

**WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE – 3 FEBRUARY 2015**

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**Title:**

**CONVERSION OF PART OF ROWLAND HOUSE, CRANLEIGH**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Stewart Stennett]**

**[Wards Affected: Cranleigh East]**

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**Summary and purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the submission of a planning application to convert the unoccupied part of the HRA-owned property at Rowland House, Cranleigh to a fully wheelchair accessible flat.

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**How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:**

This report relates to the Council's corporate priorities of affordable housing and understanding residents' needs.

**Financial Implications:**

The building work will be funded by the New Affordable Homes Reserve in 2015/16, subject to achieving planning permission for change of use to residential.

**Legal Implications:**

The legal implications that may arise from the title search, existing lease arrangements with the neighbouring user and the sale agreement for adjacent land will be explored prior to Executive.

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**Background**

1. Earlier this year, the tenant surrendered the lease on part of Rowland House in Victoria Road, Cranleigh, owned by the Housing Revenue Account and shown in Annexe 1. To ensure that the best use is made of the Council's assets, alternative uses for the vacant part of the building were explored, including the potential of converting the space to residential use.
2. An architect was appointed to prepare sketch plans to convert the vacant part of the building into a four-bedroom fully wheelchair accessible flat. The proposed layout is shown in Annexe 2.
3. The work involved in converting the space to residential use would include separating the utilities, which is currently underway, stripping out, drainage alterations and creating new accommodation, accessible access and parking.
4. Planning permission for change of use to residential will be required to enable the conversion to proceed. It is anticipated that a planning application will be ready to submit in March and is likely to take eight weeks to determine.

5. The costs incurred in bringing this scheme forward for planning will be covered by the approved budget for pre-development costs from the New Affordable Homes Reserve.
6. Before proceeding to the planning stage, Housing Development Team will consult with Ward Members and the neighbouring users on the proposals, and discuss the draft layout with the prospective tenants.

### **Conclusion**

7. To meet the high level of housing need in the Borough, the Housing Development team actively explore opportunities that arise to make best use of the Council's assets to provide additional affordable homes to meet local housing need. The vacant part of the Rowland House, Cranleigh provides one such opportunity to meet housing need.

### **Recommendation**

The Executive is recommended to approve the submission of a planning application for change of part of Rowland House, Cranleigh to a fully wheelchair accessible flat.

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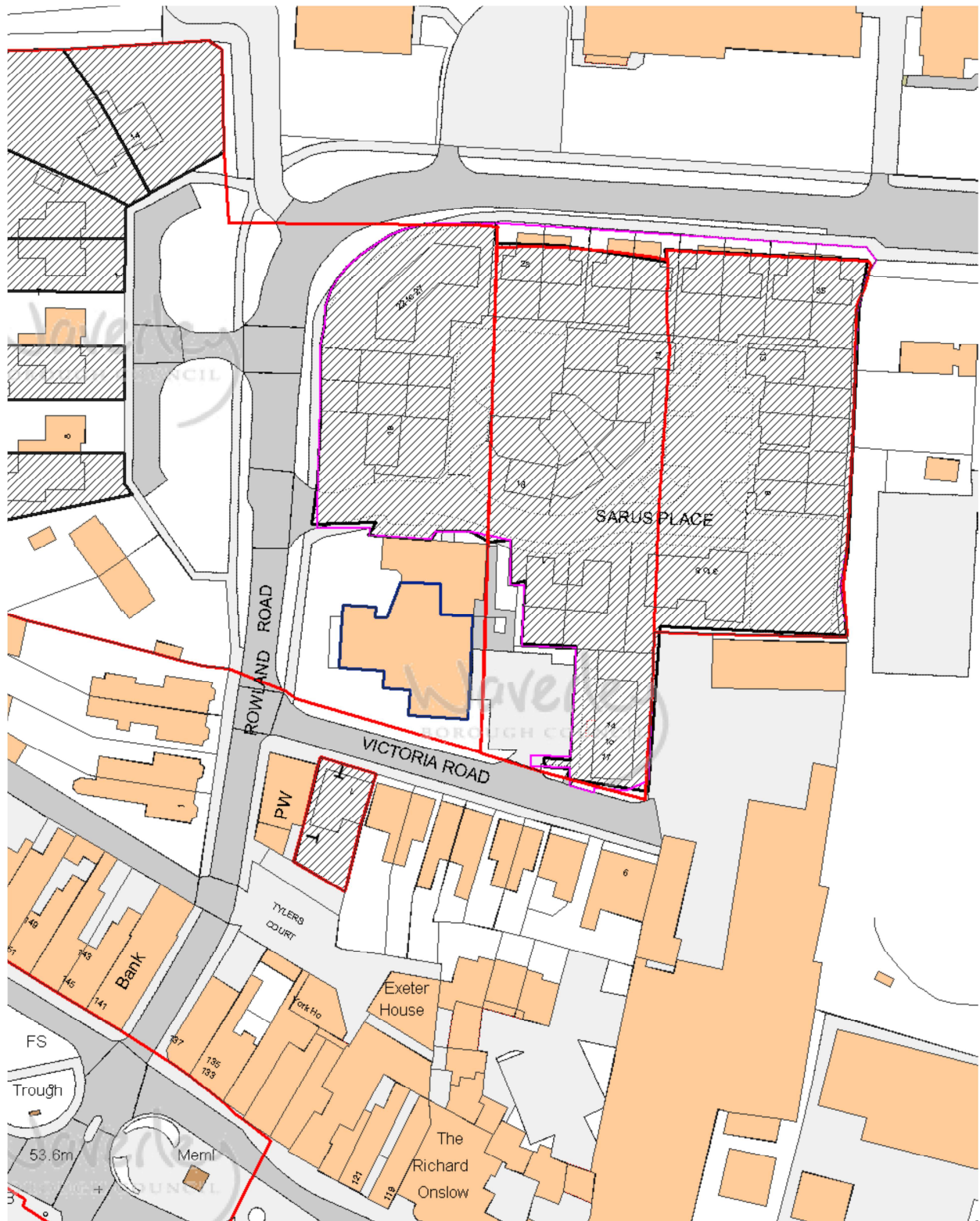
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Location plan



Proposed layout

