

Mundesley Coastal Village Workshop

3 October 2007



Feedback Report

Mundesley Village Workshop – Feedback Summary

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Hall on 3rd October 2007 and summarises the contributions of participants. The report has been posted on the Council's website www.northnorfolk.org/ldf under the 'latest news' heading and has been sent to interested parties. We are grateful to all those who attended.

Outline of the workshop

The overall aim of this event was to provide an opportunity for key members of the local community to highlight the specific issues that they felt should be addressed in planning the future of Mundesley. This included discussion of matters relating to 'coastal change' (resulting from the Shoreline Management Plan and its consequences for the village), together with the identification of places where new development could be considered to meet the settlement's needs.

The results of the workshop will be used to inform the Coastal Management Plan and the Site Specific Proposals Document (part of the Local Development Framework).



The Workshop was chaired by Cllr Barry Smith and participants included Members of Mundesley Parish Council, representatives from local businesses, clubs and other organisations. Altogether there were twenty nine people present.

The event included presentations on planning policy and coastal management, followed by sessions in which participants highlighted the important issues for the village and identified the possible development options for its future. Question and answer sessions were followed by general discussion, and feedback was gathered from participants about the event.

What participants said

Summary

Participants were asked about what they were proud of, sorry about, what they hoped and what they feared in order to understand the current issues facing Mundesley and how they envisage the village in the future. The results of this are summarised below and the full feedback is attached at the back of this report.

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What people were PROUD of

Participants felt proud of the strong community spirit in Mundesley, describing it as an active, vibrant and friendly village with a good range of facilities serving both residents and tourists. People valued the character, identity and heritage of the village and saw the high quality natural and built environment, particularly the beach and the seafront, as a major asset.

What people were SORRY about

A key issue raised was the change in policy regarding the future investment in coastal defences, which it was felt would impact heavily on the key assets that make the village what it is. There was also concern expressed about the loss of hotels and the perceived change in the 'holiday image' of the village that seemed to be emerging. Equally people were worried about the scale of residential development that had affected parts of the village in the past, which some participants felt to be inappropriate.

Participants were sorry about the condition of some of the village infrastructure and the lack of care and maintenance of its public face.

What people HOPED

Participants hoped that the village would be able to realise its potential in the future so that the local community can continue to thrive, supported by a good range of services and facilities, such as schools, a health centre, vibrant shops and employment opportunities. To achieve this it was hoped that the tourism assets could be developed and improved.

Participants hoped that the causes of coastal erosion would be managed and that sea defences would be maintained and improved to provide some certainty about the future of the village.

There was a hope that good planning could help sustain the village in the future by ensuring that new development is well-coordinated and sympathetic to the scale and character of the area.

What people FEARED

The main fear was that short-term decisions would be taken over coastal defence policy that would have a long-term detrimental effect on the village through increased rates of coastal erosion affecting property, businesses and amenities. The public perception of coastal change was also a concern as it might result in blight long before the actual physical effects take hold.

In addition it was felt that services and facilities were threatened through lack of use and that the erosion threat might exacerbate their decline.

The desire for the village to hang on to what makes it so special was coupled with a fear that further large-scale development might be planned that might destroy its 'village' characteristics.

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Key issues

Mundesley has grown to be a large settlement but it was felt that it has managed to retain its special characteristics as a seaside village. It remains popular with tourists and visitors who come to appreciate the high quality environment, the beach and the foreshore. There was a concern, however, that due to changes in the use of properties, infill development and large-scale housing estates, Mundesley is drifting away from being a holiday village and becoming a residential 'dormitory' for people who have little attachment to it. It was felt that this would impact on the character of the village, the quality of the environment, the viability of services and facilities and that the historic infrastructure cannot cope. This situation could be worsened by the threat of coastal change.

The overwhelming view was that positive steps need to be taken to plan for appropriate development that addresses the needs of the village and helps to maintain the facilities that are vital to it, but that does not destroy its character. It was felt that the tourism industry should be re-vitalised by improving and developing the visitor facilities and attractions and maintaining and enhancing the local environment.

Site-specific issues/ ideas comments and suggestions

A range of suggestions were put forward about what use different sites should be put to. These were made in the expectation that Mundesley will be selected as a 'Service Village' in the adopted Core Strategy and therefore that sites would be allocated for new development in the forthcoming Site Specific Proposals document.

- The site that many people felt presented the best opportunity for development to meet the future needs of the village was that bounded by Cromer Road, Church Lane and Links Road - adjacent to Links Chalet Park. The site is large and central to the village and it was suggested that it should accommodate a mixed development of housing and community uses such as a medical centre, community centre, a graveyard and open space, together with offices and workshops.
- Several other potential housing sites around the village were suggested including: the site opposite the school on Trunch Road; a site to the south of Beckmeadow Way (adjacent to Mundesley Beck - where some disputed the flood risk constraint); and a site to the east of Paston Road (to the South of Hillside).
- It was suggested that the dismantled railway, to the west of Mundesley, should be utilised as a 'leisure route' – a recreational footpath and cycleway.
- Participants wanted to see Gold Park and the adjacent car park protected from development.
- It was felt that if the Golf Course were to expand to become eighteen holes this would expand the tourism offer of the village.

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Questions and general discussion points

- Q. *If the sea defences have prevented any change along Mundesley's cliff edge in the last fifty years, why can we not continue to maintain them for the next fifty years and beyond?*
- A. *Changes will have occurred to the beach levels and sea-level-rise (together with increased storminess) will exacerbate this, making it less feasible and technically more difficult to continue to defend this coastline in the future.*
- Q. *Sea-level-rise is merely a prediction, what evidence is there that this is really affecting our coast?*
- A. *The UK Climate Impacts Programme includes scientific data around which there is a very broad consensus. Coupled with the element of sea-level-rise resulting from climate change is that from isostatic adjustment (fall of the land mass) in the east of England, there is therefore much evidence that seas are rising, the rate at which this will happen is, however, uncertain.*
- Q. *Cliff slips often result from problems with surface water run-off, can this be prevented?*
- A. *There is a policy in the Local Plan and in the emerging Core Strategy that seeks to prevent new development that is likely to increase the risk of erosion from surface water run-off. Some run-off, however, might result from other actions that do not need planning permission, e.g. change in agricultural practices. In those cases there is probably a need to increase the awareness of the problem.*
- Q. *What is the scale of new housing development allocated for Mundesley in the forthcoming Local Development Framework?*
- A. *The Core Strategy suggests fifty dwellings on allocated sites in (or adjacent to) Mundesley in the period up to 2021. It also suggests that fifty percent of this development (i.e. twenty five dwellings) should be for 'affordable housing' for those in need of housing in the District.*
- Q. *Is that enough to meet the needs of the village?*
- A. *That figure is in addition to any infill housing that might take place within the designated boundary and also any 'exceptions' housing schemes (of 'affordable housing' for those in need of housing locally) which can take place beyond the settlement boundary.*
- Q. *How did the Mundesley Garage Site on the Cromer Road get approval for housing, as this is clearly in an area at risk of erosion in the future?*
- A. *This was the result of a permission that was granted prior to the publication of the latest Shoreline Management Plan.*
- Q. *Won't future occupiers of sites such as this want to seek compensation once they find their properties devalued by the Shoreline Management Plan?*

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- A. *It is important to ensure that developers and future occupiers are aware of the risks when they make investment decisions. The coastal erosion risk is revealed on property searches.*
- Q. *How is the target figure of fifty percent affordable housing on allocated sites justified?*
- A. *This is considered to be an appropriate level to begin to address the high level of need in the District, whilst maintaining the incentive for developers to continue to build. The inspector examining the submitted Core Strategy will need to decide whether this is sound.*
- Q. *Will the policy be the same in places like Blakeney, where house prices are higher?*
- A. *Yes. Housing Associations are expected to determine the actual affordability of the housing (which will ordinarily be either rented or 'shared-ownership').*
- Q. *Will the housing be for local people?*
- A. *On allocation sites it will be to meet the District-wide needs. Exceptions sites can be used to meet local needs, but these are not allocated in the Local Development Framework, they arise through negotiations on 'off-plan' sites, which have lower land values.*
- Q. *Can we avoid large groups of affordable housing in single locations, this has given rise to issues in the past?*
- A. *Ideally the affordable housing should be mixed in with market housing and indistinguishable from it. Also the fifty dwellings allocation does not all have to be on one site.*

Conclusion

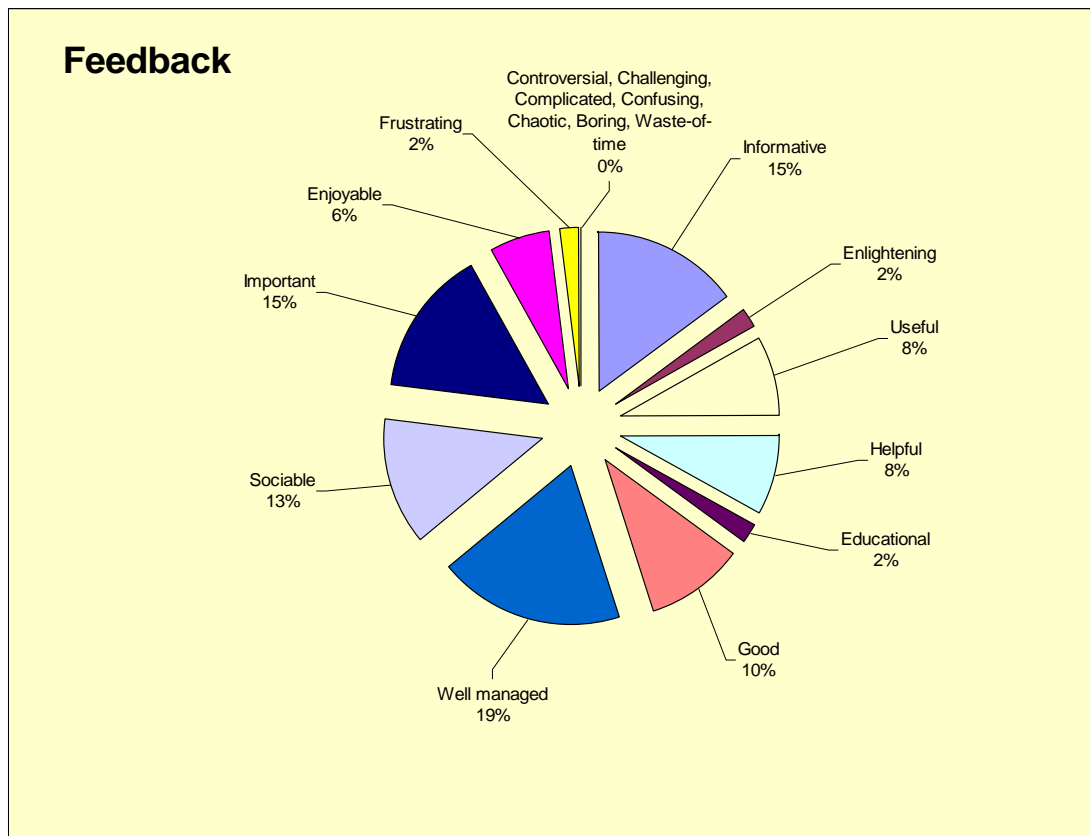
The workshop gave rise to a shared understanding of the role and character of Mundesley and of the issues it faces. There was a clear view that its environment, amenities and facilities are crucial to its vitality and that this is closely linked to its role as a tourist and visitor destination. It was felt that the vitality of the village is becoming threatened by some of the changes that are taking place and that positive planning was needed to safeguard its future. There was widespread acceptance that new development should be planned in order to address the needs of the village, but that this should respect its special characteristics.

The prospect of future changes to the coastline as a result of proposed coastal defence policies was recognised, but there was a strong desire to see these addressed soon enough for their impact on the village to be mitigated. There should be a properly executed plan to safeguard the interests of the community in the face of coastal change.

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What participants thought about the workshop

Participants were asked to give feedback on their impressions of the workshop and to provide further comments on the matters covered.



All participants agreed that the purpose of the event had been made clear, that there was adequate opportunity to participate and that this was an appropriate means of involving people in the planning process. There was also full agreement that the workshop was the right length.

Comments from the feedback forms

“Hopefully some of the points raised will be taken on board.”

“Major problem is the attitude of some of the establishments. “

“Workshop was professional and well led.”

“Amazing that you got so much feedback, you worked very hard.”

“Do not feel it is justified having so many members of NNDC present.”

“Is anyone going to take notice of these views?”

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What happens next?

The feedback generated at the workshop has been recorded, it will now be analysed and fed into the preparation of the Site Specific Proposals (SSP) document and the Coastal Management Plan (CMP) as appropriate.

Publication of the preferred SSP options will await the outcome of the examination into the Core Strategy, which will set the context and determine, for example, the extent of the Coastal Erosion Constraint Area and also confirm whether or not Mundesley is to be identified as a location for further development. The Inspector's report of the public examination is due in June 2008 and, if found to be sound, will be adopted in July 2008. Preferred options for the site allocation proposals in the Coastal Service Villages will be published for public consultation in June/ July 2008. Responses will be considered and the revised document containing allocation proposals for the whole District will be published for another round of consultation prior to submission to the Government in 2009.

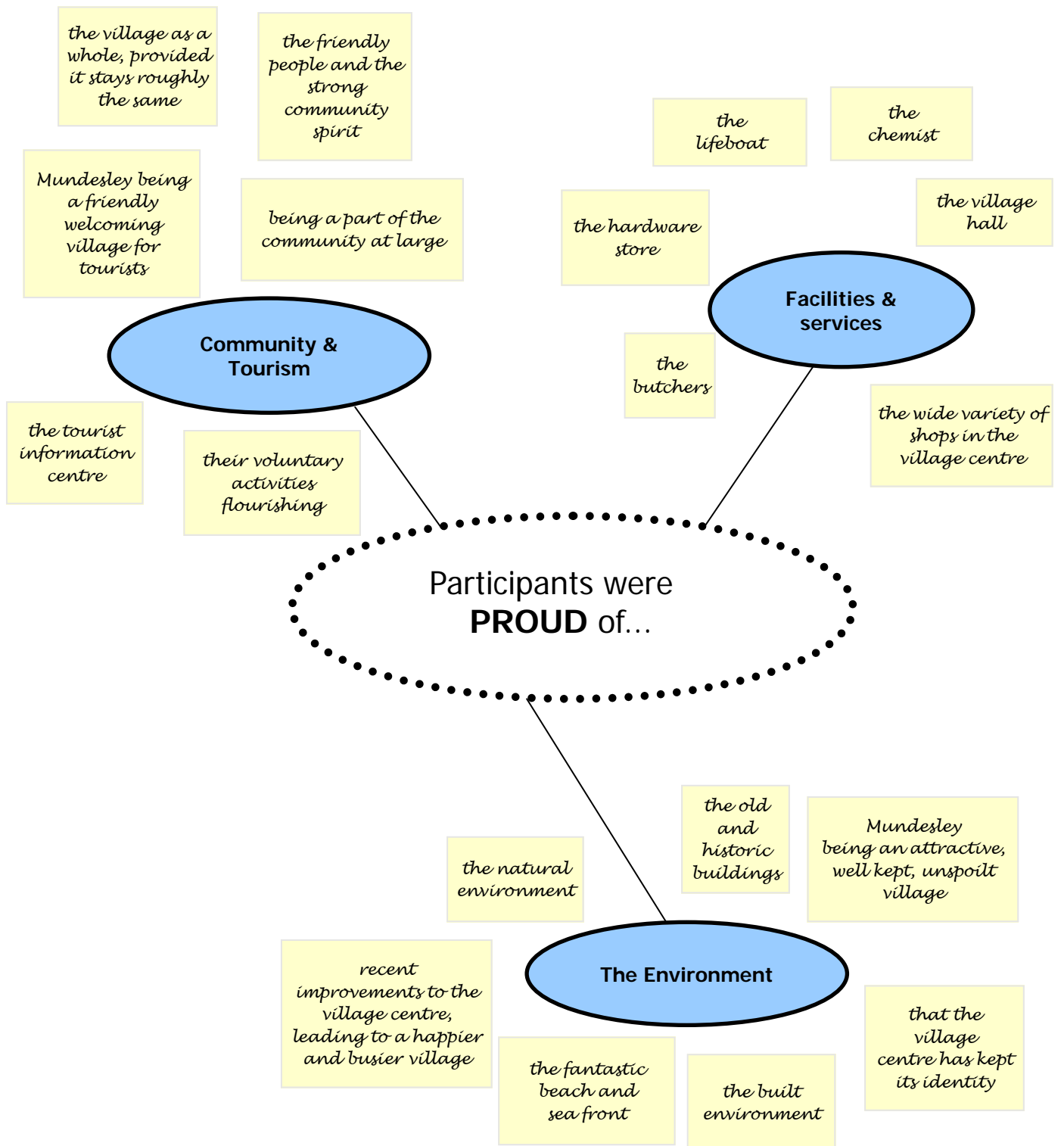
The Coastal Management Plan is not part of the LDF and will follow a separate process. This will involve developing issues, options and a vision for the whole North Norfolk coastline over the coming year. A detailed timetable for this will be published in due course.

Contact Rob Young (01263 516162) for further information.

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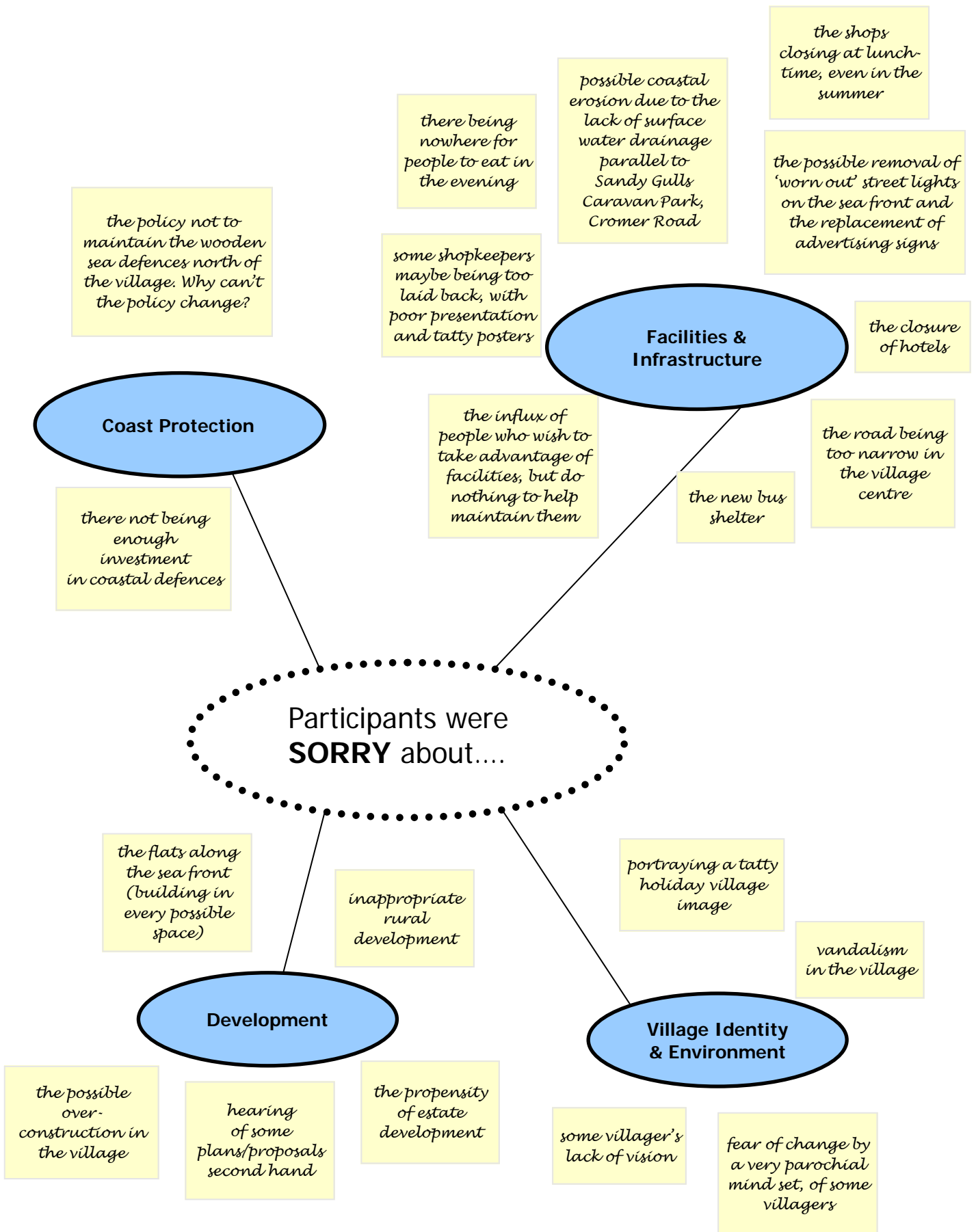
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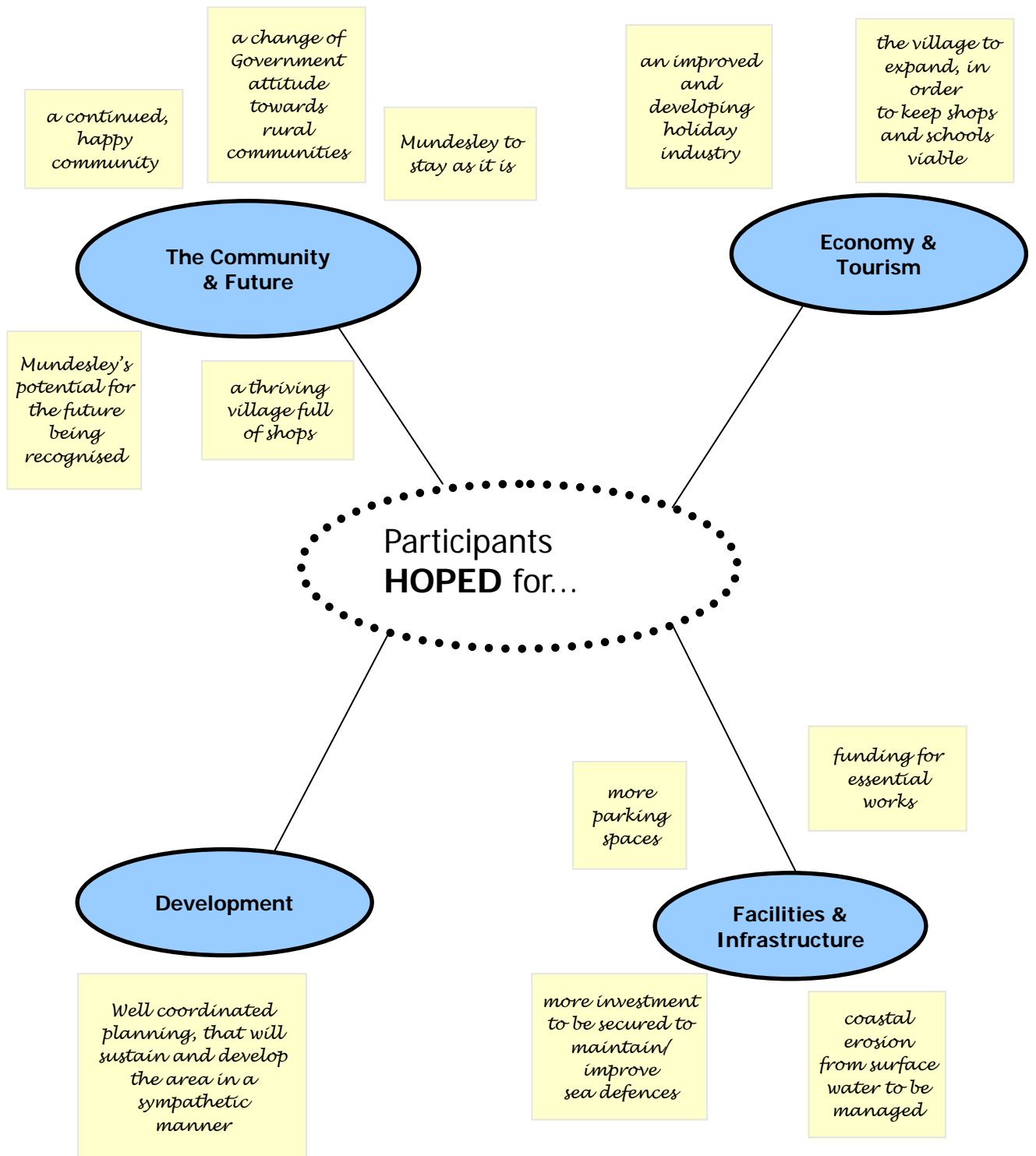
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