

Forward Planning Section,
Offaly County Council,
Aras an Chontae,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly.

New Road,
Clara,
Co. Offaly.

15/7/2021

RE/ Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027

I wish to propose the following motion in relation to the Wind Energy Strategy in the Draft County Development Plan for Offaly, 2021 – 2027.

I propose that Leamonaghan Bog be removed from Area 5 and excluded as an area open to consideration for Wind Energy Development as the area is of major historical and archaeological importance not only in Offaly or Ireland but worldwide.

The Sli Mor pilgrim path route, begins in Ballycumber Village, leads to Boher church and through the bog, over to Leamonaghan, up along St Manchan's road to St. Mellas Cell and back across the bog to Clonmacnoise. The linkage of these sacred places is made possible through Leamonaghan Bog. Many archaeological digs and excavations have proven these routes exist. Disrupting this would have long standing consequences for the potential to develop tourism.

The construction of wind turbines in Leamonaghan Bog would require hundreds of tonnes of concrete being poured into foundations which would lead to irreparable damage to an area of Co Offaly that should and must be protected for future generations.

The 'protected zone' in the material alterations was created without a site survey and with no specialist archaeological or historical expertise. Many recorded National Monuments in the bog were not afforded any protection in this amendment.

Zoning the area for wind energy would cause severe risk to the preservation of existing and other potential archaeological discoveries in the bog.

Leamonaghan Bog and the surrounding area has enormous tourism potential with the ancient Sli Mor pilgrim path linking St. Manchan's Shrine in Boher and to Clonmacnoise which has the second highest visitor numbers in Ireland.



Signed: Cllr Ken Smollen

Dated: 15th July 2021

