

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **CASTLEFINN**
County : **DONEGAL**
Category : **B**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 03-07-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	39	37
The Built Environment	40	31	31
Landscaping	40	34	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	15	15
Litter Control	40	34	32
Tidiness	20	17	17
Residential Areas	30	24	23
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	233	228

Castlefinn, County Donegal

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Your five year development plan is well structured but would benefit from the addition of timescales for the improvement projects you have in mind. You have correctly highlighted your main challenges as roads, pavements and lighting and the Jug Of Punch/Tracksend area. Congratulations on gaining funding for the new Health/Resource Centre, this will be a significant boon for the village. Thank you for an excellent map of the town.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The problem of overhead cables is endemic in rural Ireland, however, some towns and villages are now beginning to tackle this problem. Castlefinn would undoubtedly benefit from the relocation of cables underground, particularly on the approach road from Ballybofey, in the Diamond and the approach road over the bridge from Castlederg. The red house café and FAS offices are located within a wonderful red brick building and the remaining houses on The Diamond are also noteworthy. Hopefully the 'shop to let' will soon be upgraded and maintained to a similar standard.

LANDSCAPING

The Diamond is very well appointed with well maintained lawns and maturing trees. The Victorian street lamps add character and the paved central area provides a pleasant space for people to congregate. Perhaps the modern street lights that exist within the village could, eventually, be replaced by similar mock Victorian ones. Landscaped verges are generally very well maintained throughout the village. Your development plan again highlights areas that will definitely benefit from your proposed improvements in particular the old Congregational Church.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

It is accepted that your plans for development under this category have been taken out of your hands by the proposal of a new by-pass. You may, however, wish to look at other areas for improvement that are not centered around the proposed new route. Could the proposed river walk be developed at this stage?

LITTER CONTROL

Litter control appeared very good on adjudication day, particularly at the Diamond. Well done.

TIDINESS

The previous comments about Hillhead appear to have been addressed and it is accepted that the situation concerning the Jug Of Punch is currently beyond your control. Generally, the village does appear tidy and would greatly benefit from your proposed road and pavement improvements.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The relatively new estate at Caislean Court looks impressive and its planting is most complementary to the existing estate of Grahamsland. Houses on the right hand side of the N15 when entering the village are very well maintained with excellent planting. Perhaps the green area at Emmet Park could be looked at in more detail. Is it to be an area for football to be played or should it have more of an informal garden layout? Perhaps a combination of both.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

This is obviously an on going problem for the village but not one that you have ignored or, to your credit, given up on. Resurfacing of the roads will greatly enhance Castlefinn and we wish you luck with progress on this matter. Street nameplates are also on your agenda and are again welcome. The grass verges and tree planting on the approach road to the village are well looked after.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Your objective of encouraging visitors to the heart of your village is a good one. In order to achieve this you will need to bring people in from the main Balorbofey – Lifford road. Currently this does not happen because of a lack of visual cues as to where the village is.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (09/08/2002)

Castlefinn enjoys a magnificent location by river and hill and excellent scenic views are one of the amenities of the village to be enjoyed. The road up the hill by Lafferty's Post Office premises offers one of many opportunities for a developed walk (to Slí-na-Sláinte standards) with scenic viewing points.

The majority of buildings are nicely presented and some retain their traditional features. The boundary wall of the school is still in need of attention as are the fascia signs of the 'Clancey' and 'Lynchs' properties. Development sites have been noted and we anticipate these will enhance the well being of the community. Litter control was weakest opposite the Shell Garage and on the Castlederg road in the environs of the bridge, it may be necessary to rethink your litter management strategy. Landscaping around the village was very much admired and is a credit to those responsible for their design and maintenance.