

## Statement regarding Otterndorf Green bus shelter

Sheringham Town Council recognises the strong feelings surrounding the changes taking place around Otterndorf Green and specifically the bus shelter. We understand how important this area is to residents, both in terms of heritage and as a gateway to our town, and we are grateful to everyone who has shared their views.

We acknowledge that some individuals feel that Norfolk County Council's public consultation process did not meet their expectations, and we recognise this as an important lesson learned.

The consultation process, which was publicly advertised online, in the EDP, on town noticeboards, and in the Sheringham Independent distributed to all households, generated substantial resident engagement. Feedback was provided through sessions at the North Norfolk Railway, the Community Centre, and directly to Norfolk County Council. This input significantly influenced the design and resulted in meaningful revisions.

As a result of this community feedback and partnership discussions, the plans were updated to include:

- Increased green space and coordinated landscaping with Sheringham in Bloom and an overall design that better reflected the local vernacular
- A shelter design drawing on Victorian and local railway architecture; requiring bespoke metalwork and that will include artwork contributions from Sheringham schoolchildren with support from our community artist Colin Seal.

These changes were made in good faith, working collaboratively with Norfolk County Council engineers and project managers and other stakeholders.

It is also important to recognise the limitations of the existing shelter:

- Its position on a narrow pavement at a busy pedestrian point has long caused concern to the local bus operator.
- The current layout often forces waiting passengers and passing pedestrians close to the road, creating uncomfortable and potentially unsafe conditions, particularly during busy periods or for those with mobility needs or pushchairs.

The new Travel Hub layout is designed to address these long-standing challenges.

Key benefits include:

- a wider, safer and more accessible waiting area
- improved pedestrian flow to remove the pinch-point
- a shelter offering better visibility, more natural light and reduced crowding
- facilities that support more reliable and efficient bus operations, as highlighted by the local bus operator

Evidence from similar schemes elsewhere shows that improved facilities encourage more people to use buses. Sheringham Town Council believe that supporting increased use of local bus services is a positive step to:

- promote sustainable transport
- help reduce congestion
- strengthen the long-term viability of the public transport services residents rely on

Throughout this process, Sheringham Town Council has worked constructively with all authorities and local organisations to ensure that Sheringham's heritage, safety and public realm were properly considered.

While the Town Council is not the decision-making authority for highway schemes, we have consistently sought improvements that we believe reflect the values and priorities of our community.

We remain committed to listening to residents, passing on concerns through the appropriate channels, and supporting the best long-term outcome for Sheringham's public spaces and transport infrastructure.

We would like to thank residents who have provided their feedback on this scheme. Sheringham Town Council would be pleased to engage in constructive dialogue both on this and other issues as they present themselves in the community.

**Sheringham Town Council**