

An Coimisiún Pleanála  
64 Marlborough Street  
Dublin 1  
D01 V902

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026

**Re: Observation/Objection to proposed Lemanaghan Wind Farm, Co. Offaly**

**Name:** Lorraine Farrell and Ciarán Henson

**Address:** Clonaderg, Ballinahown, Athlone, Co. Offaly. N37TR96

To whom it concerns,

We wish to make a strenuous objection to the proposed Lemanaghan Wind Farm in Co. Offaly. We are respectfully requesting An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission for this development.

We support renewable energy. We understand why it is needed. However, we do not believe this is the right place for a wind farm of this size. The remainder of this letter will outline our concerns in detail.

**1. Summary of objection**

The proposal outlines a very large development. Our concern is that it would place industrial-scale infrastructure into a landscape that has deep historical, archaeological, spiritual and community importance.

**2. The significance of Lemanaghan**

Lemanaghan is an important early Christian monastic landscape linked with St Manchan. It includes St Manchan's Church, St Mella's Cell, the holy well, ancient toghers and the wider bog landscape.

These illustrate significant cultural heritage and show early Christian settlement, religious practice and local tradition over a long period of time.

The holy well and local connection with St Manchan also mean the site still has significant meaning for the community today. For that reason, the setting of Lemanaghan should be protected and preserved.

**3. Proper planning and sustainable development**

We do not believe this proposal is suitable planning for this area. In Lemanaghan, the bog is part of the heritage. It is part of the history and meaning of the place.

A development of this scale would change the area permanently. It does not consider the heritage of the location, the irreversible and negative impact on biodiversity and the long standing local objections.

#### **4. Impact on archaeological and cultural heritage**

We are concerned about the impact on archaeology and cultural heritage.

The area is known for ancient trackways and early medieval heritage. Even if individual monuments are not directly damaged, the wider landscape could still be harmed by roads, foundations, drainage, cabling and construction works.

#### **5. Impact on setting and sense of place**

Turbines of up to 220 metres would be very visible. Indeed, they would dominate the landscape.

This would change the setting of Lemanaghan Monastic Site and the wider heritage area. The quiet and reflective character of the place is part of its value. Once that is changed, it cannot easily be restored.

#### **6. Conflict with the Lemanaghan Conservation Plan**

The Lemanaghan Conservation Plan recognises the special character and heritage value of the area.

We do not believe a wind farm of this scale fits with that conservation-led approach. It would be difficult, indeed we suggest impossible, to protect the meaning and setting of Lemanaghan while also allowing this level of industrial development.

#### **7. Community, amenity and tourism concerns**

The proposal includes amenity tracks, seating, signage and car parks. These may sound positive, but they do not cancel out the wider harm.

We welcome the considered and intentional development of Lemanaghan as a place of tourism and interest in Offaly. These improvements should be led by heritage, community and conservation. A large wind farm does not and will not complement this sympathetic approach to community development.

#### **8. Environmental effects**

We are concerned that the level of intervention proposed in this project is not consistent with local and national commitments to protect and restore biodiversity. Offaly's Biodiversity Action Plan 2025–2030 is based on working with stakeholders to deliver biodiversity actions over the lifetime of the plan. The Offaly County Development Plan recognises peatlands as important ecosystems, including for carbon storage, water attenuation and flood protection.

At national level, Ireland's National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023–2030 sets the national agenda for biodiversity and links Ireland's work to the Global Biodiversity Framework. While it supports renewable energy, including onshore wind, it does not remove the need to protect biodiversity, peatlands, water quality and habitats in individual planning decisions.

For that reason, we ask that the impacts on peat, hydrology, water quality, habitats, birds, bats and landscape are examined very carefully in partnership with the community before any further developments are progressed.

In our view, this development has not shown that it is compatible with biodiversity protection or long-term restoration commitments in this particular bogland and heritage setting. Renewable energy is needed, but that does not mean every location is suitable. We do not believe this proposal has demonstrated that Lemanaghan is an appropriate location for development of this scale.

### **9. European sites and ecological concerns**

We understand that European sites are protected nature sites. We ask that any possible impact on these sites is examined very carefully.

This should include the full development, not just the turbines. Roads, drainage, peat disturbance, construction works and long-term operation all need to be considered. The combined impact with other pressures on the area should also be looked at.

In our view, if there is uncertainty about possible harm to protected habitats, birds, bats, water quality or bogland, then a cautious approach must be taken.

### **10. Conclusion**

We respectfully ask An Coimisiún Pleanála to refuse permission.

Lemanaghan is a special place. Its value lies in rich biodiversity it hosts, the monastic site, the holy well, St Mella's Cell, the toghers, the bog and the wider sense of place.

We support renewable energy. But we do not support this development in this location. The damage to Lemanaghan would be too great and too permanent.

Yours with concern,

Lorraine Farrell and Ciarán Henson