# Hammersmith Flyover to be replaced by ambitious tunnel to reconnect communities and boost development



Hammersmith and Fulham Council is considering a major transformation of the Hammersmith Flyover, proposing to demolish the 1960s structure and replace it with a tunnel, often referred to as a "flyunder." This ambitious plan, outlined in the council’s Local Plan and recent draft documents, aims to reconnect communities severed by the flyover, improve urban aesthetics, and facilitate substantial development in the area. The council anticipates that the proposal will be submitted for public consultation following upcoming cabinet approval, with a target for adoption of the plan by November 2027.

The flyover, which first opened in 1961, was originally constructed to ease traffic congestion; however, it has since been widely criticised for its detrimental impact on Hammersmith’s urban fabric. It has been described as an "eyesore and physical barrier," cutting off the town centre from the River Thames, disrupting the historic Victorian street layout, and contributing to significant noise and pollution challenges. Reflecting this perspective, Councillor Nicholas Botterill has previously labelled the flyover a "hangover from another era," advocating for its removal to dramatically improve the quality of life for residents. The proposed tunnel is intended to reduce through traffic, improve pedestrian and cyclist safety—especially in links to the riverside—and open up land currently occupied by the elevated road for new development.

The council's vision is far-reaching. The project forms part of a 15-year council strategy to revitalise Hammersmith Town Centre, including plans to construct nearly 3,000 new homes and transform parts of the area with innovative projects such as a "Hammersmith High-line," inspired by New York’s elevated park, to invigorate public spaces. The proposal, which is estimated to cost around £811 million, is dependent on collaborative efforts with Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA). The council is examining funding mechanisms that include monetising the land freed up by removing the flyover, effectively leveraging urban regeneration to finance the substantial infrastructure investment.

Despite these plans, Transport for London currently has no formal intention to replace the flyover. A TfL spokesperson confirmed the organisation’s openness to discussions, emphasising that local plans represent long-term visions from boroughs rather than approved projects. TfL’s past interventions on the flyover, such as the comprehensive resurfacing and bearing replacements completed in 2015, have aimed to extend the structure’s operational life and enhance safety without committing to a full replacement. The transport authority, however, acknowledges that any future replacement would require funding tied to wider redevelopment.

Earlier studies have highlighted the complexity such an undertaking would entail. A feasibility evaluation conducted in 2013-14 revealed that constructing a tunnel could cause significant traffic disruption, potentially lasting 18 months—which is half of the total construction time. The council must weigh these temporary impacts against the alternative of doing nothing, which would still necessitate ongoing and disruptive flyover maintenance.

Policy documents, such as those governing the A4 corridor redevelopment, underscore objectives beyond mere structural replacement. These policies demand that any new tunnel solution should not impair traffic flow on this vital strategic route and should enhance the safety and quality of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The ambition is to deliver social, environmental, and economic benefits, knitting communities back together and fostering sustainable urban growth.

In summary, the proposed removal of the Hammersmith Flyover and its replacement with a tunnel is a cornerstone of Hammersmith and Fulham Council’s strategic urban renewal ambitions. While the project promises to reshape the town centre by improving connectivity, opening land for housing, and cutting pollution, its delivery hinges on extensive stakeholder collaboration, sophisticated funding approaches, and careful management of construction impacts. The next steps in the plan’s approval and public consultation will be critical in shaping the future of this West London landmark.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/hammersmith-flyover-could-be-demolished-and-replaced-with-a-tunnel-under-new-plans/), [[4]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/hamflyunder014.htm)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/hammersmith-flyover-could-be-demolished-and-replaced-with-a-tunnel-under-new-plans/), [[5]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-25897081)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad010.htm), [[3]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad009.htm), [[4]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/hamflyunder014.htm)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/hammersmith-flyover-could-be-demolished-and-replaced-with-a-tunnel-under-new-plans/), [[6]](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2015/april/hammersmith-flyover-carriageway-resurfacing-completed-early)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/hammersmith-flyover-could-be-demolished-and-replaced-with-a-tunnel-under-new-plans/), [[5]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-25897081)
* Paragraph 6 – [[7]](https://kirby.wa-insight.com/planning-policy-map/hammersmith-fulham-hra2-a4-hammersmith-flyover-hammersmith-gyratory-and-adjoining-land)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://highways-news.com/hammersmith-flyover-could-be-demolished-and-replaced-with-a-tunnel-under-new-plans/), [[2]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad010.htm), [[3]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad009.htm), [[4]](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/hamflyunder014.htm)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://highways-news.com/hammersmith-flyover-could-be-demolished-and-replaced-with-a-tunnel-under-new-plans/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad010.htm> - In July 2024, Hammersmith and Fulham Council approved a new planning document that includes the potential replacement of the 1960s Hammersmith Flyover with a tunnel, known as a 'flyunder'. This plan aims to enhance the town centre by removing the flyover, thereby improving the urban landscape and facilitating land development. The proposal also envisions the construction of nearly 3,000 new homes and the creation of a 'Hammersmith High-line', similar to New York's elevated park, to revitalise the area. The council intends to collaborate with Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to realise this vision. The project is estimated to cost £811 million, with the council considering funding options, including monetising the land freed up by the flyover's removal. The plan is part of a broader strategy to rejuvenate Hammersmith Town Centre over the next decade. ([fulhamsw6.com](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad010.htm?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad009.htm> - In July 2024, Hammersmith and Fulham Council's cabinet considered a proposal to replace the 1960s Hammersmith Flyover with a tunnel, referred to as a 'flyunder'. This initiative is part of the council's long-term plans for Hammersmith Town Centre, which also include building nearly 3,000 new flats. The 'flyunder' aims to remove the existing flyover, described as an 'eyesore and physical barrier', to enhance the townscape, reduce through traffic, and free up land for development. The council plans to partner with Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to implement this project. The feasibility and funding of the 'flyunder' remain subjects of discussion, with some stakeholders expressing concerns about its financial and logistical viability. ([fulhamsw6.com](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/ldrshfroad009.htm?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/hamflyunder014.htm> - In January 2024, Hammersmith & Fulham Council proposed demolishing the Hammersmith Flyover and replacing it with a tunnel, known as a 'flyunder', as part of its vision for the area over the next decade. The council is consulting on its Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which outlines plans for Hammersmith Town Centre up to 2035. The 'flyunder' is central to this vision, aiming to remove the flyover, described as an 'eyesore and physical barrier', to improve the townscape and facilitate land development. The project is estimated to cost £811 million, and the council is seeking to collaborate with Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to advance the scheme. The proposal is part of a broader strategy to regenerate Hammersmith, including building new homes and enhancing public spaces. ([fulhamsw6.com](https://www.fulhamsw6.com/page/shared/common/hamflyunder014.htm?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-25897081> - In 2014, Hammersmith and Fulham Council sought residents' views on replacing the Hammersmith Flyover with a 'flyunder'. The council described the 50-year-old flyover as a 'terrible act of vandalism' and noted escalating maintenance costs. The proposed tunnel would reconnect the town centre to the river and improve the environment. Councillor Nicholas Botterill stated that the flyover was a 'hangover from another era' and that replacing it with a tunnel would 'dramatically improve the quality of life for thousands of west Londoners'. The council considered selling highway land for development to fund the scheme. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-25897081?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2015/april/hammersmith-flyover-carriageway-resurfacing-completed-early> - In April 2015, Transport for London (TfL) announced the early completion of carriageway resurfacing on the Hammersmith Flyover. The restoration was part of TfL's Road Modernisation Plan, representing a significant investment in London's roads. The work involved lifting the flyover to replace bearings, a process that required precise engineering to ensure the structure's stability. TfL informed and updated local residents and stakeholders about the refurbishment. The restoration aimed to extend the flyover's lifespan and improve safety. TfL continued to support Hammersmith and Fulham Council in developing more detailed proposals for a new road tunnel beneath Hammersmith, acknowledging that any plan to replace the flyover would need to be funded through the wider redevelopment of the area. ([tfl.gov.uk](https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2015/april/hammersmith-flyover-carriageway-resurfacing-completed-early?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://kirby.wa-insight.com/planning-policy-map/hammersmith-fulham-hra2-a4-hammersmith-flyover-hammersmith-gyratory-and-adjoining-land> - The Hammersmith & Fulham Local Plan includes Policy HRA2 A4, which outlines the council's intention to work with Transport for London (TfL) and other stakeholders to replace the Hammersmith Flyover and sections of the A4 with a tunnel. This initiative aims to release land for development, contributing to the social, environmental, and economic regeneration of Hammersmith Town Centre. The policy specifies that any proposal to remove the flyover and replace it with a tunnel should result in the release of land formerly occupied by the flyover for redevelopment, ensure no detrimental impact on the flow of traffic on the strategic route, and develop and improve the quality and safety of pedestrian and cycle routes, particularly those connecting Hammersmith Town Centre to the riverside. ([kirby.wa-insight.com](https://kirby.wa-insight.com/planning-policy-map/hammersmith-fulham-hra2-a4-hammersmith-flyover-hammersmith-gyratory-and-adjoining-land?utm_source=openai))