

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **FERBANE**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **C**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	25	23
The Built Environment	40	27	27
Landscaping	40	29	27
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	16	16
Litter Control	40	25	25
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	20	20
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	23	23
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	183	179

Ferbane, Co. Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for entry form, maps and Development Plan 2000 – 2002. We note from this documentation that Ferbane has been designated for urban renewal and also that this is the first time that a co-ordinated, integrated approach to local development is being pursued by the local community which is to be welcomed. The list of groups with whom you work and also the co-operation being received by the Committee from the Offaly County Council is commendable.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Church and the two Schools are well presented as is the Ferbane Community College. The Fire Station is well presented and the stone building at present being built at the rear of the Car Park was admired. Opposite the Car Park the Top Filling Station is at present receiving refurbishment. The Post Office and most business premises including Maidin Gheal's Home Bakery are quite well presented but, as you state, there are some derelict buildings throughout the town for which long term plans should be formulated. On the Belmont road the Midland Health Centre is well painted but the surround walls and grounds could do with attention – here weed killer was sprayed on quite long grass which then left a brown patch – weeds or grass should be removed before spraying. On the Ballycumber road, the GAA Club House and surround walls are well presented. The continuous heavy traffic through the town makes it difficult to keep buildings looking fresh and we noted some signage on premises which was affected.

LANDSCAPING

There are good planted areas on the approach roads and the tree planting is maturing nicely. As you state, the Brosna river is a feature of Ferbane and this has been highlighted with the excellent lanterns and flower baskets on the bridge. The amenity area work progress here at present will also enhance this feature. On the Birr approach, opposite the Housing Estate, a wooden railing would need attention. On this road also ivy should be removed from stone walls as it will damage the structure of same in the long term. The town car park is well presented with nice planting. Grass cutting and weeding throughout could have been a little better, but the weather was not kind for these endeavours this year to date.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The projects outlined in your plan in this category are very worthwhile and we look forward to hearing of their progress in the years ahead.

LITTER CONTROL

Unfortunately, there was a considerable amount of litter throughout Ferbane, but mostly on the main street, during the Adjudicators visit. This, despite the fact that there are many litter bins in evidence around the town. Ferbane Festival Fayre had ended the previous evening, as evidenced by a truck and chairs used as a stage in the Car Park and a Carnival based at the rear of the Community Centre. However, the Adjudicators visit started early afternoon and the town was again viewed on return from Belmont at around 3pm and no effort had been made at that stage to organise a clean up. Marks were not deducted this time as this is a once off event and presumably litter control is better at non festival times.

TIDINESS

The littering as mentioned above did not help to make Ferbane look tidy and some of the Festival bunting was also torn and hanging down. However, the side streets and approach roads presented a mostly tidy appearance and it was noted that the recycling bins were well positioned in the Car Park. Roadside kerbs were mostly weed free also.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Most of the houses in and around Ferbane are contributing to the Tidy Towns efforts. However, it should be remembered that gates and surround walls are also as important as the house itself.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

It was noted during the adjudicator's visit that a very considerable amount of heavy traffic passes through Ferbane on a continuous basis and we note that you intend to undertake a traffic survey to progress a case for a pedestrian crossing which would certainly be needed, at a minimum. The road surfaces in the Gallen Priory View Estate are very poor and verges on the approach roads from Ballycumber and Belmont rather rough. Some speed and directional signage needed cleaning and poles painting and it was noted there were no signs to Belmont and Ballycumber at this intersection.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

From the submission made with the entry form, it would seem that there will be much work undertaken in Ferbane in the next two years. We wish you well with all these projects and look forward to seeing the results of same in future years.