

REF: MA443 & MA436 COUNTY COUNCIL: PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS TO THE DRAFT OFFALY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027 PLEASE REMOVE LEMANAGHAN BOG IN ITS ENTIRITY FROM AREA 5 AS AN AREA OPEN TO CONSIDERATION TO WIND ENERGY My submission for this request is as follows. Proliferation of wind turbines in an area that is populated, historical, suitable for tourism and perfect for natural biodiversity. Industrial windfarms start with 10 to 15 turbines, but over the years they will increase regularly. Mount Lucas being a local example. At present nearly every available piece of land in Offaly has turbines erected, not to mention the country. It is reminiscent of the building boom in the early 2000's. We all know what happened then. 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. Lemanaghan 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. 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. Area 5 Lemanaghan bog is a completely flat landscape. 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. I have driven past these turbines in Boora and Cloghan many times in the last couple of weeks and noted that none of them were turning? The best storage in the world has only a few hours, so how would this work in cold frosty short days when power is needed. Wind cannot be summoned onto the network when required most, if there is no wind. Wind energy can have adverse environmental impacts. This includes the potential to reduce and degrade wildlife habitats. The NWCC conducted research and found evidence of bird and bat deaths from collisions with wind turbines. Lemanaghan bog is the habitat of many species of birds and wildlife, most of whom are red and amber listed. I am aware of the need to source energy more efficiently, but I personally believe that more emphasis should be put on the use of large buildings and farm sheds etc to have solar panels. Can this project be feasible if taking into account the maintenance and upgrading of the turbines, not to mention the upheaval caused across neighbourhoods, Thank you for taking the time to read my submission. Noel Coolahan

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