

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **DURROW**
County : **LAOIS**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 18-06-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15
Landscaping	40	33
The Built Environment	40	31
Litter Control	40	28
Tidiness	20	13
Residential Areas	30	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31
General Impression	10	8
TOTAL MARK	300	219

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

It is encouraging to read of the energetic outlook of the new committee, and of the positive use of the FAS employment scheme. Links should certainly be forged, where appropriate, with the official bodies in the county and the region. Your map is particularly clear; please always remember to mark the new developments of the previous twelve months, even if projects are not completed.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The riverside area - neglected in many towns - has been made an integral part of Durrow, as it should. In your future planning, it might be possible to create and signpost walks, depending upon rights-of-way. It is good to read of ducks being fed, yet sad that it has to be by the Gun Club!

LANDSCAPING

Planting in the area by the bridge, and planting and effective mowing at open spaces - the junction of Mary and Old Chapel Streets, the Square, and the principal approaches from Portlaoise and Cashel, is exemplary. Roses at the first mentioned were particularly admired; and the picnic areas are well laid out and were properly maintained on adjudication day. The FAS planting scheme in the car-park near the church was noted. New tree planting was very favourably noted.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The churches and the principal public buildings were well maintained. The four business premises proposed for the national competition were all examined and admired, but none had the exceptional qualities required. (In this category, as well as unique design and craftsmanship of the fascia, upper storeys and gables must be painted to a high standard, eaves, roofs and chimney stacks must be in perfect repair, there must be no mass-produced signage, no window stickers, and no obtrusive wires or masts; as an example, the Post Office was very well presented and the residence adjoining pleasantly adorned with flowers, but the gable needed freshening up with paint, and there were weeds growing on a stack.) The Pharmacy was first class, but lettering had not been completed on adjudication day. It is most unfortunate about the large 5-bay 3-storey house at the bridge, which detracts considerably from the otherwise high quality conservation of Georgian buildings in the Square. Otherwise, dereliction was only noticed in Patrick Street. The filling station on the Portlaoise road must be one of the best kept in the country.

LITTER CONTROL

There were scatterings of litter near the Gothic gates to the smaller school (near a litter bin!) and in the picnic area by the bridge. Litter elsewhere was negligible.

TIDINESS

The small amount of litter, absence of kerbside weeds, few unsightly signs and wirescape, combine in details to create a very tidy town. As a long term project, the removal of poles and wires in the most important spaces and replacement with tradition lamp standards, would make a striking impact on the streetscape.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The older houses near the Church of Ireland are exceptionally dignified and well presented. Most other street houses are well cared for; the curved terrace rising on the Kilkenny road is a good example. A particularly charming residential road is that which runs north east from the bridge: an extensive garden in the V junction gives an additional quality of attractiveness to the general bridge area. The housing

estate at the top of the town was well presented; climbing plants enhanced the grotto.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads especially well maintained, and surfaces generally good throughout the town - especially where resurfacing has been undertaken in Mary Street and environs. Numerous entries and laneways are unusually well looked after. Public seating and litter bins noted. The bridge is actually enhanced by the crimson valerian growing on the piers! - though this is not desirable as their roots loosen the masonry.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

A very handsome and superbly laid-out town.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (12/09/96)

The favourable impression of Durrow on the 1st adjudication was consistent with the 2nd adjudication. Litter control was especially good, considering the amount of through traffic. The great effort in planting and maintaining gardens was noteworthy. You should try to plant more trees in open spaces and along approach roads. There were a few untidy walls along Carrigan Street which need some attention and you could consider developing a colour scheme for the houses in this part of the town. You should try to develop a 3-5 year strategy for the town which would focus attention on the key amenities which could be developed, and a timescale for development.