

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **TULLAMORE**
County : **OFFALY**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 04-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	41
The Built Environment	40	34	33
Landscaping	40	31	30
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	29	30
Tidiness	20	14	14
Residential Areas	30	24	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	32
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	232	230

Tullamore, County Offaly

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for the completed application and, in particular, for a summary of your five year plan. This made interesting reading. The town has gone from strength to strength in recent years and is to be congratulated for achieving a good balance between ongoing development and retaining the best of Tullamore's heritage, well done! There are some fine views into the town from approach roads. The gentle rise and fall of the street together with the view of the church steeple as a backdrop to handsome two and three storey buildings makes the entrance from the Portlaoise approach interesting and elicits curiosity.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The town is a successful combination of single, double and three storey properties, many of which have fine architectural features and are Georgian in design. A notable building which is well presented is the U.D.C. offices. The Tullamore Court Hotel is a fine new development and landscaping to the roadside area is most effective. Some buildings need to be refurbished to their roadside façades. The walls of the sports grounds and the clubhouse on the Dublin entrance into the town are being well maintained. This is important as these are such a strong visual element in this part of the town. No doubt the Water Street area will be developed over the next few years. The Bridge Street development / Distillery Lane with the Shopping Centre, Cinema and new Hotel is superb. The wirescape is particularly bad here and spoils to a certain extent an otherwise very pleasant and interesting entrance. No doubt the derelict buildings at St. Bridget's Place and Convent Road junction will be redeveloped soon and it is hoped that the redevelopment is sensitive to the existing Georgian character of the area.

LANDSCAPING

The newly developed Government Offices have been beautiful landscaped to their circulation area. The wide grass margins and newly planted and maturing trees on the stretch of road between the Portarlinton roundabout and the town centre together with mature trees form a gracious and elegant entrance to the town. The roadside boundary to the Livestock Mart is the best presented of any seen in the country by this adjudicator. The roadside boundary to Arden Precision and Condron Concrete Products Ltd. should be landscaped as these look particularly bad. The same point can be made for other commercial properties along this stretch of road, e.g. J.J. Heallion and the Creamery. Storage areas for building

materials should also be screened. Landscaping to the roadside boundary of the Hospital is maturing nicely. The numerous landscaped incidental amenity areas around the town have been noted. Flower displays and shrubs on the Clara road roundabout looked quite magnificent. 'The Palace Kitchen' commercial property out the Portlaoise road could be landscaped to its roadside edge and indeed around its circulation area. The enclosure to the ESB station could be planted. The rose bushes inside the fencing along the canal opposite St. Philomena's School are a nice touch although some might say that they are out of place in this setting. Trees could be planted behind the low stone wall leading up to the power station and the Sacred Heart School. This will give greater enclosure here. Well done on the excellent standard of the finish to the IDA industrial estate.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

We note with interest your plans for an annual clean up of the banks of the Grand Canal. Do ensure your activities are sensitive to wildlife. Has a wildlife survey been undertaken? This is an important first step.

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control was quite good in the town centre but less so away from the core of the town. Weak spots in terms of litter control included the area around the canal bridge leading out the Clara road. Another litter weak spot is O'Carroll Street, the previous day's litter had not been swept away by early next day. This is a beautiful street with some handsome developments and street furniture but no litter bins. Litter control was also weak along Church Street and a litter bin near the junction of Columcille Street in Church Street was overflowing. Congratulations to Supermacs, the bin which was overflowing on a previous night and the litter around this area had been cleaned away by ten o'clock the next morning. Supermac clean this area every morning at eight thirty. The main street and the square were very clean in the early morning.

TIDINESS

As noted by last year's adjudicator, there are no major problems under this heading and last year's standard has been maintained.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Most residential properties lining approach roads look well, however in a few instances boundary walls are in need of attention. Green areas of residential developments marking the entrance to the town from approach roads are nicely landscaped and being well maintained. Many new residential developments, e.g. Clonminch Woods and the Willows (out

the Portlaoise road), are being finished to a high standard in respect of their interface with the public road and open spaces. The low timber fencing at Ardan Vale could be repainted and some boundary walls to properties leading up to the hospital refurbished also. Infill housing development at Bride's Lane looks well.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Approach roads to the town are neatly presented and nameplates are clean and legible. Traffic islands marking entrances from approach roads have been refurbished and look well. Some consideration might be given to flower displays on these. The roundabout and traffic islands at the Portarlinton junction badly need to be refurbished. The wirescape in the town centre is very heavy, no doubt there are plans to have this ducted. The long grasses and wildflowers on the Dublin approach are appealing, however, the area around the nameplate should be cut back. The carpark with public toilet facilities alongside the canal is an excellent development. Well done on the new street names. The railway station looks well and its flower displays are colourful.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The overall impression of Tullamore is one of a busy town where interest in the environment is a priority of the community.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (10/08/00)

Tullamore is doing very well in the Competition. The town is benefiting from, but also suffering from, the consequences of rapid urban development. There appear to be more interesting new buildings, and more imaginative reinstatements of older buildings, than in any other town of comparable size, but also more vacant, derelict and unsightly premises; the latter are undoubtedly temporary. Litter was a real problem on second adjudication day – though not as widespread in its incidence as on the first, being more concentrated around the Square and the Bridge. North-south traffic is very heavy indeed: not a matter for marking, but it does militate against enjoyment of the handsome town centre for local shoppers and visitors (and, incidentally, makes the photographing of buildings quite hazardous). A very impressive entry.