

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **LETTERKENNY**
County : **DONEGAL**
Category : **F**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 07-07-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	43
The Built Environment	40	35	35
Landscaping	40	36	36
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	26	24
Litter Control	40	33	34
Tidiness	20	15	14
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	32	30
General Impression	10	8	8
TOTAL MARK	300	253	249

Letterkenny, County Donegal

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The discussion document for 'Letterkenny and Environs Development Plan' is comprehensive and a good analysis of the problems facing Letterkenny today. As was suggested by last year's second adjudicator, could you please confine your entry to the application form, map and five year development plan. It would also be most beneficial if you could highlight the areas that have undergone improvement within the year and the areas of concern etc. on a more detailed map. Letterkenny is a large town and would perhaps be better illustrated on an A3 format map.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The new cinema is a new addition to the town and an improvement on the previous one. What plans are there for the old cinema as it now looks rather unpleasant with remnants of the recent general election is still visible. Other buildings on this stretch of Port Road also requires attention if they are not to detract from the very fine An Grianan Theatre. A further extension to Letterkenny Institute of Technology is currently under construction and the overall feel of the campus is very impressive. The new Sports Complex is at an early stage of construction but will hopefully be another fine addition to the built environment. Kelly's yard remains untidy and the tin roof of the storehouse is very rusty and unsightly. The Credit Union, the Courthouse, AIB and Bank of Ireland, the Letterkenny Court Hotel and the Library were all admired as attractive buildings. The New Council Offices beside the Tourist Office appear to be nearing completion at last and its grass roof is established, unfortunately, it is not the most attractive architectural solution. The wall adjacent to Kelly's on lower Main Street needs repainting.

LANDSCAPING

The Town Park is in immaculate condition and provides excellent facilities for all. The car park is well landscaped with good provision of public toilets. The sign stipulating 'No dogs, cycling or drinking is permitted here' is to be commended. Flowers outside the Courthouse were admired. Beautiful hanging baskets adorn the street lamps and shops of Upper and Lower Main Street. Street furniture is coordinated. The new GAA pitch is very impressive as are the grounds to the Boys school. An area opposite the hospital is very well maintained. Would it be possible to replace the two trees that have been cut down at the front of An Grianan Theatre? The extensive work that has gone into planters, shrubberies and hanging baskets around the town did not go unnoticed.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Congratulations to Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal on the European Green Flag Award, to Scoil Cholmcille for the excellent Green-eco publication and to Ballyraine N.S. for its Eco Diary and the planting of so many trees in one day. Well done to all involved. The

Wildlife Survey map was indeed in place on DeVelera Road on adjudication day and is a fine achievement. Are the proposed walks along the Leck Road and the old town road still to be developed?

LITTER CONTROL

There was quite a lot of litter in the road gutters along Main Street despite the excellent bin provision. The pavement outside of Funland was particularly poor in this regard and more litter was seen outside of the Library, Market Square and at the Cathedral car park on the day of adjudication. There was a lot of litter at Fortwell housing estate and at the entrance to Burnside housing estate in town. Linear Park did have some litter but is nevertheless a pleasant area. More litter was again seen in Letterkenny Shopping Centre car park. Recognition must, however, be given to the efforts to stop people from littering in Letterkenny town. Murals in visible places encourage people not to discard chewing gum etc. onto the public pavements.

TIDINESS

I understand that the travelers located at the Cathedral car park will be relocating housing on the Neil T Blaney road and the car park also appears ready to undergo alterations in layout. We look forward to the upgrading of this very public space and trust it will reflect the sensitivity of its location. The breakers yard has now gone from beside the new tourist office and the materials stored at the old tourist office were as tidy as could be expected. The three storey Barracks Bar building needs to have its roof gutters cleared of weeds. The efforts of all the schools, the staff and their students are recognised. By instilling the importance of tidiness to the pupils, one can help to ensure that there will be future improvements in this area.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The 52 residents Associations are to be congratulated on their efforts; firstly, on taking the initiative to set themselves up and, secondly, for the obvious amount of effort that has gone into improving the quality of their environment. Fortwell appears a little run down at this stage and in need of attention.

The other housing estates within the town are relatively new and appear well maintained. The two storey houses opposite Hegarty's garage and Kelly's yard looked fine and all displayed lovely window boxes as did the residents of Rosemount terrace. The town houses of Letterkenny were very much admired as were those on Glencar Road. Glenwood park Estate is fairly well maintained and has a vibrant community but do be aware of the problems of dereliction. Ashbrook, Derryveigh and Meadowbank Park Estates were further admired. Ballymacool Estate, with its grand entrance, has retained mature trees where possible. Was an impact study carried out, prior to construction, to determine the wildlife and heritage amenity of this area? It is a pity that what would appear to have been an excellent opportunity to open up this valuable space to the public has been lost here.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Grass verges are well maintained on the approach roads and on all the roads that radiate off the Hospital Roundabout. Port Road, from Sister Sara's up to Main Street, is in poor condition with some serious pot holes in places. The High Road is also in poor condition but well done on the excellent provision for disabled parking outside the Credit Union. Ramelton Road has been newly resurfaced and the resurfacing of other roads, highlighted on your application form, around the town is noted and welcome. The near completion of the Tourist Office roundabout is most welcome. It is noted that the cathedral car park is to undergo changes as mentioned earlier. The Port, Ramelton and Pearse approach roads are home to numerous industrial and retail units but little in the way of landscaping in between. Development along the new Neil T Blaney relief road will need to be well planned in order for it not to go the same way. Many people approach Letterkenny for the first time along this road so the view of the town also needs consideration as it looks on to the back of the town. Landscaping and tree planting need to be utilised here. The road to the new cinema is in urgent need of resurfacing. Generally, the provision of street name signs could be improved upon within the town.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Letterkenny is generating great enthusiasm from within its community to further enhance the character of the town. Your work to date is first class and your proposals for the future look to be of the same merit.

SECOND ADJUDICATION (09/08/2002)

Litter control was much stronger during our second visit. Some (take-away) litter was noted on the outskirts of the town and some in the car-park of the Dunnes Stores Shopping Centre. When there is a lack of consistency in litter control throughout the period of adjudication, it is difficult to gain an increase in marks. The new footpath nearing completion on the high road to the cemetery (Cullion Road?) is a welcome development and enhances the amenity value of the town in addition to making the cemetery more accessible. Newly planted trees at the junction near the Glebe Crescent housing estate have been noted together with the bed prepared for planting. Flower displays were in full bloom, these added a welcome splash of colour and were beautifully arranged. The findings of the wildlife survey were interesting and their presentation beautiful. The new 'Town Park' road signs are appropriate and give this impressive amenity development a higher profile. Thank you for your continued participation and enthusiasm.