

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **GORT**  
County : **GALWAY**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 29-06-1999

|                                | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 1999 | Mark Awarded 1998 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50           | 25                | --                |
| The Built Environment          | 40           | 20                | --                |
| Landscaping                    | 40           | 22                | --                |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30           | 13                | --                |
| Litter Control                 | 40           | 20                | --                |
| Tidiness                       | 20           | 11                | --                |
| Residential Areas              | 30           | 17                | --                |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas  | 40           | 21                | --                |
| General Impression             | 10           | 6                 | --                |
| <b>TOTAL MARK</b>              | <b>300</b>   | <b>155</b>        | <b>--</b>         |

## **Gort, County Galway**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Gort has such potential that it is highly recommended that a 3/5 year plan be established. It is commendable that works such as the new heritage centre are now underway, but it is equally important that care and attention be given to the existing features and in particular the market square.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The built environment reflects the commercial life of the town in a positive way. There is an attractive array of small retail outlets, most entertainingly presented in a colourful shopfronts, many of which display hand painted fascias. The Catholic Church and grounds look very well and along with nearby residential gardens and trees this section of the market square displays a settled maturity.

The Gort Crane House was a disappointment and is one of the existing features requiring attention. Damaged guttering and weed growth were observed, along with broken railings and temporary repair by way of plastic traffic cone, surrounding the Crane House. The nearby public toilet should be removed. It is an eyesore, possibly a health hazard, and definitely a particularly unattractive feature in what could be the centrepiece location of social activity. While not in the same category, the ladies toilet sign on the impressive stone faced building overlooking the square seemed in conflict with the perceived importance of the building. The 'temporary' retail outlet is another negative factor and is mentioned by the committee as a particular difficulty. Off the square, Kennedys Pottery is a fine example of redevelopment work which could provide inspiration for the redevelopment of the terrace of cottages in this area.

### **LANDSCAPING**

While some tree planting has taken place along the Ennis approach, there is a virtual absence of landscaping in the built up area from the bridge through to the Galway side of town. There is a flower bed, unfortunately showing some litter, around the statue in the Square, but the introduction of trees would contribute to the towns presentation. The town park is a pleasant and peaceful, place which is reasonably well maintained.

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The adjudicator is delighted to see the successful cleaning and restocking of the river. It is unfortunate that there is no access to the river from the town which somewhat limits its potential. Some means might also be devised to screen the drainage pipe outlet into the river at the bridge.

### **LITTER CONTROL**

Litter control in the main streets of the town was reasonably good, but there were some specific locations where problems exist. The road up to the library was suffering from litter from the back of a fast food outlet, the

rubbish bin at the library entrance was overflowing, and there was considerable litter in the gutter along the road from the library to the church.

## **TIDINESS**

The town is fairly tidy with good distribution of litter bins and recycling facilities. There are some temporary difficulties with the large open development site at the bridge, some grass growth at the base of trees, and the lifebuoy fitting had been vandalised. There is an unsightly factory premise on the Ennis road which requires screening. Some of the lamp standards displayed an unhappy combination of timber posts, to which had been added metal tops.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Residential areas are a combination of town and mature and relatively new estates. They are relatively well if not remarkably presented and as indicated in last years report, individual effort could make a difference in this category.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

The Loughrea approach was disappointing with weed along kerbsides, under the town sign, and growing at the base of otherwise attractive walls. Approaches from Ennis and Galway roads are well presented. Green verges at both locations are mature and feature attractive roadside trees. Reference has already been made to the town square which should be considered for pedestrianisation.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Gort has so much potential: attractive buildings and layout, and plenty of opportunity to exploit derelict areas. The entry form clearly recognises a number of difficulties and the adjudicator strongly recommends the development of a medium to long term plan which gains the support of all sections of the community, the local authority, and other relevant interests.