

# SAVE QUEENSBURY TUNNEL

Issue 1 | March 2026



## Value for the taxpayer's money

### Exaggerated repair cost

National Highways claims it would cost £30M to make Queensbury Tunnel greenway-ready, based on a 2021 figure of £22.3M for a gold-plated repair. But Bradford Council commissioned AECOM to produce a defect-specific repair plan in 2018. This was costed at £6.9M, or around £8.7M today: that's on a par with or cheaper than abandonment.



### Understated abandonment cost

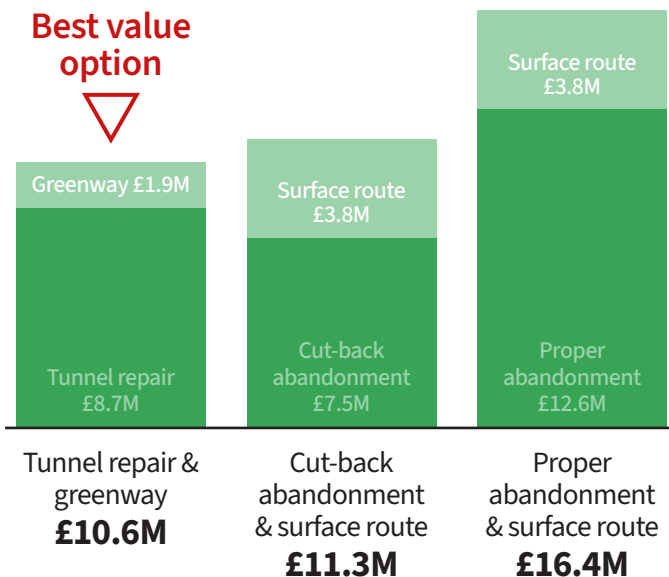
National Highways only plans to infill 6% of the tunnel, leaving the rest to collapse beneath Queensbury. The abandonment scheme detailed in its 2019 planning application would cost around £12.6M today. But the company is now proposing a cut-back version costing £7.5M by ignoring its duty of care to the public at the tunnel's south end.

### Government's plan offers worst value

The abandonment scheme authorised by Ministers delivers no public benefit. Yet, according to a study by Sustrans (now the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust), reopening the tunnel as part of a greenway network connecting Bradford and Keighley with Halifax, would deliver £3 in social, economic and tourism benefits for every £1 invested: that's higher value for money than most road schemes.

### A surface route is more expensive

Ministers claim there are "less costly greenway options which do not use the tunnel". This is nonsense. Between Holmfield and Queensbury - where the tunnel is - there is only one alternative: a surface route developed by Sustrans, mostly for comparison purposes. At £3.8M, delivery is double the £1.9M cost of the tunnel greenway.



### Unattractive route offers lower benefits

Anyone who knows the area understands a surface route could never deliver "the same or similar active travel benefits" as the tunnel greenway, as Ministers claim. The tunnel route is 1.9 miles long and only climbs 75 feet. The surface route is 3.7 miles long - almost twice the distance - and climbs 640 feet up steep, extended gradients. It crosses and partly runs on congested A-roads, including through a busy junction. Sustrans describes it as "highly compromised"; it would be neither safe nor attractive for most users, with considerable delivery challenges and substantially lower benefits than a tunnel greenway.