

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **MIDDLETON**
County : **CORK**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 01-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	35	34
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	32	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	15
Litter Control	40	28	28
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	27	26
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	212	206

Midleton, County Cork

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The five-year programme, litter management plan and correspondence submitted with application form show a very committed approach to improvement in Midleton. The format of the plan in which an inventory of items is listed and the proposal for their development is excellent. The area of sponsorship requires much successful communication with the interested parties and the timescale gives a firm commitment and a method of monitoring of the plan. It is very good to see that such a wide range of groups in the town have an input to these proposals including transition year students and trout anglers' association. In a town of this size the Tidy Towns committee's role is very much the involvement with the U.D.C , residents associations and other bodies with responsibility for developments in the town. In this way achievements can be progressed satisfactorily.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

There is a large array of building structure in Midleton from the large industrial buildings, church property, business property and the huge range of individual houses, housing estates, terraced street housing and apartments. The landmark buildings such as the Library, The Municipal Authorities Offices, Old Midleton Distillery Heritage centre, churches and schools all look impressive and as new buildings develop these help to give a sense of stability to the town. The large building developments such as Millbrook, Beechwood, and others introduce change into the town and a watchful eye is needed on planning permissions and on the standard of finish and restoration of the surrounding landscape at the completion of such projects. The shop fronts have been greatly upgraded and give a lovely impression with their well-presented and well-painted state. The post office and adjacent building with the ornate railings would benefit from attention. The Pugin designed pub building will be a welcome reopening. The AIB building at present under cleaning will be a good improvement as it is such a vital part of the streetscape. In Broderick Street the three storey terraced buildings are an interesting asset. The paving in front of the Court House is attractive, however, consideration could be given to using natural stone paving in front of such buildings rather than coloured brick. As is happening in so many towns in Ireland recently – back areas of street buildings are opening up either through the provision of carparks or by the development of businesses. While the front appearance of a building may be very attractive the backs often display unsightly conditions. This represents a major challenge in the town now. Travelling the riverside road from the JFK monument to the roundabout and bridge illustrates this point.

Also the space behind through the lane by the surgery at the beautiful house and garden at the bridge and the section from the hospital entrance to the Tourist Hostel show that these type of areas will need to be addressed in the future. The Fire Station would benefit from some landscape or architectural initiative. Hopefully the Universal Foods Corporation building will evolve in the future. The streamside cottages on the old Cork Road, Tallow Road and Ballycotton road are especially attractive.

LANDSCAPING

There are considerable landscape development features in the town. The treatment of the roundabout and the associated islands with imaginative landscaping is very welcome. These are very tastefully planted and the use of incorporated stone is effective. Small area of landscaping such as the junction of the Youghal and Ballycotton Road are nicely treated and such opportunities are taken at many places through the town. The excellent tree planting at the carpark at the centre by SuperValu is commendable. Many planting opportunities have been well used throughout the town and surrounds. The tree planting on the main street is good with mountain ashes but the use of the few cherries in the long-term is debatable and replacement with more upright tree forms and more satisfactory trees could be considered as time goes by. The streetscape with container planting is very effective and gives a sparkle to the town for the summer months. Of special mention in this regard is the spectacular treatment at St. Mary's Terrace where a coordinated effort has produced amazing results. The uniform green and black planters give a nice touch to the street. Entrances to housing estates form a very important part of the landscape of the town. Individual gardens are also a vital part in the fabric of the landscape and there is an opportunity for every householder to participate in this aspect. The many fine individual gardens are a credit to their owners and often their contribution is made in a silent way. The Baby Park is attractively grassed and good use is made of the riverside and seating. The Town Park is a lovely facility with marvellous mature trees and pathways. Riverside and natural vegetation add to the attractiveness of The Park. The planting at the heritage centre is very attractive. The landscaping at the Irish Distilleries premises on the Tallow road is a lovely feature and on the same road excellent work has been done at the Rugby club

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The Bailick Park and Slobland proposal is a very worthwhile project and avails of a particularly interesting environment. Wetlands areas offer a fascinating wildlife resource and this will be a really valuable asset.

The walkways and mounded areas of tree planting with pathways are a good basis for further development. The Town Park offers opportunities by the riverside and the use on the

natural vegetation area is good. The Pontoon walk from the Kennedy Memorial across the bridge is a lovely feature and it is always pleasant to be able to walk directly off the main street across such interesting sites. As time proceeds the old railway line could also be of interest as a development under this heading

LITTER CONTROL

The excellent work that has been done in the preparation of the litter management plan and the involvement of surveys and schools is of great benefit in developing an awareness of the need to have a positive attitude to the litter management of the town. Litter continues to be a problem not just in Midleton but most places. There was litter noted in several places including in the river and the town park, at the road up to the Heritage centre where a bin was overflowing onto the street (12.30 midday). Perseverance and continued vigilance are the only mechanisms it seems to addressing this challenge.

TIDINESS

Overall there is a very tidy appearance in the town. The many businesses and housing estates show great pride in presenting a tidy picture. Building development works and the opening of back areas create difficulties in this respect which in time will be resolved.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The residential areas show a great deal of care and attention. Willowpark Court has a nice entrance with trees and shrubs and a good standard of grassed strips and tree planting within. Elsinore estate was well treated with the shrubberies on the greens and carefully looked after gardens. Some litter and weeds in the borders along the front green of Elm Grove were noticed. The Mill Race is attractively finished. Beechwood Court while still being built is developing well and completed houses are being cared for. The Castleredmond Court estate was very well cared for. There are a vast number of streamside residences of various types in the town and the very colourfully painted terraces of cottages really look attractive. Container plantings at these help greatly too.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads are being well treated and the formula of well cared for grassed verges and tree planting together with the roadside hedges is a successful one. Various ornamental plantings on approach to the town are attractive. Care is always needed at the boundary of town and surrounding countryside to ensure that any ornamental landscaping does not impose on the natural landscape. The roundabouts are very well treated and the main town roundabout is particularly imaginatively treated. The back areas as mentioned above are

becoming a new challenge.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The comprehensive programme and the vibrant activity of the town show that there is a very positive attitude prevailing. As the town is thriving, stresses are placed on it – traffic, parking, new developments, litter disposal and misuse of parks and open spaces, all of which will need extra effort in addressing them.