

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **BELCARRA**  
County : **MAYO**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 26-06-2002

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2002	Mark Awarded 2001
Overall Developmental Approach	50	43	41
The Built Environment	40	33	32
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	21
Litter Control	40	34	34
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	27	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	34	33
General Impression	10	8	8
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>243</b>

## **Belcarra, Co. Mayo**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Belcarra is a place of purpose and clarity of vision. A sense of pride of place is all-pervasive and has become instilled in this small community. Under the guidance of a proactive community its achievements are astounding. Existing projects are nurtured whilst newer projects serve to sustain people's enthusiasm thus avoiding complacency. Your development plan is user friendly in that it allows for suitable delegation and accountability. The information pack and photographic album you submitted was most enlightening.

### **THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

The physical environment of Belcarra is in a relatively good state of repair. The Community Centre is undergoing refurbishment. The Church and the School are most impressive with an eye-catching display of flowerbeds, window boxes and decorative tubs. Derelict farm buildings near the Church were very wisely screened off. The Post Office, often the life source of a small community, is charming. Care has been taken not to destroy the overall character of the main street. The sewerage scheme has an adverse effect on the exterior paintwork of some of the main commercial outlets creating a dull effect. The traditional style telephone booth and house adjacent need painting. The Eviction Cottage is picture postcard perfect but the open space around it needs greater definition.

### **LANDSCAPING**

A creative, harmonious appearance has been achieved. There is a lovely progression of increasingly ornamental landscape effects from well maintained natural bedding on the approach roads through shrubs and decorative flowers in the village centre. Single species groupings contrast beautifully with foliage. The hard paving along the Balla Road requires definition. The completion of the new bridge will now entail soft landscaping. Wildlife survey undertaken by your committee shall serve as an invaluable resource here. The transformation of the new Graveyard is remarkable. Full credit to all concerned!

### **WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES**

The areas of natural amenity in the town have been clearly identified and developed. The Committee has incorporated wildlife areas very effectively into the network of open spaces around the village. The Committee might consider establishing an educational Nature Trail involving school children in the locality. The provision of seating areas and viewing platforms along the riverside walk could heighten appreciation of this fine feature. The possibilities are endless.

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## **LITTER CONTROL**

Your litter-control policy is highly effective as the village was virtually litter free on adjudication day.

## **TIDINESS**

The village has an air of neatness about it, with everything in its proper place. Thankfully the Committee has not made the mistake of cluttering up the vicinity with the profusion of tubs and shrubs. The pumps adjacent Heneghans need to be painted and nets should be replaced on basketball court. The stone walls on approach to the Church are in pristine state of repair. Particularly impressive are the residences on the Balla route that have taken responsibility for verges outside their boundary walls.

## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Most of the residents present their properties tastefully. The Tidy Town theme is reflected throughout the community consisting of closely cut lawns and finely trimmed hedges. However, the margin along the Balla Road where a number of new houses are located spoiled the overall effect somewhat. Contractors must be urged to clear debris as it creates an unpleasing effect.

## **ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS**

The condition of the approach roads is quite good generally. The surface along the main street is uneven with road markings and curbing requiring attention. In the aftermath of the sewerage scheme, the Council must carry out some large-scale public area improvements. Paving outside the Community Centre appears broken and uneven. Walls are one of the finest features of the approach roads.

## **GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Belcarra is a fine example of community spirit at its best. Considerable changes have taken place to create the bright and extremely attractive village of today. This is due to the dedication of the Community Council. As a number of ambitious projects reach completion, the Committee may consider establishing recreational areas along the riverside walk. The Tidy Towns legacy lives on.

## **SECOND ADJUDICATION (05/08/2002)**

Old stone walls are a characteristic feature of Balcarra and are its strongest visual element. The stands of mature trees on the bottom of the main street which can be seen from the Balla Road are impressive. Most grass verges are nicely maintained and landscaping at the Church and car-park was admired. Well done on the riverside walk and wildlife survey, this will make a significant contribution to the promotion of a general

awareness of wildlife amongst the community. A stretch of wall to a property on one entrance to the village is in need of attention.

A good overall presentation and a substantial increase in marks.