

"Caring for our environment"

Centre : **MOUNTMELICK**
County : **LAOIS**
Category : **D**

Results

Date of Adjudication : 23-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	40
The Built Environment	40	30	30
Landscaping	40	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	20	20
Tidiness	20	13	13
Residential Areas	30	22	22
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	6	6
TOTAL MARK	300	211	211

Mountmellick, County Laois

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for your Mountmellick Tidy Towns Development Plan 2002-2005. This is well prepared and puts in perspective the prospect of major improvements to the environmental quality of Mountmellick and its hinterland. Your programme will provide the platform through which the local community and visitors can access and enjoy a unique heritage

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The built environment is essentially 18th. century in character and there are a number of interesting churches and houses to be seen. However this very quality has brought twentieth century dilapidation, unfortunately, fairly evident at a number of points along the main street. The town square is somewhat of a disappointment. Used as a car park, its role as a pleasant meeting place within the town is lost. The buildings surrounding the square are quite attractive, but the supermarket signage is out of proportion. Gormans Furniture and Costcutters signs could be much improved. Questions must be raised about the aesthetic value of the trunk of the metal Christmas tree. At the Birr Road end of town it was nice to see shops and houses are freshly presented, as the general impression is of an area that has benefited from recent restoration work. The Garda station is cleanly presented as was Mountmellick Community Centre/School, and St.Vincent's Hospital. The old warehouse buildings on the Portlaoise road are in some disrepair. The terrace of houses to the left of the Dublin Road are very attractive, and this part of town is generally well presented with mature housing, gardens and trees. The adjudicator was impressed with the Heritage trail and information plaques at various points around the town.

LANDSCAPING

Entrances to Mountmellick are well furnished with amenities featuring picnic tables, seating and 'well'. Complete with shrubbery these are nicely presented and generally well kept. These would include the Birr road, the Dublin road, the Tullamore road, and Derryguille and Derrycloney on the Portlaoise road. There are some instances of kerb weed (Dublin Road), link (Birr Road) and concrete fencing which should be better screened. Within the town the complete absence of over head wires along main street is refreshing but somewhat counterbalanced by cars parked on both sides of the road which cause visual and pedestrian difficulties on footpaths. There is an attractive display of flowers at Turleys pub on the Dublin Road. The wall which fronts the MSM ReCycling centre is very well presented with climbers and trees creating an attractive bank of natural foliage. There is an attractive shrubbery display at the corner of the Dublin Road and Kirwan Park

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

The development of a nature walk along the riverside should get more attention. While there is access, there was no evident maintenance of pathway or provision of signs or other information. Plans for the Patrick Street development are most interesting and opportune. It is hoped that the 'opening' of the river and its bridge will encourage the establishment of wildlife habitats which are accessible to the community. The Graigue Cemetary Grave is neatly presented and offers wildlife habitat opportunities. Your selection for the Wildlife Enhancement Pilot Project is an exciting development and we wish you well in its progress.

LITTER CONTROL

While litter did not appear a serious problem, there was some near a fast food outlet and grocery shop in the main street.

TIDINESS

There were some grass verges growing wild in new estates, but it is presumed this is temporary. The Hinch Plant Hire yard requires screening, and there is a damaged wall to right at this point. Dereliction is an ongoing problem which can only be resolved by redevelopment or imaginative screening.

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Nice to see some restoration work is ongoing to housing on Birr Road. The Portarlington Road entrance to the town is quite impressive with its row of well designed, red bricked houses creating an attractive approach to the main street. The row of terraced houses running to the left of Tullamore/Birr junction looks very well. It is a nicely maintained crescent with the well presented green area to front. Most of the more mature housing in this area have well presented gardens, although there are a number of new developments which require time to mature. Kirwan Park a major residential area, is a mixture of new and more established residential housing. The area is still at development stage and the public areas do not appear to have been taken over by the local authority. The greens are primarily play areas for children. The adjudicator was impressed with the high standard of presentation of mature housing. Many had outstanding gardens which added to the environmental qualities of Mountmellick.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Mountmellick is commended for its attention to the shrubbery and grassed amenity areas furnished with seating, tables and well structures on each of its main approach roads. There are however a number of broken walls and chain link fences which require screening or other 'tidying' work. Dublin Road has good surface to footpath on left hand side.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Mountmellick is going through a time of considerable change. Many of its old buildings are due for replacement and their reconstruction or replacement must be treated with great care if the old world ambience of the town is to be retained. Your drawing together of the various residential, business, community, and local authority interests will do much to underwrite the future of your town.