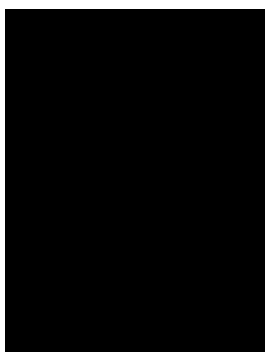


7-10-2020

Submission By:

James Moyles,



on Draft Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027



05.10.2020

Forward Planning,  
Offaly County Council,  
Áras an Chontae,  
Charleville Road,  
Tullamore,  
County Offaly.



**Submissions on the draft Offaly County Development Plan 2021-2027; From the Killurin-Annaghmore-Gurteen Wind Turbine Concern Group.**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **This status of Areas designated as ‘not suitable for wind energy development’ in the 2014 to 2020 CDP must be maintained in the new 2021 to 2027 CDP.** We must protect the landscape which we have inherited and which has remained relatively unchanged for generations. There should be NO wind energy development in areas outside the areas zoned suitable under any circumstances. Areas zoned as unsuitable or areas of high amenity should not be up for consideration under any circumstances. Some of these areas are as follows; The Slieve Blooms, and Lough Boora Parklands, Annaghmore Lake, to name but a few.
2. **Table 3 on page 17 ; Area 3; south of Tullamore from Killeigh to Kilcormac:** we submit that for the purposes of clarity, that the detail described under Area 3 should be added to as follows: that wind energy development be deemed not suitable along the designated scenic route along R431 from Tullamore , through Killurin and southwards toward the slieve bloom mountains, and in particular protected views as listed in Chapter 4 of Volume 1 of this Plan from the townlands of: Killurin, Killananny, Annaghmore, Annaghbrack Glebe Killoughy and Gurteen.
3. **Table 4: Other Local Authorities Wind Strategies or policies and the Level of consistency with Offaly County Wind Strategy in relation to shared borders: Laois;** we note here in the wind strategy document that there is low consistency between Laois and Offaly in regard to what is suitable / not suitable for wind energy development ,[ reference section 9 page 26 of the Wind Energy Strategy document ; *“It is noted that the inclusion of an area ‘open for*

*consideration' for wind farm development south of the shared border on the Laois side of the two counties will impact upon the 'Protected View' Ref. Number V1 in Table 4.16 'Key Scenic Views and Prospects' from Chapter 4: Biodiversity and Landscape of the Offaly County Development Plan of the Slieve Bloom Mountains from the N80 in the townlands of Ballynasragh, Pigeonhouse, Killeigh, Derryclure, Derrybeg and Cloncon. The Offaly Wind Energy Strategy deems this area not suitable for wind energy developments."*

We submit that the designation of this area (Area 3; Area generally south of Tullamore from Killeigh to Kilcormac) by Offaly County Council as being not suitable for wind energy development **is correct and should be maintained as such** within the 2021 to 2027 CDP, for the reasons as stated in the Wind Energy Strategy Document (ie scenic views and prospects, biodiversity of landscape,, etc.) and, in spite of the contrasting designation of suitability in the bordering area in Laois.

We submit further that , should there be a proposal to commence wind energy development in Laois along that county's border with Area 3 , or further south along the R421 as it leaves Offaly into Laois, that Offaly County Council would object to the progression of such wind energy development in that concerned area if it were being considered by Laois CC, given the effect such developments would have on our protected views , its proximity to the slieve blooms and the impact on our homes and amenities in this area.

4. Architectural Heritage: Annaghmore House and its original demesne has to be considered as having particular significance to County Offaly in terms of amenity, tourism and heritage both now and in the near future. The Insertion of a Windfarm into the Annaghmore House area would constitute a dominant and obtrusive feature in the area, which would interfere with the character of the landscape which it is necessary to preserve.

It is the policy of Planning Authorities in Ireland to assess any development proposals in areas of demesne landscape according to best practice guidelines for historic landscapes. In the Current Offaly County Development plan; 2014 to 2020, the area around Annaghmore House is deemed 'Not Suitable for Wind Energy Development.' This submission requests that the status unsuitability be maintained in the new 2021 to 2027 County Development Plan and that the best practice guidelines for planning for historic landscapes be adhered to for this treasured feature of our community.

**Background:** The Group was established by local residents in 2013 when it was found out by accident that Greenwire were signing up landowners in our local area for the erection of 185m high wind turbines. We immediately contacted our local Area Co Cllrs to inform them of the situation. We met and wrote to each County Councillor in an effort to establish their recognition and support for the protection afforded to our area against such a development by the relevant sections contained in the County Development Plan.



We conducted a Household petition in the Area Immediately surrounding the proposed Wind Turbine development. This Petition was presented to

- Mr. Tim Cowhig, CEO, Element Power, Greenwire.
- Fehily Timoney & Company.
- An Bord Pleanala.
- Offaly County Council.

**The petition statement read as follows:**

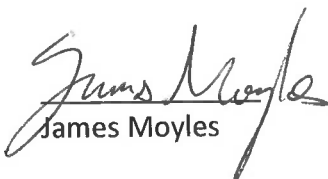
*We the undersigned are opposed to the construction of any wind turbines in the Annaghmore, Killoughey, Annaghbrack, Killurín, Gorteen area. This area was deemed to be "Not suitable for wind energy development" by Offaly County Development Plan, Wind Strategy 2009. This decision was arrived at "Having regard to the proximity to areas of high amenity, protected views and the likely effect on views towards and from such areas this area is not suitable for wind energy development". We oppose the construction of turbines and all associated work in this residential area. Noise, shadow flicker and light pollution along with the visual impact of industrial size turbines would permanently degrade the environment we live in and have a negative effect on the quality of our lives and health.*

*The Annaghmore wind farm site is close to Annaghmore Lough NHA, Clonaslee Eskers and Derry Bog S.A.C. and Slieve Bloom S.P.A. The construction of turbines in this environmentally sensitive landscape is entirely inappropriate. The proposed site is between the R421 and the L2006, both tourist routes from Tullamore to the Slieve Blooms. It would impact negatively on the architectural heritage of the area, including Annaghmore House.*

*We the residents have been denied any properly conducted or meaningful consultation process by Greenwire. No independent economic analysis of the costs and benefits has been carried out on the Greenwire project. Representatives of the undersigned residents or persons acting on their behalf may elaborate on or add to this objection in the future.*

In Total 236 households were considered for petition around the proposed windfarm. Out of the 236 households, 219 households signed in support of the petition. This figure equates to 92.8% of the households in our community - stating that they are against the proposed wind-farm, for the reasons as detailed in the above petition text.

For and on Behalf of the Killurín-Annaghmore-Gurteen Wind Turbine Concern Group,

  
James Moyles

7-10-20  
Date.

