

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Macroom**

Ref: **722**

County: **Cork South**

Mark: **248**

Category: **D**

Date: **11/08/2005**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2005	Mark Awarded 2004
Overall Developmental Approach	50	44	43
The Built Environment	40	32	31
Landscaping	40	34	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	22
Litter Control	40	33	32
Tidiness	20	16	16
Residential Areas	30	26	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	33	33
General Impression	10	7	8
TOTAL MARK	300	248	245

Overall Developmental Approach:

Thank you for your submission, complete with map, development plan and copy of Newsletter. Well done also on the new town map which we picked up at the TIO. A good town map is an adjudicators delight. The town was preparing for Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan and many shops had decorated there premises appropriately in preparation for the festivities. The town was also festooned with decorations, but alas we had to leave before the event started. The square remains your strong point and was richly embellished with a great display of seasonal flowers.

The Built Environment:

The castle and environs are excellent and present a favourable image for the town. The Castle Garage is a mess and needs urgent improvement. Its location is in full view of compulsory slow moving traffic travelling east west through the town. The Church of Ireland Church has deteriorated in appearance: the hut referred to last year is now an eyesore: there is also an abandoned car at entrance gates. The mart is far below standard and falls behind current day standards. We liked the many traditional shopfronts along Castle Street, The Square, Main Street and Railway View. The town hall excels and is a show piece for others to pursue. However, we found the public toilets locked at 2-30 p.m. on the eve of the Fleadh. The national school is quite drab and the existing sash windows should be replaced with similar design.

Landscaping:

You are richly endowed with a superb river, some lovely mature and new trees and the town planting of recent years is now playing its part in enhancing the environment. The river walk is a wonderful asset and the quietness here contrasts with the continuous through traffic over the bridge. In truth it is no pleasure now to stand on the bridge and any further viewing development here should be put on hold until the by pass is developed. The bus station adjacent to Fitzgerald Street could be improved with some landscaping. Throughout the town we have great examples of individual effort and this is acknowledged in your marks. However, we would urge more sustained development when landscaping and aim for all year round colour in planting shrubs.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

More than most centres you have ample opportunity to promote and popularise wildlife in numerous areas. The policy of display boards is good and educational. You should seek advice from the relevant enthusiasts or refer to the Hand Book of Tidy Towns. More and more centres are now embarking on various wildlife projects and are consequently raising their marks. The new developments at the river bank offers further potential for erecting display boards etc.

Litter Control:

Litter control was good and visitors to the Fleadh were being met with well kept litter free streets. Some litter bins do need replacement and you should do a survey of what is required.

Tidiness:

You have many pockets of dereliction and unattended open spaces that are causing untidiness. Long term you should aim for all overhead wires to be put underground. The dereliction on Sleeveen Road is excessive. We appreciate that many of these improvements are beyond the scope of a voluntary committee, but you are best positioned to liaise with the local authorities and lobby for action.

Residential Areas:

The standard of housing is high and new housing estates have a responsibility to integrate well with the town's characteristic. You have many attractive period houses that give reflection to a 19th century Macroom and also many terraced houses in the town are full of character. These will grow in importance with the passing of time as they have shaped the growth of the town to date. We would also encourage the policy of prudent infill and our hope would be that many of your derelict sites in the town would be converted into residential buildings indigenous to the area in layout and design. Our visit to the various housing estates noted good presentation. The former prize winning O'Connor Park has fallen back in standard and many boundary walls need painting. The green was poor and the litter bin here was overflowing.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

Approach roads are good and busy. The two principal approaches are quite lengthy and demanding on upkeep. The Masseytown approach, which has some very attractive period house is, nevertheless, scrappy, has a lot of dereliction and is undergoing extensive developments, so it will take time to mature. The children's playground on High Street is of a high standard and well maintained. The museum at the bridge seems to be permanently closed, so we wonder at the rationale of listing it on the new map.

General Impression:

The town has performed well and was most welcoming on adjudication day. We can't overstate the

pressure being put on the town by excessive, constant traffic, which at this stage must be a health hazard. We feel you now need a comprehensive plan that will chart the way forward for an improved Macroom free of excessive traffic and one that can turn its attention to the amenity aspect of the town, its wonderful river amenity, improved car parks, attention to dereliction and greater emphasis on maintaining the traditional features of the town. We hope for improvement in the coming years.

Second Round Adjudication:

A very comprehensive review of Macroom is given with the first adjudication. At second adjudication the square was looking very well and the Riverside areas are a marvellous feature of the town. The access to the river below the bridge at Maseystown road had some litter dumping in the undergrowth. Litter seems to accumulate also in the trapped space below the Court House by the Maseystown Road. The Environmental Business Park is an interesting building and a sharp contrast with any other building in the town. The large carpark areas along by the Mart combine a mixture of nicely maturing trees and unsightly sheds. Similarly unsightly sheds appear on Castle Street. Although the Castle Garage appears to have been painted very recently. The approach to the Catholic Church is very attractive. The trees along Bowl Road are a great asset and the housing estate opposite the Environmental Business Park are particularly well cared for; the park at the end of this estate gives a lovely tranquillity. The trees along the Main Street and square are maturing well and add great value. A great feature of Macroom is the huge amount of residential housing within the streets of the town and when the town is eventually bypassed this will allow the benefits of residential streets to come back to the fore.