

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CLONMEL**
County : **TIPPERARY SOUTH**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 27-06-97

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1997	Mark Awarded 1996
Overall Developmental Approach	50	34	35
The Built Environment	40	28	28
Landscaping	40	27	24
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	23	22
Tidiness	20	14	13
Residential Areas	30	19	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	24	22
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	193	187

Clonmel, Co Tipperary

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the completed application form, the detailed five year rolling programme and also sight of the Local Authority environmental award scheme submission for 1996. Clonmel is a dynamic growing vibrant centre with extensive building works in progress and large Civil Engineering projects, road and sewerage development, under way. The town projects the ethos of a centre in a significant growth phase. All the more fitting therefore that there is a five year well thought out Tidy Towns programme in place to ensure that the environment and related considerations receive appropriate and necessary weighting in the decisions that must necessarily be taken over the next number of years. It is exciting to see the major works well on the way at the Main Guard as this building because of its size, architectural merit and especially its sighting, is of seminal importance to the towns medieval core. The river Suir and especially the linear park land, much of it endowed with fine mature trees, is a spectacularly delightful asset and resource which needs to be kept to the forefront of all such development programmes.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The different architectural periods represented in the town are a history lesson in themselves. There are examples from various periods - monastic, medieval and later buildings representing the rise of commerce and trade in the town. Recent additions to the towns stock of buildings are also noteworthy and worthwhile in the story they have to tell. The substantial large factories on the approach road and especially on the ring road are in most cases well presented. In others a more energetic screening policy might pay dividends. The Military Barracks was very well presented and the historic butter market(1817) delightfully presented and in current use. Sizeable public buildings note County Hall, fire station and library all project a pleasing air appropriate to their various functions. We were struck by the amount of work in progress on buildings and in particular along the Quay side. Inevitably some disruption is necessary during this building phase. Appropriately scaled buildings are being created for example opposite O'Connell terrace which will fit in with their surroundings when completed. Other buildings for example the Emigrants Rest is a delightful cameo retaining much of the ambience of its year of construction. The new offices and studio of TIPFM are attractive and appropriate to their modern purpose. The Nationalist newspaper buildings featured a delightful and vibrant display of flowers. Commercial buildings for example the Central (Rover Dealers) were neat and orderly. Extensive works in Parnell street will, when completed, contribute materially to an already very pleasant street-scape. The extensive GAA premises, opposite the hospital is in need of re-painting and the long blank wall might be softened by an appropriate paint scheme perhaps augmented by suitable wall clinging creepers. Hospitals and schools were in general well presented although a few would benefit from an

accelerated re-painting programme, particularly of timber windows.

LANDSCAPING

Clonmel has a delightful green lung of mature park land within the river corridor. The optimum treatment of this, as set out in your programme, will bring immeasurable benefits in their wake. The very fine floral displays at roundabouts on the ring road and elsewhere are a delightful feature and provide an excellent introduction to a town which is clearly very committed to appropriate landscaping. This theme was very evident at the Central Technical Institute and also at the Technical School at the Mall. It was disappointing to see the extensive damage occasioned by caterpillar tracks at the entrance to Denise Burke Park. The old bridge area was a delight and individual houses in this area notably Park View contributed manfully to an overall pleasing vista. Individual companies notable Filling Stations and especially Sliabh Na Mon Filling Station had splendid floral displays. The use of wild daisies at the Cahir road by-pass seems very appropriate in this essentially rural setting. The delightful display of red roses at Okeville shopping centre also is imaginative and caught the eye. The practice of highlighting some of the 19th century (Mayor J Hacket 1843, etc. etc.) where there occur around the town would add interest points to street scale and should be encouraged. Landscaping achieved by the various schools particularly the Convent is of a high order and they have used their extensive grounds to really good effect. The practice of using plants and bush to spell out words at roundabouts will only prove effective when it is continually maintained to a high order on the old Cahir Road. This truism is all too evident. The potential landscape along the Quay is very evident and a superb standard has already been achieved at the Alan, Larkin & OBrien memorial. The treatment of the Quay car park entrance area is a delight.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The entire river corridor is a significant wildlife resort which on its own would make Clonmel richly endowed with wildlife habitats. Add to that the delightful asset and resource represented by the Marfield Bird Sanctuary and Clonmel can really feel proud of its assets in this regard. Marfield is splendidly well presented commencing with the appropriate timber sign directing visitors to the bird sanctuary area. Tree planting is excellent within the village and on the route to the lake. The grass was very well cut and contributed also to a delightful overall vista. Marfield retains the feel and atmosphere of a small village and is a particular joy to visit. The picnic areas and the seating by the lake and the absence of litter in this area all play their part. The wide range of birds and their accessibility to visitors makes this a wildlife resort of significant importance. It is disappointing to record the extent of weeds and grass growth at the base of walls and between the road and pavement. The waterfall area at the old bridge is an equally delightful wildlife resource and the proposed riverside pedestrian foot-path linking Clonmel to Marfield will hopefully become an early reality.

LITTER CONTROL

In broad terms having regard to the size and level of activity in Clonmel, litter management is of a high order. Suitable litter bins are to be seen in all the main thoroughfares but are not so much in evidence on the outskirts and in housing estates. The area around the railway station entrance was not without blemish while the town centre car park and especially the small and attractive slip-way leading to the shopping thoroughfare, were seriously marred. Standards vary in residential areas but in general, with unfortunately a few exceptions the general standard achieved showed a slight increase on previous years.

TIDINESS

THE ADJUDICATION TOOK INTO ACCOUNT FULLY THE EXTENT OF NEW BUILDING WORKS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS. It is recognised that Clonmel is a very busy market town. The practice of on street parking is far from fully acceptable and this can lead to congestion and a sense of disorder in the main thoroughfare. There seems to be a substantial amount of loose material and general spoil on many of the approach roads and in sections of the town itself. We were disappointed to note, for example substantial amounts of materials and an old container in the cemetery car park. The large triangle grassed area in front of the historic Silversprings House was very much overgrown and detracted from this fine setting. Extensive planting has been undertaken along the N24 by-pass but the overall good impression was marred by the extent of noxious weeds currently growing in this same area. Many buildings were delightfully presented and freshly painted and all are applauded for their efforts in this regard. A large and significant building, More Miles Tyre Service should be encouraged to achieve the same high standard.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Clonmel's residential areas include mature, well established streets and areas, in addition to very recent and continually growing residential areas on the out-skirts of the town. Each offer a different range of challenges and opportunities. For example, River street with its small scale houses was a delight but could be improved still further by judicious use of window boxes for example. The fine houses in Toberaheena, Marfield Road are a delight with many very splendid individual gardens and well presented grassed areas. Mellville similarly had achieved a fine standard with a particularly attractive entrance area. On the day of adjudication we were impressed by the extent of grass cutting and the range of appropriate machines engaged in this extensive work. Smaller gardens also contributed to colourful displays notably, Connelly Park which featured a number of excellent individual gardens. The new development at the commencement of the Dungarvan Road close to the old bridge area is maturing very well. The retention of the population within the core of the town should be an important consideration and objective. The extensive rebuilding in Mary street represents a significant urban renewal phase and this street has successfully retained a mixed commercial /residential profile.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The main entrance roads to Clonmel are bright and inviting with very few negatives to report. Generally road and street surfaces are good with the exception of the road surface on Convent road which is surprisingly uneven. The large random rubble wall on the South side of the Dungarvan road might, over a period be restored to its original height and grandeur. The newly erected small scale signs are a significant and beneficial element of street furnishings and their more extensive availability is to be welcomed. The use of red brick or cobblelock bricks at the roundabout while attractive brings with it the need for intensive and ongoing weed control. This is very evident at the Fethard roundabout where vibrant weeds have disfigured an otherwise fine display. The use of suitably sized trees contribute materially to road vistas notably at the Convent road/Dungarvan road to Irishtown. The old Cahir road has a delightful extent of grasses areas which are being very well maintained. A very fine touchstone entrance and flower bed has been created on the road to Knocklucas. Unhappily the flower bed is now overgrown with weeds and seems devoid of any flower planting.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Clonmel projects itself as a vibrant, thriving, developing, growing community and there is a great deal happening in this energetic phase. The Tidy Towns concept has succeeded in securing substantial support from the Local Authoritys and this needs to be supplemented and strengthened by a Community wide response and involvement. Environmental issues are receiving considerable attention but, perhaps because of the speed and scale of change some items are perhaps being overlooked to a certain degree. All involved in Clonmel, which has a proud record in the Tidy Towns competition and in the European Entente Florale competition are to be congratulated on another fine display.