Proposals for Railway Beams and Buffer Stops at The Coal Drops, St Mary's Road Penistone.

Planning Permission 2025/0161 and Listed Building Consent 2025/0244 and Variation of Condition Approvals Planning 2026/0368 and LBC 2026/0397 relate to the restoration of the Grade II Listed Coal Drops and the redevelopment of adjoining land to extend the coal drop with a new build restaurant to the rear and further new build offices and light industrial use elsewhere on the site.

The Planning Permissions and Listed Building Consents include Conditions 9 and 10 which relate to the need to provide proposals for Buffer Stops and original Rail Beams.

Condition 9 – Rail Beams

To provide context, the Coal Drops are a series of 6 rooms or compartments with separating walls which support large timber rail beams carrying two rows of rail tracks above allowing coal railway waggons to run over the compartments and deposit coal through a trap door in the bottom of the coal waggons into road waggons parked in the compartments below.





Fig 01 and 02. Images showing rail beams supported on cross walls below.



Fig 03. Front of Coal Drops with arched façade.

The frontage of the compartments is constructed in large stone sections with archways to give access to each compartment bay.

As can be seen in Fig 01. the rail support beams are severely decayed. Some shorter sections are capable of salvage, and it is proposed that these are retained for decorative use in their original location below a new waterproof roof covering and exposed from below. These would be visible at ceiling level spaced to match the current positions, providing a tangible link to the original use and reminder of the method of construction.

Utilising timber beams within the flagged terracing above is impractical due to the condition of the beams and the fact that they would continue to deteriorate if exposed to external weather conditions. They are also unsuitable to be set into the stone flagged terrace due to a danger to pedestrians as they would be slippery when wet.

We consider that there are enough original beams that could be salvaged and re-located within the lower Ground Floor entrance to the Restaurant. This would be a good location to allow visitors to view what remains of the original beams and could include details and photographs on the walls to reflect their original purpose, use and historical significance.

Fig 04.

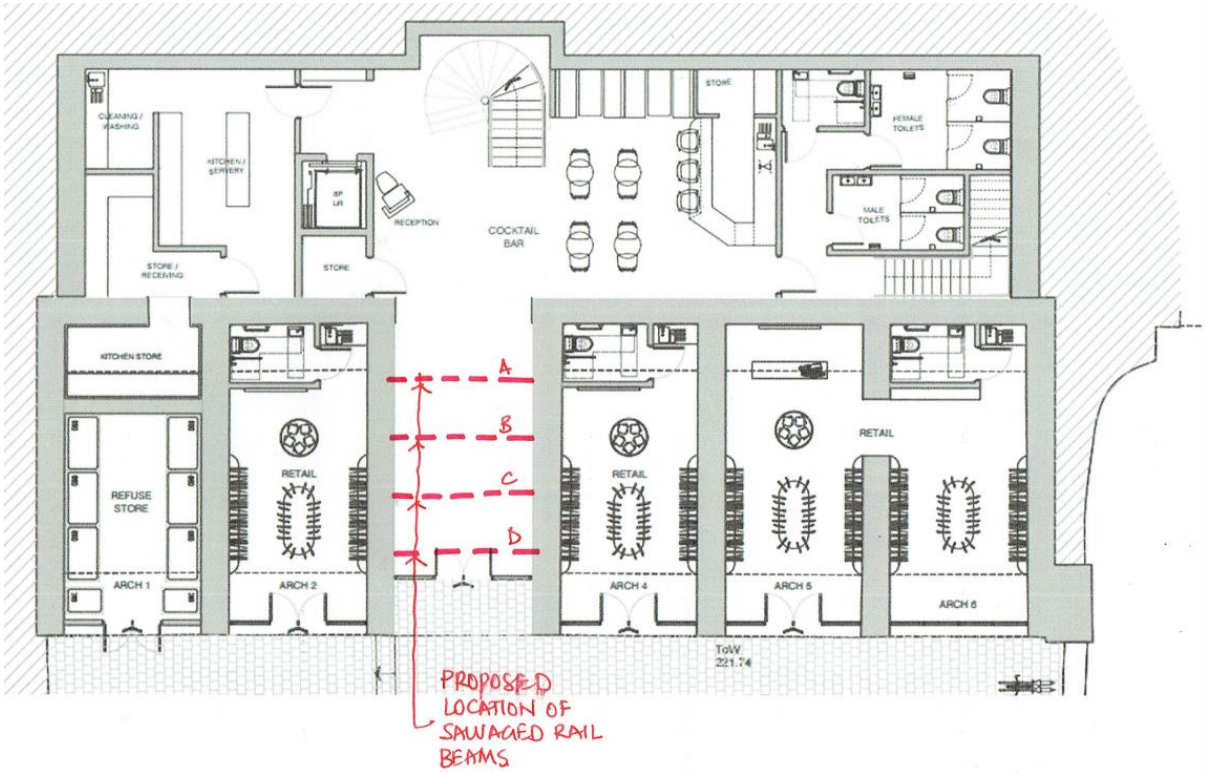


Fig 04. Extract from Lower Ground Floor Plan showing proposed location for salvaged rail beams over entrance to Restaurant at ceiling level.

Condition 10 – Buffer Stops

There were originally two sets of railway lines into a sidings above the coal drops that terminated with two sets of railways buffer stops. The photographs below show the current condition of the buffers which were constructed onto the rail beams, braced with timber struts and a cross beam and connected by steel bolts and straps.



Fig 05.

Northerly buffer stop (left and below).





Fig 06. Southerly buffer stop (left).

Due to their condition, very little of the original timber buffers are capable of salvage. There is one cross member which connects the two uprights and is rebated over the diagonal braces to the rear of the vertical uprights that could be salvaged and re-used. The remainder would have to be replaced.

It is proposed to salvage the cross brace and all of the remaining metal straps from both sets of buffers and utilise any re-usable parts to construct a single set of buffers to be located in the same position as the original south buffer stops.

In order to allow an authentic representation of the original structures to be manufactured, a detailed survey of the remains of the original buffer stops has been carried out and survey plans have been prepared including outline 3D images to illustrate the original construction methodology; see images below.

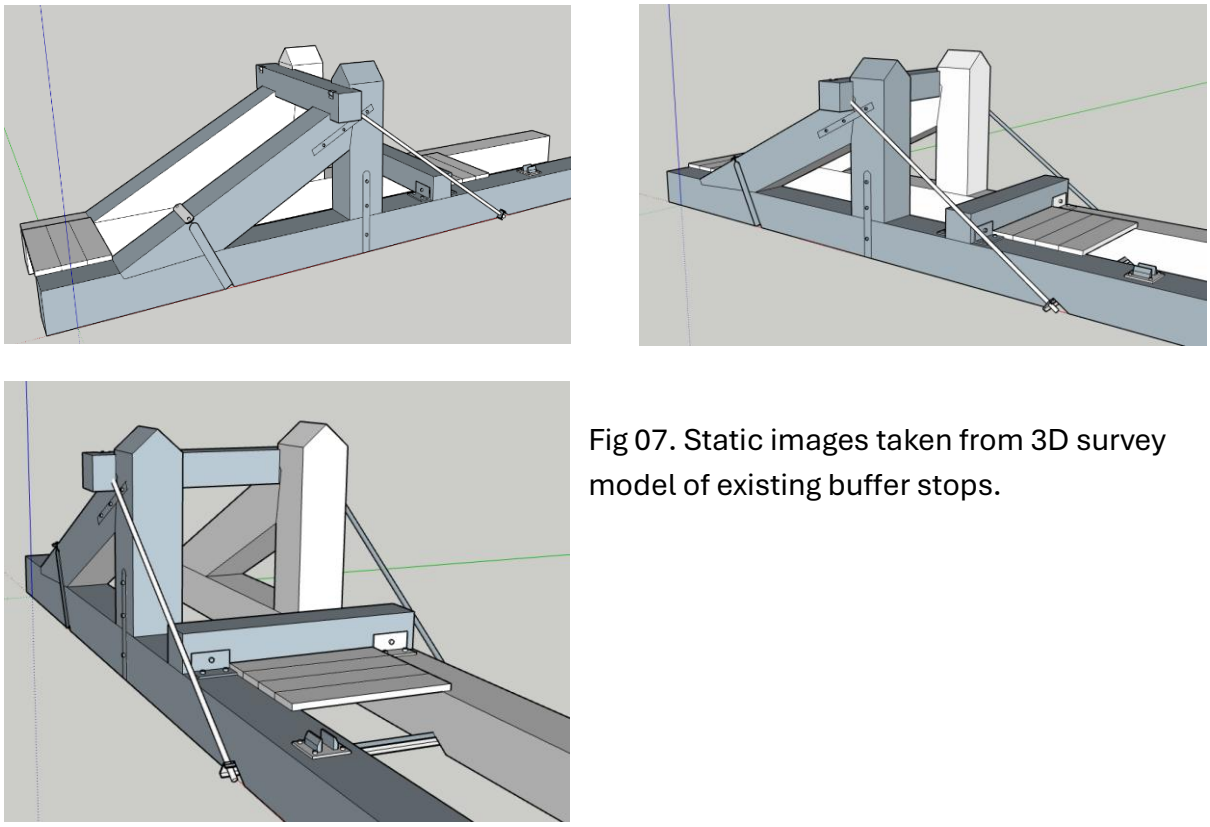


Fig 07. Static images taken from 3D survey model of existing buffer stops.

The survey data obtained and recorded, together with any remaining timber sections that can be salvaged for re-use or as to inform further construction details, will allow for an authentic re-construction of buffers to illustrate and represent those that were previously in use at the site. Although very little of the original timber structure is reusable, sufficient steel straps have survived from each of the buffers to allow for one set to be incorporated as part of the proposed works.

As previously suggested, setting beams, and/or rails into the upper Terrace area which is accessible to the public is not practical, however the Site Plan ref P02C approved as part of the recent VoC Consent (2026/0368 and LBC 2026/0397), does show a row of natural stone cobbles, set flush with the terrace flags, to reflect the line of the original railway tracks to help provide a visual indication of the previous use and historical significance of the site and the buffer stops.

The reconstruction of one set of buffer stops in their original location, utilising reclaimed parts as described, will provide a tangible reminder and help understand the previous historic use of the Coal Drops site.

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