



# ADDENDUM TO THE SADBERGE PARISH PLAN

## 11. Wind Farms near Sadberge

### Introduction

The question of wind farms near Sadberge had not arisen when the Sadberge Parish Plan was being formulated, and this issue was not included in the Parish Plan when it was adopted in December 2007. However, during 2008 it became clear that a number of developers were interested in constructing wind farms near Sadberge, and at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2008 Sadberge Parish Council decided that the Parish Plan should be extended to cover this issue.

This addendum, which was formally adopted by Sadberge Parish Council on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2008, constitutes Section 11 of the Sadberge Parish Plan.

### Sadberge Residents' Views

This issue of Wind Farms near Sadberge was discussed at the Parish Plan Open Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008. There were presentations from representatives of two developers interested in constructing wind farms near Sadberge, the 'Seven Parishes Against Local Wind Farms' Action Group, and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), followed by an open discussion of the issue. In a show of hands at the end of the meeting, 28 Sadberge residents indicated that they were opposed to wind farms near Sadberge, while 8 Sadberge residents indicated that they were prepared to accept wind farms near Sadberge subject to suitable conditions.

Following the Open Meeting, a questionnaire was distributed to all Sadberge homes, and residents aged 18 or over were asked to indicate whether they believed that the community of Sadberge – and Sadberge Parish Council – should **oppose** or **accept** wind farms near Sadberge. The results of the questionnaire were as follows:-

Responses:	263 out of 610	43.1%
Accept:	59 out of 263	22.4%
Oppose:	199 out of 263	75.7%
Abstain:	5 out of 263	1.9%

Of those Sadberge residents who responded to the wind farms questionnaire, a majority of more than three to one oppose the construction of wind farms near Sadberge.

For more information, see (a) the *Wind Farms Background Document* issued by the Parish Plan Steering Group, (b) the notes of the Open Meeting on 18-Sep-2008, and (c) the list of the comments that people submitted with their questionnaire responses. All of these documents are available on the Sadberge web site at [www.sadberge.org.uk](http://www.sadberge.org.uk).

The conclusion of the consultation is that – by a large majority – Sadberge residents oppose the construction of wind farms near Sadberge.

### Specific Actions

- ACTION 11.1** Sadberge Parish Council will support the 'Seven Parishes Against Local Wind Farms' Action Group and its campaign against local wind farms.
- ACTION 11.2** Sadberge Parish Council will object to any planning application to build a wind farm near Sadberge.
- ACTION 11.3** Sadberge Parish Council will facilitate Sadberge residents' objections to any planning application to build a wind farm near Sadberge.

### The Practical Implications of National, Regional and Local Policies

Throughout the process of compiling the Sadberge Parish Plan we have taken into account the practical realities and external factors that influence the future of our parish. Our objective is to ensure that the Parish Plan is a practical, realistic plan of action rather than just a "local residents' wish list". In the case of wind farms, it is apparent that national, regional and local policies may make it difficult for us to achieve our preferred outcome of preventing any wind farms from being constructed near Sadberge.

The UK Government has committed itself to some tough targets for reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. In particular:-

- Under the Kyoto Protocol, the UK has a legally binding commitment to achieve a 12.5% reduction in UK greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels, averaged over the period 2008 - 2012.
- In March 2007, EU Heads of State agreed binding commitments for the EU to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 20% by 2020 and to obtain 20% of all its energy – not just electricity – from renewable sources by 2020. The UK's contribution has still to be agreed, but it is likely to include obtaining 15% of all energy from renewable sources by 2020.
- The Climate Change Bill (which is scheduled to become law in Autumn 2008), includes statutory targets for the UK to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by at least 26% by 2020 and 60% by 2050, measured against a 1990 baseline.
- The UK Government has set a target to generate 10% of UK electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010, and has announced an aspiration to generate 20% by 2020.

The Government has recognised that on-shore wind farms will need to play an important role in meeting these targets, and has taken steps to speed up the process of obtaining planning permission for wind farms. As part of its 2006 Energy Review, the Government published a **Renewables Statement of Need**, which says that "*renewable energy .... is central to reducing emissions and maintaining the reliability of our energy supplies*" and "*new renewable projects may not always appear to convey any particular local benefit, but they provide crucial national benefits*". Other relevant documents are **Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy (PPS22)** and **Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS22**.

The **North-East Regional Spatial Strategy** sets a target for the Tees Valley to have 138MW of renewable energy capacity installed by 2010, and says that delivering this *target "will rely on a substantial contribution from wind energy"*.

A study, commissioned by the North East Regional Assembly, on **Wind Farm Development and Landscape Capacity Studies: East Durham Limestone and Tees Plain** concludes that "*the East Durham Limestone wind resource area is largely full at present with wind turbines*", but says that there is scope for wind farm development in the Tees Plain wind resource area. The study identifies a 'least impact' area on the Tees Plain where it says that development should occur, and says that there is potential for "*around 9 - 15 turbines within the 'least impact' area in addition to the existing and consented development*" and that "*two additional wind farm clusters separated by around 5km ..... may be acceptable in the Tees Plain 'least impact' area*".

The **Darlington Local Development Framework Core Strategy: Preferred Options** document includes a draft policy that states that "*the development of commercial scale renewable energy schemes will be supported in appropriate locations*" subject to impact assessments and appropriate mitigation measures.

This background of national, regional and local policies means that objections from parish councils and local residents may not be able to prevent planning permission being granted for some wind farms in the part of the Tees Plain near Sadberge. Therefore, in addition to our main strategy of opposing all wind farms near Sadberge, we will adopt a back-up strategy involving taking actions to

try to ensure that any wind farms that are build near Sadberge cause the minimum possible harm to the local environment and local residents.

#### Specific Actions

**ACTION 11.4** Sadberge Parish Council will work with Darlington Borough Council – in its role as Local Planning Authority – to address the issues of cumulative impact of wind farms in the north-eastern part of the Borough of Darlington.

In particular, Sadberge Parish Council will ask Darlington Borough to adopt a policy that specifies that:-

- (a) Wind farm development will be restricted to the 'least impact' area specified in the capacity studies report for the North East Regional Assembly.
- (b) Planning consent will be given for a total of no more than 8 commercial-scale wind turbines in the north-eastern part of the Borough of Darlington.
- (c) Each wind farm will consist of no more than 4 wind turbines.
- (d) Each wind farm will be at least 1 kilometre from any dwelling, and at least 1.5 kilometres from any settlement comprising ten or more dwellings.
- (e) Wind farms will be separated by at least 5 kilometres.

See the separate document ***Suggested Wind Farms Policy*** for more details.

**ACTION 11.5** Sadberge Parish Council will work with Darlington Borough Council – in its role as Local Planning Authority – to try to ensure that any planning permission for construction of a wind farm in the north-eastern part of the Borough of Darlington is subject to binding conditions designed to minimise harm to the local environment and to local residents.

In particular, Sadberge Parish Council will ask Darlington Borough Council to impose planning conditions relating to the issues of:-

- (a) Noise.
- (b) Shadow flicker.
- (c) Aircraft safety.
- (d) Wildlife, including birds and bats.

See the separate document ***Suggested Wind Farm Planning Conditions*** for more details.