

SADBERGE PARISH PLAN

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS FOR PRESENTATION TO THE OPEN MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 17th MAY 2006



Introduction

The first of the Sadberge Parish Plan Open Meetings will focus on the issue of Planning and Development. We need to decide what we want Sadberge to be like in ten to fifteen years time. Will it be a quiet "commuter dormitory" hamlet with a very limited range of services? Will it be a lively, bustling village with a good range of facilities? How big will the village be? How many new houses will there be? What types of houses will be built? Where will they be built?

In order to help to structure the debate the Parish Plan Steering Group has put together descriptions of four scenarios. These will be presented at the beginning of the Open Meeting on Wednesday 17th May 2006 and will set the scene for the subsequent discussion.

Please note that:-

- (1) These are not "options under consideration". They are scenarios to help people to consider and discuss what Sadberge might be like in the future and what we want for the future of our village.
- (2) The fact that someone has helped to put together the description of a particular scenario does not mean that he or she supports that scenario. The objective was to come up with a clear description of what Sadberge might be like in each scenario, including the possible benefits, disadvantages and issues to be addressed. The purpose of the scenarios is to help to structure the discussion at the Open Meeting.

Scenario #1 – Minimum Development

Theme: Sadberge is a very nice village. Let's not spoil it.

Approach: Minimise the building of new houses in Sadberge. Accept that about 4 - 5 new, executive-type houses will be built on the Primary School site, but discourage any building on Town Farm field and definitely do not allow any houses to be built on the old reservoir site.

Advantages: This scenario avoids the problems that could be caused by change and growth. For example, issues with integrating new people into the village society, even more problems with parking and traffic, anti-social behaviour by bored teenagers, overloading of infrastructure such as sewers, etc.

Issues: Services in the village continue to decline.

- There is only a limited bus service because there are not enough people using buses to make it a commercially viable route and there is only limited funding for a subsidised bus service. The older residents find it very difficult to travel out of Sadberge to get to shops and leisure facilities in Darlington or elsewhere.
- There is not enough business to sustain the village shop and Post Office.
- Young families will not come to live in Sadberge because there is no primary school, there is very little for children to do in the village and it is difficult for children to travel out of the village to leisure facilities in Darlington or elsewhere.

Solutions:

- Extend and improve the "dial a ride" scheme for pensioners.
- Put a bowling green on Town Farm field.
- Reinforce the village hall's role as a centre of village social life, particularly for elderly residents. Bingo, coffee mornings, lunches, etc.
- Arrange for a travelling Post Office to visit Sadberge, as happens in Heighington.

Outcome: Sadberge retains its character as a quiet, rural, friendly village. Quite a lot of its residents use it as a pleasant "commuter dormitory" village and drive off to work in Darlington or Teesside. There is also a population of older residents whose social focus is in the village, particularly around the village hall.

Scenario #2 – Moderate Expansion based on Executive Housing

Theme: Bring new people and money into the village, but avoid changing the basic village character. Limited growth without over-stretching.

Approach: Allow the building of a total of about 35 executive houses on the Primary School site, Town Farm field and the old reservoir site. The population of Sadberge increases from about 600 to about 740 over the next ten years.

Advantages: Sadberge needs to grow in order to avoid declining into a quiet hamlet with very few services. Building low-density, executive-type housing will bring new people and money into Sadberge without changing the basic character of the village.
Building executive housing in Sadberge would be profitable for developers, so there is scope for using "Section 106" planning obligation agreements to provide funding to support and improve services and facilities in the village. For example, such funding could be used to subsidise bus services.
Sadberge would be seen as a very pleasant and desirable place to live; c.f. Bishopton and Redmarshall.
The new houses would have their own off-street parking, so there would be no additional parking problems in the village. Limiting the number of new houses would minimise the issues of additional traffic and the pressure on infrastructure such as sewers.

Issues:

- The occupants of the new houses would probably use Sadberge as a pleasant "commuter dormitory" village, and might therefore not contribute much to village life.
- Additional executive housing would not encourage young families to come to live in Sadberge. The village population would be an uncomfortable mixture of well-off commuters and pensioners, with very little interaction between the two groups.

Solutions: Use the village hall to host events aimed at bringing together all Sadberge residents.

Outcome: Sadberge becomes primarily a very pleasant "commuter dormitory" village with excellent road links to Darlington and Teesside for people with cars. It does, however, retain a good range of facilities and services for people without access to cars, including in particular its elderly residents.

Scenario #3 – Moderate Expansion based on Mixed Housing

Theme: Revitalise the village by allowing carefully planned and controlled growth.

Approach: Allow the building of a total of about 80 - 85 new houses on the Primary School site and the old reservoir site. Build a mixture of different housing types to attract a range of different types and ages of resident, from young couples to retired people. No "bulk estate" development. The village population increases from about 600 to about 920 over the next ten years.

Advantages: Prevents Sadberge from declining into a quiet hamlet or from becoming primarily a "commuter dormitory" village. Builds a sustainable village society with a full cross-section of age ranges and family types.
Maintains the existing style of mixed housing in Sadberge. The village already has a healthy mixture of types of houses – private and council, larger and smaller, houses and bungalows.
The increased village population, plus funding from "Section 106" planning obligation agreements, sustains the facilities and services in Sadberge. Bus services, village shop and Post Office, village hall.

- Issues:
- Mixed housing needs more care in planning and design and is likely to generate lower profits for developers. It might be difficult to get developers interested in building the required types of housing.
 - Impact on parking in the village.
 - Additional traffic in the village.
 - Integration of a comparatively large number of new residents into village society. Need to avoid a "new estate" environment.
 - Need leisure facilities to avoid bored children falling into anti-social behaviour.
 - The lack of a village school may mean that Sadberge still does not attract young families.
- Solutions:
- Ensure that the new houses have adequate off-street parking.
 - Traffic originating in Sadberge is not the main problem. The current problem is the volume of through traffic, particularly in a north-south direction.
 - Implement traffic calming measures in the centre of the village, particularly on Darlington Road and Stockton Road. Possible 20 mph zone? Give priority to pedestrian needs rather than car needs.
 - Replace the existing playground on the edge of the village with an improved recreation area on Town Farm field. The new recreation area should include a park, swings, a kick-about area, netball / volleyball facilities, etc.
- Outcome: Sadberge becomes a lively village with a sustainable, mixed society and a good range of facilities and services.

Scenario #4 – Larger Expansion

- Theme: Move up a league to become one of the "better serviced" villages in the Darlington area.
- Approach: More than double the size of Sadberge over the next 10 - 15 years so that Sadberge becomes a larger village with a full range of services for its residents. Expand the village development limits and allow the building of around 500 new houses in and around Sadberge. The village population increases from about 600 to around 2,100.
- See figure 1 for details of the village development. The numbers in the following list relate to the numbers in figure 1.
1. Old reservoir site. Mainly executive houses. Access from the lay-by on Darlington Road.
 2. Land to the south of the old reservoir site, plus the allotments. Affordable houses suitable for young families. Access from the lay-by on Darlington Road.
 3. Existing playground. New bungalows / houses, similar to Abbey Road and Dale Road. Access from Stockton Road. Build an improved play area and meeting place on Town Farm field in the centre of the village.
 4. Re-open and modernise the school.
 5. Area to the north-east of the school. Starter homes for young families. Access via a new road from a roundabout just outside the 30 mph limit on Norton Back Lane.
 6. Land to the south-east of Sadberge, immediately north of the A66. Wildlife reserve with walkways, funded by a "Section 106" planning obligation agreement with the developers.
 7. Land to the north-west of Sadberge. Executive houses. Access from Darlington Road beside the Village Hall.
 8. Land between Sadberge and the new wildlife reserve. Affordable houses. Access from Stockton Road.
 9. Land to the south of Stockton Road. Shopping area, including a general dealer's, a doctor's surgery / pharmacy, a Post Office, possibly a hairdresser's, and car parking area. Possibly also a new, purpose-built community centre.
- Advantages: Puts Sadberge on a par with Hurworth and Heighington.
- Enables Sadberge to sustain a full range of services, including regular bus services to Darlington and Stockton, a Post Office, a doctor's surgery / pharmacy, a general dealer's (or mini-supermarket) and a village school.

- Issues:
- This scale of development would require a change to the Core Strategy Document in Darlington's Local Development Framework.
 - Impact on parking in the village.
 - Additional traffic in the village.
 - Integration of a large number of new residents into village society. Need to avoid "new estate" environments.
 - Need leisure facilities to avoid bored children falling into anti-social behaviour.
- Solutions:
- Ensure that all of the new houses have off-street parking for at least two vehicles.
 - Build a new road between Norton Road and Stockton Road. A mini cross town route that avoids the need for traffic to go through the centre of the village. See figure 1.
 - Traffic calming in the centre of Sadberge.
 - Implement a ban on HGV's travelling through the village.
 - Provide Youth Services, including a Youth Club.
- Outcome: Sadberge becomes a larger village with a sustainable, mixed society and a full range of village facilities and services.

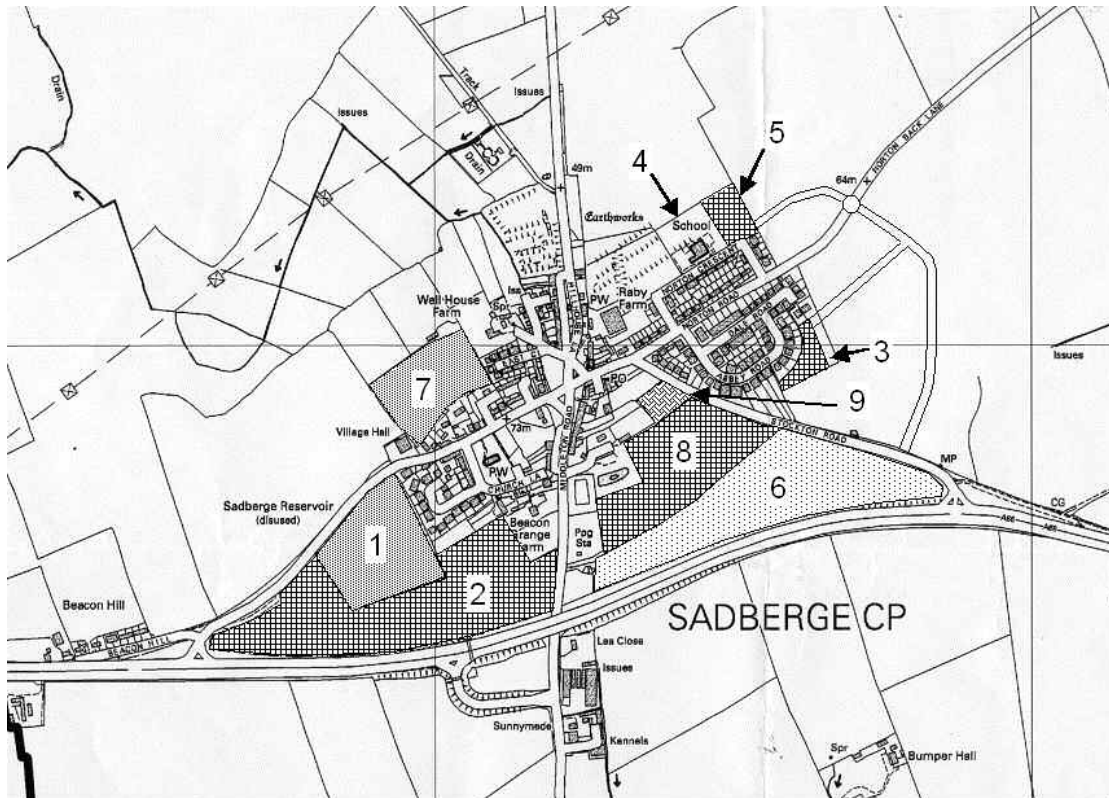


Figure 1 – Larger Expansion