

REF: MA443 & MA436 COUNTY COUNCIL: PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS TO THE DRAFT OFFALY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027 PLEASE REMOVE LEMANAGHAN BOG IN ITS ENTIRETY FROM AREA 5 AS AN AREA OPEN TO CONSIDERATION TO WIND ENERGY My submission for this request is as follows

BIODIVERSITY: There is a serious biodiversity crisis at the moment. Bogs are the best method of carbon storage; it only makes sense to avail of this by allowing the bog to go back to its natural habitat and allow all the beautiful flora and fauna to reoccur in the area. Erecting turbines will result in millions of tonnes of concrete being pumped into the bog, completely nulling any energy saving effect of the windfarm, and in turn will lead to flooding as the roads are at a very low level around the bog. **POTENTIAL FOR TOURISM;** Ballycumber Community Development Plan has drawn up an excellent plan which will incorporate tourism, recreation for visitors and locals alike, along with biodiversity. This I believe is the way forward for Lemanaghan bog. Windfarms are not a tourist attraction – SEEN ONE, SEEN THEM ALL. Lemanaghan also has a very significant history and heritage, which I am sure the council is aware of as it sponsored the Lemanaghan Conservation Plan which was published by the Heritage Council. Section 4 of this Plan states that ‘Lemanaghan is a sacred place of great antiquity’ for example. St Manahan’s well, Mellas Cell, the graveyard, also Castle Armstrong and St Bridget’s well are part of the Pilgrim path and linked to Clonmacnoise, which The Irish Times this year had as one of the top tourists walks in the country. There also has been many archaeological finds in the bog over the years which have been recorded, **VISUAL & NOISE POLLUTION;** Area 5 Lemanaghan bog is completely flat. As it is, the turbines in Boora and Cloghan can be seen clearly from all sides of the bog. Therefore, no matter where on Lemanaghan bog the turbines are placed they will still have a serious impact on the landscape. Also, there are dwellings all around the area adjacent to the bog, so the constant noise from the turbines, regardless of how low it may appear to once off visitors, will be impossible for the residence to live with. If the people who live close to other Windfarms were listened to, they would tell you this. I received a recording of this noise from a friend in Leitrim, and I can assure you, it is not something anyone should have to live with in this day and age. **WILDLIFE AND BIRDS;** Red and amber listed species are in decline in Ireland. Lemanaghan bog is the habitat for many of these, such as the hen harrier, whooper swans, bats, red squirrels, pine martin, and buzzards to name just a few. They have reduced in quantity in recent years due to Bord na Mona working the bog, but this is an opportunity to increase the

population again should the bog be allowed to restore itself to its natural habitat. I am aware of the need to source energy more efficiently, but I personally believe that if grants and subsidies were as available for solar and other forms to the extent that they are for wind, that the emphasis would be put into obtaining energy from, for example, solar panels on top of large factories and industrial units or farmers sheds. There are many options that would not only be more economical financially, but also with space. Thank you for taking the time to read my submission Eilish Keyes
