

Tidy Towns Competition 2003

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Mountmellick**

Ref: **507**

County: **Laois**

Mark: **210**

Category: **D**

Date: **17/06/2003**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2003	Mark Awarded 2002
Overall Developmental Approach	50	40	40
The Built Environment	40	28	30
Landscaping	40	32	32
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	19	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	210	211

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your entry to Tidy Towns 2003. With your 4 year development plan now in its second year a lot is already happening in Mountmellick. The restoration of the deteriorating premises cannot come soon enough. However, the new riverside development is well under way and no doubt will kick start the rejuvenation of the town.

The Built Environment:

The Heritage Centre could be better presented. There was quite a show of weed in the forecourt behind the railings. Outside of that, the building looks not too bad. To the left of the main street there are a number of premises which are now derelict and awaiting planning permission for further development. The Bank of Ireland building impressed with its window boxes. The building with plaque 'Mountmellick Street Re-newal' opened by Noel Dempsey in 1998 looks in need of repainting and windows replaced. The nearby Methodists Church looks very well, with nicely presented grounds. St. Pauls Church of Ireland also on the Heritage Trail is a fine church nicely set in its own well kept gardens and surrounding grave yard. The Quaker Meeting House and Prebyterian Church look fine. The Town Square looks quite well even though some of the shop fascias are out of context. There are a number of buildings which front the Square on the main street between the 'Video Vault and the DIY Centre which are unoccupied and due for replacement. The Catholic Church and its adjoining school have well kept shrub beds which dress the tarmac frontages. The old mill buildings beside the Anngrove stud are somewhat dilapidated. Fire station is not particularly well

maintained and there is a show of weed in its forecourt. The Garda station is cleanly maintained.

Landscaping:

There are attractive lighting standards which add to the Square's appearance. The entrances to Mountmellick are well furnished with amenities featuring picnic tables, seating and 'well'. The approach from the Portlaoise road introduces Mountmellick with an amenity area at Derrycloney. This has been trimmed and looks quite well. Some of the concrete fencing requires attention. Closer to town the cut verge on the right has a nice display of trees. Some kerb side weed is present close to the Deryyguille amenity which otherwise generally looks fine. The Mountmellick sign sits in a trimmed verge. The approach to the town from the Portlaoise side with its mature houses and gardens is particularly attractive.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The Wildlife Enhancement plan for Mountmellick presents an outstanding reference for not only ensuring the preservation, but in the context of the new developments taking place, the enhancement of wildlife habitats throughout the town. Around the new bridge some amenity work has been completed but already the timber decking has been damaged by fire. Mountmellick has a fine array of interpretative signs displayed at various points throughout the town which add insight to its historic, social and cultural past. Work on the new Mountmellick museum is ongoing resulting in the disruption of the area around the Mountmellick Development Association and Old Mill Restaurant. The walking trail along the river bank from the bridge requires some further development. The gardens around the public library are well laid out with cut lawns and stone sculptures. The Graigue graveyard on the Tullamore road approach is very well maintained.

Litter Control:

Litter did not appear a serious problem.

Tidiness:

Down the main street of the town, car parking is a problem with cars up on paths on both sides. There is no wirescape and all public lighting has been attached to road side buildings. The Tullamore road approach is well presented with trimmed verges but is somewhat hindered by some poorly presented housing. In one case, garden railings have been either knocked or pulled down. 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 at the corner of the Dublin Road and Kirwan Park

Residential Areas:

Housing on the approach from Dublin is a mix of single, two storey, and Bord na Mona estate development, all well maintained. Kirwan Park looks well with its grassed and planted areas. Harbour Court to the right is an attractive semi circle in which the grass area could be trimmed. In much of this area, normal housing presentation is disrupted due to ongoing house building works. The continuation of the approach from Dublin has a fine planted corner display backed by a terrace of red bricked houses. Grove Park development is ongoing and looks quite well. The Hospital grounds are well maintained as are the houses opposite.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The approach from Clonaslee is quite attractive with a small picnic green area to the left bordered by black stakes. At the 30 mph Mountmellick sign there was a gravel surfaced picnic area with seats and well feature. To the right the road edges are maintained to inconsistent levels and a water pump which could be a feature has been virtually ignored. The road surface is quite good,

wire-scape not too bad. There is some link fencing with weed. The approach from the Dublin side introduces the town with an attractive picnic amenity. The Road surface is good, but the Mountmellick Town sign stands in a not well maintained verge.

General Impression:

The level of redevelopment around Mountmellick is impressive. The major concern is to preserve the town's 19th. century ambience while at the same time welcoming change which will underwrite its future.