

## **CABINET**

**29 MARCH 2011**

### **RIDGE MEADOW PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Alan Jarrett, Finance

Report from: Deborah Upton, Assistant Director, Housing and Corporate Services

Author: Noel Filmer, Valuation and Asset Management Manager

#### **Summary**

This report requests that Cabinet rescinds its previous decision to declare surplus the Ridge Meadow Primary School site so that this asset can be retained for an operational council use.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1. As the decision to declare this property surplus was made by Cabinet, then rescinding this decision is also a matter for Cabinet.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Ridge Meadow School site was declared surplus by Cabinet at its meeting of 18 January 2011 (decision no. 2/1011).
- 2.2 Full Council decided the following on 24 February 2011 as part of the 2011/2012 budget:

That a scheme be added to the Capital Programme to create a Specialist Autism Unit on the Ridge Meadow site and that a sum of £1,500,000 be allocated from the proceeds of the Temple site for that purpose. To facilitate this and the proposed move of the Post-16 Bradfields Unit to the Ridge Meadow site, Cabinet is asked to reconsider its decision to declare the Ridge Meadow site surplus.

#### **3. Former Ridge Meadow Primary School, Walderslade**

- 3.1 The council owns the freehold of the above school site as shown edged black on the attached plan, area of approximately 2.7 Hectares (6.6 acres). The school became redundant when Cabinet at its meeting

on 15 December 2009 decided to close the school with effect from 31 August 2010 (Decision 206/2009) and as set out above, the school site was declared surplus on 18 January 2011.

- 3.2. However, there a need has now been identified for the site to be retained for another council use (as set out in paragraph 2.2 above) and it is considered that the cost of making provision on another site would far exceed the disposal value of the Ridge Meadow site.
- 3.3. Officers will now take these proposals forward including the plans for the relocation of Bradfields post 16 provision into part of the Ridge Meadow buildings by September 2011. Officers will draw up a feasibility study for the creation of an autism unit on the same site during the summer terms and this will be presented to Members in due course following initial discussions with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

#### **4. Advice and analysis**

- 4.1 Subject to obtaining the necessary consents, the Council could dispose of the former Ridge Meadow School site or it could retain the site for the uses as set out in paragraph 2.2 above. It is considered that the cost of making such provision on another site would far exceed the disposal value of the Ridge Meadow site, so as a result, the site should be retained.

#### **5. Risk Management**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>
Property takes a long time to reuse.	Property becomes a target of antisocial behaviour/vandalism/squatters pending re-use.	Keep the site and buildings maintained and secure and bring forward proposals to re-use the site as soon as possible.

#### **6. Consultation**

- 6.1. This matter was considered by Full Council at its meeting on 24 February 2011.

#### **7. Financial and legal implications**

- 7.1 The council will not receive the proceeds of sale from the site, but will make savings compared with building a new facility as set out in paragraph 2.2 above.
- 7.2 The Council is able to appropriate sites for the purposes of its statutory functions under s122 of the Local Government Act 1972

**8. Recommendation**

- 8.1 That Cabinet rescinds its decision of 18 January 2011 (decision no. 2/2011) to declare the Ridge Meadow site surplus and appropriates the site to education use.

**9. Suggested reasons for decision(s)**

- 9.1 Cabinet is requested to rescind its previous decision to declare the Ridge Meadow Site surplus, so that the site can be retained for a council use.

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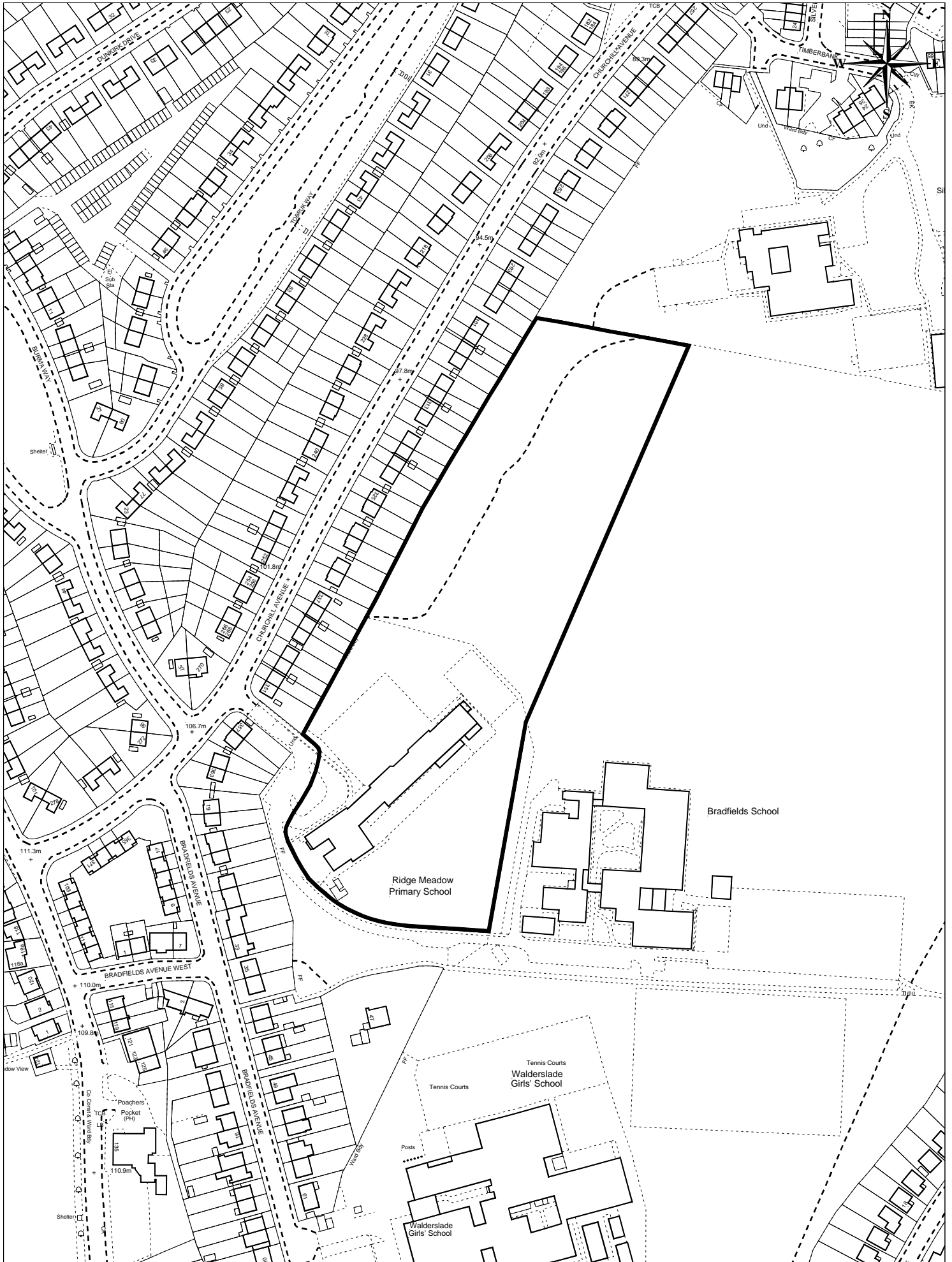
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**Background Papers:**

Cabinet 18 January 2011, minute 2/2011.

Council 24 February 2011





# Ridge Meadow Primary School Site



Scale: NTS 07/01/11