# Wentworth villagers divided over proposal to turn farm into luxury hotel and spa



In the picturesque village of Wentworth, South Yorkshire, famed for its stringent regulations and charming aesthetic, the tranquillity of village life is facing a potential upheaval. The local populace, proud of their tightly-knit community, has expressed concern over recent proposals to convert a former farm into an upscale hotel and spa. This initiative, spearheaded by the Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate, aims to transform agricultural buildings into luxurious accommodations with amenities that promise to attract a different kind of visitor to this postcard-perfect setting.

For decades, Wentworth has held a reputation as one of the UK's most authentically English hamlets, characterised by its strict adherence to traditional village values. Residents are required to seek approval from the village trust for any home alterations, leading to a uniformity that many feel encapsulates a bygone era. In an environment devoid of supermarkets and takeaway outlets, the community prides itself on maintaining a slower pace of life, where quaint establishments like teashops and local pubs still thrive amidst meticulously preserved architecture.

However, the recent planning request has ignited a debate among residents about the future character of their village, with many villagers voicing apprehension about the potential influx of visitors and vehicles. Mary Pearson, a long-time tenant farmer in the area, highlighted concerns during a parish council meeting, lamenting that she had not been consulted about the proposed changes. “I have been very disturbed for the last eight years,” she remarked, reflecting a broader unease within the community regarding the planned transformation.

Conversations in the village echo the mixed feelings surrounding the potential benefits and drawbacks of increased tourism. While some locals acknowledge that a hotel might boost foot traffic and support local businesses, others worry about the accompanying challenges—namely, a surge in traffic and the potential for accidents. Phil Russell, a nearby resident, underscored the concern, stating, “From what I have seen, the plans will bring more visitors to the village, but I do worry a bit about the traffic.”

The hotel proposal notably includes plans for a sophisticated spa and guest facilities, drawing inspiration from some of the UK's most exclusive establishments. The design aims to blend modern luxury with the area’s rich historical backdrop, which would include features like a flat-roof glazed walkway linking the new spa and hotel components, alongside treatment rooms that retain the rustic charm of the original buildings. Artistic details planned for the interiors aspire to create a serene atmosphere reminiscent of high-end venues like Annabel's in London’s Mayfair.

Despite these ambitious designs, the community's reaction remains mixed. Over a dozen objections have been raised on the council’s website, primarily concerned with increased traffic and changes to the fabric of the village. Statements such as "the village does not need this" surface among objections, highlighting the tight-knit village's collective sentiment toward preserving its identity and tranquillity.

Amidst these contentious discussions, the Wentworth Parish Council is considering seeking specialist advice to navigate potential implications of the proposed development. Cllr Brendan J. McNamara, the chair of the Parish Council, assured residents that they will continue to engage with the community and local estate amid ongoing consultations.

As Wentworth edges closer to a significant change in its landscape, residents grapple with the question: how to honour the village's rich heritage while accommodating potential growth and development? The fascinating juxtaposition of preserving a cherished way of life against the promise of modernity underscores the complexities inherent in rural development today. With emotions running high and voices raised, only time will tell whether Wentworth’s quaint charm will survive the tide of change set to wash over this beloved village.

### Reference Map

1: Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6  
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7: Paragraphs 1, 6

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14691551/We-live-Britains-strictest-village-LOVE-terrified-new-neighbours-moving-in.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.rothbiz.co.uk/2024/05/news-8463-multimillion-pound-hotel-and.html> - This article discusses early-stage proposals to convert agricultural buildings in Wentworth, South Yorkshire, into a luxury hotel and spa. The Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate is collaborating with planning consultants to repurpose the Grade-II listed buildings, aiming to provide guest accommodation, hotel and spa facilities, and parking. The plans are in the pre-application stage, with consultations underway with Rotherham Council before an official planning application is submitted. The initiative seeks to enhance the local food scene by creating opportunities for local producers and hospitality businesses.
* <https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/23972678.grand-hotel-york-plans-outlined-spa-upgrade/> - The article outlines proposed upgrades to the spa facilities at The Grand, York's only five-star hotel. The plans include enlarging the spa area to accommodate more guests, with minor internal works such as removing masonry walls and creating a reception area. The existing pool is set to be shortened, and modern faux-classical niches will be removed to create more space. The private dining room and gym are to be converted into relaxation areas. The upgrades aim to enhance the spa experience while minimally impacting the listed building's significance.
* <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/lifestyle/staycation/yorkshire-spa-breaks-and-the-rules-on-reopening-now-and-when-hotels-reopen-in-may-3200267> - This article provides information on the reopening of Yorkshire's spa facilities in line with government guidelines. It details which services are permitted to reopen, including personal care facilities, close-contact services, and indoor gyms, with specific Covid-secure measures in place. The article also discusses the reopening of hotel stays, particularly self-catering accommodations, and outlines the rules and restrictions in place to ensure safety during the reopening phase.
* <https://hnmagazine.co.uk/travel/paradise-found-in-yorkshire-at-the-swinton-estate/> - The article highlights the luxurious spa facilities at The Swinton Estate in Yorkshire. It describes the various pools available, including an indoor 18-meter pool, hydrotherapy pool, and outdoor bio-filtered pool. The gym is equipped with the latest machines and offers functional fitness options. The spa also features a range of heat experiences, such as an aroma steam room, salt room, and Finnish sauna. The article emphasizes the comprehensive and relaxing spa experience offered at The Swinton Estate.
* <https://citizen-femme.com/2024/11/20/grantley-hall-ripon-yorkshire-spa-uk-countryside/> - This article provides an overview of Grantley Hall, a luxury spa hotel in Ripon, Yorkshire. It details the spa's Roman bathhouse-inspired design, featuring an 18-meter heated pool, indoor-outdoor hydrotherapy pool, Nordic spa garden with outdoor sauna, and a snow room. The spa lounge offers cream teas, salads, and smoothies. The article also mentions the hotel's amenities, including complimentary daily yoga sessions, a gift shop, and a poolside service for ordering drinks. Nearby attractions such as Fountains Abbey and Brimham Rocks are also highlighted.
* <https://www.rothbiz.co.uk/2024/05/news-8463-multimillion-pound-hotel-and.html> - This article discusses early-stage proposals to convert agricultural buildings in Wentworth, South Yorkshire, into a luxury hotel and spa. The Fitzwilliam Wentworth Estate is collaborating with planning consultants to repurpose the Grade-II listed buildings, aiming to provide guest accommodation, hotel and spa facilities, and parking. The plans are in the pre-application stage, with consultations underway with Rotherham Council before an official planning application is submitted. The initiative seeks to enhance the local food scene by creating opportunities for local producers and hospitality businesses.