

These are key features in the conservation area and the points relate to the numbered areas on the map.

- 1 The Church of St Michael and All Angels (Grade II*) is situated in a prominent position above the rest of the village as was common in the early mediaeval period. It was founded at the expense of Earl Godwin in about 1050. An area to the south of the churchyard was quarried away at some time in the past for some reason as yet unknown. Nearby was probably the original mediaeval manor farm house.
- 2 Sopley Farm buildings are an interesting example of the problems encountered in the reuse of redundant agricultural buildings as dwellings. Consideration should be given not only to the size, shape and detailing of the buildings but also their original purpose, the extent of any remaining fixtures and fittings such as specialised machinery and partitioning, and how all this can be accommodated within a domestic context.
- 3 The mill dated 1878 is the last in a long line of mills in the village going back to at least the time of the Domesday Survey. Attached to its north side along the lane is a much older mill house. The mill was operated by an undershot waterwheel - superseded by a water turbine - and was worked until 1946. Today it is a restaurant retaining much of the original milling atmosphere.
- 4 The Avon Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest stretches from Bickton to Christchurch Harbour. There is a greater range of habitats and a more diverse flora and fauna than any other chalk river valley in Britain. These habitats support internationally important groups of breeding and wintering birds, rare species of flora and a diversity of notable invertebrate fauna. The valley contains one of the largest expanses of unimproved floodplain grassland in England.
- 5 The Lodges at either end of the park wall are the only remaining prominent evidence of the Manor Park estate. They are both very individual in style and detailing, typical examples of the later 19th century.



These are some of the things that make Sopley special - they need to be looked after:

History

- The pattern of lanes and footpaths.
- The relationship between the parkland and the village.

Buildings

- Orange red brick mainly in Flemish bond, replacing timber framing in some of the older cottages.
- Thatch was the traditional roof covering here and remains on several cottages. Tiles and slates from the 19th century are also found.
- Sopley Farm group of 19th century brick buildings mainly with slate roofs.
- St Michael's Church is of ironstone rubble with dressings of Binstead stone from the Isle of Wight.
- The mid 19th century lodges to Sopley Park, each with elaborate architectural details.

Landscape/Townscape

- The irregular grouping of the buildings allowing glimpses of the farmland between.
- The central green area enclosed by the roads of the one way system.

Setting

- The narrow winding nature of the roads give ever changing vistas.
- The high ground of the churchyard provides a good vantage point giving views to the south.
- There are extensive views over the Avon valley from the northern water meadows.

Potential for enhancement

- Any realistic opportunity to reduce the volume of through traffic by heavy goods vehicles should be considered.