Hexgreave Estate
Little is known for sure about the origins or ownership of the land now known as Hexgreave. The name first appears as Hekkesgrave in 1240 written as 'Bocus de Hekkesgreave' which implies it was a game reserve, especially of deer. In 1255 the park was in the possession of Thomas de Bella Aqua, later Belleu or Bellew, from whom the nearby Belle Eau Park is named. That year he bequeathed 'Bocus de Hekkesgreave' to Walter de Gray, Archbishop of York and his successors.

This map of 1662 shows 'Hexgrave parke' marked as one of several private deer parks in the area, fenced in with a wooden palings to protect the deer. Bestwood Park was also a private park owned by the Crown.

The Hexgreave estate became part of the parish of Farnsfield in 1878 having previously been in the parish of Southwell.
The estate is now an award-winning Business Park having won the Rural Business AwardsMost Outstanding Rural Diversification project for 2015.

South Lodge
In 1891 the Fisher family lived here. William Fisher was a general labourer on the Hexgreave estate. He lived with his wife Alice, their daughter Elizabeth, their son George, a gardener who had been recently widowed, with his daughter Elsie aged 6 and son Arthur aged 2.

Arthur went to work at Farnsfield station as a porter at the age of 13. This photograph of Arthur in his porter's uniform was taken in 1906. He then left Farnsfield and took a post as porter at North Hykeham Station before becoming signalman at Tickhill in South Yorkshire.

Swan Lodge – read more here:
Swan Lodge Mid 19th C building

Hexgreave Hall & Business Park Hexgreave Hall

Grade II listed Hexgreave Hall is one of two grand houses on the estate. It is estimated to have been built between 1750 and 1760 and has been substantially altered, particularly the front (east) elevation. In the 19th century, the Hall was owned by landed gentry including Richard Milward, gentleman and his sister Frances who farmed at Lower Hexgreave. The family had with a coat of arms, a significant status symbol at the time. Frances donated £1,000 for the rebuilding of St Michael's Church in Farnsfield in 1859 although, at the time, Hexgreave was still part of the parish of Southwell. There is a stained-glass window in St Michael's church dedicated to the memory of Richard and Frances Milward. It was donated by their nephew Richard Parkinson Milward who inherited the coat of arms and estates from his uncle on condition he change his name from Parkinson to Milward.

In the 1930s Hexgreave was bought by Sir Stuart Goodwin who was a Sheffield steel magnate and philanthropist. In 1949 he donated the funds to buy and convert the old malthouse on New Hill into a youth centre and village hall. The Lady Goodwin play park is named after his wife Lady Florence Goodwin. After Sir Stuart's death in 1969, Hexgreave was bought by Sir John Eastwood who developed the largest chicken and egg producing company in the world.

Lower Hexgreave

Lower Hexgreave is a late Georgian stone-built house and was the second significant property on the estate. It has been known in the past as The Lodge or The Dower House. The 1881 census records that the Lower Hexgreave farm was 1,000 acres and the farmer George Herbert Burnley employed 11 men, 6 boys and 3 women to run it. The house, which contained 9 bedrooms, was used as the main farmhouse. There were also a number of smaller residences for farm workers working on what was called Home Farm.

George Bartle farmed at Lower Hexgreave from 1918 until 1926. He lived here with his wife Lucy Louisa and daughter Vera Louisa. He employed a horseman, William Henry Curtis and two farm labourers Tom Coldrun Bagguley and George Graves, who lived on the Lower Hexgreave estate with their families.

George's granddaughter, June Hayes, recalls that while he was farming at Lower Hexgreave an outbreak of foot and mouth disease affected sheep grazing in one of his neighbour's fields and he prevented from moving his own stock. Because his own stocks were not infected, he was not entitled to any compensation. This added to a run of bad luck that put him out of business. He refused to go bankrupt; paid everything he owed and had a very poor sale, which resulted in his ending his farming days with nothing. He, his wife and daughter moved into a rented property in Farnsfield and he continued to work at Hexgreave for the Wilson family and subsequent owners of the estate until he retired. June says that he accepted his lot without remorse or grumbles, his philosophy being "we've got each other". He died in 1951 and is buried in Farnsfield St Michael's graveyard with his wife.

In later years of the 20th century, Lower Hexgreave was used as a racing stable, a trainer's stable and a stud and many of the former farmworkers houses were replaced by stabling.

(information and photographs provided by Kay Youngberry, great-granddaughter, with thanks)