



Below is a full summary of the coverage so far of the announcement of The London Tunnels project across international, national, consumer and trade publications.

National Coverage

- *Evening Standard* [City of London approves plan for Kingsway Tunnels underground attraction](#)
- *City A.M.* [Wartime tunnels under the City of London will be transformed into a cultural site – if Camden agrees too](#)
- *Euronews* [Is James Bond taking over London's secret WWII underground tunnels?](#)
- *LondonLovesBusiness* [Plans to transform subterranean wartime Kingsway Tunnels site into cultural attraction approved](#)
- *Londonist* [Secretive Central London Wartime Tunnels Could Open To The Public](#)
- *Ian Visits* [Cold War tunnels under Holborn approved to become a tourist attraction](#)
- *Time Out* [James Bond Getting Underground Museum in Central London](#)
- *Secret London* [Secret Tunnels To Be Turned Into London's Next Tourist Attraction](#)
- *Evening Standard* [James Bond exhibition planned for London's secret wartime tunnels](#)

Built Environment Coverage

- *CoStar* [City Corporation Backs Plans To Turn London Wartime Shelters Into Cultural Attraction](#)
- *Building* [Wilkinson Eyre's plans to redevelop spy tunnels into visitor attraction get City approval](#)
- *BE News* [London tunnel tourist attraction receives green light from planners](#)
- *Building Design* [Wilkinson Eyre's plans to redevelop spy tunnels into visitor attraction get City approval](#)
- *Architects' Journal* [WilkinsonEyre's £220m plan to restore secret wartime tunnels wins approval](#)
- *Construction Enquirer* [£220m plan to restore secret wartime tunnels approved](#)
- *Tunnels and Tunnelling* [City Corporation approves redevelopment of London war tunnels](#)
- *EG* [London Tunnels project gets go-ahead](#)
- *The Planner* [Plans to redevelop secret tunnels into London visitor attraction set for approval](#)
- *City Planning News* – email newsletter (cutting attached)

Publication: Evening Standard
Date: 10 June 2024
Circulation: 11,900,000

The Standard

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NEWS | LONDON

For your eyes only: James Bond exhibition planned for London's secret wartime tunnels

007 exhibit part of planned transformation of Kingsway Tunnels under High Holborn into underground museum



HOW THE ATTRACTION MAY LOOK, WITH INSET IMAGES OF THE TUNNELS IN USE DURING THE WAR AND DANIEL CRAIG AS 007

ES COMPOSITE

An exhibition about James Bond could be among the first attractions in a planned underground museum in central London.

It is part of a project to transform the Kingsway Tunnels, which run under High Holborn, into a cultural space after developers applied to the City of London for planning permission. The tunnels, originally built beneath Chancery Lane Tube station to shelter thousands of Londoners from the Blitz during the war, cover about 7,000 square metres.

As the threat of mass enemy bombing receded, they were used by the wartime government as a secret telecommunications centre and base for the Special Operations Executive, which parachuted agents behind enemy lines after being instructed by Winston Churchill to “set Europe ablaze”.

They were then taken over by British Telecom and closed in the early Eighties. Plans submitted by London Tunnels Ltd include demolishing an office block and an empty building in Furnival Street which would be rebuilt and linked together to form the entrance to the site as well as having a gift shop and office space.

Documents prepared for the planning committee predict the tunnels could hold hundreds of visitors who could learn about the site’s “influence on wider historical events in London, including the Second World War and the Cold War” while some parts of the tunnels “may be used for medium term exhibitions on associated themes such as James Bond, a subject deriving from Ian Fleming’s reference to the tunnels in his first book of the secret agent”.

Developers also say they are looking at “partnerships with historical and heritage institutions within London”, including the British Museum, the Imperial War Museum and the Museum of London.

An application has also gone to planners at Camden council as the tunnels cross the boundaries of the two local authorities. Officials have recommended that the City grants planning permission, subject to various conditions.

If approved, the tunnels would be the latest cultural site in the City, which is increasingly marketing itself as a centre for the arts and entertainment as it diversifies from its traditional reliance on financial services.

Other plans at various stages of development include the Museum of London at West Smithfield, a migration museum at Tower Hill and a visitor attraction on the site of the original Roman forum.

Publication: Construction Enquirer
Date: 12 June 2024
Circulation: 1,600,000

Construction Enquirer



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News

£220m plan to restore secret wartime tunnels approved

Aaron Morby 38 mins ago

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Deep-level underground wartime shelter tunnels in London's High Holborn area are set to become the Capital's latest tourist attraction.



City of London Corporation planners have given the thumbs up to a £220m scheme to convert the warren of tunnels into a visitor and cultural attraction.

In developing the underground site, buildings at 38-41 Fumival Street would be combined into a single structure, with the ground floor used as the main entrance the tunnels.



Works include demolition of the existing buildings at Fumival Street to enable construction of a new five-storey entrance building with a three-storey basement.

The Kingsway Exchange Tunnels tunnels, an intentionally misleading name to hide its true location under Chancery Lane station, were bought from BT by Australian fund manager Angus Murray last year. His private equity-backed developer London Tunnels Ltd is bringing forward the scheme.

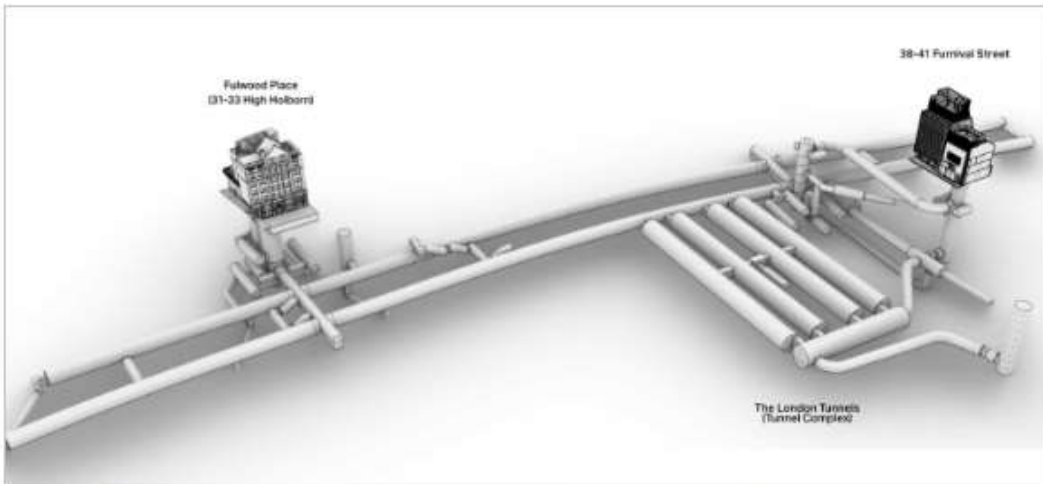
The 8,000 sqm of passageways, located 40m below High Holborn, were originally constructed as a deep-level shelter for 10,000 people during the Second World War. The Tunnels were kept secret for nearly 60 years under the Official Secrets Act and were once home to the Special Operations Executive (SOE), an offshoot of MI6.

007 creator Ian Fleming worked in the tunnels as liaison officer to the SOE and in his first Bond book "Casino Royale" referenced them as the location for M's Q Branch gadget development labs.



Heritage Exhibition will reveal and celebrate the history of the tunnels and their role in WWII and the Cold War

By the mid-1950s the tunnels became home to a protected telephone exchange in the Cold War era, the 'hotline' between the White House and the Kremlin ran directly through the exchange and was used during the Cuban Missile Crisis.



£140m will be spent restoring and preserving the Tunnels, as a unique and valuable piece of the Country's historical heritage

The London Tunnels project team includes architect Wilkinson Eyre, project manager Gardiner & Theobald, and WSP providing all engineering disciplines.



Cultural Exhibition space for contemporary artists to exhibit fully immersive digital artworks and installations.

The visitor attraction will reflect past uses and contain an immersive view of the universe while also containing a plush deep underground bar.



Deepest bar in UK, celebrating what used to be the staff canteen when the tunnels were in operation.

The centre is expected to bring an estimated £60-85m of extra footfall spending to the local area, per year.

Publication: City Planning News
Date: 12 June 2024



Today, the City Corporation's Planning Applications Sub-Committee met to discuss two schemes, both of which were approved.

Firstly, members approved plans by Mactaggart and Partners for the redevelopment of 1-8 Long Lane to create a new hotel. The proposed hotel (pictured) will be operated by The Resident, and will provide 125-130 "apartment style" guest rooms, cafe and retail spaces at ground floor level and a pocket park space for visitors to enjoy. The plans will also significantly upgrade the building to become more sustainable and meet modern EPC requirements. The investment in hotel space reflects the changing demands of office space in the City, and was described as a "very welcome" addition to the City that supports the "Destination City" agenda.

An application to transform deep underground London tunnels to create a unique tourist attraction and museum was also approved. The Kingsway Exchange tunnels have remained a hidden London secret since WWII, and are shrouded in a fascinating history with connection to [the Special Operation Executive, Winston Churchill's "special army" that was the forerunner of MI6](#). The attraction would include state-of-the-art interactive features and tell the story of 'The Blitz', providing a unique educational and tourism experience, with a vision to become an "iconic" London destination on par with The London Eye.

The proposed demolition and reconstruction of buildings at 38-41 Funnival Street would create the principal entrance to the tunnels. As the proposed attraction crosses a boundary to the Borough of Camden, a duplicate application has been submitted to Camden Council.

In other property news in the City, architect Fletcher Priest has revealed its drawings for Axa IM Alt's tower scheme in Bishopsgate. Read this and more news stories below.

This newsletter is provided by our partners at [Concilio](#).

Andrea Williams

Director, Policy & Communications

City Property Association

citypropertyassociation.com



1 - 8 Long Lane, London, EC1A 9HF

Demolition of existing buildings to basement level and construction of a nine storey plus basement level building for hotel use (Class C1) with retail (Class E(a) / E(b)) use at part ground and basement levels together with ancillary cycle parking, associated servicing, plant, amenity terraces, landscaping and other associated works.

Agent: DP9

Applicant: Mactaggart Third Fund and Ian Mactacgart Trust

Committee Papers: [Here](#)

Decision: Approved

Planning Committee discussion

Following a discussion on servicing, construction management and conditions for taxi drop off and parking, the application was approved with 11 votes in favour and five against.

Member John Edwards stated that the scheme was a "very welcome" proposal for the City that supported the Destination City agenda, particularly in relation to its decision not to include an in-house restaurant, which he praised for helping to increase footfall for food and beverage outlets in the local community.



38 - 41 Furnival Street, London EC4A 1JQ and 31 - 33 High Holborn WC1V 6AX

Change of use of existing deep level tunnels (Sui Generis) to visitor and cultural attraction (Use Class F1(b)(c)), including bar (Sui Generis); demolition and reconstruction of existing building at 38-39 Furnival Street; redevelopment of 40-41 Furnival Street, for the principal visitor attraction pedestrian entrance at ground floor, with ancillary retail at first and second floor levels and ancillary offices at third and fourth levels, excavation of additional basement levels at 40-41 Furnival Street and 38-39 Furnival Street, and widening of lift shaft at 38-39 Furnival Street; creation of new, pedestrian entrance at 31-33 High Holborn, to provide secondary visitor attraction entrance (including principal bar entrance), deepening of lift shaft at 31-33 High Holborn; provision of ancillary cycle parking, substation, servicing and plant, and other associated works (Duplicate application submitted to the London Borough of Camden as the site area extends across the borough boundary). Re-consultation: Due to amended details (Duplicate application submitted to the London Borough of Camden as the site area extends across the borough boundary).

Agent: Montagu Evans LLP

Applicant: The London Tunnels PLC

Committee Papers: [Here](#)

Decision: Approved

Planning Committee discussion

The Committee appreciated the public benefits this application would bring to both the "Destination City" agenda and educational opportunities for schoolchildren.

After debate on health and safety procedures, servicing, mitigating the impact on neighbouring amenity and on local transport networks due to increased visitor numbers, the Committee was overall impressed with the application and it was unanimously approved.

Shravan Joshi, Chairman of the City of London Corporation, has [said](#): "*I am incredibly excited by these plans and hope that LB Camden feels the same way. At the City of London, we are a thriving, sustainable Square Mile, through a combination of business growth and celebration of our local heritage. The new and exciting heritage, arts and culture activity that this scheme has the potential to deliver, will enliven the local streets and venues.*"

The future of the application now depends on approval by Camden for the part of the site at High Holborn. It is expected to go to Committee in Camden soon.

City of London News

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Circulation: 500,000



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NEWS

Wilkinson Eyre's plans to redevelop spy tunnels into visitor attraction get City approval

By Ariana Hashtudi | 12 June 2024

Scheme still needs Camden green light for final sign off

Wilkinson Eyre's plans to redevelop a network of Second World War tunnels 40m beneath central London into a visitor attraction have been approved by City of London planners.

The proposals still need the green light from neighbouring borough, Camden, which is due to vote on the plans on 11 July.

The scheme will convert the tunnel complex, which extends to more than 8,000 sq m, into a visitor and cultural attraction that is expected to draw in up to two million visitors a year.

The buildings at 38-41 Fournival Street will be integrated, with the ground floor containing an area for exhibitions and heritage experience that reflects the history of the City.

The scheme will also include an underground bar within the Camden area of the site.

Known as the Kingsway Exchange, the tunnels were built in the early 1940s as shelter for Londoners during the Blitz. It later served as the headquarters of a covert Special Operations Executive branch that employed professional saboteurs to aid the British war effort.

The complex continued in use during the Cold War and even underwent an expansion that created London's deepest licensed bar. Author Ian Fleming worked in the tunnels in the 1940s, and they were the inspiration for James Bond's "Q Branch".

Under Wilkinson Eyre's plans, which have been designed for Australian banker Angus Murray, a vacant building and office building at Fournival street will be demolished and reconstructed in order to link the two buildings internally and to use the ground floor as the main entrance to the attraction.

The demolition of these buildings has been deemed "acceptable" by the City's planning officers.

The new buildings will deliver a retail area, including a gift shop and workspace for staff.

Historic England noted that the scheme sits near Barnards Inn, where solicitors traditionally practiced and underwent training until the 19th century. The body said that scheme does not physically interfere with the inn but recommended that extra care should be made to maintain ease of access to the building.



The tunnels are expected to bring in two million visitors a year

Publication: The Standard, Online
Date: 11 June 2024
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The
Standard

CULTURE

City of London approves plan for Kingsway Tunnels underground attraction

The plans now need the go-ahead from neighbouring Camden Council



HOW THE KINGSWAY TUNNELS COULD LOOK

LONDON TUNNELS LTD

ROBERT DEX, ARTS CORRESPONDENT
49 MINUTES AGO

The transformation of a set of tunnels under High Holborn into a tourist attraction is underway after the plans were approved by the City of London.

The Kingsway Tunnels, originally built beneath Chancery Lane tube station to shelter thousands of Londoners from the Blitz during World War II, cover around 7,000 square metres.

As the threat of mass enemy bombing receded, they were used by the wartime government as a secret telecommunications centre and base for the Special Operations Executive (SOE) which parachuted agents behind enemy lines after being instructed by Winston Churchill to “set Europe ablaze”.



THE KINGSWAY TUNNELS WHILE USED BY BT

GETTY IMAGES

They were then taken over by British Telecom and closed in the early 1980s.

Plans submitted by London Tunnels Ltd include demolishing an office block and an empty building on Furnival Street which would be re-built and linked together to form the entrance to the site as well as having a gift shop and office space.

Members on the City of London Corporation's Planning and Transportation Committee approved the plans on Tuesday, but because the site crosses over the city boundary to Camden it will also need their approval before work starts.

Committee chairman Shравan Joshi said: "I am incredibly excited by these plans and hope that LB Camden feels the same way. At the City of London, we are delivering a thriving, sustainable Square Mile, through a combination of business growth and celebration of our local heritage.

"The new and exciting heritage, arts and culture activity that this scheme has the potential to deliver, will enliven the local streets and venues.

"As we work to transform the Square Mile into a seven-day-a-week destination, developments like the one proposed for the Kingsway Tunnel site will become global attractions for a variety of visitors, which are projected to rise substantially."



JAMES BOND AND THE PROPOSED KINGSWAY TUNNELS

ES COMPOSITE

Among the proposals for the tunnels is an exhibition dedicated to James Bond as well as subjects including World War II and the Cold War.