

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **LOUGHREA**
County : **GALWAY**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 17-06-98

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	32
The Built Environment	40	24	22
Landscaping	40	29	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	23	22
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	199	193

Loughrea, County Galway

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your preparation work and documentation is exemplary - so well thought through, with a welcome absence of overstatement! Thank you, too, for marking the salient sites on your map. This adjudicator has passed through Loughrea many times in over 40 years, but except for visits to the Cathedral (the work of Irish artists here is not made enough of nationally) has never had the experience of observing the town in detail. Much of the real interest appears to be off the beaten track of Main Street. The through traffic is dire - because of it, it is not possible to appreciate and enjoy the town centre to the full, which it deserves.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Clonfert Cathedral is a superb example of late Victorian Gothic, beautifully maintained. St Brendan's Hospital is almost in the same category. Boundary walls of the fine classical Court House should be repaired with limestone, not cement. A promising new limestone building is emerging beside the Library - its completion is looked forward to. The Cinema (old Town Hall?) is a fine building which could do with some upgrading. The Hotel is large enough to take the very strong colour with which it is painted, and makes an important statement. It is very encouraging to see the recently improved business premises, of which Morrissey's is undoubtedly the most successful, but Killian's and Kelly's are very good, and the others are a real improvement on what was there before, judging by the photographs.

LANDSCAPING

The several green open spaces which are a feature of the town looked very trim on adjudication day. The Cathedral and Hospital grounds, and those of the Western Health Board, are attractively kept. Garrybreeda Park, for many years crying out for development, looked very well indeed even on a very rainy day. Your tree-planting, and plans for planting, have been favourably noted. The lakeshore amenities, including the Long Point and Corry's Fields, as well as incidental planting throughout the town, help to enhance the urban scene.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The lakeside amenities already noted, and the care of the natural environment, undoubtedly encourage wild life of various kinds. It would be interesting to draw attention to, e.g., the species of local flora and fauna, perhaps by providing an illustrated board at a place such as Corry's Fields, and/or encourage schoolchildren to undertake projects of identification.

LITTER CONTROL

There was some sporadic litter in the town centre, but the green spaces were remarkably free. Your plan to keep a watch on the area marked 6 on the map deserves success. Several well-publicised hefty fines might do the trick.

TIDINESS

There is some dereliction, which does not need to be pointed out. Projecting signage on shops and pubs still detracts from Main Street especially, and the wirescape is no help. A long term project would be to have the wires ducted, and more attractive lamp standards provided, as has been done successfully in some other towns.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The variety of housing in Loughrea is extraordinary, from the superb neo-classical residence on the Tynagh road to cottages in side streets, from mid-century council schemes to recent suburban developments. In general, householders keep their homes very well. This adjudicator was particularly attracted to closes such as at Chestnut Park and off Barrack Street. Your scheme for stone nameplates is an excellent one - it was not possible to identify several unmarked estates.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The street leading to the old Railway Station is something of a black spot. There are a few entries which could be tidied up. The concrete fencing at the Court House needs repair in some places. The large car park is well kept, but the one in Abbey Street is somewhat weedy.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

This committee has identified the problems well, and is planning imaginative action over an extended period. The impression is of a very busy town with too much passing traffic, and a great deal of excellent environmental improvement.