

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **MACROOM**
County : **CORK**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 27-06-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	39
The Built Environment	40	29	29
Landscaping	40	32	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	27	29
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	24	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	227	225

Macroom, County Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The five year Macroom Tidy Towns plan with year 2000 update shows a very good commitment to progress and ensures that the plan remains active all the time. The level of co-operation with various bodies is also noted which is essential in achieving progress in such a large town. The work of Tidy Towns Committees changes significantly with the size of the town. The larger the town the less hands-on approach and the more lobbying and communicating with bodies to achieve results is required. Traffic continues to be a major problem and the bypass would give Macroom a new lease of life.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The commercial premises in the streets of Macroom are continuing to upgrade. At one time it was simple to list the shops that were looking particularly well - now it would be easier to form a list of those that still need attention. The cinema/ theatre/library complex is a very welcome development being in such a prominent part of the town. The Credit Union building is attractive too. The colour schemes of the shop fronts have developed to give a very interesting range of colours along the streets. The castle is an obvious important building giving great character to the town. On approaching the castle walls from the across the bridge, the Guinness advertisement is questionable in such an important viewing point for the castle. The rusty tin-roofed building by the school in the castle demesne needs to be considered. The Catholic Church is imposing and the approach up Chapel Hill is very attractive with the planters. The provision of a handrail is very considerate. The Church of Ireland is an attractive church and adds to the fabric of the building composition at the castle area. The courthouse is a fine building. The surrounds of the courthouse do not serve this building well. The town hall continues to form a great focus of activity and the lamp standards and planters add greatly to the appearance of this very fine square. The castle entrance is nicely treated with interesting stone paving. The opening up of carparking behind mainstreets and of laneways for shopping presents a new challenge in many towns and cities in Ireland in recent years. This opening up of back areas exposes the backs of buildings, which hitherto were unseen. As these are often not the most attractive sights some remedies need to be found. This is now happening in Macroom and will need to be faced.

LANDSCAPING

The most valuable landscape is indeed the fine grounds of the Castle. The riverside walks are a great asset and the area of

the pitch and putt course is a lovely landscaped amenity. The view from the bridge is spectacular and within seconds it is possible to be well away from the fumes and noise of the traffic. The container planting in the town is very attractive.- particularly so in the Town Hall Square. This contrasts with the half barrels in the entrance to the demesne which really need attention now. The water feature was not working at the time of adjudication and held some litter. The plantings at the Coachford junction are developing well. The island planting could benefit from bark mulch to conceal the plastic. The area behind the concrete post and rail fence needs some attention. The tree-planting project is commendable and the importance of tree planting on a continuing basis is vital to keep a continuity of tree age structure . The mature trees we now enjoy were planted by people who could never have hoped to see them to maturity – we owe a similar legacy to future generations.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The castle grounds and surrounds with riversides offer interesting potential in this respect. Projects need to be developed to avail well of the wildlife facility. Often people take their knowledge for granted but many people would benefit from the shared knowledge if this was accumulated . A school project or naturalists fieldclub branch could be most helpful in this respect.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control continues to be a problem. Litter was very evident on entering the arch at the demesne and on the square. Picnic areas at the riverside walk were also littered also the area at the river at the O’Riada Pub carpark by the river. This of course is a national problem and the bigger the town the more difficult it becomes . An intensive action plan is needed. The notice of clean ups included in your application shows you understand the problem.

TIDINESS

The tidiness aspect looked well in the Main Square and street. Street trading is part of Macroom but do things have to continue the same forever? Perhaps at some future time such trading could be confined to an off street area. As mentioned above backs of buildings are now becoming more prominent with the opening up of back areas.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The residential areas in the town are well treated. Both individual residences on the surrounding roads and the housing estates were noted. Tree planting should be an ongoing feature utilising green areas with estates or where

possible boundary pieces of land. The entrance to Oakwood estate is nicely presented with good tree planting. Inside that estate the large greens offer possibilities. The Bowl road with attractive planting to either side looks very well and along to the ESB. Castlecourt estate is well maintained.. On the Masseytown Road the O'Connor Park shows great care .Perhaps the concrete post and mesh fence is for security from the road if so a more attractive boundary could be considered.. Within the streets there are some very attractive residences showing great care with painting and presentation.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The traffic is the most predominating feature when one mentions this section. Parking on the main street continues to cause great difficulty with large trucks finding difficulty with parked cars. Traffic fumes and noises being the result. The bypass will bring a new life to the streets. Permitting parking along the street from Chapel Hill to the post office and back to the credit union at such a narrow point is unwise for the sake of the small number of spaces it serves. The Castle street area needs upgrading with a number of premises needing attention.. There are a number of laneways such as Hollands lane, Duggans Lane, the passage at the Hole in the wall, Williams lane together with all back yards of premises that can be viewed from the streets that need to be focused upon.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There is a rising standard of premises in Macroom. The obvious advantages of the river and castle grounds are impressive and there is much to be made of maximising these and being alert to the back areas, Castle Street, the courthouse surrounds and entrance lane and the traffic situation. The continuing planning and reviews are of great benefit.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (07/08/00)

The busy town of Macroom looked well on second adjudication day. Most of the buildings of the main streets and around the square looked well cared for and fresh on adjudication day although one or two looked rather shabby in comparison. Grubby signage was evident on the Millstreet Road in the form of the town nameplate – perhaps this is due to the high level of construction work taking place on this road. Do discourage large billboards, particularly in the centre of the town. The Millstreet side of the bridge has greatly improved over the last number of years. The abundant hanging baskets and window boxes were admired, as indeed was the interesting and unusual plasterwork to buildings. Litter control could have been better on the day, in particular at the Town Square. However, the adjudicator was pleased to note that the planters in this location had been filled with fresh marigolds and the town water pump was in working order

since the first adjudication had taken place.