

# Wentworth: A Great Place for Everyone



HERITAGE | LANDSCAPE | ECONOMY | COMMUNITY







## Foreword

Wentworth is remarkable. It is a place formed by the vision, passion and energy of the Fitzwilliam family, their forebears and all those who worked the land, dug coal from within and made iron upon it. It is a place where families were raised, where great wealth was created and invested, giving us all the wonderful legacy of buildings and designed landscape that we cherish today.

Over the years Wentworth has evolved from a place focussed on a single family, to a diverse community and host to a variety of businesses, large and small, including farms, pubs, restaurants, shops, artisans and the ever-popular Garden Centre.

Wentworth is fast becoming a destination of choice for residents and visitors to South Yorkshire as people are attracted by the quality of place, its history and its heritage. The recent acquisition of Wentworth Woodhouse mansion house, stable block and grounds by the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust makes it even more attractive, providing an opportunity for the public to fully experience the extraordinary house and stables.

We are working with the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust to help them realise their Masterplan. Yet Wentworth is about far more than a single great house. Although synonymous with history, heritage and environment, it is also a thriving community and local economy appreciated by an increasing number of people.

The village, farms, parkland, woods and countryside create the perfect venue for people to relax, explore, experience and enjoy. The pubs, cafés, restaurants and shops already here offer a breadth of leisure opportunity.

Though already enjoyed by many, Wentworth can do more. We want to stretch what Wentworth is and what it has to offer; to introduce a focus on fun, health, fitness and food. We want to make Wentworth a great place for everyone. A place where families and people of all ages can live, work, visit, stay, experience and learn. A place which will leave you refreshed in mind and body, a place you will want to come back to and to share with others.

This consultation document offers an insight as to what that means and how we intend to make good on our ambition. I hope you enjoy reading it and look forward to receiving your observations.

Tom Naylor-Leyland





## Introduction

This document provides an insight into the Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate and sets out an ambitious vision for a shared future for Wentworth as **a great place for everyone**. It has been produced in 2019 by a strategic team with an interest in the Estate, its activities, future plans and objectives.

This is an exciting time at Wentworth. The acquisition and operation of Wentworth Woodhouse mansion house, stables and gardens by the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust is likely to generate significant interest and create opportunities for many.

Yet Wentworth is far more than a single house. It is also a vibrant community with a thriving local economy set within a beautiful landscape rich in heritage. The Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate has played a major part in its past and present. This document sets out our aspirations for the future.

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## Our History

Wentworth has an immensely rich past. The history of Wentworth as an Estate in single family ownership dates to at least 1250 when a Robert Wentworth married Emma Woodhouse. The Watson-Wentworth family controlled the Estate for some 450 years and were connected to the Fitzwilliam family through the marriage of Lady Anne Watson Wentworth to the fourth Earl Fitzwilliam in the second half of the 18th century.

Three of the Estate's iconic follies, the Needle's Eye, Doric Temple and Hooper Stand were built by the Watson Wentworth family in the period 1744 to 1750. The Needle's Eye, a 45ft high sandstone pyramid over a Gothic ogee arch straddling a former access road from Wentworth Woodhouse northwards was constructed in the mid-18th Century, allegedly to win a bet after the 1st Marquis of Rockingham claimed that he could drive a coach and horses through the eye of a needle!

The Rockingham Monument was built in 1783 as a memorial to the 2nd Marquis and marks the passing of the Estate from the Watson Wentworth to the Fitzwilliam family.

The fourth Earl, William Fitzwilliam inherited the Estate, including Wentworth Woodhouse, on the death of his uncle, Lord Rockingham. His heir the fifth Earl, Charles, assumed the name Wentworth Fitzwilliam, consolidating the connection of the Fitzwilliam family to the area.

The Estate remains in the stewardship of descendants of the Wentworth Fitzwilliam family to this day, currently being under the direction of the tenth Earl's grandson, Sir Philip Naylor-Leyland, Bt. (pictured above with his wife, Lady Isabella). Sir Philip's son, Tom, now takes an active interest and has written the foreword to this document.





# Our Responsibilities

The Estate today comprises some 15,000 acres of land, the Grade II\* Wentworth Woodhouse Deer Park with its serpentine lakes, listed monuments and follies, together with a diverse portfolio of let houses, farms and business premises.

Influenced by renowned architects and landscape designers, the heritage at Wentworth is of national significance. The mansion house was developed in phases with designs from local architect Ralph Tunnicliffe, Henry Flitcroft and subsequently John Carr. The parkland is influenced by Humphry Repton and two of the four follies, various lodges and the magnificent stables were also designed by John Carr.

The historic villages of Wentworth and Greasbrough are protected by substantial Conservation Areas and include over 70 listed buildings such as the farm buildings at Home Farm Wentworth and Manor Farm Greasbrough, the Powerhouse and forge at Wentworth, various lodges, pubs, churches and school buildings as well as almshouses and various cottages.

The Estate's rich rural environment plays an important role for half a million residents of the conurbations of Rotherham, Barnsley and the communities of the Dearne Valley. It is a key green space resource and makes a valuable contribution to health, quality of life, sense of place and overall happiness recognised within Council strategies for culture<sup>1</sup>, health & wellbeing and cannot be underestimated.

As these urban areas grow (Rotherham and Barnsley Councils are planning 35,000 new homes in the next ten to fifteen years) pressure on greenspace within neighbourhoods will increase, making access to local countryside increasingly important.

<sup>1</sup> Rotherham Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018 – 2025 (Priority 3), A New Cultural Strategy for Rotherham (increasing participation), Barnsley Green Space Strategy (targets for proximity of natural and semi-natural spaces to all households)







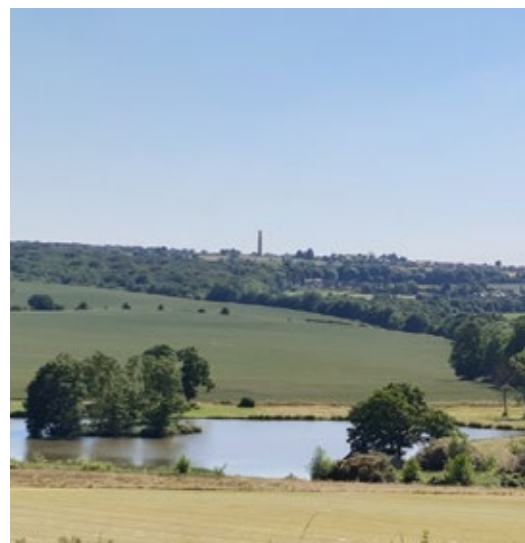
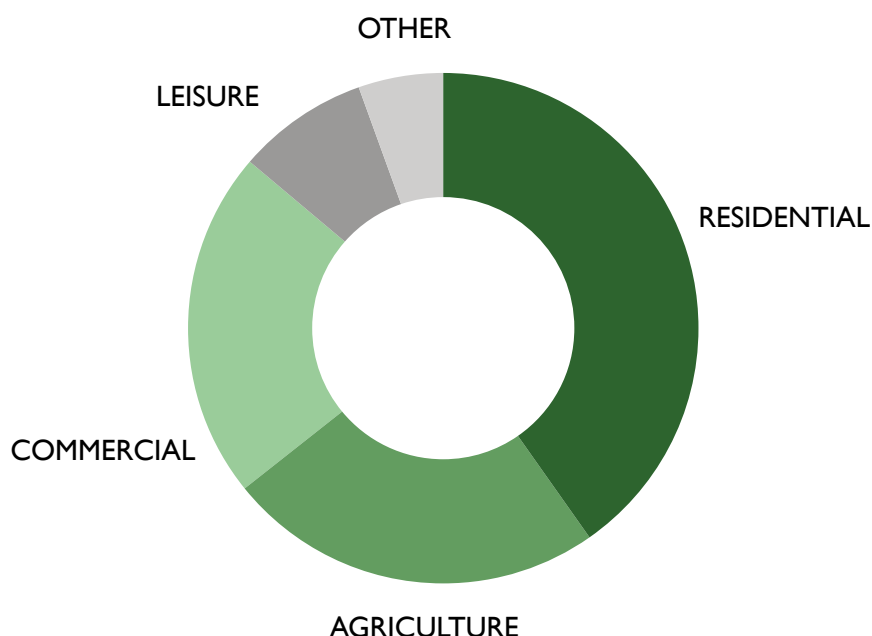
# Our Business

The Estate's natural assets support a range of land-based enterprise including 30 farms, managed woodlands, leisure interests, a highly regarded coarse fishery, moorland sheep flock and parkland deer herd.

The rural economy is about far more than land-based business however and the Estate also hosts a diverse range of commercial enterprise including retail lets such as the village shop, Post Office, wine shop, manufacturers of furniture and stained glass, pubs, restaurants, cafés, artisanal workshops/antiques at the Old Building Yard and the ever popular Wentworth Garden Centre.

The Estate's property letting business is run from an office within the village (on Clayfield Lane) and employs a team of administrators, rangers, building trades and foresters.

The extensive housing portfolio provides homes for people of all ages, backgrounds and income. The Estate provides affordable and special purpose housing alongside its commercial lets with around 25% of the Estate's houses being occupied at below market value.







## Our Impact

The Estate generates significant economic, environmental and social benefits. It provides homes for over 600 people and premises to businesses which collectively sustain over 350 local jobs. The farm businesses that the Estate supports produce food (cereals, meat and dairy products) sufficient to feed 20,000 people. Its woodlands generate enough timber to heat around 3,000 homes and sequester over 7,500 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum. Half a million cubic metres of peat locked within the heather moorland forms part of the biggest store of carbon in the UK.

The Estate provides important community facilities such as the cricket pitch and playing fields in Wentworth, an arboretum and allotments, the village school and church car parks, and Church Walk linking the Grade II\* listed Church of the Holy Trinity to the environs of Wentworth Woodhouse.

In addition to 3,000 acres of open access land in the Peak District National Park, the Wentworth Estate maintains an extensive (80km) public right of way network, filling gaps with 12km of concessionary footpaths/bridleways and provides access to the monuments and follies.

The Estate is conservator of Wentworth's built and natural heritage. Much of the housing and land associated with the villages of Wentworth and Greasbrough were placed into charitable trusts by the 10th Earl Fitzwilliam before his death. The Fitzwilliam Wentworth Amenity Trust now maintains the bulk of Wentworth village, the historic parkland and key buildings. The principal objective of this trust is to permanently conserve the lands and buildings and preserve and improve the rural and visual character and amenities of the parish.

Through these charitable trusts, the Estate provides approximately £250,000 of annual grant funding to regional and national good causes.

The Estate takes great care in its management of property beyond the Trust's ownership and has published a local design guide to provide the appropriate context and setting to support the Trust's work.

Whilst the Estate is proud of its existing status, it wants to do more to strengthen its community and grow its economy as a visitor hub. A place that combines a vibrant mix of leisure uses, including food and beverage, retail, accommodation and play with a strong sense of place and community. A catalyst for economic opportunity and thriving enterprise, providing strong connectivity to the surrounding area, which promotes and maintains an outstanding reputation for the Fitzwilliam Estate and associated businesses.



## A Great Place For Everyone

Through its interesting buildings, appealing landscape and existing enterprises, the Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate already makes a substantial contribution to people's lives. Wentworth continues to be a remarkable place, offering a high quality of life to its residents, easy access to the countryside for our neighbours and an enjoyable experience to the many who visit.

The cultural heritage, natural capital and leisure amenities of Wentworth currently attract over 750,000 visitors per annum.

We want to do more however, to stretch what Wentworth is and what it has to offer, to build on what is here and to introduce a focus on fun, health, fitness and food. We want to make Wentworth the best place to live, visit, farm and do business in South Yorkshire.

Whilst continuing to protect the interests of the resident population, we want to make Wentworth **a great place for everyone**. A place where families and people of all ages can visit, stay, experience and learn. A place where your visit will leave you refreshed in mind and body, a place you will want to come back to and share with others.





## Enabling a Better Wentworth

The Estate impacts on people in several ways; it provides housing, farms and business premises, enabling people to live, work and play locally. It maintains the built fabric which forms the heritage context of Wentworth village and Wentworth Woodhouse. It manages the farm and parkland, woods, hedgerows, streams, rivers and lakes that form the landscape in which they are set.

The Estate seeks to ensure that these impacts are positive by the diligent and careful management and maintenance of its property and the surrounding environment.

In recent years the Estate has made a series of interventions designed to make Wentworth a better place to live and work as well as an easier place to visit. These include assuming responsibility for village car parking, improving access to Wentworth Woodhouse and the Garden Centre with a new access onto Hague Lane (enabling one way traffic during busy periods) and creating a new car park to serve Wentworth School and Holy Trinity Church.

Our objective is to help create a better Wentworth through both a continued commitment to the pro-active management of land and property and investment in new visitor facilities, business premises and infrastructure, leading to enhanced residential amenity, visitor experience and the creation of new opportunities for business.

# Conserving and Enhancing Resident Amenity

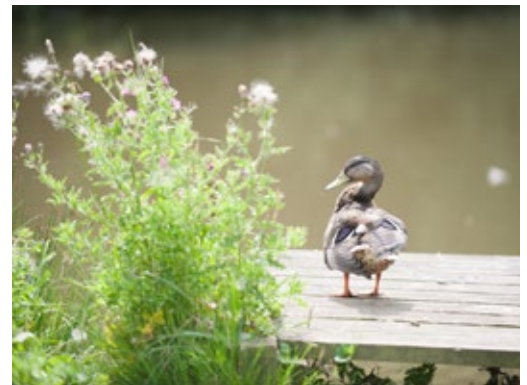
Wentworth is first and foremost a place where people live, bring up their families and enjoy a well-earned retirement. It must continue to deliver this function and make use of the opportunities created by its increased status as a visitor destination to maintain and enhance amenity for the people that live and work here.

Visitors are a benefit; the money that they spend helps maintain local services. Very few villages the size of Wentworth that are not visitor destinations continue to enjoy the variety of amenities (pubs, restaurants and cafés) available to residents, nor can they maintain a village shop, Post Office and range of other retail outlets.

However, visitors create impact. They bring increased levels of traffic and activity during the times when locals are looking to relax and compete for scarce local resources, such as on street parking near resident's houses. More people in the local area also create pressure on responsible authorities to introduce new infrastructure such as signage and lighting which may undermine the essential sense of place.

Any increase in commercial activity in what are mainly residential areas could exacerbate these pressures. The Estate is alive to these issues and has identified the area associated with Wentworth village between Barrowfield Lane (to the west) and Hague Lane (to the east) as one where its management and investment focus will be on maintaining and enhancing residential amenity.

The Estate expects to work closely with Wentworth Parish Council and other key stakeholders to ensure any issues that risk prejudicing residential amenity are identified early and due consideration is given to how they can be mitigated. Initial actions will include a positive and pro-active response to recommendations set out in the Access & Parking Study relating to the provision of new parking infrastructure to support increased visitor activity at Wentworth Woodhouse.



<sup>2</sup> Research by Natural England found that proximity is a key factor in the proportion of people that access open countryside and natural green space.





## New Visitor Infrastructure

Wentworth is an increasingly popular visitor destination. It attracts both local people and day visitors to South Yorkshire, many of whom return regularly to enjoy the tranquillity and breathing space the parish offers.

Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust's 2018 Masterplan, *A New Life*, sets out plans for the operation of the mansion house, stables and grounds at Wentworth Woodhouse as a visitor attraction and events venue. This will further develop Wentworth as a destination, attracting more of the 12 million people that live within a 90-minute journey time. Increased visitor numbers will have a thirst for a wide range of activity.

All parties recognise that there is currently insufficient infrastructure to support delivery of the Masterplan and the Estate has been working with the Trust to fill that gap, jointly commissioning an Access & Parking Study. The strategy emerging from the study identifies a series of opportunities for the creation of new parking, much of this on Estate land. The Estate intends to work closely with the Trust and key stakeholders such as Historic England and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to help deliver the infrastructure needed to achieve the ambitions of the Trust's Masterplan and the organic growth of visitor numbers.

## New Connections

The Estate supports the Great Place Wentworth & Elsecar project which seeks to raise the aspirations of young people in the local area and help them achieve their potential using new, inspiring, innovative methods of engagement set against the rich heritage and culture of these truly great places.

The Access & Parking Study has identified the potential to improve physical connectivity between Elsecar Heritage Centre, Wentworth village and Wentworth Woodhouse with amendments to the public and permissive right of way network that crosses the Estate.

The Estate intends to work closely with Barnsley and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Councils and other key stakeholders such as Historic England and Natural England to do what it can to achieve such improvements and help promote Elsecar and Wentworth as combined destinations.

Wentworth's historic parkland is a valuable passive leisure resource and we are keen to work with partners to encourage greater engagement in nature and the 'countryside next door' from the growing urban populations of Barnsley and Rotherham<sup>2</sup>. We believe enhanced access and an increased variety of experiences across the Estate can make a direct contribution to important local objectives around culture, health and well-being.

# New Visitor Facilities

Beyond parking and rights of way the Estate is keen to provide improved facilities to enable access and support visitors to the Wentworth Deer Park from Greasbrough and Rotherham. We recognise the opportunity to create a new visitor centre facility on Church Street adjacent to Coach Road (and Trans Pennine Trail) at Town End Farm. Our emerging concept envisages a visitor space with café, education and interpretation, toilets, children's adventure play and off-road parking.

# New Experiences

We want to make Wentworth a great place for everyone; a place where families and people of all ages can visit, stay, experience and learn.

Whilst Wentworth is a paradise for natural exploration and play there is currently little formal indoor or outdoor provision for children and young adults. We want to address this and create opportunities for families to engage, explore, and play together all year round.

Added to this we want to introduce a focus on food. The Fitzwilliam Estate has been fundamental in developing Malton as Yorkshire's Food Capital. We want to bring some of what we have learnt at Malton to Wentworth, adding to the already thriving food offer by creating new opportunities for local producers, artisans and hospitality businesses.

Alongside multi-use parking provision, we have identified the area associated with the Gun Park, the Powerhouse and Home Farm as the optimum place to introduce new visitor experiences associated with food and play. We have discussed these ambitions with both the Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust and the operators at the Wentworth Garden Centre and plan to work collaboratively to create a complementary offer in this gateway location.

Beyond Wentworth we have identified the opportunity to create a new visitor experience focused on fun, health and fitness on the former mining site at Elsecar and the area around Simon Wood etc. We expect to liaise closely with the Local Authorities, potential commercial partners and key stakeholders such as the Forestry Commission, Natural England and Historic England to do what we can to bring forward transformational health and fitness focused active leisure experiences in this locality.







## New Opportunities for Business

British agriculture is experiencing a period of economic challenge and change. Coupled with food security, focus is on conservation and diversification. The Estate plays an important role in managing the Natural Capital and delivering the ecosystem services from its farmland and moorland. Farming is increasingly consolidated into fewer well equipped holdings located outside settlements, leading to vacancies of village centre or fringe steadings where opportunity then exists for economic re-purposing.

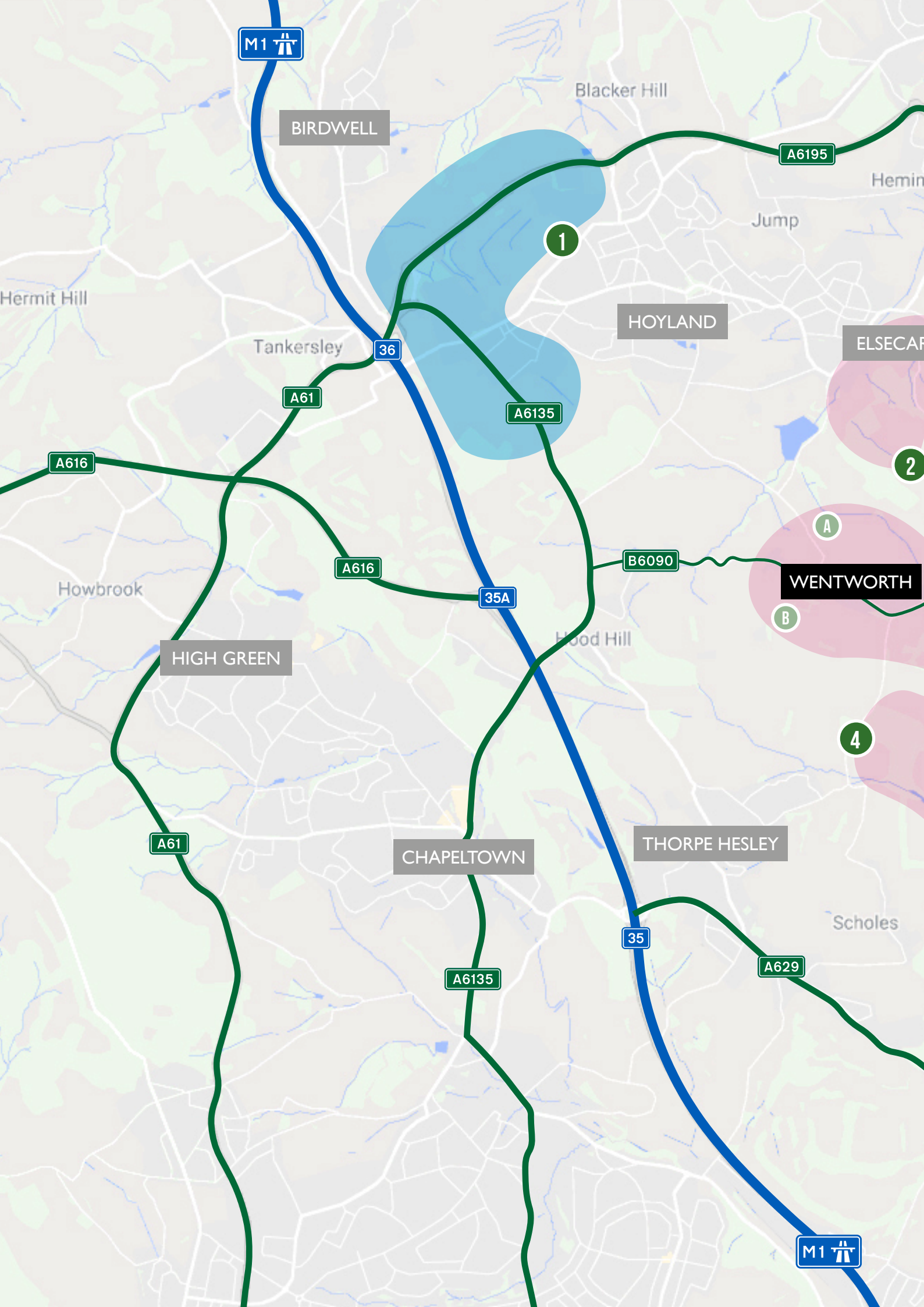
Our ambitions to stimulate economic growth and create new visitor experiences will generate opportunities for business to utilise buildings on the Estate that are no longer suitable for modern agriculture and are consequently increasingly under-used.

We are keen to explore opportunities to make use of some of these buildings to create new workspace, to increase housing stock or to add to the availability of short stay accommodation. For example, primary investigations suggest that Barrow Farmstead to the west of Wentworth village is suitable for flexible workspace use that would generate valuable economic benefits to the local economy.

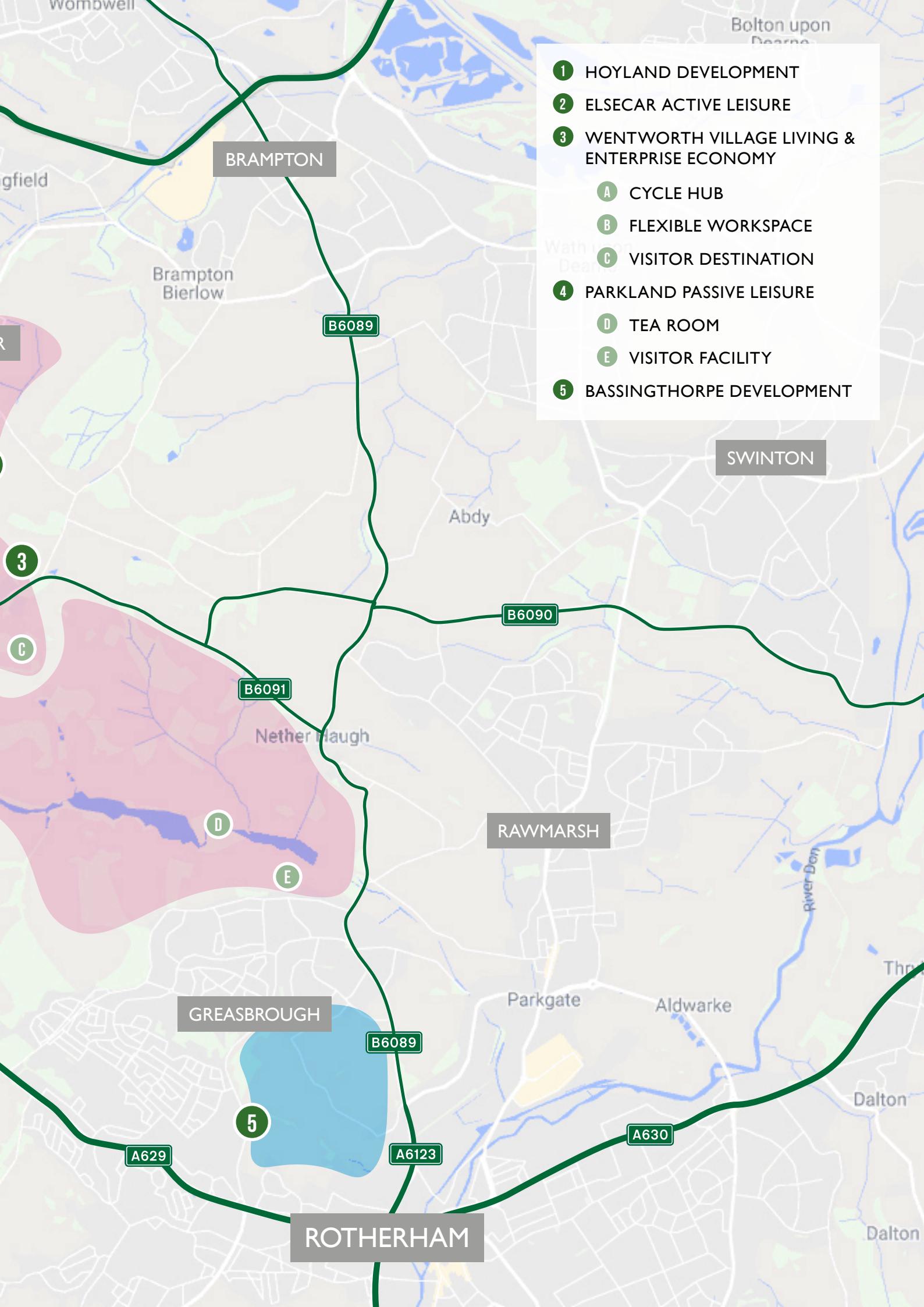
Other opportunities exist across much of the Estate to create opportunities for new business based on experiences linked to woodland adventure, camping, glamping, a network of cycling routes and farm attractions.

## Indicative Plan

The indicative plan overleaf presents a contextual concept of the key commercial, leisure and amenity opportunities we have identified on the Estate.







- 1 HOYLAND DEVELOPMENT
- 2 ELSECAR ACTIVE LEISURE
- 3 WENTWORTH VILLAGE LIVING & ENTERPRISE ECONOMY
  - A CYCLE HUB
  - B FLEXIBLE WORKSPACE
  - C VISITOR DESTINATION
- 4 PARKLAND PASSIVE LEISURE
  - D TEA ROOM
  - E VISITOR FACILITY
- 5 BASSINGTHORPE DEVELOPMENT









## Shared Dividends

The approach and opportunities set out herewith will, we believe, help to make Wentworth a great place for everyone.

They will create opportunity for more people from all backgrounds and places to visit, stay, experience and discover. They will create opportunities for people to learn about themselves, to experience history and to explore and spend time in special spaces that were designed to give pleasure and be enjoyed.

Increased participation and engagement in nature and the countryside will have far reaching health and well-being benefits and add significantly to the quality of life for all local residents, whether living in city, town or village.

The 'reach' of the Estate across village, park, woods and countryside, coupled with the skills, access to finance and energy to get things done create an exceptional opportunity to make good things happen.

The inter-relationship within the Estate of personal care and interest, charitable trust and commercial imperative will ensure that where change is proposed and introduced it will be done in way that respects the extraordinary legacy of the past we all cherish whilst creating the optimum conditions for residents, visitors and businesses to enjoy the future.

We look forward to working with you as we strive to preserve the cultural and environmental capital and to deliver our vision of making Wentworth a great place for everyone.

