timings for these could also be included in the Programme Document.</p>
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