

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CALLAN**
County : **KILKENNY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 17-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	20
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15
Landscaping	40	23
The Built Environment	40	22
Litter Control	40	30
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	28
General Impression	10	6
TOTAL MARK	300	179

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is some years since this adjudicator visited Callan (as a tourist) and this year his first as adjudicator: the very real and existing potential of the town was immediately striking on adjudication day. Be sure to make contact with the official bodies suggested on the yellow form, and make use of the available schemes - for example, the FAS scheme has been most useful in many centres. You will find that a well drawn up 3 or 5 year plan will help you identify priorities - attempting too many schemes at once can be counter-productive. Your answers to the questionnaire show imaginative plans for the future but very little work achieved so far; do not therefore be disappointed if marking is comparatively low in your first year. The absence of a map (Section D of questionnaire) has made adjudication really difficult, especially as few of the salient features in the town, including housing estates, have name plates or signs. When providing your map next year, be sure to mark all the locations where work has been completed or is in progress, and name the streets and principal places of interest.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

This is a new heading, and a nominal mark is being given to centres where activity is not yet under way. Your Kings River proposal looks excellent.

LANDSCAPING

There is very little municipal planting in Callan. There is room for more tree-planting especially on approach roads and in housing areas. The completion of the by-pass will provide opportunities. There is of course a place for bedding-plants and annuals, but shrubs and perennials have a longer life and require less attention. The river area could be wonderfully attractive on both banks i.e. at the car park and opposite, with the bridge as backdrop (and possibly a footbridge?).

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Callan's architectural heritage is so rich it is a pity not to see more use made of it. The interesting and rather forlorn-looking ruin near the car-park is described on one notice as "abbey" and on another as "priory". (What is it?). A series of permanent signs (or plaques, as in Kinsale) would explain and interpret at least a dozen sites; a "historical trail" could be worked out. The Edmund Rice homestead was looking really beautiful yet the inappropriate boundary railing surely belies everything which a heritage centre of this nature should stand for). The principal public buildings and churches of the past 150 or so years are reasonably well maintained. A highly sensitive site (hall?) on a south-east corner on the higher section of the main street was being repaired on adjudication day, and its completion will enhance this intersection considerably. The Old Charter building on an intersection lower down is even more significantly placed; its restoration (including removal of the woodwork at ground level) would give an immense "lift" to the area. The almost derelict yet remarkably attractive buildings signposted as "Council Area" (Workhouse?) require much thought in the long term. Several business premises were greatly admired, among them O'Mahony's, Adelphi House, Keogh's, Dawson's, McDowall's, O'Brien's and Molloy's. When you come to nominate shopfronts for awards, be sure the upper storeys, gables and roofs are as smart as the street frontage, and that there are no mass-produced or plastic signs or unsightly wires and cables. The CTM premises needs sprucing up. Cluain Aobhainn was admired.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter does not appear to be the problem in Callan that it is in many other places, but there was considerable disposable litter in the main street and in Edmund Rice Park.

TIDINESS

There are a considerable number of derelict or abandoned sites, and these tend to accumulate rubbish.

Discourage wire-and-post fencing (which has a short life and is difficult to keep free of weeds), concrete block walls or concrete block repairs to stone walls, mass-produced shop signs. Encourage stone walls and wooden fencing.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Many older street houses, and rows of cottages, are most attractively presented. A beautifully painted terrace of houses opposite the Jet station was particularly admired. Some un-named estates, as well as Collins Park and Edmund Rice Park are well kept - though the latter was badly littered on adjudication day -and open spaces and planting favourably noted. The most interesting housing development is the neat one-storey scheme opposite the Council Area; the stone wall frontages are exemplary'. There is great scope for further sensitive development in this location.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The by-pass should solve several problems, not the least the constant traffic congestion which makes it difficult to appreciate the attractive town-centre. There are several "corners" and entries which look very scruffy indeed, and would be pointed out here if a map had been provided. The approach road from Kilkenny looked very trim indeed (others naturally less so, because of road works). The impact of troughs of flowers on the corner by the convent was reduced because they were sited on a very weedy patch of ground. Road surfaces in general were good. When traffic has been calmed, attention can be given to the urban streetscape; the wide eastern pavement at the upper end of the main street should be re-paved, and appropriate lamp-standards provided; parking should be entirely banned from this strip. On adjudication day the tubs round the Edmund Rice statue were neglected, and the weeds round the memorial simply should not have been there. There are several poor commercial frontages on the road leading towards the west.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

A town of immense but as yet unrealised potential; many towns with far fewer interesting sites or natural amenities have won county and regional and indeed national awards. Callan deserves to be up there with them.