

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CASTLEPOLLARD**
County : **WESTMEATH**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 01-07-2001

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2001	Mark Awarded 2000
Overall Developmental Approach	50	37	37
The Built Environment	40	28	29
Landscaping	40	33	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	13	13
Litter Control	40	29	28
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	16	16
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	207	206

Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Castlepollard is congratulated on its planning approach. The 5 year plan is an excellent document which breaks the work of the committee into annual achievable tasks. Although there are many new housing and other developments taking place it is a pleasure to see the committee actively moving ahead to improve the presentation of the town and its surrounds. A word of caution - The town square has excellent potential but care must be taken with its Georgian character. There are concerns about the presentation state of some of its old premises and of some less than sensitive restoration works.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Within the square there are a number of nicely presented shops and house fronts. The Town Hall looks well but one wonders why it was selected as the site for the recycling bins. The Church of Ireland is centrepiece to the square and is well presented with two nice flower plants to the front. Particularly noted were the Post Office and the adjacent corner house which despite its plastic window frames looks very well. D and P Murphy's shop supports the general 'estate village' ambience. The shop looks well although preparation for repainting was in progress at time of adjudication. Each of the bank buildings is cleanly presented but have succumbed to some plastic window frames. Repainting of the awning at Murrays Shop was in hand on day of inspection. The Pollard Arms frontage looks well, Lees Shop is still a problem but as it is for sale it is hoped the new owners will improve the shop signs. Connies and Kennedys Pubs are in urgent need of repainting and removal of plastic sign. The Corner shop, also for sale, needs similar restoration. The Mergon buildings are very well presented with cut lawns, flower beds and shrubs.

LANDSCAPING

The square's open grass area is very well maintained with its fine stands of maturing trees. The traffic roundabout is very colourfully planted and supported by flower displays at each of the four exits. Children of Lir monument looks very well. All roads leading into the square are well presented with cut verges and floral displays. The Ballyduffy corner green adjacent to St. Peters Centre was undergoing wall reconstruction at time of visit. There is a lot of new housing in this area resulting in an amount of builders' debris. The approach road from Mullingar has very attractive cut grass areas well furnished with flower beds and maturing trees.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The Kilafree Castle and the adjoining graveyard offers an excellent wild life habitat, but requires interpretation information. The Ballyduffy amenity is a pleasant development with stone bridge and picnic area beside stream. There are cut lawns and mature hedgerows and wild grasses to support wildlife habitat. As last year,

you are encouraged to undertake a habitat survey to identify natural habitats and threats to these.

LITTER CONTROL

There is a good distribution of litter bins and happily, very little litter. There are some problems near construction sites but these are of a temporary nature and should disappear when construction work is complete. Generally your litter management programme is working - well done.

TIDINESS

Generally there were good levels of tidiness displayed in Castlepollard.

Watch for weed growths between the road and kerb stones and also at the base of some walls. There are incidents of dilapidated buildings in the square and a serious problem with the old cinema. The clutter of sandwich boards on footpaths should be discouraged as should the visual impact of beer barrels and wheely bins.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Castlepollard has a mixture of many residential styles. In most cases these are well maintained although some difficulties arise where building work is ongoing.

The Castle Heights estate and the new walls to the estate look well. The housing estate on the Tullynally Castle road looks very well with well maintained flowers and shrubs. Most of the housing around the village have well developed gardens which add to fine presentation of each of the access roads. The National school in Water Street is well presented, cut lawn to front, wild grasses to rear. The School wall is good. Church on the Fore Road is well presented with cut lawns and trees. Railings to front could be freshened with painting.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

All approach roads to Castlepollard are very well presented. All have well maintained grass verges, floral displays, and town signs. The entrance from the Tullynally side is fine, nice verge presentation with flowers and trees. The football field car park requires screening. Well presented housing estate below fire station, with green area, timber fencing and planter at entrance. An adjoining building site is undergoing development. The Collinstown entrance features a construction site on right side. The Green Street entrance opens with attractive cut margins, roadside open green, and planter, but within the built area there is an untidiness in its variety of facades and irregular roadside. The Mullingar approach is particularly impressive with fine sweep of grass verge, mature trees and plants.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Castlepollard is going through a time of considerable change. Many of its old buildings are due for restoration and care will need to be taken with their replacement, particularly around the square, to ensure its character is not lost. In addition a number of new housing developments are now underway which will impact socially and economically on the future direction the town will take.