

### **Great News for Local Residents on Blakedown Station Car Park**

Residents will be aware of the current proposal by the Health Concern/Green/Liberal Democrat/Independent Progressive Alliance led WFDC to remove the field adjacent to the railway station in Station Drive from the Green Belt and allocate this for 50 houses and a circa 170 space car park. This car park would be in addition to the circa 80-100 spaces proposed on the brown field land site at Station Yard. This matter is due to be considered by the planning inspector at the Examination in Public (EIP) which is due to commence on 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.

Blakedown County Councillor Marcus Hart says, "As your County Councillor I have been taking a very keen interest in this matter on behalf of local residents and have been liaising with senior officers at Worcestershire County Council to ensure that the modelling used by their consultants is absolutely correct, especially given the change in work and travel habits as a result of the Covid -19 pandemic. I have consistently said that I fully support rail travel and that Blakedown needs extra car parking capacity but not to the extent of removing a field from the Green Belt as it will simply make Blakedown a magnet destination and Station Drive, Mill Lane and surrounding lanes would not be able to cope. To that end I am absolutely delighted to receive confirmation from senior officers that they have asked the consultants to look again at Blakedown and that Worcestershire County Council do not require the field for car parking and that with the current on street spaces in Station drive and Station Yard this will be sufficient capacity. They evaluate the requirement up until 2036 to be 136 spaces and that at present there are 11 on Station Drive meaning an additional 125 spaces are required. Station Drive has an indicative layout of 111 spaces and this site, together with Kidderminster Rail Station should be the focus for delivery. This as you can see means, the field is not required."

As a result of the above Worcestershire County Council will be submitting to WFDC that they are withdrawing their interest in the green belt site.

Marcus says, "This is excellent news for local residents and I am grateful to the County Council for looking at this issue very carefully and for listening to my views as the local member, whilst ensuring there is a robust evidence base to support this decision."

District Councillors Ian Hardiman and Lisa Jones added, "We have been working alongside Marcus and this is great news for local residents. We await now to see whether the Progressive Alliance will still remove this land from the green belt purely for housing or not."