

Queensbury Tunnel: Asset or Liability?



March 2026

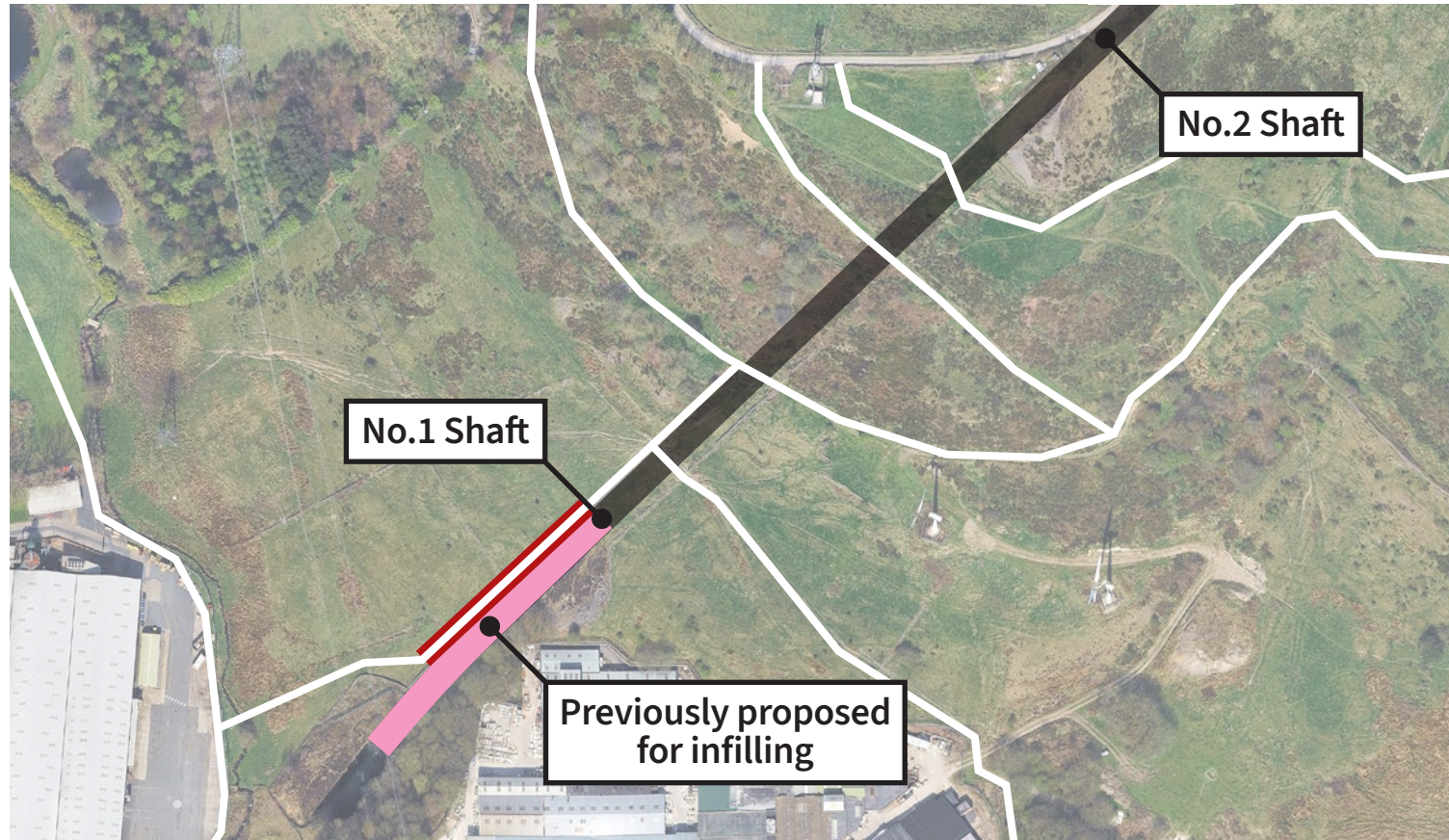
Cut-back abandonment

NH now claiming that 1965 Conveyance transfers maintenance responsibility to owners of land above south end of tunnel

5. THE Purchaser hereby releases the Board from all obligations (if any to maintain the said tunnel and air shafts and any works connected therewith and any fences walls water courses road crossings footpaths or other works made for the accommodation of the lands adjoining the property and will indemnify the Board from and against any claims whatsoever arising out of such obligations as aforesaid and also out of any subsidence occurring on any part of the property

Rebuttal letter sent to DfT by specialist land/property solicitor
Minister failed to specifically address issues in response
DfT failing in its Duty of Care to public by excluding this section

Rights of way at south end



**“potential to cause substantial settlement
in the ground at surface level”**

2019 Planning Statement (NH/Jacobs)

Abandonment: the real driver

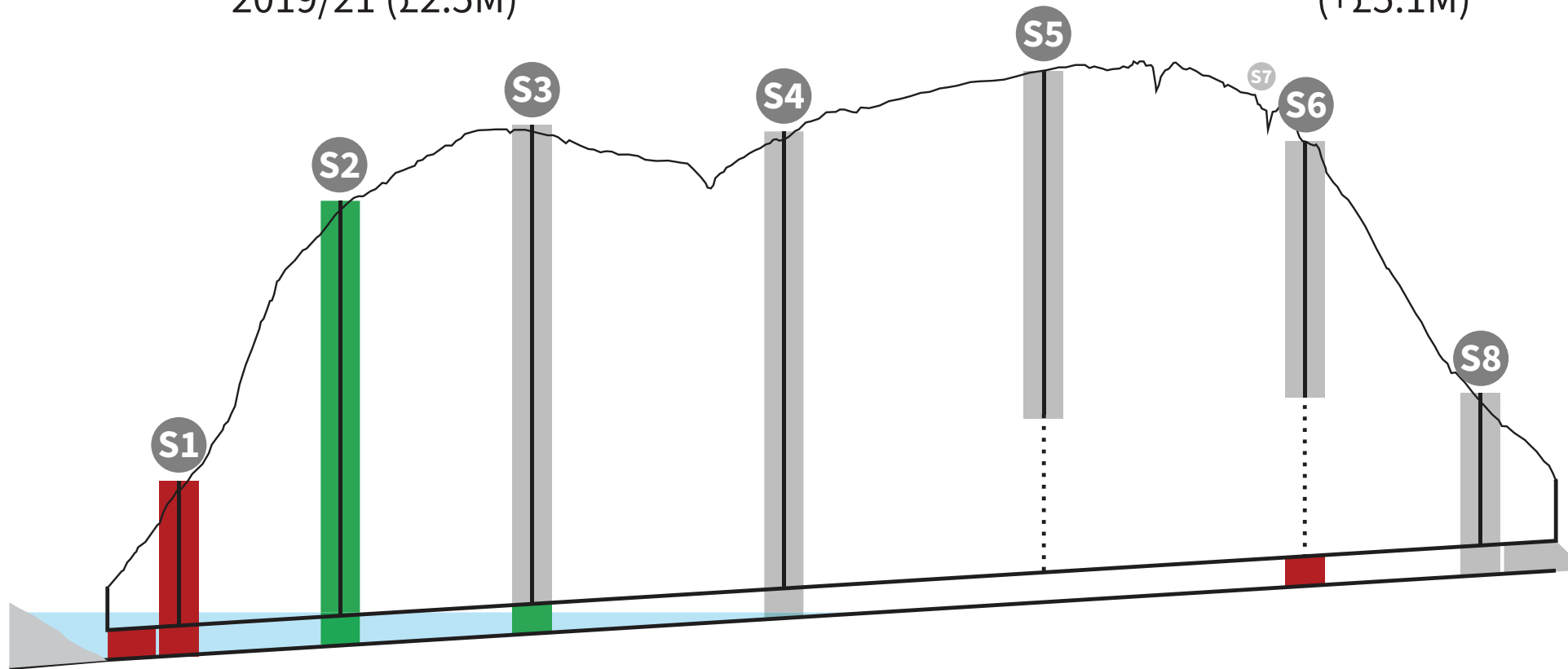
South end of tunnel now unmaintainable due to NH's failure to pay £50 annual rent for three years, resulting in loss of lease



Landowner happy to facilitate dewatering arrangement at no cost **IF** the tunnel is repurposed

Abandonment cost

- Suboptimal 'removable' abandonment from 2019/21 (£2.5M)
- 2025 abandonment proposal (+£7.5M)
- 'Full/proper' abandonment (+£5.1M)



+£12.6M to abandon tunnel 'properly'

Maintenance

“The alternative of continued maintenance and safety costs, and potentially incurring similar costs to those we already have in the past, without a clear plan to make use of the tunnel as an active travel route does not, in my view, provide value for money to the taxpayer.

Minister Lilian Greenwood MP

£7.3M spent on 2018-21 works

Provides stability of shafts (key risk) for 60-120 years

£250K repairs every 10 years?

Would take 300 years to spend £7.5M abandonment funds

(Section south of No.4 Shaft cannot be maintained)

National Highways

“We’re weak when it comes to tunnels”

Fiona Smith: NH’s Senior HRE Engineer (2016?)

AMCO·GIFFEN

Appointed framework contractor with Queensbury Tunnel in mind

Specialist tunnel contractor - multiple projects for Network Rail

Reputation for being commercially “aggressive”

Whistleblower: former AmcoGiffen manager

- ▶ AmcoGiffen’s general approach to NH
- ▶ Cheaper to repair Queensbury Tunnel

Manchester shaft collapse

Now cited by NH to create sense of peril at Queensbury
No mention of collapse in Jacobs' 2016 Options Report
Report is not clear on impact of shaft collapse



Whistleblower: former AmcoGiffen manager

 Exploiting Manchester tunnel shaft collapse

Benefit comparison

“This government has made its priorities clear: we must focus expenditure on initiatives that improve people’s lives in tangible ways.”

Minister Lilian Greenwood MP



Zero social/economic benefit

£15M spent on tunnel since 2018

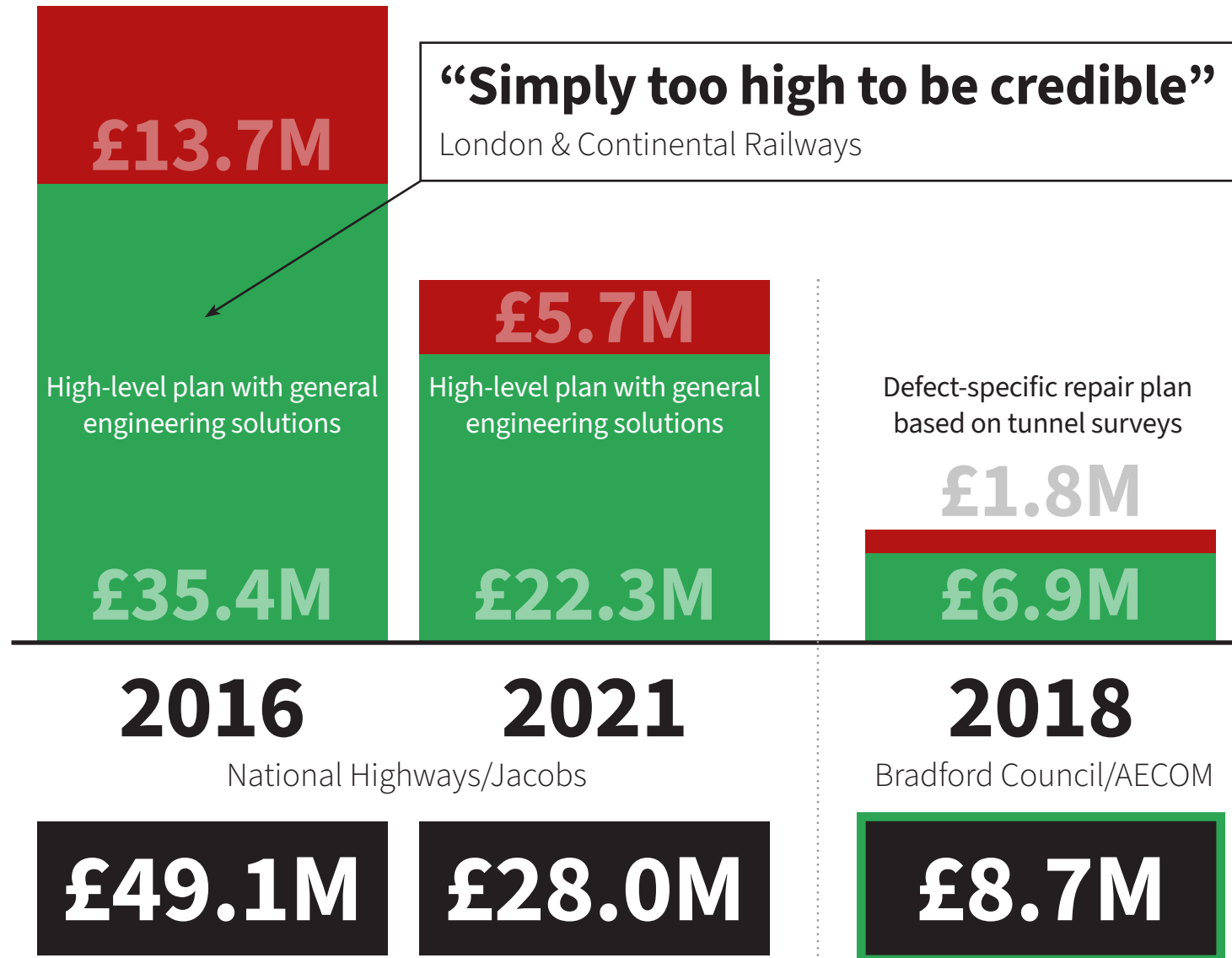


£3 benefits per £1 spent

High value for money

(£4 benefits if tunnel repaired proportionately)

Tunnel repair costs (+inflation)



Surface active travel route

“there are less costly greenway options which do not use the tunnel...and that these options would provide the same or similar active travel benefits”

Minister Lilian Greenwood MP

Only **ONE** alternative route bypasses the tunnel:

“constrained highway conditions”

“extremely challenging to deliver”

“extended or steep gradients”

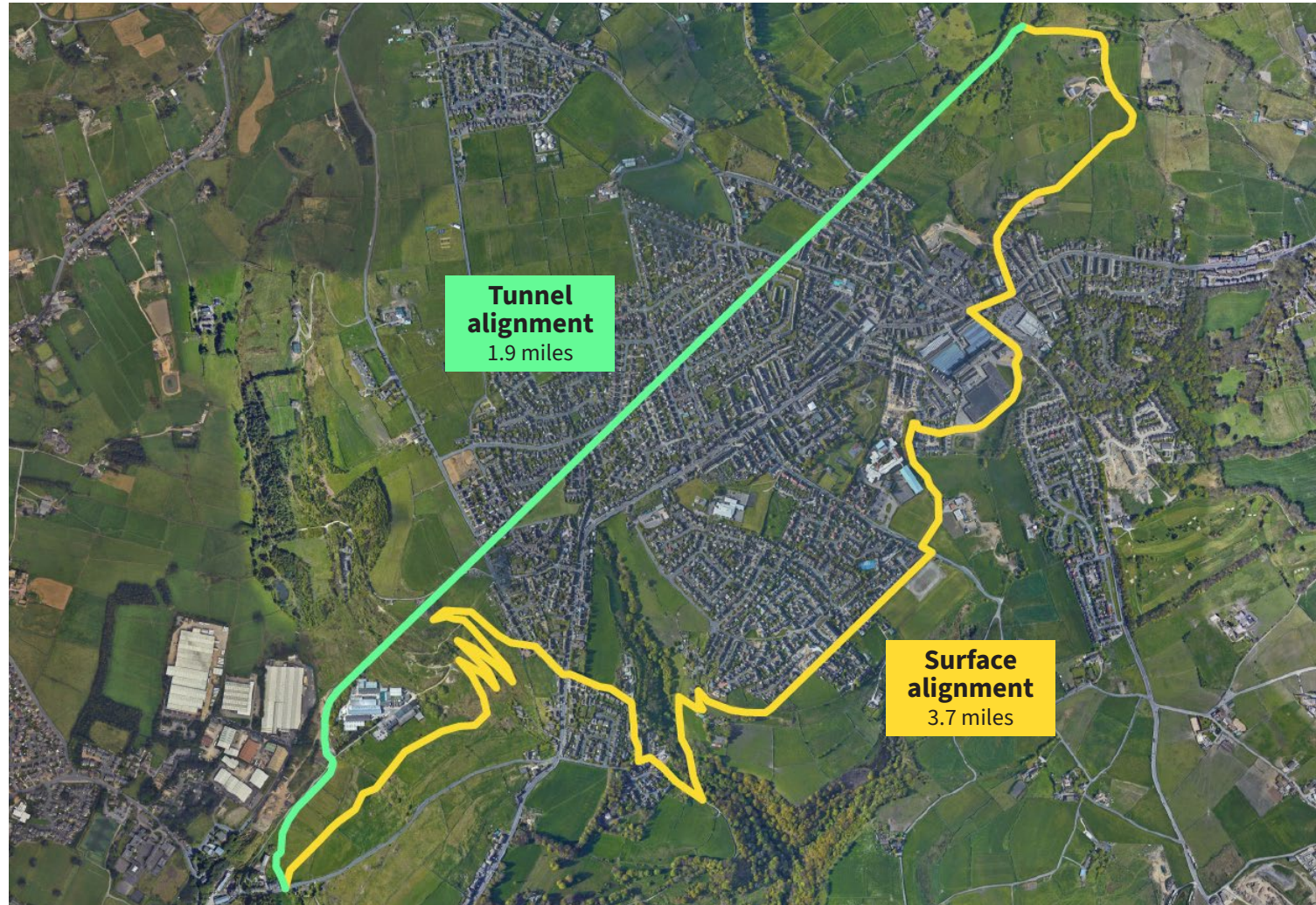
“highly compromised”

Sustrans (Walk Wheel Cycle Trust)

NOT cheaper if tunnel abandonment costs included

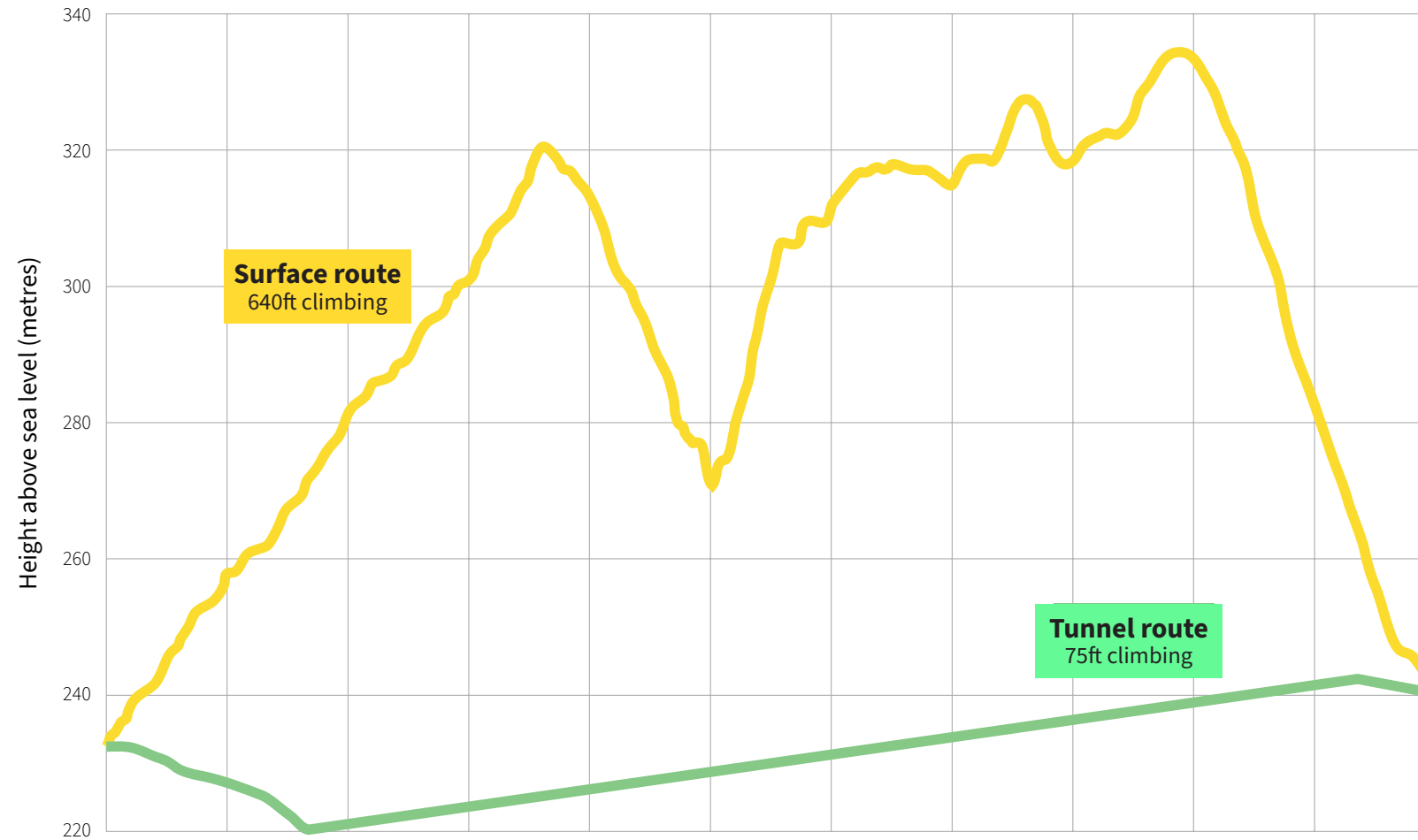
Surface active travel route

Route map

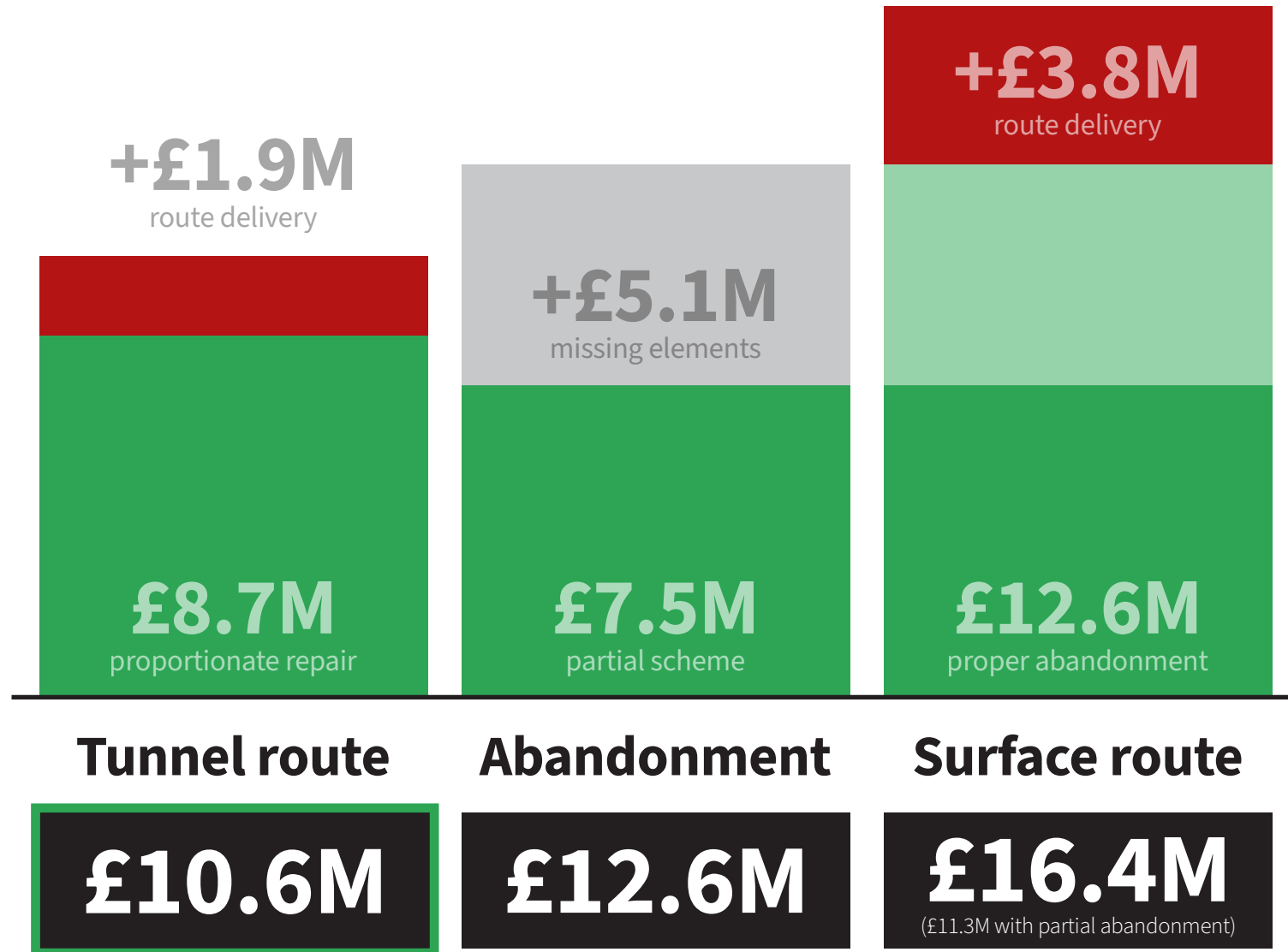


Surface active travel route

Gradient profile



Cost comparison



Poor political optics

Tunnel risks/repair costs have been exaggerated and repurposing benefits hidden/played down

Abandonment/repurposing costs of similar order

Misrepresentations and unsustainable claims make Ministers look foolish

Opportunity to invest positively in communities

Chosen to invest wastefully in destruction

More cause for electorate dismay