

# Parkwood Springs Community Vision Regeneration Action Plan

Produced for the Parkwood Springs Steering Group

June 2003

by  
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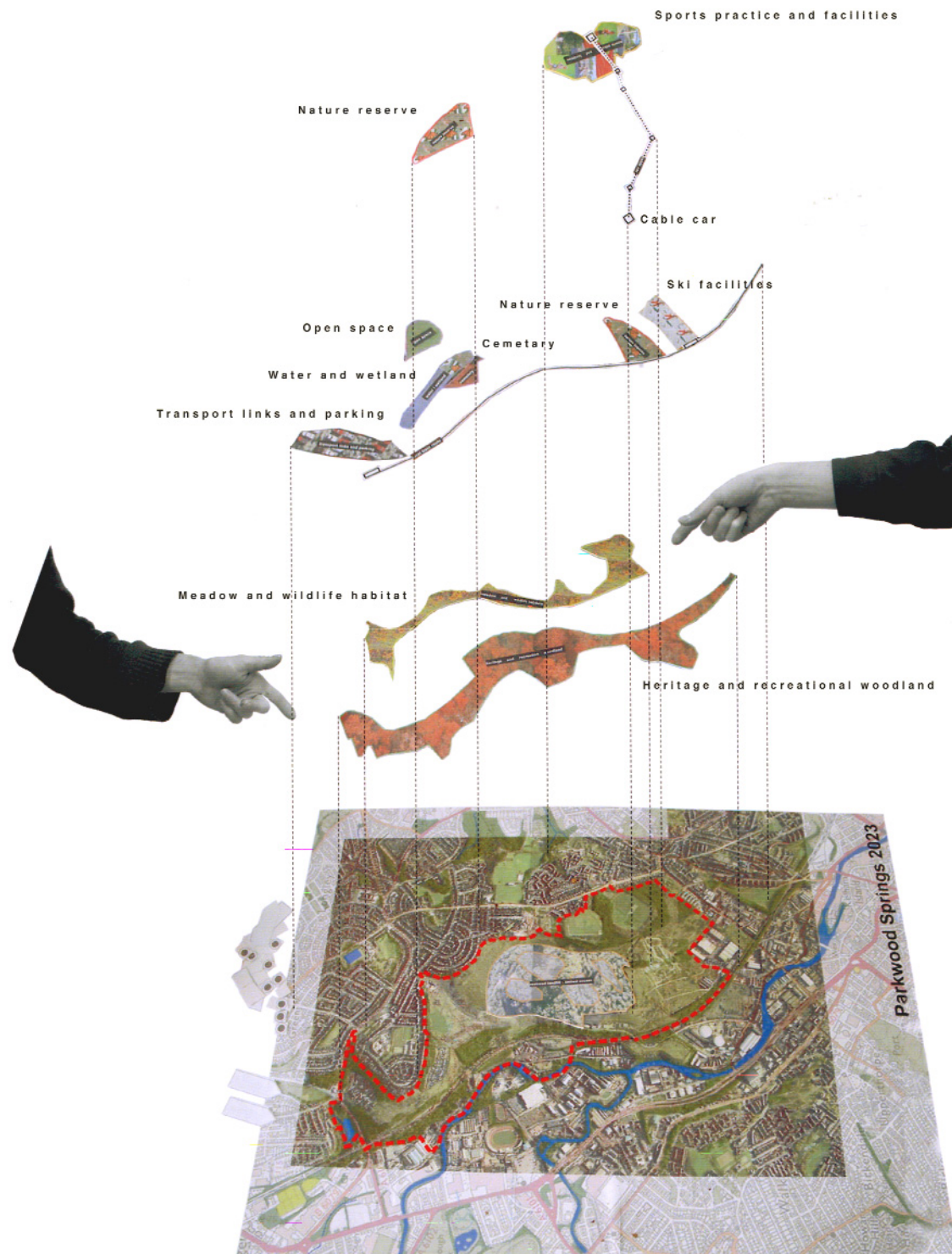
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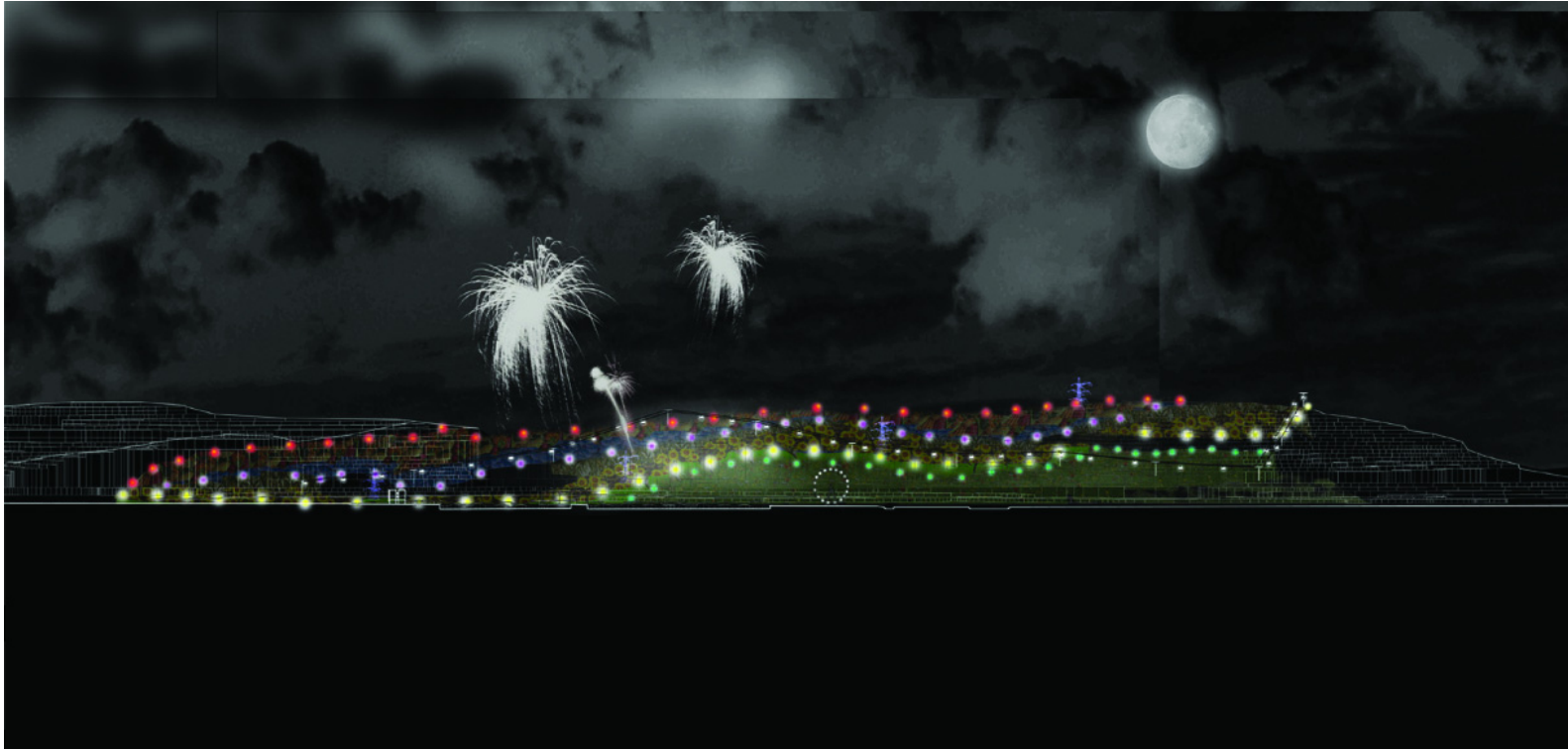
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A collage showing what Parkwood Springs could be like at night.

## Foreword

Parkwood Springs offers a unique opportunity to Sheffield - an opportunity to transform a vast, scarred landscape from its current day problems into a special place that local people, the city and the region can be proud of. A place that has both local and European significance - attracting people to enjoy experiences that are both leisurely and breathtaking.

The brief for this commission asked for a 'Community Vision and Regeneration Action Plan' for Parkwood Springs. This report documents the process used to develop that Vision and presents the findings. The final part of the document puts forward recommendations of action (a combination suggested from the consultation process and ourselves). These actions would take the Vision a step closer to making something happen on the ground.

One of the key aims of developing the Community Vision was to start the process of breaking down conflicting interests that have posed barriers to progress. For the first time, we have brought together many of the key stakeholders for Parkwood Springs to discuss ideas and agree a positive way forward for the site. We have worked with local residents from the surrounding communities, various community and voluntary groups, Sheffield City Council, South Yorkshire Forest Partnership, Sheffield Wildlife Trust, OTC, Sheffield First for Environment, Parkwood Spring Investments - Ski Village, Viridor - Landfill Site, local area regeneration teams and Area Panels to name but a few. All these interested parties operate at different levels; however, they are united in the development of a long-term Vision for Parkwood Springs.

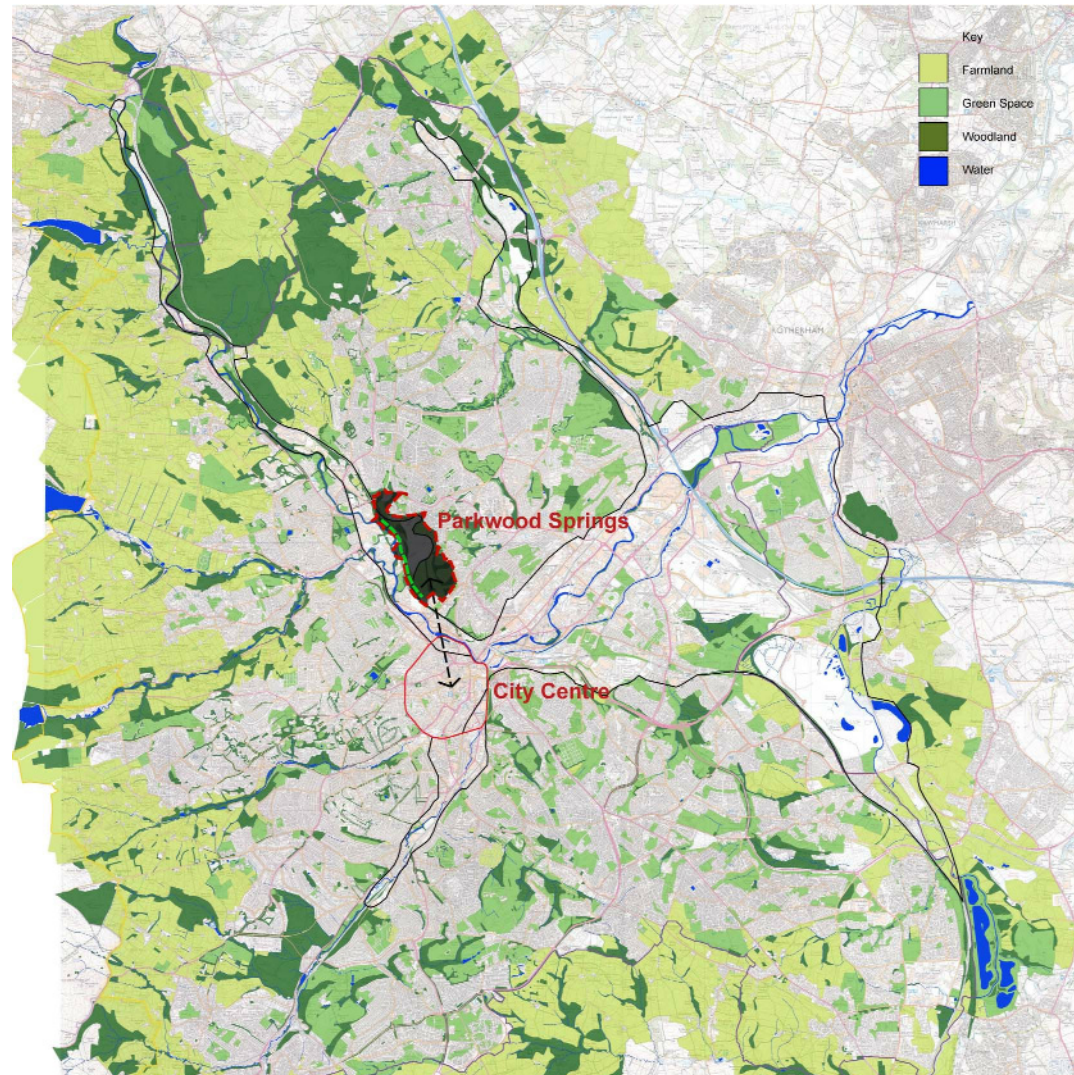
From the outset, we recognised the need to build consensus and most importantly, an opportunity for all interested parties to continue working together in one direction; developing the Vision further and starting to implement positive action supported by all. To sustain this 'One Vision' joint-working approach it is important that the work initiated through this commission continues, taking advantage of the momentum achieved.

In developing the Vision further it will be important to establish strong partnerships, continue to build consensus further, attract new interests and continue to involve all those that have contributed so far. Only by working together will the ultimate goal be achieved - to make Parkwood Springs an exceptional place for everyone.

## Acknowledgments

The authors of the report would like to thank all participants of the workshops, the Parkwood Springs Steering Group, Sheffield Wildlife Trust, council officers and the diploma students from the School of Architecture at the University of Sheffield.



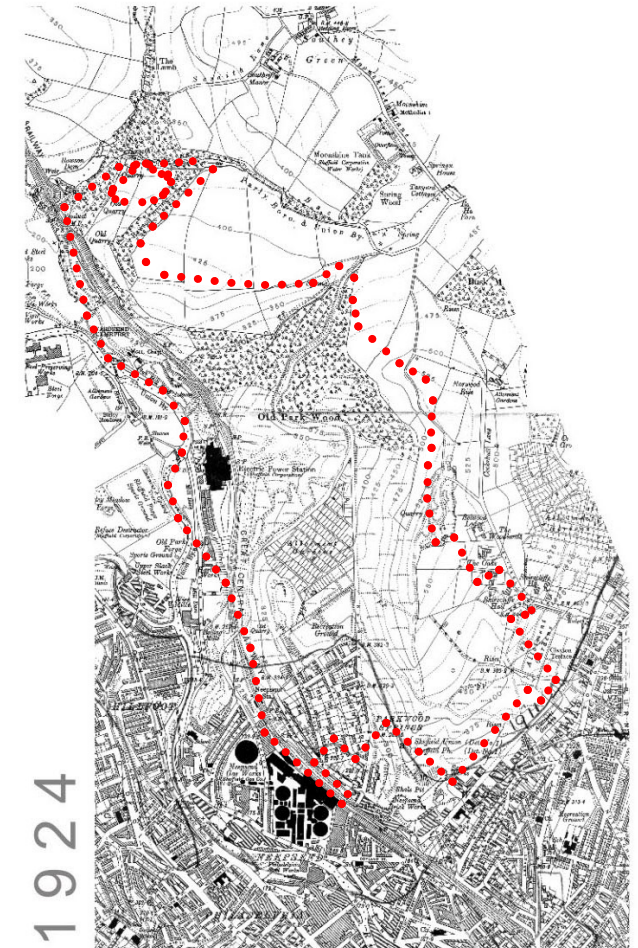
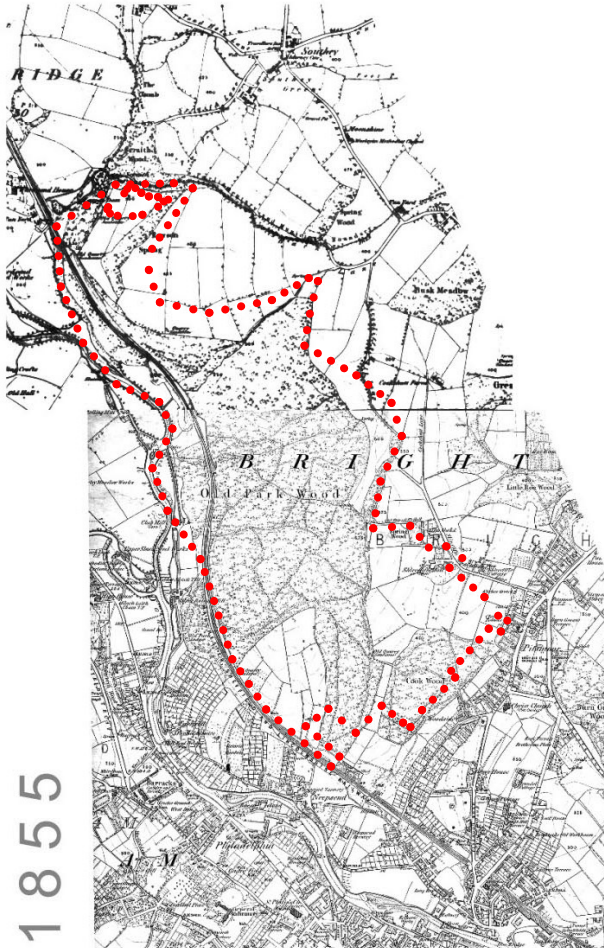


Parkwood Springs and its relationship with the rest of the city.

## About Parkwood Springs

Parkwood Springs is an extraordinary part of the city. Located just 1 mile from Sheffield City Centre, it is positioned on a south west facing hillside in the Upper Don Valley. In parts it is steeply sloping and the area occupies an extensive site of over 120 hectares / 300 acres (almost as big as the city centre). The boundaries of the site include the River Don to the west, Rutland Road to the south, the rear property boundaries on Penrith Road, Musgrove Road and Shirecliffe Road to the east and Herries Road to the north. The position of the site offers potentially good access from the motorway (M1) and the river network and is within easy reach of residents from a large proportion of Sheffield in particular the nearby communities of Southey/Owlerton, Burngreave, Hillsborough, Walkley and Netherthorpe.





Approximate boundary of study area

Parkwood Springs Historical maps: 1855 to 2002



## Previous Land Use

The site has a rich and complicated history. Originally a wooded landscape, it was described in 1819, by the historian Joseph Hunter, as "...so beautifully clothed with a forest verdure....the ground declining to the River Don.". Old survey plans dated 1855 still show the extensive woodland landscape and in particular the old Park Wood.

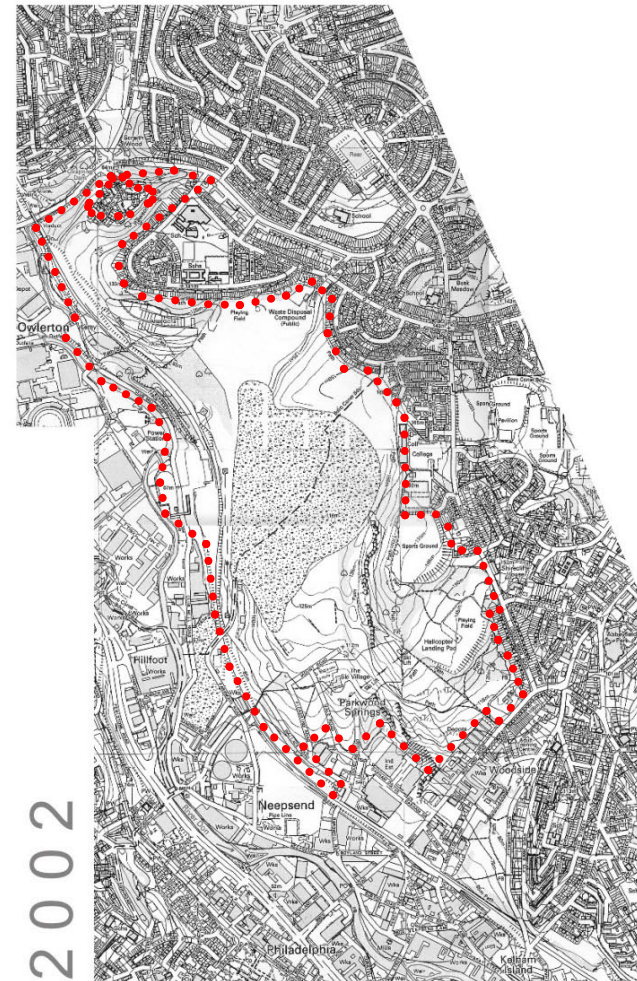
Since that time, the site has experienced extensive woodland clearance, mining and quarrying for stone, clay and most recently ganister, for the steel industry. Other less dominant, but still significant land uses have included housing, developed in the late 19th and early 20th century, along with the development of industry, recreation and allotments on the site.

Much of the land has been contaminated and there is an history of pollution problems. Material has been dumped from the former power station situated on Club Mill Road and furnace ash deposited in large quantities on the site.

***"...so beautifully clothed  
with a forest verdure the  
ground declining to the  
River Don."***

Joseph Hunter (Historian  
Writer), 1819

**An image of industry in the Don  
Valley during the 1940's.**








### Existing land use on Parkwood Springs.

- 1 Wardsend Cemetery
- 2 Shirecliffe
- 3 Open land
- 4 Owlerton Dog Track
- 5 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- 6 Landfill Site
- 7 Dry Ski Slope
- 8 Railway Track
- 9 Dumpit Site
- 10 Allotments
- 11 Sports Pitches
- 12 College buildings demolished for new housing

 Approximate boundary of study area

### Land Use Today

Today, the predominant land use remains public open space. The once dominant woodland landscape has been reduced to Scaithwood and Rawson Wood Spring both classified as 'Ancient Woodlands', and currently being managed with the benefit of Heritage Lottery funding as part of the 'Fuelling a Revolution' programme. Wardsend Cemetery can be found in amongst this woodland landscape, and is connected to an important part of Sheffield's history, the Sheffield Flood, which claimed many of the lives now buried in the cemetery.

The open space is also made up of recreation space including the Sheffield Ski Village (established 14 year ago), playing fields situated closer to the Shirecliffe communities, a go-karting facility, allotments, and a substantial area east of the ski village, cleared and planted in 1977 to develop a new phase of woodland with improved footpaths. Today access to Parkwood Springs is generally poor, with under-maintained and vandalised roads and paths.

There are two adjacent Sites of Special Scientific Interest, (SSSI's) - The Neepsend Brick Pit and the Neepsend Railway Cutting.

Both these are of national geological significance. The Neepsend Brickpit is a nationally important sedimentological site - rock outcrops to the north and east faces of the quarry show iron-stained sandstone, mudstones, shales and seatearth.

The Neepsend Railway Cutting is the best exposure of Crawshaw Sandstone formation and the Norton Coal in the East Pennines and is nationally important.

In the palaeogeographical reconstruction of the Westphalian A, it is an outcrop along the eastern side of the cutting with dipping strata of shales, sandstones, coal and seatearth.

The SSSI's, the topography, the siting, the ancient woodlands, the cemetery, the River Don and the Ski Village are all potentially important natural, historical and leisure amenities but the constraints are considerable.

The River Don is a seriously underused amenity and forms a barrier to the bottom of the site along with the A61 Penistone Road. Parkwood Springs is potentially one of the most beautiful stretches of the River Don and part of the extraordinary industrial and water engineering heritage of the city. There are some historically interesting industrial buildings located alongside the River Don which could be restored.

## **Constraints to regeneration**

Open space on Parkwood Springs has subsequently been neglected and under-maintained and is now regularly used for dumping and fly-tipping.

The Southern part of the site is dominated by business / industrial and commercial premises - a mix of engineering firms, warehousing, distribution, manufacturing, scrap yards etc. The landscape around these premises is neglected and unsupervised resulting in further fly-tipping.

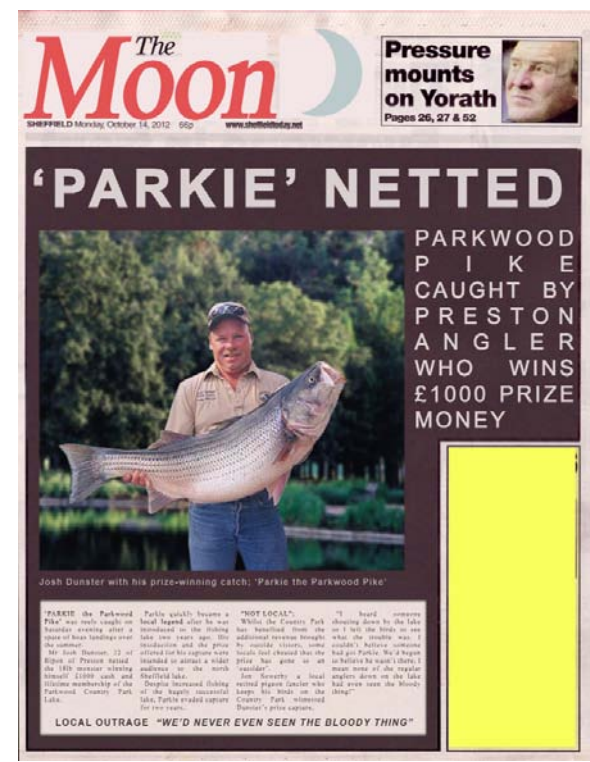
The Railway line is still in very infrequent commercial use (once a week) and provides a further barrier, with Penistone Road, to Parkwood Springs from Hillsborough.

Significant aerial cableways, overland electricity pylons and gas pipes cross some parts of the site, giving areas of the site a sinister and dangerous feel. These obstacles restrict development and prohibit access and some activities to parts of the site.

Another land use dominating the central part of the site, approximately a third of the site, is the area used for current day landfill operations - where both domestic and industrial waste are tipped. This land once owned by the Duke of Norfolk's Estates is now owned and operated by Viridor. The operators suggest the activity could continue for another 15-20 years, but this depends on the volume and frequency of waste tipped and on changing European legislation. A recent tax law change discouraging landfill has paradoxically probably lengthened the life of the landfill site.

Larger domestic waste is also tipped at the Dump-it Site. Situated at an entrance point onto the site off Longley Avenue West, this is a very controversial and problematic "facility". The most robust and long standing complaints from residents in Shirecliffe concern this dumpit site. It blocks off the major and most convenient entrance onto Parkwood Springs for residents living at the top end of the site and it's also felt that it encourages fly-tipping along the whole top swathe of Parkwood Springs. Some residents strongly suggest that the future of Parkwood Springs and its success depends on the re-siting of the Dump-it site.





Trigger boards used during the Visioning Workshops: Parkwood Springs 2022



## How the Vision was developed

A five stage process was developed. Previous studies relevant to the site were consulted and information from these studies was tried and tested through various consultations. This concluded with a consensus building workshop that brought together a Vision for Parkwood Springs.

### The Process

#### Stage 1 - Research

Parkwood Springs has been of significant interest to many organisations. A range of studies and feasibility work has been undertaken suggesting potential proposals for future development on and around the site. In addition, in recent years there has been a lot of regeneration activity set up and continuing to operate around the site i.e. Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR), Burngreave New Deal for Communities and the work of the Netherthorpe and Upperthorpe Community Alliance. It was important that all this work was acknowledged and considered in developing the Vision. It all had some direct relevance.

#### Key studies used or relevant to Parkwood Springs:

Parkwood Springs Development and Management Plan 1995  
Undertaken for South Yorkshire Forest Partnership  
By The Landscape Section of the Directorate of Planning and Economic Development, Sheffield City Council

Claywheels Lane/Upper Don Valley Study 2002/2003  
Undertaken for Yorkshire Forward Economic Division.  
By Civic Regeneration including Chesterton plc, Latham Architects and ARUP

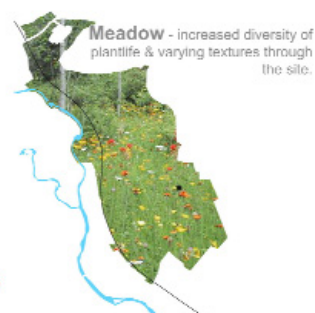
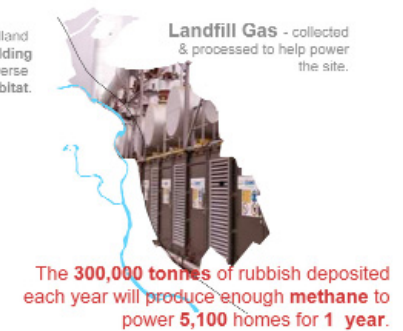
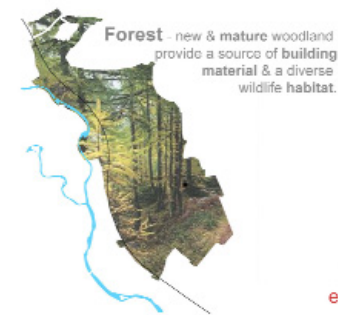
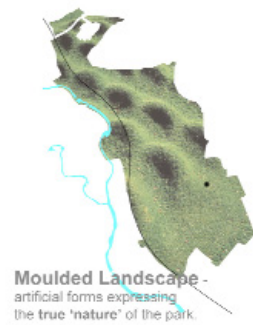
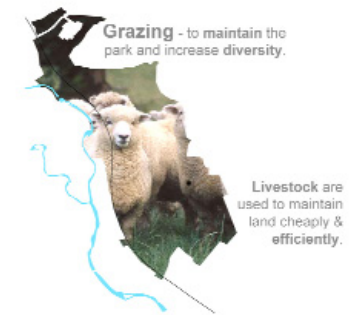
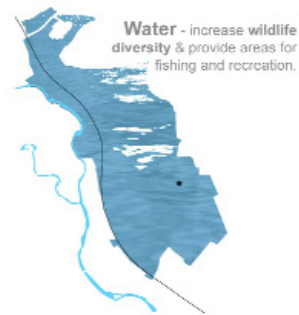
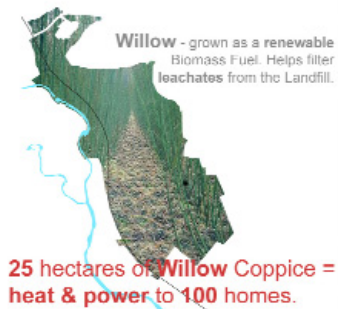
Parkwood Springs Area Sports and Recreation Feasibility Study 2002  
Undertaken for Parkwood Springs Steering Group, a sub group of SOAR Environment Leisure and Transport Group  
By OTC

GIS database including information on current and historic landuse, foot-paths and access points, habitats and the geological SSSI's  
Undertaken for Parkwood Springs Steering Group, a sub-group of SOAR Environment Leisure and Transport Group  
By Sheffield Wildlife Trust

Regeneration Framework Document for Southey and Owlerton Neighbourhood Strategies 2002  
Undertaken for SOAR and Owlerton Southey Green Area Panel  
By Neighbourhood Strategies for Hillsborough (in preparation 2003) Shirecliffe, Parson Cross, Foxhill, Southey and Longley

Also,

The UDP for Parkwood Springs  
Southey Owlerton Area Plans 2001/2002  
Netherthorpe, Hillsborough and Walkley Area Plans 2001/2002  
New Deal for Communities, Burngreave  
South Yorkshire Forest Plan 2002  
Sheffield Wildlife Trust Ecological survey of Southey and Owlerton  
Sheffield University School of Architecture Live Projects 2002



Potentials for Parkwood Springs: people attending the workshops were invited to place a coloured pin in each potential, to represent their agreement or disagreement for the idea.

## Stage 2 - Developing the Toolkit

We developed a toolkit of consultation material suitable for the scale and nature of the site. The emphasis was to communicate ideas as graphically as possible without presenting a definitive scheme or plan, but suggesting possible ideas, amenities, ways of using the site, possible technologies and facilities. We suggested from the beginning that all these possible amenities could be provided within an overarching strategy for the site that might have a powerful image or identity and impact on the whole area.

We also used previous studies, demonstrating how proposals could be pulled together to fit with various local regeneration strategies. In particular we put our work in the context of the recent Southey Owlerton Regeneration Framework to make it fit with the emerging identity offered for the whole of the North East Sheffield. This identity and how it is relevant to a vision for Parkwood Springs is described in the Southey Owlerton Framework document.

The toolkit was made available in both exhibition and power point presentation format. This enabled us to use a relevant format with different audiences and made the consultation material accessible and portable to both large numbers of people at one time at public events and to individuals / small groups in meetings and interview situations.

Alongside the presentation of collaged images, the following materials were prepared to consult with:-

- Questionnaires to collect a range of past, present and future issues, problems and suggestions
- Pin boards to quickly establish agreements and disagreements to suggested ideas
- Aerial-photographs with plans overlaid with clear acetate loose overlays to allow free drawing and information to be added
- Jigsaw land use maps allowing pieces to be pulled apart and reconfigured
- Action and partner cards allowing long and short term priorities and potential partners to be identified

**PARKWOOD SPRINGS CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

enter the free price sheet by filling in this sheet

**1 What makes Parkwood Springs a special place?**  
Tell us about special memories or qualities of the site that make it an interesting, pleasant or memorable place for you.

**2 Your interest**  
What is your interest in Parkwood Springs?  
Tick all that apply:  
 Pleasant home nearby community ☐  
 Business / Offices ☐  
 Training / Club ☐  
 Pleasant User ☐  
 Business / Commercial ☐  
 Other please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**3 Who should the site be developed for?**  
Parkwood Springs is an important and significant site offering potential opportunities for local people and visitors. It could bring many economic, recreational and other benefits to local communities, the city, region and more.  
Please tick the boxes below to indicate areas from where you think people should be attracted to use the site. Tick as many as you like.  
 Adjacent Communities ☐  
 Sheffield ☐  
 South Yorkshire ☐  
 Yorkshire Region ☐  
 North of England ☐  
 England ☐  
 Britain ☐  
 Europe ☐

**4 Potential Land Uses - What do you think?**  
Parkwood Springs offers many opportunities for development. What do you think about the uses shown in the exhibition / presentation?  
 Leisure & Recreation Facilities? ☐  
 Comments / Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Not Sure ☐  
 Agriculture, Agriculture & Growing? ☐  
 Comments / Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Not Sure ☐  
 Transportation Routes? ☐  
 Comments / Suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Not Sure ☐

**5 How important are key issues for its development?**  
In terms of its development, how important do you think the following factors are. Please circle.  

	Not important	Not too important	Important	Very important
Job Creation	1	2	3	4
Improving the environment	1	2	3	4
Attracting visitors from outside Sheffield	1	2	3	4
Useful space for local people	1	2	3	4
Commercial / business activities	1	2	3	4
Sport and outdoor activities	1	2	3	4
Improving the value of existing	1	2	3	4
Providing homes for people	1	2	3	4
Improving transport facilities	1	2	3	4
Improving natural resources	1	2	3	4

 Are there any other issues you consider to be important? If so please list as well below 1-10, 30, 60, 90.

**6 Additional Comments / Suggestions?**

**7 Tell us about yourself**  
To ensure we receive responses from all sections of the community we need to know a bit about the people we have consulted.  
 Your Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐  
 Age Group: 18 and under ☐ 45-52 years ☐  
 53-60 years ☐ 65-74 years ☐  
 75+ ☐  
 Ethnicity: White ☐ Black ☐ Asian ☐ Other ☐  
 Pakistani ☐ Bangladeshi ☐  
 Indian ☐ Chinese ☐  
 You are welcome to join Parkwood Springs Steering Group. If you would like to be actively involved in the project please tick ☐  
 If you have asked for advice or would like to be involved in the free price sheet please provide your contact details.  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you**  
for taking the time to give us your views.  
All responses will be used to develop a community vision for Parkwood Springs.

Parkwood Springs questionnaire (see appendices)



**Hillsborough library Visioning Workshop.**



**Southey and District Community Centre Visioning Workshop.**



**Hillsborough Christmas Fayre consultation event.**

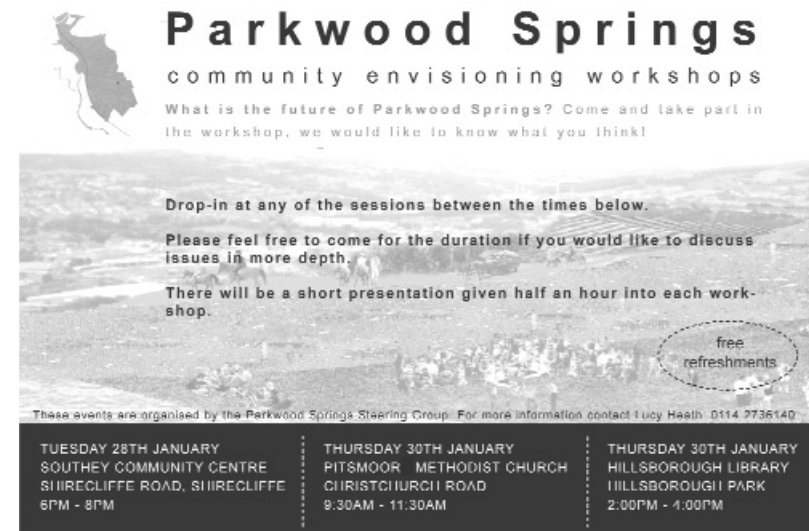


### Stage 3 - The Consultations

A programme of consultation was established, targeting all key interested parties in and around the site including residents from surrounding communities and Sheffield area-wide, local regeneration agencies and Area Panels, landowners, community groups, developers, businesses, local Councillors, relevant trusts and agencies, relevant departments within Sheffield City Council and strategic partnerships such as Sheffield First For Environment. The Appendices list some of the key interests consulted.

The consultation programme was launched at a 3 day Christmas Fayre in Hillsborough Park in December 2002. In January and early February 2003 Community Visioning Workshops were held in each of the 3 major nearby communities, Burngreave, Shirecliffe and Hillsborough. In addition, a separate workshop was held at this time to target local teenagers in the Shirecliffe area.

Throughout the duration of this programme, presentations were given to key interest groups such as Sheffield First for Environment to raise awareness of the work and to encourage acknowledgement of their role in the development and future delivery of the Vision. Individual meetings were also held with relevant departments of the city council, private landowners and potential developers.



The consultation flyer advertising workshops and events.





Exploring ideas for Parkwood Springs using the land use 'jigsaw'.



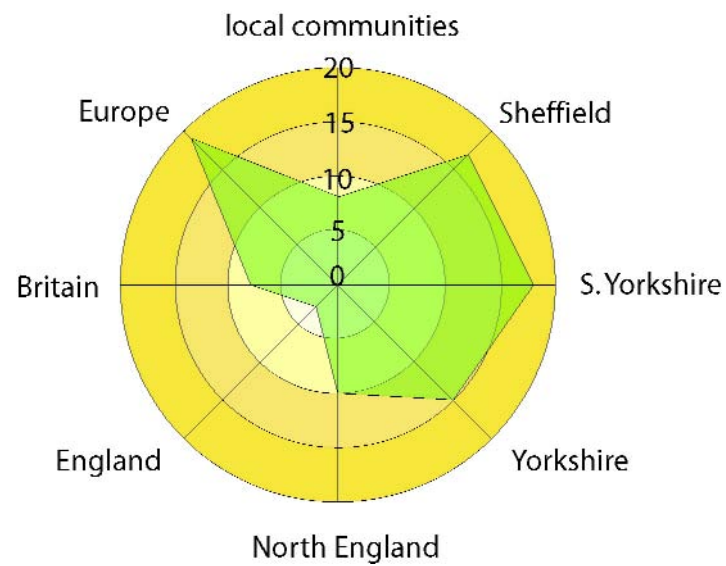
## Stage 4 - Building consensus

The consultations concluded at the end of February with a Consensus Building Stakeholder Workshop. All interested parties were brought together for the first time.

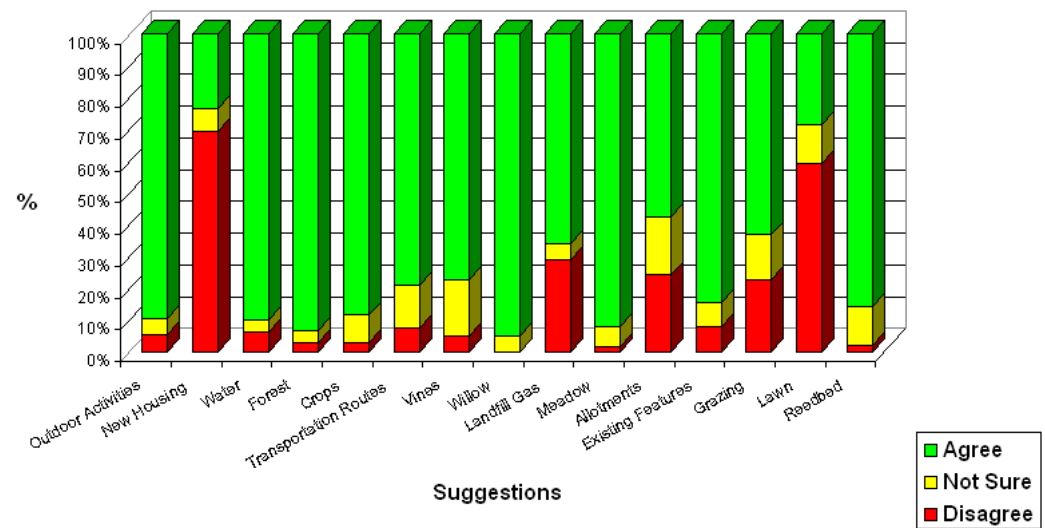
At the final workshop, ideas were developed further. People rotated in mixed interest groups around specific activity sessions. This included a jigsaw model of the site that allowed people to move land use preferences around to agree an overall Vision for the site. A prioritising session encouraged people to think about achievable short term actions / projects that would make a difference. Finally a long-term visioning session identified bigger steps that should be taken to continue developing and start implementing the long-term Vision. At the end of the session each activity summarised their conclusions to the full group.



The jigsaw model allows people to investigate different uses for the site.



Where should Parkwood Springs be attracting people from?



Potential land use questionnaire responses.



## Stage 5 - The conclusions

Some interesting results emerged illustrating the key issues and how important they were to various stakeholders. Generally there was strong support for retaining the area as greenspace but with recognition that the site was under developed and could accommodate a sensitive integrated range of mixed uses. The profile of the site was considered important - the provision of high quality, notable landscapes and facilities that might attract visitors from across Europe was a popular idea.

The vast majority of those consulted thought the landscape appearance and the improvement of the site as a piece of greenspace was very important. The creation of new jobs and the provision of community and sporting facilities were also considered important, as well as harnessing the natural resources of the site.

### Summary of Consultation Outputs

250	People directly consulted
109	Questionnaires completed
38	Organisations represented in the consultations
5	Community workshops delivered

## Summary of Key Issues

### Leisure and Recreation

Many leisure and recreation suggestions were put forward linking town and country, traditionally considered as either urban or rural activities. Extreme / alternative sports mixed with other more passive activities that are not regularly easily accessible. e.g. skateboarding, rock climbing, cycling / mountain biking, country walks, adventure play and water recreation. From those living in nearby communities facilities for motorbike / quad-bikes were commonly requested. Also, more traditional urban park improvements on existing peripheral playing fields.

### Agriculture, Allotments & Grazing

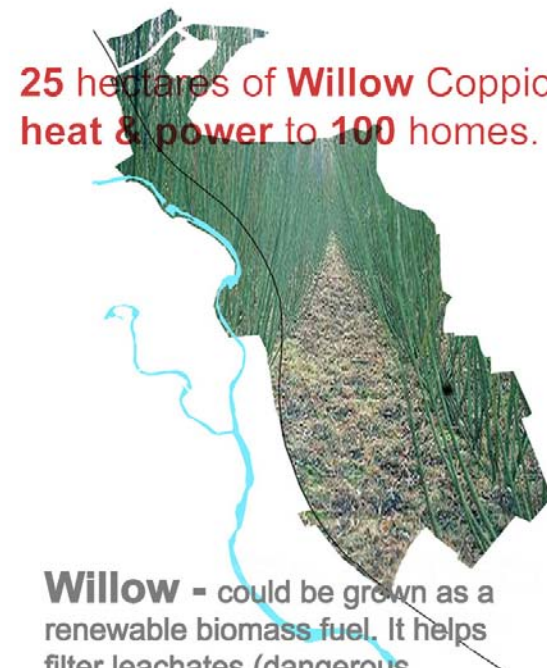
On the whole, favourable responses were received to the above suggestions. Concerns were linked with viability and sustainability in relation to demand, maintenance and amount of land that could potentially be developed into this suggested use. Doubt was also raised about what could actually grow and survive on the land but people favoured the idea of possibly making some of the land productive with the benefit of creating expansive areas of colourful crop planting.

### Transportation Routes

This issue was recognised as an important element of the development of the site. A considerable number of positive comments were associated with the development of environmentally friendly modes of transport and other public transport initiatives (linking and improving routes to existing and developing new forms). Concerns were raised about the impact on landform and reduction of green space to provide transportation routes. A lot of support was expressed for the idea of a cable car. Also new and improved footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways. The idea of establishing a steam train service along the bottom of the site on the existing railway tracks which stops at points of interest was very popular. People recognised a need to provide parking for the private car but preference was given for this to be on the edges of the site or by expanding existing car parking areas.



**Forest** - new and mature woodland could provide a source of building materials and a diverse wildlife habitat



**25 hectares of Willow Coppice = heat & power to 100 homes.**

**Willow** - could be grown as a renewable biomass fuel. It helps filter leachates (dangerous chemicals) from the landfill site.

Potential ideas for new developments on Parkwood Springs.

### **Retaining and Enhancing Existing Qualities**

There was evidence that many of those consulted knew very little of the existing qualities of the site. However, for some the place holds special memories. The cemetery in particular appeared to be a special place where memories of a beautiful landscape rich with wildlife and the spectacular views to and from the site were continually repeated.

### **Woodland & Forestry**

Many were in strong favour of further woodland planting to encourage wildlife and to develop recreational routes through. Those with concern raised issues associated with management and maintenance.

### **Housing & Holiday Accommodation**

There was strong disagreement to housing. Those that did show support suggested self-build, minimal amounts and low density, blending in with the character of the site. Holiday accommodation may need to be explored further.

### **Water**

There was a lot of support for improvements to existing water areas, mainly for habitat and wildlife creation in natural springs on the site and for recreational reasons on the River Don. Concerns were associated with safety and pollution.

A full breakdown of these findings is included in the appendices.



**One option for Parkwood Springs, looking out across Sheffield.**



Collage showing the potential flexibility of work practices in the future.



## The Vision

### Nature - Energy - Technology

The Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration Framework Report describes the kind of place that Southey and Owlerton could become - *creating a vibrant city by attracting high technology and e-technology companies to Sheffield*. The report discusses how we can market Sheffield as the kind of place these companies will be attracted to. It is the natural attributes of Sheffield, the topography, the rivers and the green space combined with a strong technological base that could make the city unique. Parkwood Springs is an important part of this new image.

The nature-technology relationship, building on what made Sheffield a pioneering industrial city of new technologies in the 18th century due to its natural attributes, the hills, valleys and the rivers - is a powerful theme for Parkwood Springs in the 21st century. Parkwood Springs is ideally placed to develop a rich ecological landscape of the highest environmental and design quality, increasing both the wildlife value and the bio-diversity of the site.

In order to develop an identity for Parkwood Springs and indeed Sheffield that is distinctive, forward looking and innovative, new sporting and recreational facilities will need careful planning within the landscape. They should exploit new sustainable technologies, like the development of alternative forms of energy from the landfill site and harness the natural resources.

So, against this backdrop of a synthesis between nature - energy - technology the Vision will create a vibrant place with a strong emphasis on good structural landscape design. A place full of life, offering new and unique experiences to people from the local communities and visitors from Europe.

This Vision can be developed by harnessing a complex mix of land uses, built on three areas of activity - Jobs, Environment and Leisure - the '3 Strands of Development'.



**An integrated solution for Parkwood Springs.**



Collage showing the integration of recreational facilities within the landscape.

### 3 Strands of Development

#### Jobs

To create a business environment full of vitality. To transform the existing business / industrial and commercial areas into places where employers workers and customers are proud to be associated. A place offering more than just a work place. A place offering a quality surrounding environment that presents a first class image to buyers.

To develop maximum opportunities for the creation of local employment, that is accessible to local people from nearby communities. Carefully, developing the site to accommodate employment opportunities that respond to local need. Creatively, contributing to the development of the social economy by using the site as a resource for local enterprises.

Enterprises likely to create jobs include:

- The expanded ski village
- The sporting, leisure and recreation facilities
- A visitors centre
- Income from productive landscape
- Alternative energy production
- Cable car/local steam train

#### Environment

To create a dramatic landscape of high ecological value. A landscape that echoes the natural history of the site, developing and enhancing existing woodland and also adding a new dimension. Swathes of new planting, vast areas of colour that will form dramatic views of the site and provide a pleasurable landscape to walk, cycle and run through.

The landscape should be carefully designed to successfully accommodate a mix of land uses without compromising the overall landscape character, nature and wildlife value of the site.

The landscape should provide the perfect conditions for a diverse range of habitats. Habitats that will attract wildlife back to the site, including the aquatic environments of the River Don and natural water springs on the Parkwood Springs site.

Suggested ways to enhance the environment include:

- Better relationship between the park, existing businesses and other stakeholders
- Develop an environment that successfully combines a mix of rural and urban activities, capturing the essence and synthesising two very different environments and ways of life, 'city park and city living' and 'countryside park and countryside retreat'.
- Protection of the SSSI's
- Decontaminate land and improve soil quality





Potential leisure and recreation facilities.



## Leisure

To create a place that successfully combines a quiet leisurely inspiring environment with an exciting place of adventure. Parkwood Springs should offer a wide choice of experiences amongst breathtaking landscapes with some extreme and alternative sporting opportunities.

To open up access and offer opportunity to everyone through provision of formal and informal activities on the site. To offer experiences to both active and passive users in activities that are sometimes inaccessible because of distance or cost. To make it a place for all age groups and abilities to have fun.

To support the development of existing and new communities of interests. Generating greater use and creating an environment full of life where people come together for social interaction.

To create a welcoming atmosphere of wonder and surprise. Encouraging people to explore and experience something new. To make it a special visit for a short stay by people in the local communities or for a longer stay with visitors attracted from across Europe.

## Popular suggestions for new facilities and development of the existing include:

**Motor-cross, Quad-biking, Motor-biking** - There is strong demand and support from local communities for a motorcycle area. If provided it would be expected to positively reduce the use of motorbikes on the rest of the Parkwood Springs area.

**Canoeing, Water Sports** - The River Don at Parkwood Springs is ideal as a teaching and development base, extending activities from other parts of the Don. Existing unused historic buildings could be developed to provide supporting facilities.

**Mountain Biking, Cycling** - The terrain available at Parkwood Springs will enable substantial provision for occasional riders and recreation riders.

**BMX, Skateboarding, Skating** - and other urban sports are popular across Europe. Parkwood Springs offers an opportunity to provide competition standard facilities as well as more informal facilities for these sports.

**Walking, Nature Trails** - The creation of multi-user and sole-user paths should provide sufficient access for the existing users, additional recreational users and urban users.

**Ski-ing** - Sheffield Ski Village has put forward a planning proposal to increase the services they provide at Parkwood Springs.

**Jogging, Orienteering, Cross Country Running** - New facilities should be well designed routes which meet the needs of different users and give the perception of feeling safe.

**Horse Riding** - Specific routes dedicated to horse riding could be developed throughout the landscape, promoting a rural activity in urban surroundings, forging links between town and country.

**Adventure Play** - for all age groups promoting family use of the site, social interaction and physical challenges. This facility could also offer intellectual, cultural and educational challenges.

**Other activities include: Adventure Trails, Bird Watching Fishing, Climbing and Go Karting.**



Potential extreme sports facilities at Parkwood Springs.

## Development principles

To successfully integrate a compatible mix of opportunities and experiences in each of the 3 Strands of Development, we recommend the application of simple development principles - developed from the results of the consultations.

### Suggested Development Principles

To retain & enhance existing features / qualities of the site and build on what is special to local people:

- Extensive views across the city and out to the countryside in all directions
- The visibility of the site as an important and attractive landmark from most parts of Sheffield.
- Dominant land use of open space is highly valued.
- A natural landscape, once beautiful and full of wildlife.
- Industrial heritage e.g. The Silver Mill and other buildings alongside the river
- Links to Sheffield history e.g. The Sheffield Flood and stories from the Second World War.
- The historic Wardsend Cemetery
- Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest with national geological interest.
- Ancient Woodlands.

To promote links between urban & rural lifestyles - for example

- Promote a mix of urban and rural activities
- Develop a combination of urban and rural landscape settings
- Apply thinking in relation to the 5 Big Ideas outlined in the Southey Owlerton Regeneration Framework.



To maximise the potential of the natural physical landscape and its location:

- Orientation of the slopes - south west facing
- Over 120 Hectares of land
- Exposed rock faces / cliff
- Hillside slopes
- Location for local access (1 million people within Sheffield)
- Location for visitor access (16 million within 2 hours drive)
- The rivers and the valley
- Natural spring water on the site
- Existing expanse of green space
- Large areas of woodland

To recognise the potential and seize the opportunity to provide local employment:

- Improve existing commercial, industrial and business activity on site.
- Create training and job opportunities through development of the site.
- Create local training and job opportunities in facilities developed on the site.

To sympathetically transform the site without compromising existing special qualities of the site:

- Apply quality design
- Use of appropriate materials / building techniques
- Design out and reduce potential conflicts
- Safeguard and protect special qualities

To apply and prioritise environmental issues in all aspects of future development:

- Use appropriate building materials / building techniques
- Improve soil quality
- Improve ecology - terrestrial and aquatic
- Consider renewable energy sources
- Reduce pollution
- Improve air quality
- Consider visual and noise impacts
- Promote use of public transport and other environmentally friendly modes of transport.
- Consider environmental effects of all future developments on site

To develop unique experiences, apply quality with innovative and creative technological solutions:

- Provide facilities not regularly found elsewhere e.g. first class competition standard recreational facilities.
- Successfully combine many different landscape settings e.g. recreational, environmental, economical.
- Apply innovative and creative design solutions
- Use the most advanced technological solutions

To develop a place that everyone is proud of:

- Involve all interested parties in developing and implementing the Vision
- Remove the current problems from the site
- Transform the site into a place beyond belief

## Regeneration action plan

The Parkwood Springs Steering Group was established in 2001 as a sub group of the SOAR Environment, Leisure and Transport Theme Group. A group of key interest representatives started meeting regularly with the aim of developing the area of Parkwood Springs for social, economic and environmental benefits. The Steering Group have terms of reference (see appendices) that clearly sets out their role, aim and objectives. The document explains that membership of the group consists entirely of people with an active interest in furthering the potential of Parkwood Springs and that the group shall work in genuine partnership with no one member dominating.

Since its establishment the group has continued to meet regularly and although the group have had difficulties in sustaining representation from some key interested parties, they have continued to move forward. They have initiated and delivered some significant preparatory studies that have contributed to the development of a Consensual Vision for Parkwood Springs i.e. the 'GIS Database', undertaken by Sheffield Wildlife Trust and the 'Parkwood Springs Area Sports and Recreation Feasibility Study', undertaken by OTC and most recently, this commission.

It is important the work of this group is acknowledged and their continued role in the development of Parkwood Springs clearly identified.

The work of the Steering Group has taken the project to a new level, encouraging the involvement and participation of all key interested parties to guarantee success in developing and delivering a Vision supported by all for Parkwood Springs. As originally set out in the terms of reference for the group it is important that a "genuine partnership is formed with no one member dominating".

## What should happen next?

As demonstrated earlier in this report, the very nature of the site is complex. It is complex in all aspects - history, land-use, land-ownership, development potential, barriers and restrictions to development, the extent of the issues and problems on the site and levels of interest from a wide range of individuals, central and local government, other statutory organisations, community and voluntary sector organisations, regeneration agencies, local residents, site users, strategic partnerships, developers, utility providers, land-owners, specialist interest groups, businesses, site operators etc. etc.

Through this commission, Parkwood Springs Steering Group requested the development of a Community Vision - a Vision that is consensual with other key interested parties. Within the constraints (time and money) of the commission we have delivered to the brief. However, there is much more work to be done so the impetus of the consultation and the agreement are not wasted. This can be broken down into 4 areas of work:

- 1. Development of a 'genuine partnership' between all key Interested parties**
- 2. Further work to develop the medium to long-term Consensual Vision**
- 3. Implementation of some early action that will contribute towards delivering the Vision**

## **1. Development of a genuine partnership between all key interested parties**

To develop a genuine partnership, all key interested parties must first be identified. A partnership structure must then be developed. The structure must be inclusive and give a voice to all interested parties at different levels. The structure must be formal but flexible with the ability to respond and adapt to change. It must be continually reviewed to work with the timescales of the project. Sufficient resources are key to the successful operation and a long term sustained future.

In developing the structure it will be necessary to review the future role of the exiting Parkwood Springs Steering Group. We recommend the appointment of an independent facilitator to work with representatives from all key interested parties, to help develop the necessary structures and to bring about genuine partnership to take forward the Vision.

The role of a partnership needs to be identified. Suggested roles include: overseeing the development and delivery of the Vision and a champion for the design principles (page 28-29).

## **2. Further work to develop the medium to long-term Consensual Vision**

The brief for this commission very clearly set out a request for a 'Community Vision'. We are confident that the Vision reported in this document is widely supported by the community plus some other key interested parties on the site. However, the Vision needs to be developed in more detail and all key stakeholders need to become involved. Developing the Vision in more detail needs to happen through the partnership structure, commissioning further work to demonstrate success. Some suggested further work to develop the Vision is outlined below.

### **Continue to work with all interested parties to develop a sense of ownership through participation and involvement in decision-making.**

A bottom up / top down approach should be applied. This approach should continue to promote consensus amongst all levels of stakeholder. It will bring together knowledge and understanding leading to informed decision-making in all aspects of the project. It is important that all interest groups agree who should facilitate this process of working. The Southey and Owlerton Regeneration Team have developed this approach through the Southey Owlerton Neighbourhood Strategies.

### **Promote both the Vision and the opportunity for involvement. Raise awareness of the work and continually update and feedback progress.**

Our work has initiated interest in a Consensual Vision. Almost everyday, throughout the commission we have uncovered new information about the site and future developments and uncovered new interested parties. This has come about through research, but mostly through promotion and awareness-raising. As the work has developed, more interested parties have become involved and agreed to work towards developing one Consensual Vision. This should continue, contribute towards developing a transparent and inclusive process as well as attracting new interested parties and sustaining existing interested parties in the site.

### **Develop a Master Plan**

The Vision presented in this report is a first attempt at collecting the main ingredients for the development of Parkwood Springs. The diagrams on p.34-36 illustrate the agreed layout from the community showing approximate positioning of their ideas. However, a more detailed master plan needs to be developed to ensure that the works are feasible. A phased programme of development is needed to help secure funding and other resources. The partnership should be developed and continue to involve the communities. This masterplanning work needs to be linked with some further detailed studies.





**A new landscape for Parkwood Springs will be highly visible. A strong landscape structure is needed to contain all the new activities - for example - bold swathes of colour.**



### **Further detailed studies**

We know what people would like to see on the site but ascertaining feasibility is dependent on the following recommended detailed studies:

**Land Contamination Study** - to understand exactly what is in the ground and how this needs to be dealt with in relation to delivering the Vision. This includes the development potential of the landfill areas (past and present) - understanding exactly what is feasible and not feasible in terms of development and public access in these areas.

This study should include the smallest detail of what vegetation would thrive in specific parts of the site. It should also link to the timescale of the project; considering the future contours of the site when landfill operation is completed. This study should make site specific links to ensure the feasibility of these areas in relation to all other site conditions, .i.e. not just understanding the general feasibility from research of landfill sites but making it site specific to Parkwood Springs.

**Feasibility study of potential bi-products from the Landfill Site** - We have been informed by Viridor that there is already research work happening to explore the potential of using bi-products from Parkwood landfill site. This work should be supported by the potential partnership so that plans can become part of the long term consensual vision for the site. This should include a feasibility study to explore the potential of using renewable energy sources to power the site. This idea was very strongly supported in the consultation.

**Feasibility study for the re-location of the dump-it site** - Exploring the options to relocate this facility and working out the opportunities that a relocation of the dump-it site would create for Parkwood Springs.

**Ecological study** - Some mapping has already been carried out (in particular the recent GIS database undertaken by the Wildlife Trust). However, further studies need to be done to understand more about the existing plants and wildlife on the site and the relationship with its surrounding environment. These studies should identify ways forward to develop the natural environment and increase the ecological value of the site. A comprehensive woodland plan is required for all recently-planted woodland and to identify suitable areas for new woodland planting.

**Transport Infrastructure development study** - To consider the potential and feasibility of major transport infrastructure development to, from and across the site.

**Land Ownership Survey** - Although we understand the ownership of much of the site there still remains a substantial amount unknown. In particular, the area occupied by much of the businesses in the southern part of the site.

**Detailed survey of site conditions** - and potential for environmental improvements in and around the area of the site occupied by businesses - to develop a clear action plan or improvements that could be implemented with grant assistance to businesses.

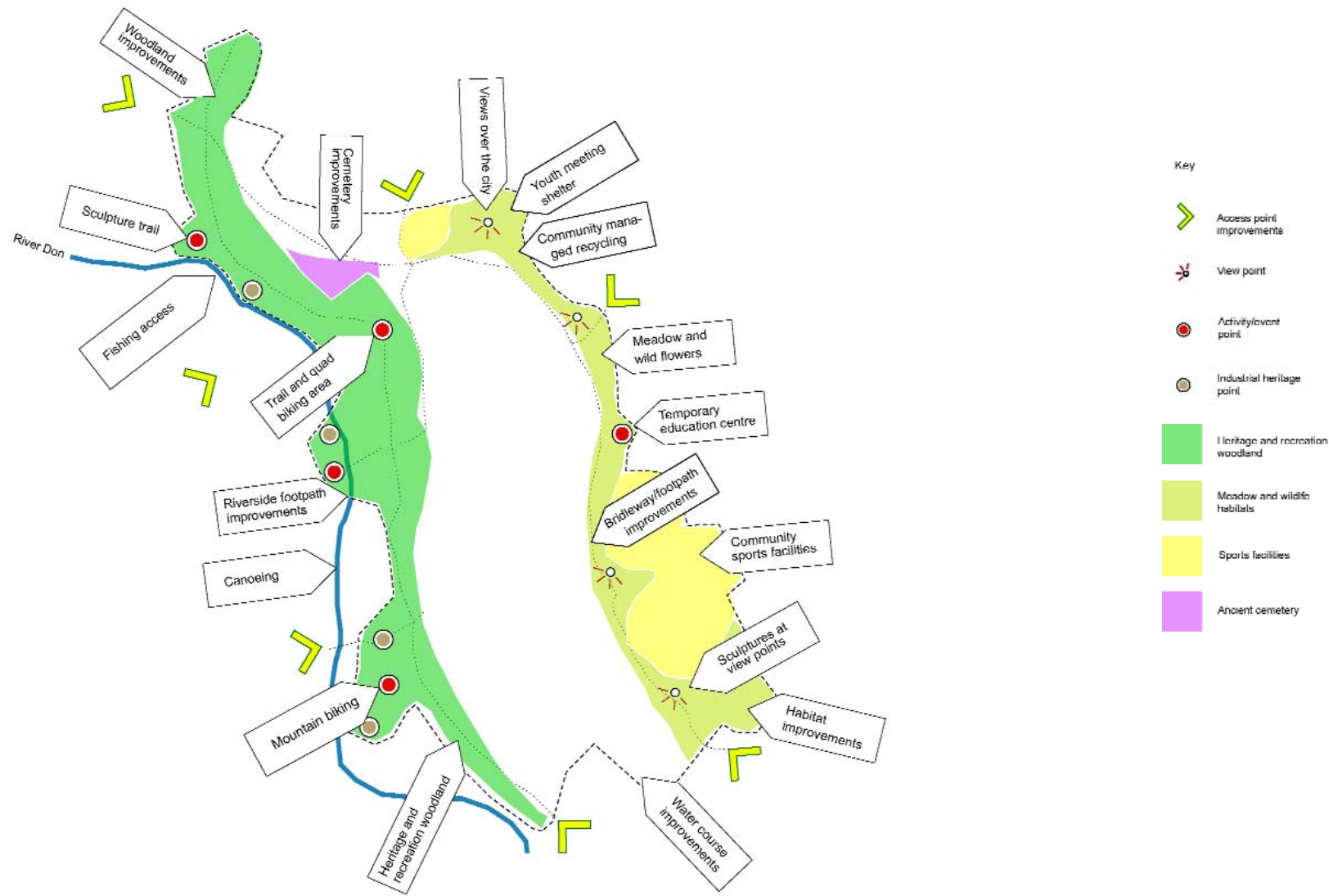
**Feasibility study for new commercial / income generation activities on the site** - To test the market and understand the financial viability, short-term and long-term investment opportunities. This is relevant for private and public investment from small scale to large scale initiatives including social enterprise opportunities and also to explore the potential generation of section 106 Planning gain monies with respect to developing new areas of housing on the site. Although, this latter point was not supported strongly in the consultation.

**Feasibility study for potential restoration works** - In particular, buildings associated with the industrial heritage of the site. For example the Silver Mill was considered to be very important by local people. It is important that we understand the potential of these buildings.

**Study exploring employment and training opportunities** - To ensure the site is developed with employment / training opportunity benefits for local people. It is important that the full potential of the vision is recognised to deliver jobs and training. Relevant local employment / training agencies need to be brought into the process to help realise this vision and suggest ways to take forward the ideas.

**A funding strategy** - A strategy that identifies sources of funds to implement the Vision and considers and identifies funding for the continued management and maintenance costs of the project. This should include exploring opportunities of initiatives that will generate income to secure a sustained future for the project. There needs to be both a short-term and a long-term funding strategy.

Consensual Vision - Early action projects





### **3. Implementation of some early action that will contribute towards delivering the Vision and involve the local community.**

Some achievable practical works have been identified to implement positive early action on the site. This would contribute towards delivering the long-term Vision and small steps that would start to make a difference to the site and foster community involvement. It is important to start delivering action on the ground but this must be done with a well thought out strategic plan to allow the early action to be incorporated into the long-term plans. There is a danger that partners could start to move in separate directions. It would therefore be necessary for action at any level to be taken through the partnership structure in place.

In addition and including some of the individual areas of work we list below, there is potential for larger scale short-term action on the site. Parkwood Spring Investments and Viridor have the potential, in partnership with others, to bring about these larger-scale improvements. These might include major investment into leisure and recreation facilities, extending the existing ski village facility, opening up major access roads into the site and consolidating the northern part of the site adjacent to the rear boundary of the new Ben Bailey estate in Shirecliffe.

#### **Environmental**

- Develop and Implement a woodland management plan
- Undertake community tree planting schemes
- Undertake pilot projects (i.e. planting experiments in different areas to find out the best results for future high density planting)
- Develop opportunities for the site to be used as an environmental educational resource
- Undertake small scale environmental improvements i.e. creation of wildflower meadows
- Improve existing habitat areas, enhancing natural water-courses on site
- Support existing community and voluntary groups to improve the site i.e. Friends of Wardsend Cemetery, The Upper Don Trust
- Develop managed community recycling facilities

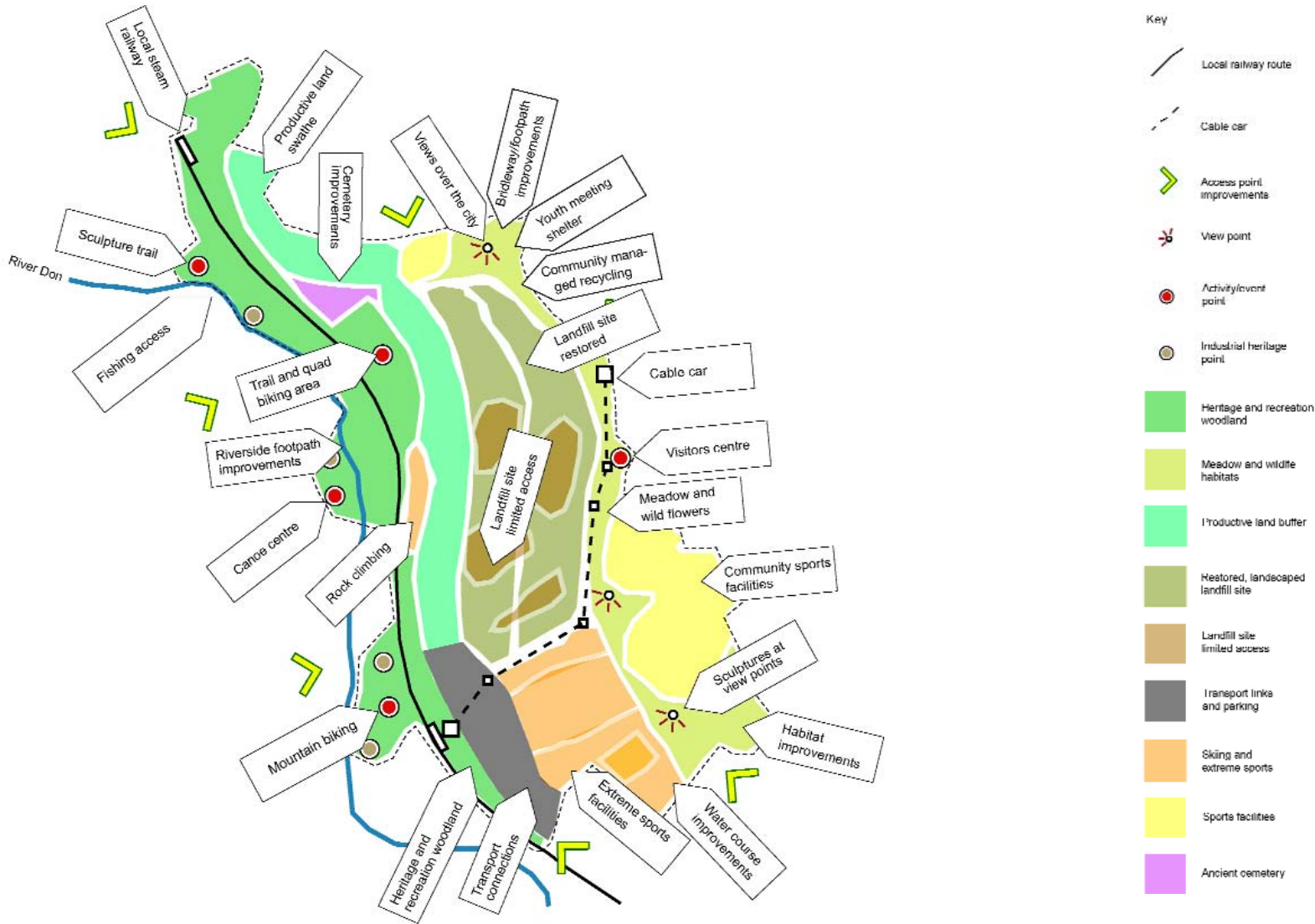
#### **Leisure & Recreation**

- Improve existing main paths by surfacing, access controls and clearing visual obstructions to improve safety
- Improve main access points into the site to create welcoming gate ways
- Develop cycle routes / mountain bike trails and provide a cycle hire facility
- Develop bridleways
- Regularly maintain footpaths and cycle routes and bridleways
- Improve existing football pitches
- Provide a meeting area / shelter for young people
- Develop a dedicated area for motorbike / quad-bikes
- Develop a heritage trail on the site
- Organise events and activities on the site to promote the work and encourage recreational use
- Develop conditions for fishing on the River Don

#### **Early actions - some useful small scale grant funding sources to explore**

- Architectural Heritage Fund - Revive to Regenerate Programme (020 7925 0199)
- Transport Cycling Projects Fund (020 7944 2979)
- SRB 5 - Southey Owlerton Regeneration Team
- New Deal for Communities - Burngreave
- New Opportunities Fund
- Neighbourhood Renewal
- SEED
- Landfill Tax Grants
- Doorstep Greens
- RALP
- BTCV Better Places
- South Yorkshire Forest Partnership, including Objective 1 funded Forestry Resources Grant

Early and medium to long-term action forming  
the Consensual Vision in 2023



## The consensual vision: 2023

The completed development in approximately 2023 incorporating early actions, medium to long-term goals and all the major infrastructural elements;

Cable car

Local steam train service

Completed heritage and recreation woodland scheme

Woodland links, industrial heritage projects

New extreme sports facilities

Transport interchange and roads

Productive land swathes developed on the landfill site

Swathes of planting

Public art strategy

The temporary education centre replaced by a signature building acting as a permanent visitors centre

Temporary actions that improve the area during the interim years of development formalised

The transformation will be complete from wasteland site to beautiful park with structured and free activities co-existing successfully.

## Appendices

- 1 GIS information**
- 2 Organisations involved**
- 3 Consultation materials/questionnaire**
- 4 Response from consultations**
- 5 Steering group terms of reference**
- 6 Report from Sheffield First meeting**



## **1      GIS information**

**Features**

**Recreation proposals**

**Ecological**

**Historical data**

**Ownership**

**Other**

## 2 Organisations involved

Consultation reached out to the following organisations:

Parkwood Springs Steering Group

Parkwood Springs Investments - Ski Village Developers

Viridor - Landfill Site

The House (Indoor Skate Park)

South Yorkshire Forest Partnership

Sheffield City Council - Parks Unit

SOAR Team

OTC

Shirecliffe Forum

Sheffield 50+

Shirecliffe TARA

Parkwood Landfill Action Group

North Sheffield Action Group

Burngreave New Deal for Communities

Sheffield Wildlife Trust

Southey Action Group

Voluntary Action Sheffield

Local Enterprises Around Food

Southey & Owlerton Area Panel

Burngreave Area Panel

Netherthorpe, Hillsborough and Walkley Area Panel

Sheffield City Council -Ecology Unit

Sheffield City Council - Sport and Community Recreation

Sheffield City Council Planning Department

Sheffield City Council - Parks, Woodlands and Countryside Service

Netherthorpe & Upperthorpe Community Alliance

Hillsborough Community Development Trust

Sheffield City Council Burngreave Councillor Representation

The Civic Regeneration Trust

Hillsborough Development Trust

Friends of Wardsend Cemetery

SOAR Environment, Leisure, Transportation Theme Group

Sheffield City Council - City Development Unit

Sheffield First for Environment

Sheffield City Council - District Maintenance Section

Burngreave Messenger

### **3 Consultation materials/questionnaire**

## **4     Response from consultations**



## **5     Steering group terms of reference**

## **6      Report from Sheffield First meeting**