

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **CASTLECOMER**  
County : **KILKENNY**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 14-07-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15
Landscaping	40	27
The Built Environment	40	22
Litter Control	40	26
Tidiness	20	14
Residential Areas	30	17
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32
General Impression	10	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>185</b>

## Adjudicator's Comments

### OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is good to read in the questionnaire that local businesses are contributing substantially - the involvement and interest are as important as the funding. It is also encouraging to read that you intend to produce a 5-year plan; its recommendations, and ultimately its results, will be eagerly looked forward to. Although there is a note to say the Plan is being forwarded, the adjudicator did not receive it prior to his visit on the 14 July. Because of this, and because none of the questions 3 to 5 in the questionnaire have been answered (it merely says "See Plan") and section C items (a) to (g) have been left blank, there has been no way of knowing what improvements have taken place in the last year or what areas should be given special attention. The following comments, therefore, are simply the result of a walk through all quarters of the town, without any particular guidance. Marks have to be nominal in some cases, including under the above heading because your Developmental Approach is not known.

### WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

A nominal figure will be given.

### LANDSCAPING

One of the delights of Castlecomer is the prevalence of mature hardwoods, which surround and enter the town and are at their most remarkable in The Square - perhaps for The Square one should read Bridge Street, but Bridge Street is not marked on your map. Tree planting on this kind of scale should continue where it does not already exist, for example on approach roads to the south and west. The small square behind the Market House would benefit from planting, and could become a delightful urban precinct free of parking; the paving here is first class. Flower beds on either side of The Square (Bridge Street?) looked attractive though not remarkable. The area around the Sports fields (off Clogh road) was well looked after, as was the lawn at the junction of Ballyragget Road and the hill leading to Marymount. The Golf Course property is splendidly conserved.

### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The two principal churches and their surroundings are well looked after. The Market House is a pleasant example of small scale official building of its period and appears to have been recently renovated. The Community School and grounds looked well on adjudication day; there is an older building (barracks?) nearby which had weeds on eaves and gutters. The exterior and grounds of Comer International were well presented; in fact, factory premises in general are impressive in Castlecomer. Among the business premises, Roe's Hardware, Bollard's pub, O'Dwyer's victualler, Harrington's betting office, Avalon Inn, The Gem and Tommy Coogan's were picked out for commendation. The handsome terrace on The Square (Bridge Street) is the most significant and unique element in Castlecomer's building heritage, and the majority of its houses are well looked after.

### LITTER CONTROL

This was very poor on adjudication day - and much of the litter appeared to have been there for some time. The worst places were at the junction of The Square and Chatsworth Street, in the otherwise delightful riverside park - there were even plastic bags in the river - and at Church View. Bins were stuffed to overflowing. This is all in contrast to last year's adjudication, when litter was not so prevalent throughout the town.

### TIDINESS

There are still quite a number of plastic or mass-produced signs, which are not in accord with buildings on which they are placed. The hill to Mary Mount had a length of unweeded kerb. The entrance to Church View was weedy, with considerable litter; there was also litter at Hillside View. Discourage

post-and-wire fences, as they are difficult to keep free of weeds.

#### RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The handsome terraces on The Square (Bridge Street) and older street houses elsewhere are for the most part well maintained. Especially impressive are two brick terraces near the Community Hall and four attractive dwellings opposite. Neat gardens, hanging baskets or window boxes can make all the difference. Maryville has some excellent gardens, especially those with rambler roses and creepers. The Mary Mount estate was well looked after, and the houses at Hillside View were very well looked after. However, indeed - but it is extraordinary how much litter was to be seen outside front gates - the kind of litter which householders could pick up in a few seconds, or better still not drop at all. There is an opportunity for landscaping, or a children's playground, at the turning-place at the end of Hillside View - an unsatisfactory ending at present.

#### ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Street surfaces in general are good. Approach roads are better than average, though there is inconsistency of frontages especially on the Kilkenny road, with some first rate boundaries alternating with some which are not so good. The short road leading to the Golf Course is particularly untidy in its verges. The Car Park at the Castlecomer Woods and Wild Life Sanctuary gives a poor impression at this important point of arrival in Castlecomer: poor fencing, weeds, and litter.

#### GENERAL IMPRESSION

A handsome town, which does not approach the full realisation of its wonderful potential. Many towns with far less interesting streetscapes and in less attractive surroundings have, through local pride and good husbandry, come top in their counties or regions, and some have even won national awards.