

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **ARDCLOUGH**
County : **KILDARE**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 11-07-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2000	Mark Awarded 1999
Overall Developmental Approach	50	26	26
The Built Environment	40	20	18
Landscaping	40	21	19
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	24	24
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	20	19
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	16
General Impression	10	5	4
TOTAL MARK	300	164	154

Ardclough, County Kildare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The village of Ardclough is very fortunate in having the amenity of the Royal canal so close by. The village though is also impacted by the traffic on the road through to Straffan and as more people are moving out of Dublin the impact of further housing in the area will also be seen. A development plan is required – this need not be long or intricate, though a strategic plan focusing on your aims and objectives for the next 3/5 years would be useful in giving the community a sense of focus and direction.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Daniel Graham Memorial Park was well presented and the walls were recently painted though the gate needed attention. The Post Office was neat and tidy though flowers or a widow box might enhance it further. The church looked very well – the architecture and the surrounding landscaped area blended well into the rural hinterland. The School looked well. There were nice window boxes and the hedges were well cut.

LANDSCAPING

Overall, the landscaping was very good throughout the village. In considering the context of the emerging village from the rural surrounds, landscaping should reflect this rural background and native species should be considered, over "exotics". Hedgerow management should be also considered particularly due to the distance between speed signs. Some dead trees were noted and these should be replaced. Further trees within the triangle would enhance the area further – perhaps a stand of Acers or Rowan trees which provide good berries of birds during the Autumn and winter months could be considered?

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Work could be carried out on the Royal Canal in conjunction with the local school. An audit of the types of habitats, flora and fauna would be of interest and supplement their school curriculum. Management of this area is also required and perhaps the encouragement of a greater variety of native flowers through the sowing of wildflower seeds might be considered. This section should be addressed as part of your plan.

LITTER CONTROL

There was very little litter in the village and this should be the

case due to its size. There were a couple of pieces outside the shop. The litterbin here should be replaced and further bins are required throughout the village. Litter awareness campaigns should involve both the school and the local residents. A series of covered litterbins in a natural material such as wood located throughout the village would look very well.

TIDINESS

It is difficult to get the balance right in a rural village between what should be managed and what should be allowed grow naturally. There were weeds in the gutter in Wheatfield and these should be removed. The overgrown grass opposite Lyshandra Manor should be cut just at its margins and managed possibly as a wildflower verge. This does not mean leaving it uncut but managing and encouraging the growth of wildflowers. Some graffiti on the grey box in the triangle looked shabby.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Lyshandra Manor is well landscaped and maintained. Wheatfield is a lovely development and well proportioned. The new trees and landscaping looked well. There were well kept seats and the telephone box is well maintained. There was a good sense of community about this estate. Houses on the approach road from Celbridge were also well kept though a derelict house on the Straffan road could be considered as an investment in the future?

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The speed signs from which judging takes place are a long way out of the village. However this seemed to be necessary due to the speed at which cars and bikes travel on the road. The signs looked new. There was no approach sign for Ardclough on any road and these are required. The Celbridge approach was well cut back closer to the village though the Straffan approach less so.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Ardclough has progressed in the competition despite its recent entry. The village will take time to develop itself as a cohesive entity. Name signs and a co-ordinated approach to planting would help give the village an identity. Do try and progress with a development plan. This should be carried out in conjunction with the local bodies and the community identifying resources. A realistic plan should help to give the community both focus and direction in the long term – good luck with future work.