

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change

REPLACEMENT OPTIONS FOR BRINSLEY HEADSTOCKS1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval to conduct a public consultation on the replacement options for the Brinsley Headstocks.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to CONSIDER the consultation questions detailed in APPENDIX 3 and RESOLVE accordingly.

3. Detail

Brinsley Headstocks is a 6.1-hectare Local Nature Reserve located off Mansfield Road in Brinsley. The site consists of a range of habitats including grassland, woodland and wetlands. Up until December 2023, the site also featured a wooden tandem headstock (**APPENDIX 2**).

Brinsley Headstocks operated at Brinsley Colliery a former coal mine, between 1872 and 1934. The Headstocks were then relocated to facilitate access to another local pit until 1970, after which the structure was then moved to a mining museum. In 1991, the Headstocks were relocated back to the site in Brinsley but were installed in a slightly different location.

The twin Headstocks and nearby disused mineral railway track, are all that remain of the once extensive coal mining works. They act as a visual link to the heritage of the site. It should be noted that most of the structure is not original, which is why the Headstocks are not listed.

Since the Headstocks relocation over £80,000 has been spent on its maintenance. Further detail is provided in **APPENDIX 1**.

In January 2023, a condition report and safety inspection was undertaken on the Headstocks. It identified that the Headstocks were no longer considered capable of safely carrying the load from the winding wheels without intervention.

At the beginning of September 2023, the metal colliery wheels were removed, in the hope that the timbers from the towers could be salvaged. However, in late November employees undertaking checks on the structure noted further deterioration in the wooden structure. This was confirmed by an appropriately qualified employee and concerns were raised that the structure was at risk of imminent collapse.

Given the level of deterioration, restoration of the structure, as it currently stood was no longer possible and in the interest of public safety, the most appropriate

course of action was to have the Headstocks dismantled. This was undertaken in December 2023.

Now that the Headstocks has been safely dismantled and any timber and ironwork salvaged. Plans need to be drawn up regarding a suitable replacement. These options are detailed in **APPENDIX 1**. However, before agreeing on a suitable replacement members are asked to consider a public consultation exercise. This will serve as a valuable tool in gathering public opinion and insight to help guide an informed decision in identifying the most appropriate replacement option. Further detail and the suggested questions for the consultation are detailed in **APPENDIX 3**. A separate focus group exercise is also recommended with the Friends of Brinsley Headstocks.

Upon completion of the public consultation and focus group exercises, the findings will be presented to Members in a further report.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

The cost of the public consultation would be contained within existing budgets.

Members should note that there is currently no budgetary provision for the refurbishment of Brinsley Headstocks. The capital cost of the potential options ranges from £20,000 to £280,000 with potential ongoing revenue budget implications too in terms of maintenance and repairs. Any capital investment would have to be funded from prudential borrowing unless alternative capital grant funding and/or other third party contributions could be sourced. The borrowing cost of the most expensive option would add £30,000 per annum of ongoing revenue budget pressure to the General Fund in terms of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and interest costs.

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal were as follows:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report

6. Human Resources Implications

The comments from the Human Resources Manager were as follows:

Not applicable

7. Union Comments

The comments from the Union were as follows:

Not applicable

8. Climate Change Implications

When considering the climate change implications of replacing the Headstocks, it is important to evaluate the environmental impact of various materials. Opting for a wooden replacement could offer potential ecological benefits due to the woods renewable nature and lower carbon footprint. Responsible sourcing of the wood would be crucial. It should be noted that whilst a wooden replacement would be a sustainable option, it would require an enhanced and extensive programme of maintenance.

A steel replacement will offer different advantages in terms of durability and longevity, although it should be acknowledged that its manufacture will entail a higher carbon footprint as steel production involves energy intensive processes.

9. Data Protection Compliance Implications

Not applicable

10. Equality Impact Assessment

Not applicable

11. Background Papers

None

APPENDIX 1

Background

Since the Headstocks were relocated back to Brinsley in 1991, it was observed that the structure had already undergone a number of patch repairs. Once reinstated, the Headstocks underwent regular visual onsite inspections. These were conducted by a suitably qualified employee. In 2010, a comprehensive survey of the entire structure was undertaken by a third party. This was used to develop a schedule of repairs and these were undertaken in the same year.

Since the reinstallation of the structure, £80,000 has been spent on maintenance and repairs. Details of this are highlighted in table 1.

Year	Maintenance/Repair	Cost
2010	Approximately 15% of the whole wooden structure replaced.	£64,000
2013	Headstocks treated with wood preservative.	£7,000
2021	Approximately 30% of the timbers on the left hand tower replaced.	£8,000
Various	Minor repairs.	£1,000
Total		£80,000

Table 1: Maintenance costs for the Brinsley Headstocks

Following the identification of serious structural concerns with the Headstocks, the Environment Team initiated a search for a suitable contractor capable of salvaging as much of the original structure as possible. The procurement team put forward an expressions of interest advertisement, but unfortunately no organisations came forward. The team started to approach companies directly and found a company that was capable of removing the winding wheels.

Once the wheels were removed in September 2023, it was hoped that the structure would remain stable enough to repair.

As highlighted earlier in the report, further deterioration in the wooden structure was identified in November and a decision was taken to dismantle the Headstocks in the interest of public safety. This has been at a cost of £28,000. The details of this are contained in table 2.

Item	Cost
Structural engineers report	£1,300
Hire of MEWP for inspection	£850
Purchase of Heras Fencing to secure site	£3,400
Removal of Wheels	£3,700
Dismantling of Headstocks (Main)	£9,000
Waste disposal (skips)	£4,500
Wood assessment/dismantling	£3,000

Item	Cost
Removal of wood from steel fixings	£1,000
Site clearance and removal of fencing	£1,000
Total	£27,750

Table 2: Costs for the dismantling of Brinsley Headstocks

During the dismantling process, a thorough assessment of the timbers was made. Unfortunately, the majority of these were found to be in poor condition (Photos highlighting this are in **APPENDIX 2**), rendering them unsalvageable. All the metal work was retained and taken to Kimberley depot for storage.

Now that the Headstocks has been safely dismantled and a small amount of timber and all ironwork salvaged. Plans need to be drawn up regarding a suitable replacement. It is proposed that the salvaged metal work and the remaining timber are utilised (where appropriate) in any replacement, following appropriate Member approval.

The following are suggested options; however, further recommendations may emerge from the public consultation and focus group exercises (if approved). These will be bought back to Members in a further report.

The potential options are as follows:

- **Direct replacement with an oak frame structure.** Whilst this option preserves the original aesthetic of the structure, the estimated cost of replacement is approximately **£170,000 - £220,000** (including groundworks). The structure would also require six monthly visual inspections by Broxtowe Borough Council Officers, a yearly engineers visual report (approximately **£500**) and a five yearly Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) (approximately **£1,000**). Plus, a revenue budget for maintenance and repair (estimated cost of £30,000 over a five-year period).
- **Direct replacement with a steel structure.** Indicative pricing for a steel structure is in the region of **£240,000- £280,000** (including groundworks). Although this option costs more than its wooden counterpart, it brings about the advantage of reduced concerns over the structures integrity in comparison to a wooden one. The structure would also require six monthly visual inspections by Broxtowe Borough Council Officers, a yearly engineers visual report (approximately **£500**) and a five yearly Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) (approximately **£1,000**). Plus, a revenue budget for maintenance and repair (estimated cost of £20,000 over a five-year period).
- **Ground level interactive art piece.** Installation of a ground level structure, utilising original materials from the Headstocks. Work could be undertaken with a local artist to create something that is sympathetic to the environment, whilst highlighting the cultural and historical importance of the site. Some maintenance and repair for the structure would be required, but this would be at lower levels compared to the first two options. Estimated cost between

£20,000 and £50,000. Plus, a revenue budget for maintenance and repair (estimated cost of £1,000 over a five-year period).

Consideration for the replacement options will need to include:

- Affordability/Funding
- Environmental impact
- On-going maintenance

A report considering these aspects will be taken back to Members, alongside the results of the public consultation (if approved).

Brinsley Headstocks Photographs

Before dismantling



Site Survey Photographs – January 2023



Headstocks deterioration- November 2023



Central trestle leg of the Headstocks, highlighting significant deterioration. This was picked up during a routine structural condition check by employees.

The collapsed leg was pulling and twisting the Headstocks structure towards the public benches.

Dismantling of the Headstocks



Storage of wheels, wood and metal work at Kimberley Depot



Public Consultation for Brinsley Headstocks

The public consultation process on the Brinsley Headstocks could incorporate a variety of different methodologies to ensure maximum accessibility and participation. This could include:

- Posters featuring a QR code. These will be installed across the nature reserve.
- Online survey circulated using the Council's Social Media platforms.
- Paper copies of the document being made available at a number of locations across the village.

Introduction to the public consultation for the poster

The tandem timber headstock at Brinsley is believed to be one of the last standing examples in the Country and for Brinsley residents a symbol of the village and reminder of the once dominant local mining industry. Much of the original timber in structure has been replaced following a series of repairs, although a few pieces remain, along with some of the original ironwork.

In Spring 2023, the Headstocks were fenced off from the public after a structural engineer highlighted safety concerns (information was placed around the site to inform residents and users of the nature reserve). In September 2023, the iron winding wheels were removed to lighten loading on the frame, whilst a specialist contractor could be found to shore the timbers and begin a dismantling and cataloguing process. Unfortunately, the condition of the structure further deteriorated and posed a risk to public safety. Given the continued decline, it became obvious that restoration of the structure, as it currently stood was no longer possible. The best course of action from a Health and Safety perspective, was to have the Headstocks carefully dismantled, salvaging as many timbers and the ironwork from the structure as possible

The Council would now like to consult the community as to the way forward for the Headstocks and the surrounding site.

You can access the consultation online, either through the QR code provided below or by typing the web-link into your browser.

(INSERT QR CODE, WEB-LINK)

If you don't have internet access, paper copies are available at the following locations in the village:

- The Headstocks Tearooms
- The Durham Ox Public House
- Brinsley Parish Council Offices

Consultation Questions

The Council would like your thoughts on the future of the Headstocks and surrounding open space, along with some information on whether you use the site and why it is important to you. No personal information will be collected. Working closely with the Friends of Brinsley Headstocks, the results from the consultation will be used to inform a report to Council Members and possibly inform the approach to potential funding strategies.

Please select your choices from the boxes below. There is also a separate section for any additional comments.

Headstocks Replacement

What would be your preference as a replacement for the Headstocks? (please select only one option)

1. Full size replacement of the Headstocks, in a treated, durable timber such as European oak, recycling any suitable timber from the original and all the original ironwork (estimated cost £170,000- £220,000). Plus £30k estimated maintenance costs over a five-year period.
2. Full size replacement of the Headstocks in galvanised steel, re-using the original winding wheels (estimated cost £240,000 - £280,000). Plus £20k estimated maintenance costs over a five-year period.
3. Ground level sculpture/interactive art piece including the salvaged winding wheels. (estimated cost £50,000). Plus, estimated maintenance costs of £1,000 over a five-year period.
4. Other: Please provide detail.

Site improvements

Do you think the site would benefit from additional information panels (Y/N)

Do you think the access points should be improved (Y/N)

Do you think more accessible paths to the Headstocks location would be beneficial (Y/N)

As well as its mining heritage, the site is managed as a local nature reserve. Do you think more could be done to enhance the habitats on site for wildlife (Y/N)

Is the car parking adequate (Y/N)

Reasons for visiting

Do you visit the site at present (Y/N)

If you answered no to the above, would you visit the site if it were improved (Y/N)

If you do currently visit the site, what is your main reason for visiting (please select only one option)

For informal recreation, such as walking

To meet friends

To exercise your dog(s)

To observe wildlife

If you do currently visit the site, what is your main means of getting to the site (please select only one option)

On foot

By car

By public transport

Health Benefits and Socialising

Do you think access to informal open spaces such as the Brinsley Headstocks is beneficial for your physical health (Y/N)

Do you think access to informal open spaces such as the Brinsley Headstocks is beneficial for your mental health (Y/N)

Do you think access to informal open spaces such as the Brinsley Headstocks site provide an opportunity for you to socialise with like-minded people (Y/N)