
EXTENSION OF THE SADBERGE CONSERVATION AREA

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the proposed extension to the Sadberge conservation area further to Minute C77(a)/Feb/98.

Summary

2. Three additional landscape areas are proposed for inclusion within the boundaries of the Sadberge conservation area. These represent areas important to the hilltop setting of the village and are illustrated on the **attached plan**.

The Existing Conservation Area

3. The Sadberge Conservation Area was designated nearly 27 years ago in November 1972. Its boundaries have remained unchanged since then. A brief description is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Proposed Additional Areas

4. The existing boundaries include all the traditional groups and buildings in the village. On the south the boundary follows a course about halfway across the open countryside between the built up area of the village and the dual carriageway of the A66 which by-passes the village. This gives an adequate landscape buffer zone at the edge of the conservation area to protect its setting in this direction. At the east end of the village the excluded twentieth century housing development forms a strong border to the conservation area and the present boundary seems sensible here. The present northern and particularly the north west and western boundaries are drawn fairly tightly to the built up fabric which is largely halfway up the northerly hillside. The lower slopes of the hillside are important to the overall setting of the conservation area while the embanked reservoir is a prominent feature of the hilltop settlement from distant views and marks a "gateway" to the conservation area when approached from the west. It is therefore proposed to include three additional areas within the boundary of the conservation area as detailed on the **attached map** and described below.

(a) North West Hillside

This is the largest and most important area to be included. It is proposed to replace the existing boundary which, on the ground follows a rather vague line half way up the hillside, by a well defined field boundary at the base of the slope running westwards from approximately the northern extent of the scheduled monument and returning southwards along public footpath "Sadberge No. 3" to meet the existing boundary and so including the visually important lower slopes of the hillside.

(b) North East Hillside

The second addition proposed is a modest refinement of the existing boundary. The inclusion of an extra small triangle of land linking two northern corners of the two parts of the scheduled monument will enhance the setting here, where the present boundary sits tightly against the beginning of the built up area to the east of the north-south road.

(c) South West Reservoir Site

The remaining area proposed for inclusion is on the south western tip of the present area. This is the whole of the reservoir site, the carriageway of the road running along its northern edge and the small embankment beyond this. This completes the landscape setting of importance to the core conservation area.

Development Policy

5. New development should maintain or enhance and consolidate the appearance of the hilltop village with its well defined edge, leaving the slopes generally clear of buildings. Any changes to the reservoir, which lies outside the current limit for new housing development, should be consistent with this policy.

Scope of Consultation

6. Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 gives guidance on the duties of a Local Authority with regard to the designation of conservation areas and the steps to be taken when declaring such areas. Following the survey, consultations should be undertaken with local residents, local members, any residents' associations and other interest groups over the identification of areas and definition of their boundaries.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that:
 - (a) The extended area, on the boundaries shown, be approved for consultation.
 - (b) The Officers be authorised to carry out the appropriate consultations with English Heritage, The North East Civic Trust, Darlington Civic Society, Darlington Environmental Watch, Ward Members and Parish Council.
 - (c) The Officers report the outcome of the consultations to a future meeting of this Committee.

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Geraint F. Edwards
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