

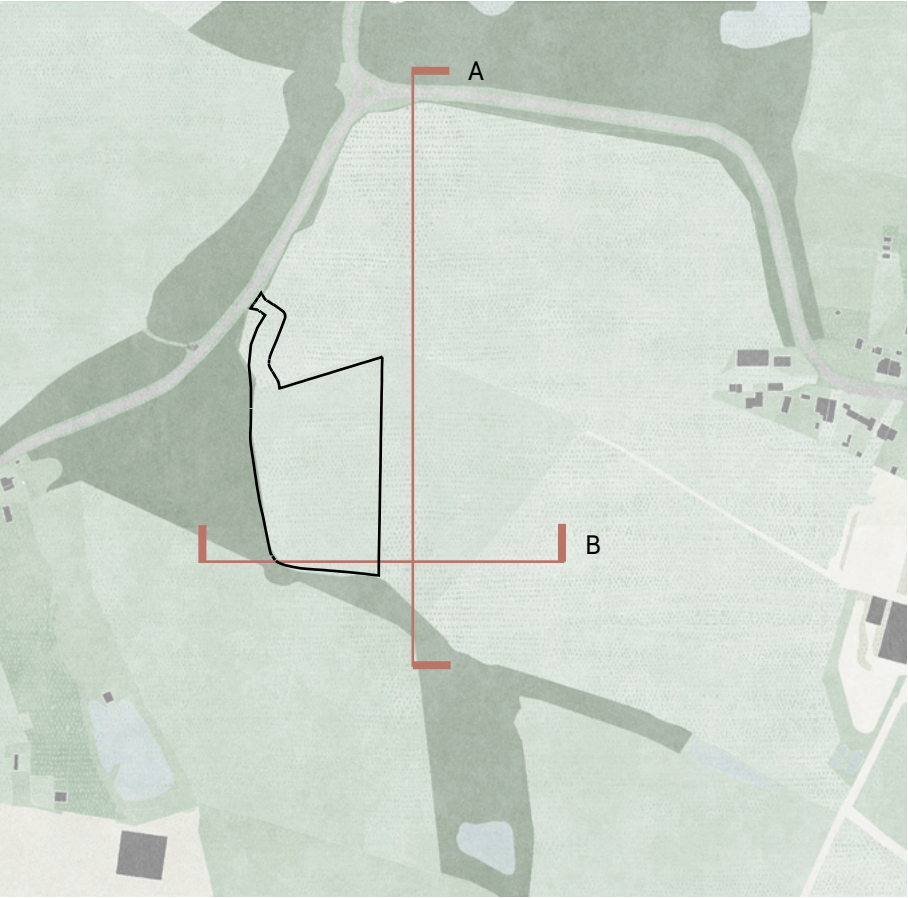
2.2.5 Topography

The site comprises gently undulating pasture characteristic of the Mid Sussex clay vale landscape. Landform variation is subtle but legible, creating long and low horizon lines across the field.

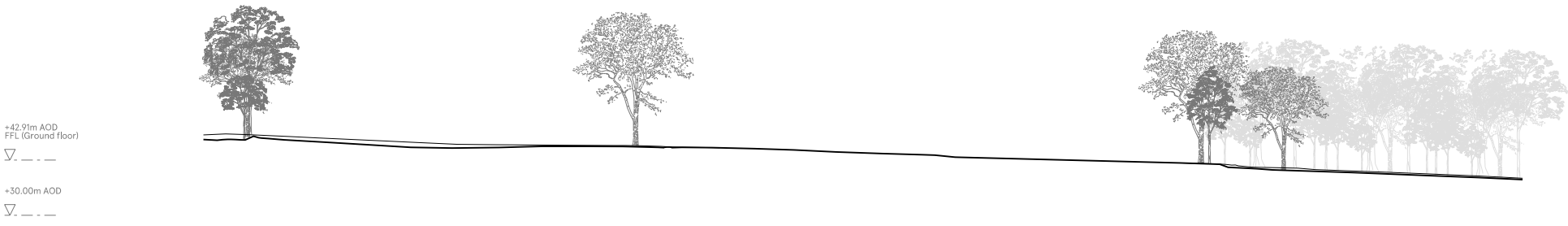
The ground rises toward the north-east adjacent to Montes Hill and falls gradually toward the south-west. The overall change in level across the application field is modest, though sufficient to create visual containment when combined with woodland and hedgerow boundaries.

The site does not occupy a prominent ridge or elevated position within the wider landscape. Instead, it sits within a shallow pastoral fold enclosed by vegetation and lower-lying woodland belts to the south and west.

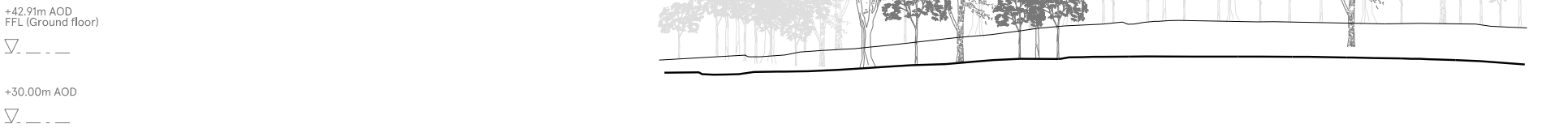
From the northern edge and adjacent public footpath, the land falls gently into the field interior. Longer views extend across pasture toward wooded horizons rather than toward concentrated built form or settlement.



Key plan to section drawing locations



Site section A through existing landscape



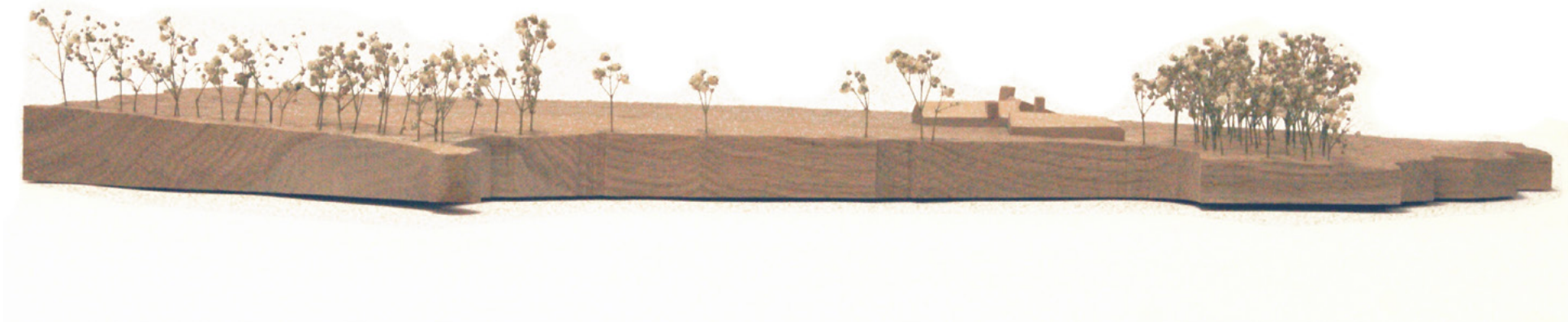
Site section B through existing landscape

The restrained and incremental nature of the topography allows development to sit within the existing contours and landscape structure rather than appearing elevated above it.

The restrained and incremental nature of the topography allows development to respond to existing contours and sit within the landscape framework rather than above it.



Site photograph denoting falling topography from the highest point in the north to the lowest point in the south of the field



Photograph of site model denoting falling topography from the highest point in the north to the lowest point in the south of the field

2.2.6 Vegetation

The site currently comprises a single field of agriculturally improved pasture associated with long-term grazing use. The grass sward is relatively uniform and species-poor, reflecting the field’s existing agricultural function.

Vegetation structure is concentrated primarily at the field margins. Mature hedgerows define the northern and eastern boundaries, whilst woodland belts associated with Brock Shaw, whilst woodland belts associated with Brock Shaw ancient woodland enclose the site to the west and south.

Existing woodland species include oak, hornbeam, ash, sweet chestnut, hawthorn, blackthorn and bramble, establishing a strong and varied vegetated edge condition around the pasture field.



Aerial photograph of site denoting the western and southern boundaries to the site where a small copse of trees and hawthorn hedge are sited.

A small number of mature trees are present within the field itself, including a mature oak toward the north-eastern portion of the site. These isolated trees contribute to the pastoral character of the landscape and reinforce the loose agricultural grain typical of the surrounding area.

Overall, vegetation within the site establishes a strong relationship between open pasture and enclosed woodland edge conditions. Ecological and visual diversity is concentrated along the field boundaries, whilst the field interior remains comparatively open and simple in character.



Site photograph showing existing southern boundary



Site photograph showing existing southern boundary



Site photograph showing existing southern boundary



Site photograph showing existing western boundary

2.2.7 Flood Risk

According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, the site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore identified as having a low probability of fluvial flooding.

No part of the application boundary falls within Flood Zones 2 or 3, and there are no areas of functional floodplain affecting the site.

The site occupies gently sloping agricultural land and is not located adjacent to any main river or significant watercourse. Existing vegetation and permeable pasture contribute to natural surface water infiltration across the field.

The proposal incorporates permeable landscape strategies and additional planting which seek to reinforce the existing hydrological characteristics of the site whilst avoiding increased surface water runoff.

- Flood zone 3
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 1
- Flood defence
- Main river
- Water storage area

Key plan to Flood Risk Map



Flood Risk Map for Planning provided by Environment Agency

2.2.8 Site History

The application site lies within the historic parish of Lindfield within the Low Weald landscape of West Sussex. The surrounding landscape has historically been characterised by dispersed agricultural holdings, irregular pasture fields and woodland boundaries associated with the gradual clearance of medieval woodland.

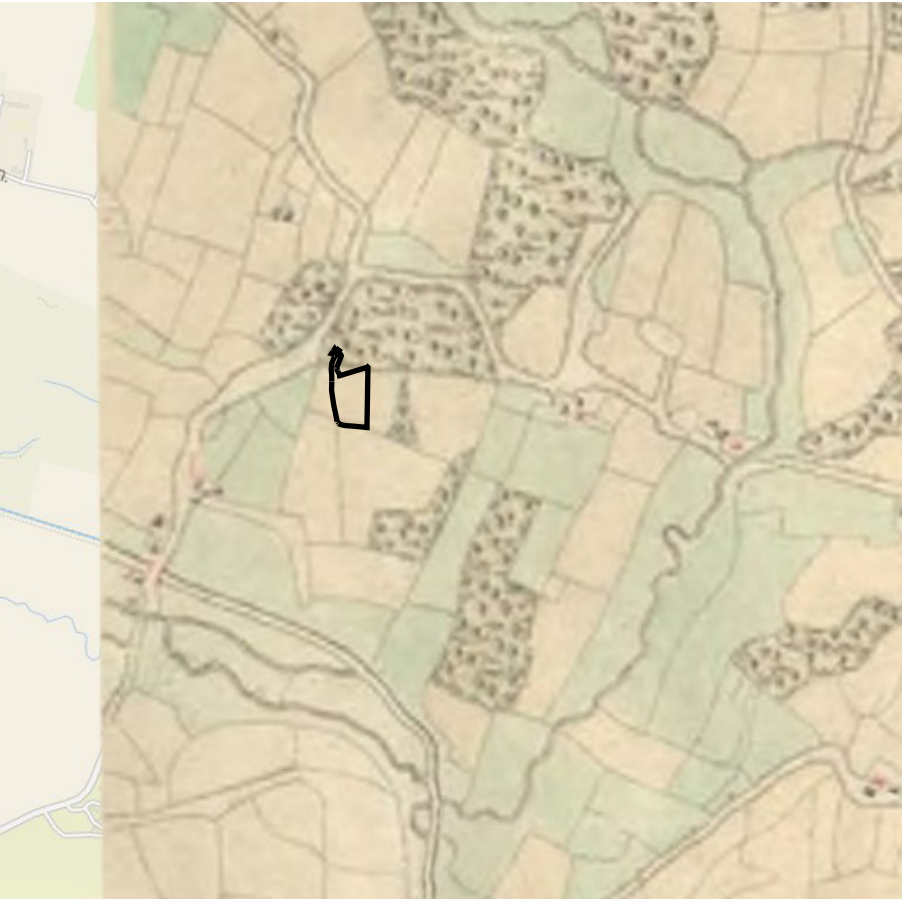
Historic mapping from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries demonstrates that the field structure surrounding the site has remained largely consistent over time. The irregular geometry of the pasture fields and the relationship between woodland, hedgerows and dispersed farmsteads remain clearly legible today.



1659



1892



1883



1945

Cockhaise Farm itself emerged as one of several dispersed agricultural holdings within the parish and historically operated independently from the more nucleated settlement pattern associated with Lindfield village.

Historic aerial photography further confirms that the application site has remained in continuous agricultural use with no record of previous built development within the field itself.



Historical aerial photograph from 1966

The landscape character evident today is therefore the result of long-term agricultural management rather than recent subdivision or expansion.

The site should accordingly be understood as part of a historic and enduring rural field system characteristic of the Low Weald landscape, defined by dispersed settlement, agricultural occupation and woodland enclosure.



Historical aerial photograph from 1952



Historical aerial photograph from 1952



Historical photograph of Cockhaise Mill



Historical photograph of Cockhaise Mill

2.3 Local Built Environment and Context

The site sits within a dispersed rural landscape characterised by isolated farmsteads, converted agricultural buildings and occasional rural dwellings set within woodland, hedgerows and open pasture.

Built form within the surrounding area is generally fragmented rather than continuous. Development occurs as individual agricultural holdings and loose groupings of buildings associated with working farms rather than formal village streets or suburban expansion.

Traditional farmhouses and barns within the wider context are typically modest in scale and agricultural in character. Buildings are arranged around yards, courtyards and working enclosures, often formed incrementally over time in response to use, topography and agricultural movement patterns.

Materials within the local context include red and brown brick, timber framing, clay tile and timber boarding. Agricultural buildings are generally simple and functional in expression, with an emphasis on robust construction and practical arrangement rather than formal architectural composition.

The surrounding rural lanes are narrow and enclosed by hedgerows, woodland and drainage ditches. Views of buildings are frequently filtered by vegetation, with development experienced intermittently within the landscape rather than as continuous frontage.



Of particular relevance to the proposal is the loose courtyard arrangement evident within many of the surrounding farmsteads. Agricultural buildings commonly form partial enclosures and sheltered yards rather than complete formal compositions. The proposal draws from these local spatial characteristics in developing a series of interconnected volumes arranged around sheltered garden spaces.

The site therefore relates more closely to the dispersed agricultural character of Cockhaise Farm and the surrounding rural holdings than to the more nucleated settlement form of Lindfield village itself.



Figure ground study into local farmstead typologies

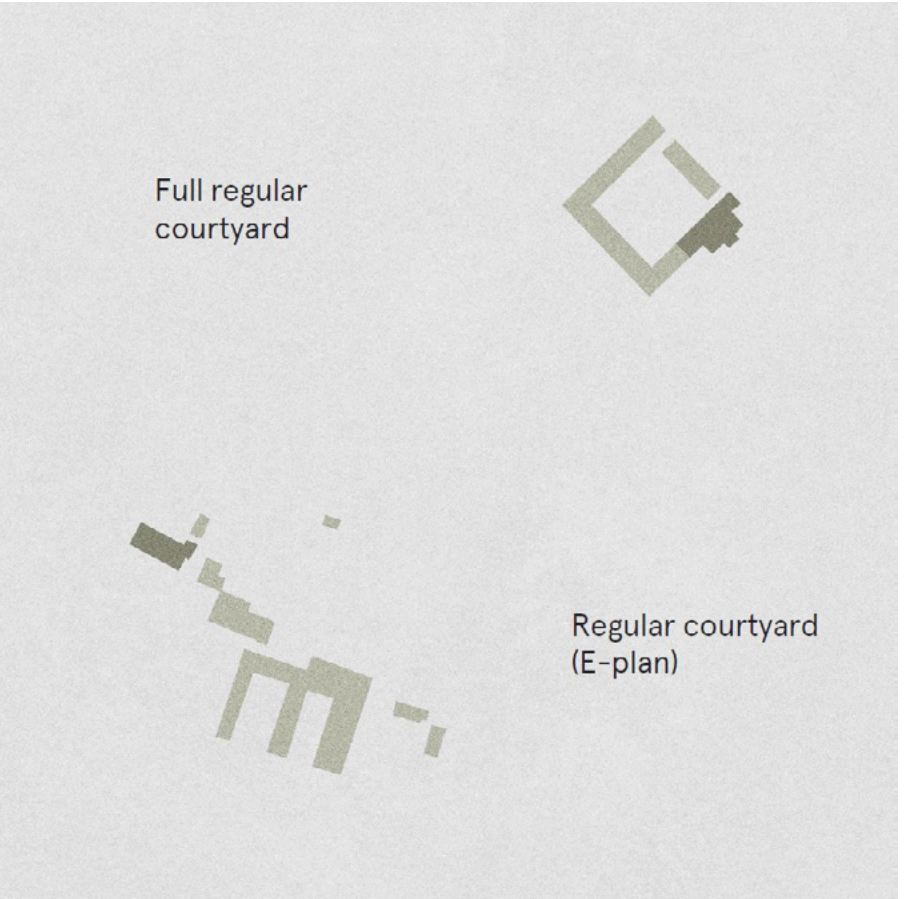


Figure ground study into local farmstead typologies



Figure ground study into local farmstead typologies



Aerial photograph of Freshfield Mill Farm denoting loose courtyards

Local built environment references from Lindfield and surrounding farmsteads