

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report to	County Hall Museum Sub-Committee
Meeting date	09 September 2026
Report author	Dan Sancisi
Agenda item	6.4

Lift Planning Permission Report

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To revisit plans for a lift installation to the first floor of the Museum, as requested by Members, following pre-planning application advice.

2 Summary

- 2.1 Preplanning applications to the Vale and Historic England were conducted between 2021 and 2024, thus receiving guidance and feedback on the viability of gaining planning consent to install a lift to the first floor of the museum.

3 Action required

- 3.1 No action required, report to be noted.

4 Link to strategic plan and objectives

- 4.1 *KO2 To develop a resilient, sustainable town which will provide a home for residents now and in the future.***

4.1.1 The Museum's presence in Abingdon County Hall sustains the condition of the building, maintaining it for future generations, enhancing its town centre context by articulating the history of Abingdon.

4.1.2 Creating lift access to upper floors of the Museum increases inclusivity and makes the Museum more accessible.

- 4.2 *KO4 To work with community partners to support those who are vulnerable and in need and to create opportunities to increase social inclusivity.***

4.2.1 Lift access broadens outreach to less physically able groups who can then take the opportunity to engage with the museum exhibitions, workshops and events.

5 Background

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5.1 Preplanning advice and feasibility study for a new lift:

- 5.2** F10/23 FGAM 14 June 2023 'County Hall proposed new lift' approves budget for extended studies and refers to full council for approval.
- 5.3** T41/23 Town Council 28 June 2023 'Report on a new museum lift' - It was recommended funding for the extended study be approved.
- 5.4** New lift options report, additional access surveys, conservation report all received on 10 October 2023.
- 5.5** 22 March 2024 Historic England letter of pre-application advice received.
- 5.6** Minute F9/24 The committee considered a report from the Museum Manager regarding lift options.
- 5.7** Re item 6.16, if planning permission is received, as long as tangible work begins within three years, the planning permission will remain valid.
- 5.8** The committee agreed that the proposals should be considered at the strategy day as the whole council should be involved given the scale of the project.
- 5.9** The proposal was not discussed at strategy day and no further discussions took place.
- 5.10** Meeting of Museum sub-committee on 4 June 2026 proposed the Museum Manager explore making outline planning applications for a lift to first floor and all floors.

6 Key information and options

6.1 Revisiting the concept of a lift to all floors of the Museum.

- 6.2** Your Officers have been asked by the Museum Sub-Committee to make outline planning applications for a lift to all floors and a second application for a lift to serve basement, pavement, arcade and first floor only.
- 6.3** Initial investigation suggests that an outline planning application must be made in parallel with a listed building consent application.
- 6.4** Such an application requires further liaison with Historic England as per their pre-planning advice letter of 22 March 2024.
- 6.5** Your Officers consulted VOWH Planning who replied;
- 6.6** 'We would not recommend submitting an outline application for works that need listed building consent as we wouldn't be able to validate it. There are times when outline consent is not appropriate and in the case of listed buildings, it would be inappropriate to accept an outline application without an accompanying listed

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building consent.

- 6.7 If you wanted to apply for outline consent, you would need to submit listed building consent with it. But given that the building is Grade I listed we would need a full specification for works with the listed building consent, so there would be no matters left to add to the subsequent reserved matters application. For this reason, we would recommend submitting a FUL application instead.'
- 6.8 Your Officers have obtained a quote for executing a planning application to West Waddy Architects which is attached as [Appendix](#) item6-6.4 1429_2026-06-18_Abingdon County Hall Museum Lift.
- 6.9 Should committee wish to explore this option further estimates can be obtained from two other architects.
- 6.10 Your Officers accept that even with positive statements having been made by Historic England in their pre-planning advice, they may choose to veto the submitted planning application anyway.

7 Climate change/green implications

- 7.1 No additional climate change / green implications to report.

8 Financial/budget implications

- 8.1 There are no additional financial implications regarding the current budget in this report.

9 HR implications

- 9.1 There are no current HR implications.

Dan Sancisi, Museum Manager, 28 August 2026