

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CARRICKMACROSS**
County : **MONAGHAN**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 02-08-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	45	45
The Built Environment	40	34	33
Landscaping	40	38	38
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	26	26
Litter Control	40	27	28
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	27	27
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	247	247

Carrickmacross, County Monaghan

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The maps, photographs and detailed priority lists within your plan were very welcome and made the adjudication interesting. They give a very good grasp of the type of activities that have contributed to developing Carrickmacross to the high standard it has now arrived at. There are a wide range of activities in progress in your town and the results are very satisfactory. Investment in streetscape is really worthwhile and has paid off very well here. The involvement of the Tidy Towns committee with so many bodies has enabled the great progress to succeed.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Carrickmacross has a wealth of fine buildings and the presentation of these is being increasingly enhanced. The Court House and Market Place areas have really become well incorporated into the town in their renewed state. The hotel and bank look very well with their floral displays outside. The church buildings are impressive too as are the convent buildings with the attractive stonework displayed well. St. Joseph's Church is particularly well presented and is a magnificent asset to the buildings portfolio. Shop fronts are in very good condition. The high standard of these highlights those that are in need of renovation and hopefully the remaining few will be remedied soon. The cut stone engravings around the town add character and the naming on these is attractive as is the novel idea of inscriptions on the wall at the convent area. Carparking is a major factor in a town of this size. Unfortunately, people seem to prefer to park on streets rather than in the fine carparks provided.

LANDSCAPING

The greens on the Castleblayney road at the school are a really attractive sight and so well maintained. Grass cutting is well in hand and there is a very well cared for appearance to the grassed areas on the approach roads. The contribution made by the sober containerised plantings through the town are valuable. These complement rather than dominate the streetscape. The hedgerows along the Dundalk road are attractive. The landscaping at the Lisanisk lakeside Park has matured very well and the walkway is beautifully planted with a range of plantings especially good are the shrub roses. This is maintained well and a great asset to the town. The platform areas for seating at the roadside are very functional but do seem a little stark with their rigid shape and concrete base. Areas at entrances to housing estates form an important part of the landscape and in this respect Carrickmacross is progressing well. The Crann Nua housing development is a fine example of innovation of landscape style and the work there is highly

commendable. Street tree planting in the main street is progressing well. The large lime trees in the Catholic Church look very well, the walkway towards the hall is attractive but a disappointment follows as one faces the parkland area sloping down from the upper road. This area has great landscape potential and, hopefully, that will be fulfilled.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Both the convent lands and Lisanisk lake are tremendous assets to the wildlife interest of the town. The lakeside walks are beautifully set out and as stated above well landscaped. The convent land development is very exciting. In a busy town it would be marvellous if walkways could be made to get from one place to another in the town without having to go by the streets and roads. Such walkway development allows for greater appreciation and awareness of the wildlife and natural amenities of the areas. Information about the wildlife likely to be seen would give a great opportunity for extra enjoyment in this regard. Retention and care of hedgerows and new hedgerow plantings of thorns where possible is always worthwhile.

LITTER CONTROL

Your very comprehensive approach to dealing with this issue is commendable. The new litter bins were noted. With so many activities in the town litter control is understandably difficult. The main street had a considerable amount of litter by the footpaths which was a little disheartening knowing how much effort has gone into this problem. Litter in the Convent lands at the entry above the cemetery was also noted. The cemetery was spotless and this area is a credit to all concerned who so carefully maintain graves and the general area of the cemetery. The litter bin at the lakeside walk was full to capacity.

TIDINESS

There is no doubt that the central areas of the town are extremely tidy and the market square area in particular gives such a tidy impression. The cattle mart area is nicely screened off but could be improved. The sight of the back yards of premises from the footpath on walking up the road from the Hotel towards the Castleblayney direction continues to present problems. Side streets and back areas offer further opportunity for improvement under the tidiness heading.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The housing estates are well cared for and it is good to see the public areas in many areas well planted and grassed carefully. The competitions organised are a great idea for encouraging developments. Many individual houses and gardens contribute greatly to the overall appearance and good credit is due to their owners for the efforts.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

There is a very good standard of approach roads. The Dundalk road in particular is very attractive and the care and attention to roadside verges and hedges is welcome. Many of the side streets are unnamed. This is a great pity as naming is important. Some attention to wall painting and to rears of premises would be helpful. Many towns in Ireland now find that with the increased opening up of areas behind buildings for carparking and business that unsightly aspects of buildings are revealed and a plan has to be put in place to deal with such situations.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

There is a vibrant attitude to development in Carrickmacross. This has achieved much in the past years. A new impetus is now needed to tackle some of the perennial problems such as litter, progress on back street areas, convent grounds walk and the area below the Castleblayney road by the hall.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (02/08/01)

The numerous plantings – beds, tubs, baskets, window boxes – were in vivid bloom at the second day of adjudication, creating a real summer mood at so many points throughout Carrickmacross and on its approaches. Certainly this town deserves its high placing in its category, and the abundant work of the committee, the official bodies, and the business-people and householders of the town, are to be congratulated. A few small points – though they add up – noted on the second visit were kerbside weed in the Clough Valley area, the persistent dereliction of the fine building which closes the perspective of Bridewell; the ladies public WC where steps make access difficult for the disabled, no paper, and a broken seat; and the ever-present double parking which visually spoils the very handsome Main Street and where cars backing in and out add to the traffic problem; these are examples of discrepancies which need to be addressed at this high level in the Competition if, as is hoped, Carrickmacross is to climb even higher.

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