

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **SIXMILEBRIDGE**  
County : **CLARE**  
Category : **C**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 14-07-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	27	25
Landscaping	40	30	29
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	21
Litter Control	40	25	24
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	20	22
General Impression	10	6	7
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>194</b>

## **Sixmilebridge, Co. Clare**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Thank you very much for the completed entry form which is quite informative on the approach taken during the year. There is however the need to supply a three to five-year work plan. This assists in adjudication, but also places a direction on how the project should be carried out. The set of photographs submitted by the Community Development Association were very helpful at the pre-assessment before visiting the town and this documentation is encouraged as it assists in adjudication. In general, the efforts carried out by the Tidy Town Committee would seem to be over-powered by the extent of civil works being carried out throughout the full extent of the town, and as such this year would not be a fair assessment to what an overall image would be expected by the Tidy Town Committee. The attached map was helpful in identifying the new areas where trees had been planted. However, there is a desire to see some overall philosophy as to why the Tidy Towns Committee is approaching new works in the town and what the overall intention of this effort will be. This should be expressed for next year's adjudication and hopefully all the civil works will be finished by then.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

There is very good use of colour for many of the buildings throughout the town. This extends from the public shopping area to the residential estates. This use of colour provides a very strong theme and individual character for the town and the Committee is recommended to develop this particular aspect of the town in its three to five-year plan so that there is a stronger co-ordination throughout the town for the use of colour. The state of buildings is quite varied and in part this must be an outcome of the impact resulting from the extensive civil works as it is a very uncomfortable town to use at present because of the amount of unfinished footways and storage areas for elements associated with the civil works. The Greyhound Bar, with its connection to the river and close association to the Old Mill, is a very pleasant example of what Sixmilebridge has to offer for visitors looking at the town. It must be said that the Duck Inn, which floats in the river, does need some renovation works, even though the residents may not be complaining. A more detailed assessment of the town is really only possible after the civil works have been completed. There is a need to tackle the spreading ribbon development associated with the town and how its image will contribute to the overall experience. It was not possible to enter the Library on the day of adjudication and it would have been thought that the open space around the Library would have been open during daylight hours, however the gates were locked. It is hoped that the wirescape that destroys the views to the centre of the town will be tackled with the civil works.

## **LANDSCAPING**

In general the open spaces vary in standard of upkeep and this has to do with the extent of civil works and unfinished housing areas. The planting of the blue Cedar at Churchview is an excellent idea, as it will terminate an axis and eventually become a centrepiece for this grass space. It would be a good idea, however, to treat the edge of the grass space so that it is tidier, given the narrow lane width of the road going around Churchview. An issue of concern must be raised as to the extent of street trees that are being placed in all the new civil work areas. Examination of the tree pits would indicate that they are significantly below any expected standard and the success and growth of these trees is presumed to be very poor because of the lack of good attention to the planting. The Tidy Towns Committee must get in touch with the County Council before the hard paving to the footways is carried out to ensure that adequate standards on all these trees have been matched. At present the tree pits for these trees are very small and will be insufficient for the future growth requirements. The display of roses at the traffic junction in the centre of the town would seem to redeem the impact of the civil works. It is perhaps a consideration that the Tidy Towns Committee should offset the very harsh environment during the period of civil works construction.

## **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

Though the Owengarney river is identified as a unique feature, it must be stated that on the day of adjudication civil works were being carried out for the placement of a sculpture in the middle of the river. The works would seem to go against all recommendations for the protection of water quality protection particularly if the river is advertised as an angling resource. This is stated because of the amount of silt that was kicked up during the works and no protection measures were in place. The mark for this category has been dropped around the new Library and not respectful of this particular category, though it must be said that the grounds do look very presentable at present. The fact that there is a river going through the centre of the town and the countryside enters into many of the areas of the town, are two very strong points that should place this town very well within this category. It would be hoped that the Development Plan would demonstrate a creative response to this category.

## **LITTER CONTROL**

The new signs stating "Litter-Free Zone", on entering the town, are not well sited and one of them is actually nailed to a tree which sends out the wrong message. The Committee must be complimented on instigating this particular programme. However, there is need to place these signs in more visually acceptable locations. There was very litter to be seen on the day of adjudication.

## **TIDINESS**

This category essentially relates to the overall image of the town. In general the civil works have imposed a very untidy environment on the town and as such this category is remaining at the same mark as these works go beyond the scope of the Tidy Town Committee. It must be pointed out however, that areas of grass cutting need to be properly cleaned up after the grass has been mown. An example would be Churchview, where the grass cuttings would seem to have been left in place for a length of time and resulted in a very untidy image in this small crescent of houses. Again treatment of the edge of this grass area should be considered, again because of the untidy nature of the earth edges.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Residential areas looked well on the day of adjudication. Where housing had the opportunity for the use of colour, this particularly helped in connecting the new estates with the older section of the town. Most gardens are well kept and contribute to enhancing the amenity space for the town. It must be pointed out that the permanent render finish, with coloured stones, in the plasterwork would seem to be inappropriate for Sixmilebridge as this is a finish that requires no painting and as such is out of sympathy with the overall character of the town. This item is raised as many new housing estates may well seek for this type of external finish and this will further divorce their visual connection with the overall town.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

This category is difficult to review during the course of the civil works, as the expected improvements have not yet been finished. The litter free zone signs must be reconsidered in terms of location. Treatment of kerbs and verges on the entry roads should also be examined during the course of the civil works so that entry areas are properly cleaned up. This would be so for the road entering from Bridgetown. On a last note it cannot be emphasised sufficiently that the new street trees must be addressed immediately, or else all the effort of introducing these trees will have been lost.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

There is a significant involvement by the Tidy Towns Committee in improving and enhancing the open space areas of the town. The presentation of a Development Plan will ensure a better understanding for proposed works by the adjudicator. The mark has dropped because of the general visual impact of the civil works. However, it is understood that with the committed efforts that have taken place in Sixmilebridge over recent years, that this town has a lovely element of charm.