

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Fermoy**

Ref: **398**

County: **Cork North**

Mark: **234**

Category: **D**

Date: **17/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	41	41
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	34	33
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	22	22
Litter Control	40	33	32
Tidiness	20	15	15
Residential Areas	30	25	25
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	25	24
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	234	230

Overall Developmental Approach:

Your submission proved helpful on adjudication day. We would have welcomed a town map in view of the large area under adjudication. We also wonder if you have a development plan and if so we would welcome details of same. As mentioned last year the town has many attractive features and like so many towns of its size is undergoing an unprecedented amount of house building. The town is divided by the majestic Fermoy bridge and Blackwater river and few towns can boast of so many natural amenities serving the people of the area. Your principal streets: Mac Curtain Street and Patrick Street are really special and have some superb period buildings. We wonder if you have a planning policy of protecting some of the shopfronts in particular and we notice the bypass is on the way and the sooner the better for frustrated pedestrians traversing the busy streets of the town.

The Built Environment:

We congratulate the proprietor of the Grand Hotel for an outstanding presentation, inside and outside on this important site. It represents a most favourable introduction to the town. We hope the site beside it will be of equal standard and presentation when complete. The plethora of shops and buildings mentioned last year looked well again this year and some have improved: the Wesleyan Church on Patrick Street has improved but we urge the removal of so many signs. The Frank Morgan studio is sweet in presentation. We notice some unoccupied and some derelict buildings on both Patrick and Mac Curtain Streets and we hope these will be attended to in the near future. The slowness of the traffic coming down Patrick St., enables drivers to see every detail of fault and

favour as experienced by this adjudicator during peak time traffic. Mrs Quins Charity Shop is excellent and also the wonderful flower display at the house beside it. The Fire Station is interesting and well presented: perhaps some colour would soften the limestone effect somewhat.

Landscaping:

How fortunate you are to have your own gardener and the hand of same is very much in evidence. Few towns can boast of a Town Park so extensive and so well presented. The view from Church Hill illustrates how well presented it is, so well done. We also acknowledge the landscaping listed in your submission. You still have scope for tree planting and we urge to extend this programme. Trees are probably the best environmental investment you can make and are beneficially sustainable. We were surprised at the excessive cutting back of the lime trees on Patrick Street, despite our praiseworthy comments last year: we hope they will recover. Well done to the many individuals who embark on window boxes, hanging baskets and flower tubs. We liked the display at the Bupa Building, so well done to all concerned.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

You have plenty of opportunity to raise your marks in this category. Well done on the erection of display board. The river and river bank offers great habitats and much wildlife was in evidence on the walk from the bridge to the Rowing Club. The club itself would benefit from painting.

Litter Control:

We were pleased to find Fermoy so litter free and we commend you on your efforts. Litter control is quite a challenge for a town of its size and with such passing traffic. We notice the quality of litter bins is not great and many have gone shabby. You should consider replacing with the stainless steel ones similar to those in use in neighbouring Mallow. You are coming under pressure with the usage of the Bring Bank in the car park at the library. We noticed the skip was full and the containers are in need of cleaning. The centre at the Friendship Bridge is much better presented but with less demand we suspect.

Tidiness:

Your many unoccupied houses, dereliction, unattended open spaces, untidy side and rear entrances all combine to present many pockets of untidiness in and around the town. Even within the core of the town, e.g., Newmarket Street has a row of dereliction you have many potentially valuable sites lying dormant and untidy. These will only be tackled in time but the best method is under the auspices of the Town Council.

Residential Areas:

New house building continues at an alarming rate and is changing the character of the town significantly. The standard of house building is good, despite the plethora of pvc doors and windows: e.g., the row of houses at Ard Abhainn needs colour to soften the stonework. However, housing estates need appropriate landscaping and ideally this should always form part of the planning process. Your lengthy approach roads have many fine housing estates and the entrances to many have been richly landscaped.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Street names are good and most helpful to adjudicators. We commend you on the use of appropriate names for such streets and areas and the bilingual presentation. The pressure of commercial development has led many developers to develop side and back areas and this offers opportunity for raising your marks. Many of these areas can be most interesting and feature many traditional characteristics of interest. The new commercial developments at Emmet Street is attractive.

General Impression:

Despite the frustrating continuous traffic through the town you are coping well with developments. Your future with the impending by-pass is bright and we hope it will come soon. You will then enter a new era and no doubt face new challenges similar to other towns. A Fermoy without traffic congestion will raise the quality of the environment and enable you to plan for more leisurely use of your streets and open spaces. This has several beneficial implications for the community to enjoy the natural amenities to a greater degree.

Second Round Adjudication:

Fermoy has many positive features and good progress is being made in the town. The park is particularly notable and together with the riverside areas makes a wonderful amenity in the town. The streetscape is steadily improving – some unwelcome displays of produce outside shops cause a hindrance. The recycle bins behind the library were being cleaned on this occasion and appeared well, as did the bin area by the carpark near the livestock mart. The McCarthy Insurance/BUPA buildings look very well and the amenity areas surrounding the buildings make a very attractive feature. The cycle lanes on the roads are helpful. The McCurtain Street road surface is very uneven. With the development of the Corner site and further refurbishment of Pearce Square this will give an enhancement to the square. The potential for further development of the core of the town is enormous with the pending bypass. A focus on tree planting within the town would be very welcome development in the future and removal of all overhead cables.