

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **GEASHILL**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 06-07-99

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	38
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	34	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	15
Litter Control	40	32	34
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	230	233

Geashill, County Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you very much for the entry form which is informative and presents a complex set of issues in a very simple format. Unfortunately the three to five year Development Plan, which is a mandatory requirement at this stage in the Competition, was not submitted and therefore is reflected in a drop in points in this category. Obviously with the submission of such a document this should not be a long term reflection on marks in this category.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is very pleasant and compact with a very relaxed atmosphere provided to the village. The school was very presentable, however the burnt out building beside it not only detracts from it but is possibly also quite dangerous and one wonders when it might be removed. The green is very well maintained and the walls are in very good repair and it provides a very strong treatment to such a public space. Hamilton's had a very good colour scheme and the new baskets are a wonderful contribution. New footpaths are good and safe, it should be noted that the wirescape is quite intrusive and removal or cleaning up into a more ordered system would be a great improvement.

LANDSCAPING

The green is the central focus of the village and very well tended. At present it is rather isolated from other landscape features in the village and perhaps future plantings of trees could extend the green to adjacent spaces and roads; the planting of flowers in strategic locations added some good colour. The grotto is simply presented but perhaps could be connected to the green by further plantings.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The glebe walk is a pleasant facility and being further reinforced by new plantings. This category is often explained in the development plan where issues of education and management policies are expressed in a document. Thus it is difficult to ascertain exactly what is being carried out with respect to wildlife in this village. It is noted that more use could be made of native plants and that further experimentation both in the school grounds and with forms of landscape management could be employed to enrich this aspect of the competition.

LITTER CONTROL

The general appearance within the village is quite litter free. However there is poor control within the vicinity of the shops and this is the reason for the drop in marks as the source is easily controlled. The grotto, school and entry roads were all clean of litter.

TIDINESS

The whole village has a very tidy appearance and this is reinforced by the very good policy of grass cutting and clearing of cut grass which is clearly demonstrated by the very tidy appearance of the green and entry roads. The presentation of the front gardens also aids in reinforcing this issue, however, it must again be stressed that it is in the vicinity of shops that tidiness is not well monitored. In addition, truck traffic passing through has a significant impact on bringing in dirt and gravel and this needs attention.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

St. Oliver's Estate has had new trees planted and looked very well. It is a pity that they are not of a single species so that they could connect the overall space as a single unit, however, this effort will bring long term benefits to this area of the village. All the gardens are very interesting and there is good use of floral displays.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Kerbs in general are well maintained and the new paving near the school is a definite improvement for the safety of pedestrians. The derelict buildings near the High Chapperal do detract from the overall setting of the roads and this road in particular needs a better sense of character whether it is improved through paving or unification of colour.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Geashill has a lovely if not unusual character in having such a strong focus of a village green. The residents of the village must be commended for their efforts in maintaining the high quality. If future works are to be carried out to the village, they are best expressed through the 3 to 5 year development plan which allows the adjudicator to monitor the step by step process. Important areas to tackle are the development of an entry theme on all roads to the village and works to the school grounds to make it both safer for the children and more experimental from the point of wild life concerns.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (07/08/99)

Stone walls are a major attribute to Geashill. The new stone

walls make a pleasant entry from the Portarlinton side and the older stone walls – especially the low walls at the green with the moss and ferns retained. A nice addition would be to replace the concrete kerb on the green by stone kerb in keeping with the surrounding walls. The school seems a little stark and some more planting would be helpful. Litter noted in several places was disappointing - at the phone box area, the grotto and at points at roadsides. This needs extra vigilance . The placing of signs on the pavement outside shops is not in keeping with the overall tone of the village. The glebe walk is a lovely asset and as stated above more attention to the development of the wild life aspect of this would be good.