

Tidy Towns Competition 2005

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Roscrea**

Ref: **543**

County: **Tipperary North**

Mark: **232**

Category: **E**

Date: **08/08/2005**

| | Maximum Mark | Mark Awarded 2005 | Mark Awarded 2004 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Overall Developmental Approach | 50 | 45 | 45 |
| The Built Environment | 40 | 38 | 38 |
| Landscaping | 40 | 35 | 35 |
| Wildlife and Natural Amenities | 30 | 20 | 20 |
| Litter Control | 40 | 28 | 28 |
| Tidiness | 20 | 12 | 12 |
| Residential Areas | 30 | 22 | 22 |
| Roads, Streets and Back Areas | 40 | 24 | 24 |
| General Impression | 10 | 8 | 8 |
| TOTAL MARK | 300 | 232 | 232 |

Overall Developmental Approach:

Many thanks for your very detailed submission. As suggested by last year's adjudicator, not all of this documentation is necessary. For next year's submission if you could submit your Work Programme, one clear map indicating the work that you have achieved to date and that you want looked at and your application form that would be quite sufficient. Also enclose a copy of Angela Jupe's landscape plan for the town which would be of great interest. Congratulations on your website. The heritage town of Roscrea has much to offer both visitor and resident, with its wealth of unique and distinct architectural and historical heritage.

The Built Environment:

The properties along the main streets well generally well maintained. Of note being, Oliver Douglas, The Carry Out in bright red, The Dragon Inn and Stonewoods - which was very fresh in bright red with its original windows. Damer House and St. Cronan's Church, the Round Tower and the Romanesque Doorway are all well maintained pieces of heritage in the town centre. The schools looked well, including the Sacred Heart Primary School and the National School with its Green Flag flying proudly! The Adult Education College near the by pass looked well, although its boundary wall was a little grubby. The Bridge Bar looked well but its sign was damaged and the letters should be replaced before next year's competition. The Tower Bar and Restaurant was well turned out and the Railway Station looked quite charming. Do discourage the use of curved canopies - replace them with ones of a more traditional fabric awning type and replace plastic signs with ones of a more

traditional timber variety. Mulvey's Tyre looked very fresh with its attractive stepped gable. The Post Office looked quite charming but will need painting before next year. The modern Interpretive Centre integrated into the old Black Mills building was greatly admired as a modern intervention which respects the old.

Landscaping:

The attractive planting to grassy beds on the Thurles Road made a welcome impression on this entrance to the town. The marvellous planting at roundabouts, with its good mix of trees such as silver birch, permanent planting and colourful flowers look most cheerful and well presented. It was noted that these were sponsored by local businesses which is to be highly commended. There is scope for a landscaping project at the terrace of shops on the Thurles Road, where some tree planting or permanent planting would make a great deal of difference to the forecourt car parking area. The park diagonally opposite this appeared quite overgrown, although the FAS sign gave hopes that this will be rectified in the not too distant future. An attractive bed in stone with lupins and petunias on the Birr Road was admired, as were the attractive hanging baskets to a gateway on this road. The brightly painted gateway to the GAA grounds in red and white was admired. The new Heritage Garden in the Interpretive Centre with its seats, new trees and daisies, set on gravel looked magnificent and its clever timber gateway was admired. The new by-pass sculpture looked well, with its limestone animal heads on one side and humans on the other. An interesting sculpture outside the Bank of Ireland was admired. Hanging baskets at the bridge looked quite cheerful in the vicinity of the Mall and the Glebe garden beyond looked well in its simplicity. Your plans to create a water feature at this location are noted and are looked forward to.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities:

The adjudicator was pleased that you have obtained permission from the County Engineer for a wildlife area opposite the by-pass sculpture. The sowing of wildflowers in this location is a good idea, as is the involvement of the pupils of Colaiste Phobal. We look forward to reading your wildlife surveys as conducted by the schools for next year's entry.

Litter Control:

The standard of litter control on the day could have been better. Some was strewn along the roadsides in front of the houses on the Thurles Road and in the vicinity of the Sacred Heart Convent. More was apparent on the Limerick Road and to an open space of a housing estate on the Birr Road. Quite a bit of litter was evident to the road to the GAA grounds. Indeed there was a light scattering of litter throughout the town with one or two even in the Glebe Park by the Mall and outside the Bank of Ireland at the base of the litter bin! Litter bins, however, were in good condition.

Tidiness:

The standard of this category of the competition was generally good. There are one or two problem areas in relation to dereliction, such as an empty yard area on the Thurles Road and an empty site at the Church of Ireland and graveyard - is work taking place in this location? A religious building on the Dublin Road appeared to have been abandoned and a derelict house opposite the shops on the Thurles Road looked unfortunate. Do discourage advertising hoardings and flyposting. The bare concrete block retaining wall on the road to the GAA grounds should be painted up. Weed control was generally good, although there were a few weeds evident to pavements opposite Hayes Hotel.

Residential Areas:

Along the Thurles Road, most of the houses were well kept, although one or two of the boundary walls in the vicinity of Kennedy Park were in need of attention. There is some attractive planting on the Rathdowney Road at the entrance to a new housing estate and this was admired. There are some attractive houses and gardens in the vicinity of the Sacred Heart Convent. There were

numerous charming and unique stone cottages, in particular, those on Limerick Street with their recessed ground floors and attractive tree planting opposite. Those on the Birr Road were also admired - a number appeared to be for sale. An attractive garden with hanging baskets and window boxes on the Limerick Road was greatly admired, as was Gleann Glas with its limestone nameplate. The attractive housing estate on the Birr Road with its fresh statue of Our Lady was admired. The Glebe House looked very fresh with freshly painted gates and its bridge over the Mall which is in the form of a cobbled ramp.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas:

The Thurles Road looked well, with neatly cut grass verges. The roundabouts have been commented on elsewhere in this report and looked quite magnificent and welcoming. The Limerick Road looks well and affords the visitor a magnificent view to the town beyond. Directional signage was a little bit grubby and in some cases rusty - one in the town centre was so bad that it formed a negative, with the lettering reading white on a grey background! This was in the town centre on the Limerick approach. The Birr Road was quite overgrown and this was so severe that it caused a large advertising hoarding at this location to be obscured! However, the other side of the road looked well with its wildflowers including daisies and poppies. The laneways and archways are ripe for development within the town centre - indeed a number had done so - including that to the shopping mall.

General Impression:

Roscrea is a fine and interesting heritage town with a lot to offer both resident and visitor alike. Much work has been done in recent years and the adjudicator was pleased to see the amount of progress that has been made since last visiting the town. Well done to all concerned.

Second Round Adjudication:

Roscrea has a very strong ecclesiastical history and it is encouraging to see this heritage interpreted for visitors and residents alike through the Black Mills Heritage Centre. This restoration is excellent and it is so good to see new appropriate uses for old buildings. The 2nd round adjudicator has nominated this building for the national architectural award, and it will be considered among the other nominations from around Ireland. While there are many buildings of interest in and around Roscrea some other buildings need attention in terms of signage, projecting signs and shop-front design. The Carry Out building caught the eye because of the scale of the property, colour scheme and attractive curved end. The signage could be improved to the benefit of the commercial operation here. A vacant sit under development beside the Church of Ireland Church was noted. Hopefully the building design for this site is appropriate to the number of heritage buildings in the immediate surroundings. On The Mall the terrace of houses with the curved stone-clad frontage was noted. This echoes perfectly the historic tower of Roscrea Castle just across the road. At Rosemary Square the adjudicator was of the view that more could be made of this area in environmental / presentation terms.