

Tidy Towns Competition 2008

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Castledermot** Ref: **367**
County: **Kildare** Mark: **201**
Category: **C** Date(s): **22/06/2008**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2008
Overall Development Approach	50	32
The Built Environment	50	25
Landscaping	50	28
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	50	18
Litter Control	50	25
Waste Minimisation	20	6
Tidiness	30	14
Residential Areas	40	26
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	50	22
General Impression	10	5
TOTAL MARK	400	201

Overall Development Approach:

Thank you for your entry and welcome to 2008's Tidy Towns competition. We acknowledge your 5 year plan, but the years are not noted on it, which would be helpful to the adjudicator, also useful would be a larger map of the area south of Doyles Bridge. See also our comments under approach roads.

The plan seems to be very sensible including control of litter, planting of beds and trees, provision of seats and a large lantern at the square. We congratulate you on your effort in getting a wild life study.

Finally, you have many derelict buildings in the village which you are determined to have upgraded by the County Council.

You plan to get lighting on Hamilton Road and Barrack Road and also to use students from Colaiste Lorcan to undertake research into Irish Street names, and to provide a nature and historical trail around the town and name survey. Information signs are to be provided on the square, on the Fair Green, and finally you plan to provide feature lighting on the historical sites.

You have a large committee with monthly meetings, and you are assisted by your local authority. Well done on having media attention through your use of local notes.

The Built Environment:

The principal historical features in the town are the remains of the beautiful Friary and the early Christian churchyard, church and two beautiful stone High Crosses together with a round tower! The gate is beautifully landscaped and well presented. Well done also on the clearing up of additional path called The Laurels which has beautiful old unique railings and gates at each end. Well spotted and the gates need careful restoration.

There are also some old town walls which are well presented.

Barrack Road is an attractive, generally well presented road, with beautiful stone walls on each side. It forms an attractive junction together with Carlowgate at an angle to the Main Street at the square.

There are many attractive buildings in the village including lovely old houses in Main Street, which have entrances to the rear which are in some areas beautiful or in others unkempt. Schools, where inspected, were well presented with good landscaping. The Square looks well.

There is a lot of dereliction, particularly in the area between the Fair Green along the road running to the North West.

The Catholic Church was also of good quality. There is no heritage trail as yet.

There do not appear to be many civic amenities. There is however, a football club on Baltinglass Road which has a fine and well maintained pitch. The entrance requires some fencing.

There is also a G.A.A club in the Abbeylands area which has great planting on the wall.

The library which uses an old church on Main Street is excellent.

Irish language is used widely with English throughout the village.

Landscaping:

Well done Castledermot on your very fine paving at the Square which has recently been attractively done and provided with new traffic lights, and paved crossings are in place with good seats, one is metal and one in stone. There is also good attractive stone and timber planters which are very colourful and off set the buildings around.

In the Main Street, to the North of the Square are beautifully landscaped gardens, which also encompass the beautiful old Abbey Tower. This is good work.

There is beautiful planting with stones also at the junction at ESSO Station. These are well done in the Castledermot colours.

Extra tree planting has been undertaken and landscaping to augment the mature trees in the Fair Green. The planters on Doyles Bridge were also observed and were very colourful on the day.

The base wall on the approach to St. John's estate could be softened by landscaping. Further landscaping and screening is possible in most areas of the village because of the significant number of mature trees. Many buildings which are derelict could be softened and screened with planting to good effect.

The wall to the GAA Stadium is beautifully landscaped.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

We note your plan for a connecting trail providing a heritage and historic trail through the town, including the lagoon, which has great potential for flowers or wildlife. It is indeed a special achievement to have two green flag schools.

It would be a good idea if the school undertook planning a wild life survey, and to map out a significant route. There are no explanatory sign boards of historical or natural amenities. These should be included perhaps in the Fair Green where a walk could commence.

The Fair Green is in fact a lovely wild meadow, surrounded by trees.

Litter Control:

Well done on the clean ups, which appear to be working except in the Bring Bank area. The bring bank area was festooned with plastics bags and other litter. Perhaps a large rubbish bin might help. The bring bank is inappropriately placed due to its situation between the Fair Green and the square in full public view and also on a road bend. It is also on a busy road. There should be a set down area for unloading from cars.

Waste Minimisation:

There are signs of composting in some houses but none visible publicly.

We would recommend that you carry out a waste audit described in the Race Against Waste booklet. You should perhaps organise a Seminar to inform yourselves and local residents and businesses as to what can be achieved in this area. Waste Minimisation is much more than recycling.

Tidiness:

There are lovely stone walls in many areas with attractive original posts and railings, such as that on Main Street to the North of the square and also on Church Lane and the Laurels. Many gates are in need of painting. The timber fence on the side of Hamilton Road was of good quality and might be used to advantage elsewhere in the village. There are several advertising boards which are too invasive.

Weed control was good on all paths and roads and in general, verges were neat.

The narrow foot path outside the ice cream shop near the Granite House Pub was cluttered but other paths in the main street were attractive.

Road signs in most cases require replacement or repair and cleaning. Perhaps an area engineer could assist in this.

Timber bollards on the Fair Green are level and can be repeated elsewhere in the village.

The new adjacent motor way which bypasses the village, will improve the quality of the life of the villagers by reducing traffic numbers and pollution. The new traffic lights and pedestrian crossings on the square are a good start for you, as traffic on the day of inspection was very heavy, on a Sunday, when the adjudicator was down. It will help with traffic management planning and a new pedestrianisation.

Residential Areas:

Some of the houses in the Main Street were very well maintained, but there were also derelict houses. St. John's estate is mostly very good. It could do with a little more mature tree planting. It has a lovely rural aspect and a good clear name sign in stone. A bare wall could do with some planting. The large Abbeylands estate (off map) on the southern approach is settling in well. Its stone sign is also good. Both sides at entrance need grass cutting. The Friary has a green space filled with clover which looks attractive, and is good for wildlife. The landscaping is new, but will mature. Some construction is still ongoing. The local authority housing on the Woodlands approach is good.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

It would be useful if you identified approach roads on your map. Except the adjudicator had the Discovery map series in their personal possession it would be very difficult to describe the non signposted approaches.

The main road approach from the south (Carlow) has a good granite sign; good surfacing and kerbing. The hedgerows on the west side are good. Planting remains to be completed. The security fencing around the Pitch and Putt looks poorly, despite planting. Planting needs intensification to screen the raw fencing. Unfortunately, the Castle Inn sign which is very poor is still in situ. This was also commented upon last year.

The northern approach (Dublin) passes a vacant site and derelict properties at the entrance to the town. These and their precincts are quite untidy with peeling paint, untidy site curtilages and weed growth.

On the Baltinglass approach, the Castle Villa football club entrance needs renewal, and tidying. There is a small redundant Castle Inn sign here also. The car park of the said inn and its signage is also poor. The Tullow Road approach is quite good, but the pole of the town sign needs replacing, as does the neighbourhood watch sign.

The Athy Road approach has a good stone sign, which probably would be better without the "fussiness" of the smaller stone surrounds. The town sign was damaged.

The seating at the bring bank area on the final approach to the town along Keenan's Lane is very poor, and the bollards were very dirty indeed. In the same area near the Fairgreen a triangular space was filled with machinery and pallets. This looks poorly.

The Woodlands East approach has some footpath verge weeding required.

General Impression:

Castledermot has immense potential which will indeed be possible to fulfil with less traffic. It has a very

historic heart, which must be used to its advantage. Perhaps the plan needs to be broadened.