

## What's in Store? updates

Museums love objects. And we love to work with the community to bring their stories to life. To do that, we need space.

### 1. Funding announcement



Following initial funding of £78,952 by The National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop this project over the past year and consult with the community we are excited to now be in a situation where the project can progress to the next phase.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has awarded Newton Abbot Museum £818,653 to create a new accessible state-of-the-art museum store. This will be an interactive space for members of the community to get more involved with behind-the-scenes museum activities. The news was announced at a celebration event of Newton's Place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October, which marked 5 years since the transformation of the derelict Victorian church.

### 2. What is the project going to do?

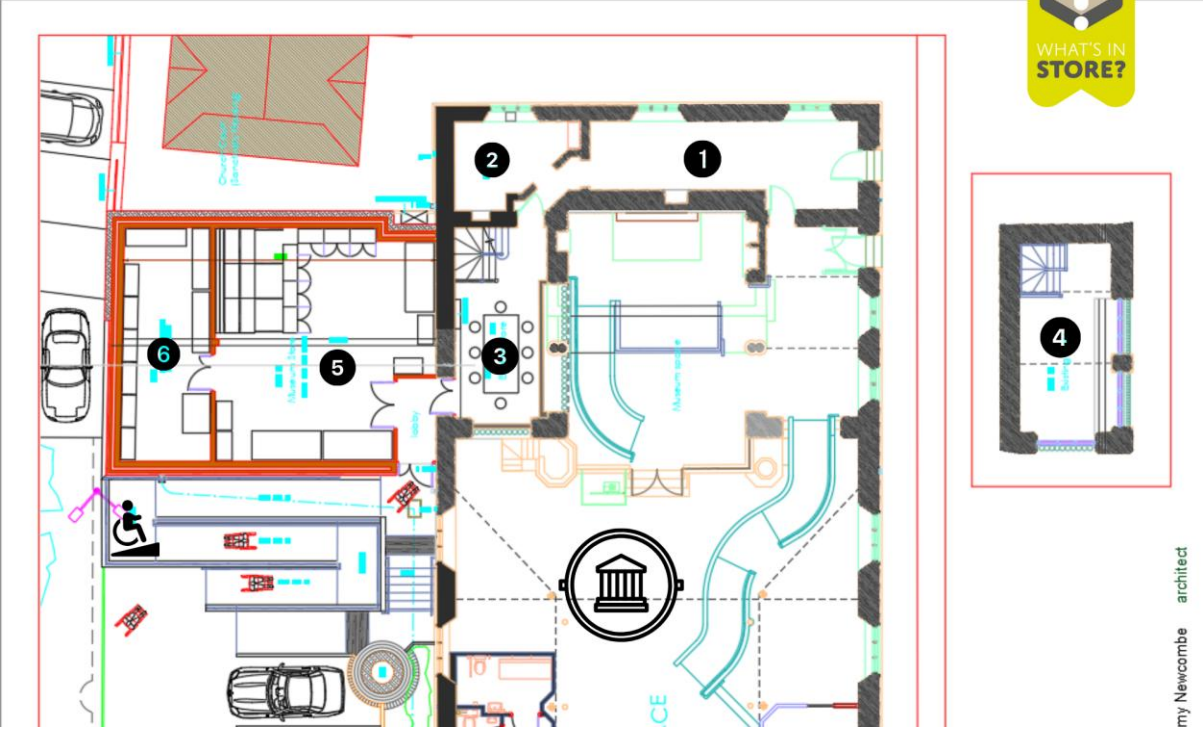
The project will make a fundamental change to the level of care, community access and space provided for stored museum collections by building a single-story extension to the museum, housing an environmentally innovative and accessible collections store. In addition, conditions in the current store will be improved and a community room will be created. With community engagement very much at the heart of this project, an ambitious programme of over 120 engaging behind-the-scenes community activities will be delivered, aiming to engage with 2,500 people.

The three-year project will also provide the museum staff and volunteers with additional workspaces which they desperately need to be able to work on managing, conserving and monitoring the collection. A programme of heritage skills training will support the project and provide opportunities for volunteers and staff to learn new skills. The project will create new employment opportunities.



The new store extension will be cladded with chrome acting as a mirror to reflect the surroundings and to contrast the old of the Grade II listed Victorian church with the new

### Store Floorplan



### 3. Next steps

We are currently completing the 'Permission to Start' forms with the aim for the project to commence in November this year.

#### 3.1 Fundraising

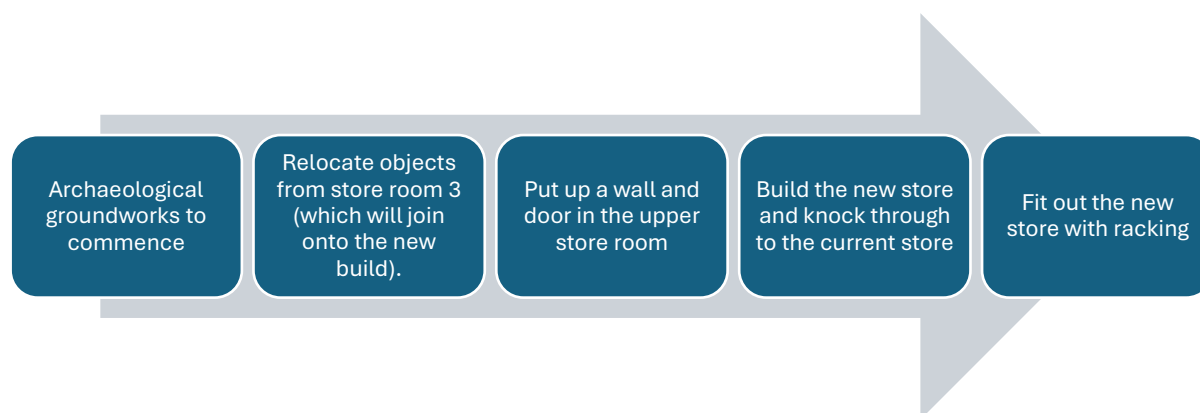
During the development phase the project grew – in terms of the size of the building and the addition of a permanent accessible ramp. This means the project has added an additional £70,001 which needs to be raised.

We have submitted a funding application for this amount to Garfield Weston and are also looking at other funding options. As soon as we have the go ahead to start in November we will be fundraising in the museum and looking at creative ways to do so. Recent museum donations have been earmarked for the project and we are fortunate that an underspend on the museum budget last year has also been put aside to help pay for the shortfall.

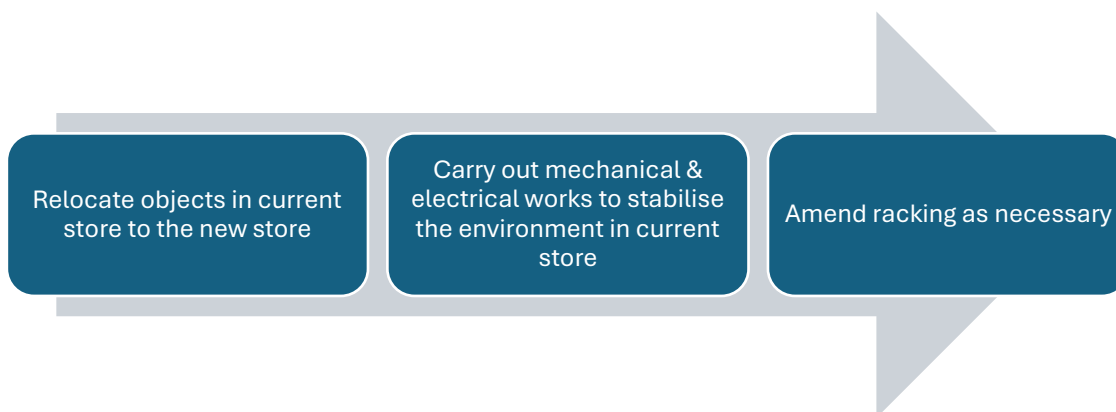
#### 3.2 The build

One of the first tasks will be to tender for the building contractors with the aim for the build itself to commence in April 2026. The building works will be done in two phases.

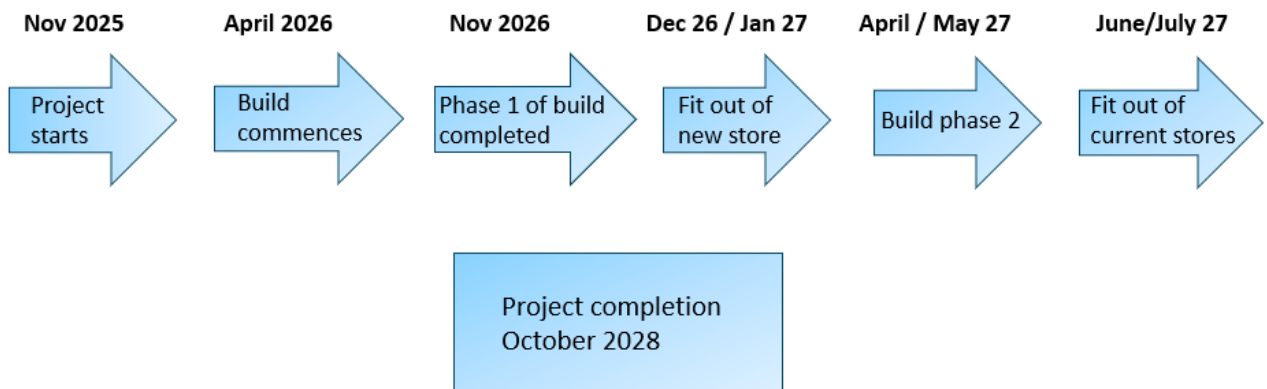
##### Phase 1: new store



##### Phase 2: current store

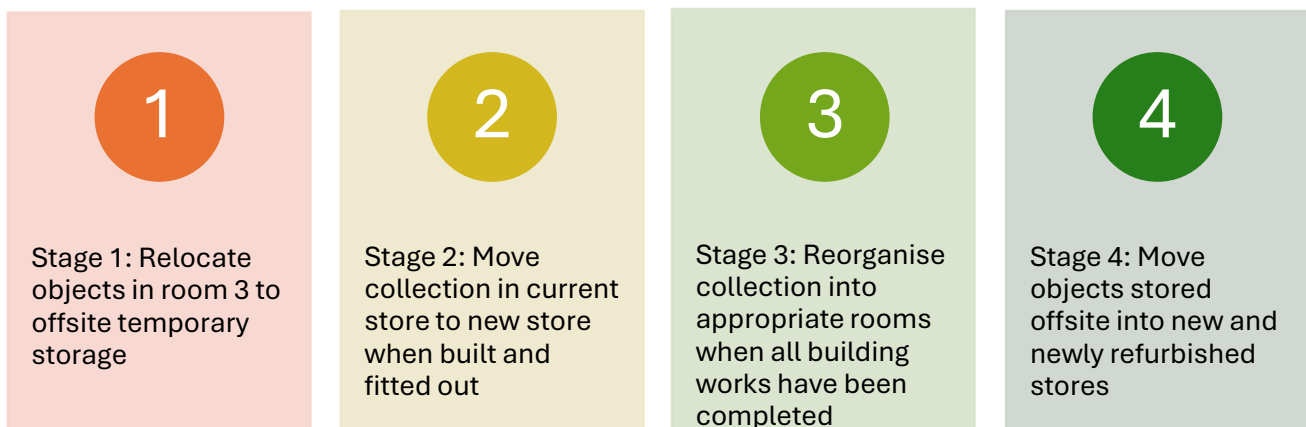


## Build timetable



### 3.3. Stores move

As with the build, the stores move and organisation will happen in stages:



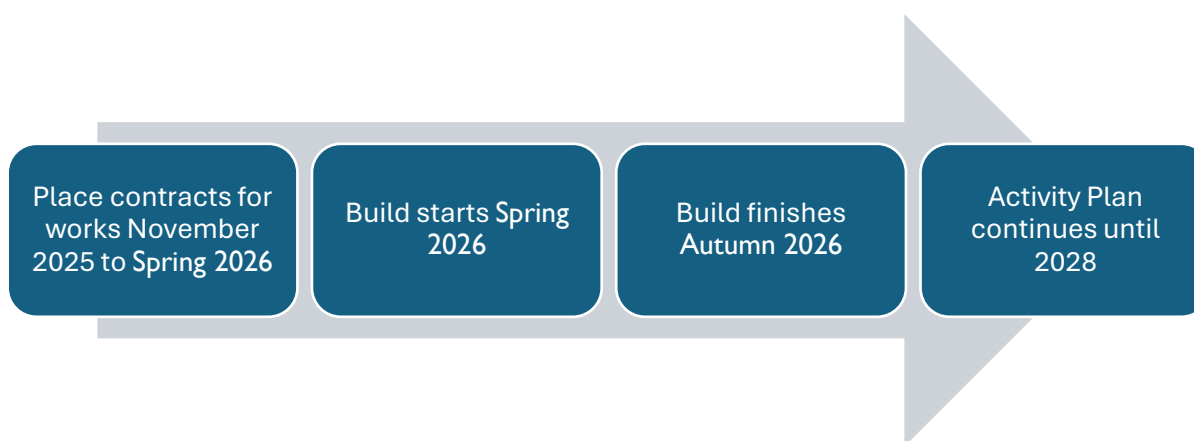
### 3.4 Activities

Throughout the three-year project there will be activities for the community to get involved with before, during and after the build in 5 rounds of delivery and evaluation.

- Activities developed during the Development Phase:
  - Naming the space
  - **'Show and Tell'** - illustrated talks
  - **'Picture This'** - art workshops
  - **'Deep Dive'** - intensive focus & research sessions

- **'Curious Curators'** - young people working as curators
  - **'Conservation in Action'** - conservation demonstrations
  - **'Inside the Store'** - immersive experiences
  - **'My Favourite Things'** - community curation
  - **'What's in the Box?'** - Behind-the-scenes experience
  - Outreach sessions connecting with groups outside the museum space
- End of Project Exhibition inspired by the project
  - Training & development for staff and volunteers

### 3.5 Key milestones



### 3.6 Staffing

Part of the funding awarded is to pay for more staff to work on the project:

**Project Coordinator** – Helen Smith will return to coordinate the project until the build and fit out have been completed and signed off. First year 2.5 days a week going down to 2 days a week.

**Curator Backfill** – Charlotte Dixon will be on maternity leave during the first phase of the build so during this time the Project Coordinator will do an additional half day a week to oversee the build. When Charlotte returns there will be a curator backfill post one day a week so Charlotte can focus on the project.

**Community Engagement Officer** – Kate Green, 3 days a week for 3 years.

**Marketing Consultant** – To be recruited, 1 day a week for 2 years. January 2026 – December 2027.

**Collections Manager** – To be recruited, 3 days a week for 2 years. November 2026 – October 2028.

The Project Board will continue to meet throughout the entirety of the project.