

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **COOLANEY**
County : **SLIGO**
Category : **A**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 21-06-96

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	50	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19
Landscaping	40	28
The Built Environment	40	24
Litter Control	40	23
Tidiness	20	12
Residential Areas	30	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	26
General Impression	10	7
TOTAL MARK	300	191

Adjudicator's Comments

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

There seems to be a good deal of enthusiasm in the town, and you have quite a number of people involved in your efforts. It is a positive sign that you are working with the County Council to improve the town, but what about other organisations, particularly local schools and the GAA? There is potential to involve a broad spectrum of people in the community in your plans, so consider building more links. You mention promoting awareness of litter in the schools, and this is a good start. Perhaps your development of the riverside park or other planting efforts, especially tree-planting, could involve the children. Your detailed map and entry form were very helpful on adjudication day. We are pleased that you have found the new format more comprehensive and look forward to seeing your plans develop further.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

It is good to see that you have given attention to the major amenity in the town, namely the river and the view to the Ox Mountains from the river banks. This area has great potential for both wildlife and recreation for residents, and we hope that you will continue to develop this potential. There are some detailed aspects to the park which you should focus on, and we point them out to you in the hopes that you can solve these minor problems. The boundary wall on the side of the River Inn pub should be weeded and painted, as it fronts onto the riverside park. The small shed next to the picnic benches could be painted green to tone it down or perhaps should be moved to a less noticeable location. A few seats near the entrance from the road could provide a place to rest and to view the Mountains. Even a few large flat stones would suffice. The riverside walk would be enhanced by some hedging to screen the backs of house along the river.

The owner of the field across the river from the park should consider planting some hedgerows and improving the river bank through the REPS scheme. The view of the Ox Mountains is really attractive, and it could be enhanced if this field were enclosed by hedging. This would enhance the scenic quality of the river and improve the wildlife potential of the river zone.

LANDSCAPING

Trees planted along the road at the junction with the Sligo road were coming on well. However, trees planted at the Sligo end of the Main Street were dying. The planting near the bridge looked very well on adjudication day. The field at the junction of the Sligo road and the Main Street (near the homes for the elderly) would be improved if shrubs or hedgerows could be planted along the chain-link fence. In this field there is a rusty sign for O'Gradys which should be re-painted. The concrete block wall opposite this field needs painting and the stone wall beyond it should be cleared of overgrowth and brambles.

The monument is very attractive now that it is cleaned. The next step would be to plant some trees behind it and shrubs along the unattractive chain-link fence to the sides of the monument. The new stone wall of the cemetery is impressive, but you should obtain advice about tree-planting in the cemetery grounds as it is quite bare. The community park is in need of some attention, particularly the side walls of the car park which need painting. The old stone wall here could be cleared of overgrowth. The gate to the right of the picnic area should be replaced, as it detracts from the lovely setting.

Planting at the well was especially admired, and your efforts to focus on this area are to be commended. All of the planting here was very well-maintained and attractive.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Happy Landing and Keanes both looked well on adjudication day. The Garda station looks well, having been freshly-painted. More could be made of the space in front of the station with some planting. Sprouls shop has too many signs and stickers in the window, which detracts from its otherwise positive appearance. The infill buildings look very tidy, but the side wall of the building on the left side looks poor

with the rendering pulled off. Hopefully, it will be repaired soon. McNulty's would benefit from re-painting. J.J. O'Grady's would be a real contender for an award if the plastic sign were replaced with a more traditional one.

Window boxes and hanging baskets would vastly improve some of the houses and pubs on Main Street, so you should perhaps assign this task to a sub-committee. The community centre looks well, but if you put window boxes or planters there it would liven it up a great deal. There are brackets on the building, but no hanging baskets! The River Inn pub had brackets, but, alas, no hanging baskets, and it is nearly July! The post office was very well-presented, but the bed to the right of it wasn't yet planted!

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control on Main Street was superb. Well done! Unfortunately, there was some litter noticed in your riverside park, as the bin was full, and not covered, so that litter just blew out! Litter bins should be provided at the new picnic area at the village well, otherwise you may find it difficult to control the problem over time. Litter control on the Rockfield Road was excellent.

TIDINESS

Overall, the town was very tidy on adjudication day, with obvious effort put into litter and weed control. The few derelict buildings in the town still present a problem, but it is encouraging that you are working with the County Council to try to deal with this difficult matter. There are a few minor areas of untidiness, mainly boundary walls in need of attention, and it would seem that the situation is manageable and that you are making great effort in this regard.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The houses to the left of the post office were charming, especially with the potted plants at the doorstep. As these are opposite the well, they are highly visible, so it is important to keep up the good work! The first house on the right on the approach from the Sligo-Ballina road needs freshening up. The blue and white house to the right of the community centre is impressively clean, but it is a pity that the house opposite is so drab. It would benefit from re-painting, as would the boundary walls of the house next to it.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

On the approach from the Sligo-Ballina road, the grass verges were not mown from the village name sign - only from the speed limit signs. The Rockfield Road was well-maintained, with verges mown and weeds absent. The boundary wall of the white house on the right side coming into town needs freshening up, as do some of the boundary walls and gates on the left side of the white house. The village name sign on this road needs re-painting.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

It was a pleasure to visit Coolaney on adjudication day and to see the work in progress to improve the town. It is commendable that the committee have made sincere efforts to develop and improve the town to a high standard. Many of the residents were seen to be enjoying the riverside park on the summer's evening, and it reflects the general attitude of your committee to improve the town for your own enjoyment of a pleasant atmosphere to live in.