

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **SHANNON**
County : **CLARE**
Category : **E**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 12-07-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	42	42
The Built Environment	40	31	31
Landscaping	40	32	31
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	27	27
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	22	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	25
General Impression	10	6	7
TOTAL MARK	300	222	220

Shannon, Co. Clare

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The Committee is thanked very much for their very fine presentation of the town, particularly when the committee size is quite small and this must place a strain on the available resources. Though last years comments relate to a works program there was no 3-5 year development plan submitted with this years documents and as such it is presumed that this is an oversight. Though marks have not been deducted it is recommended that next years entry attach the up to date document otherwise the may be an alteration in the scoring for this section. This is a very important document for assessment purposes. This three-year Progress Plan, in conjunction with your Development Plan, which allows the Committee to continually monitor and plan, in a systematic say, the continual development, and to allow the rest of the community to appreciate the direction of work by the Committee.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The entrance to the town is different from most other towns in Clare and presents a modern planning approach, which separates the town from the road system and sub-urban areas. This requires a different approach to assessment as the built environment is zoned and as such the impacts that affect its environment are easily established. There is a tremendous need to assert the town centre with an individual character of its own. This is stated because the planned town centre does not seem to have developed, as projected plans would have sought. Thus there is a need for intervention that personalises the spaces. The large car parking areas and manner in which the rear elevations of buildings face the public spaces needs to be considered if the town is to strive for an individual identity. Daily vandalism is most noticeable in the town and the state of the library is quite appalling given the very effective design and connection to the mall. There does not seem to be much new building within the urban core and as such an up to date reference document could assist in assessment of what must be considered during this current year.

LANDSCAPING

There is a definite impression that the overall planted environment has an approach that is well controlled. The landscapes of recent planting are now emerging as distinctive mature collections of plants. Much of the plantings would seem to be associated with either corporate developments or county council ownership and these are really very well maintained, such as with the front areas to the hotels. There is a need to allow greater personalisation to some of the public spaces so that they would seem to

have developed naturally and in a more random fashion than the block treatment of many of the larger landscape schemes. This can be seen in part within the residential areas but these areas are quite divorced from the town centre.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

There is a wonderful opportunity to develop a wild life project in the centre of the town, by using outdoor boards illustrating ecology of the river Shannon Area. The local school should be a prime motivator in this project. There is a need to explore this category with an element of creativity and use it to emphasise an aesthetic that responds to the surrounding countryside. This is stated as the landscape treatment for both public and private areas relies very heavily on foreign plants and large areas of mown grass.

LITTER CONTROL

There was some litter seen in the town on the day of adjudication but this was generally associated with the rear to the shopping centre area.

TIDINESS

The town has a neat and tidy appearance, which is well presented. The issue of vandalism must be addressed and this has implications on the level of detailing so that it is robust. The area around the Shannon Development Authority is an excellent example of integration of large scale building with town park environment.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The housing areas are very zoned and as such do not have contrasting land uses that would allow for diversity of planting schemes and general presentation. The town is essentially a new town and as such there is the need to develop different characters to the various estates. A theme association would help with producing a more personalised variety of spaces. There are many well designed gardens.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

The roads in Shannon are varied. The concern does not relate to the primary routes but more to the changing character of the rural roads that are being transformed through further development. The access road to the graveyard is in need of special attention and the detailing of the gates with the barriers would seem to be easily vandalised or taken apart.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

The mark for this category has dropped because of the general lack of understanding of where the Tidy Town's commitment lay. There is a need to reduce the apparent

separation between the people spaces and the housing areas. This is an important issue as the model type for the town would seem to be more associated with a new town on the edge of a much larger city. The challenge is to assert an identity that emerges from the people so that the overall environment does not seem as if it is controlled by a corporate image.