

2.3.1 Analysis of Existing Buildings Adjacent to Site

The buildings adjacent to the application site form part of the wider operational complex at Cockhaise Farm and are agricultural and utilitarian in character.

Existing structures comprise a mixture of agricultural sheds, barns, workshops and ancillary farm buildings associated with livestock management, storage and agricultural activity. Buildings are generally simple in form and robust in construction, reflecting functional requirements rather than domestic or formal architectural expression.

Materials include profiled metal sheeting, timber boarding, blockwork and lightweight agricultural cladding systems. Roof forms are shallow pitched and expansive, with large openings, sliding doors and exposed servicing elements common throughout the site.



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site

Several structures are arranged around hardstanding yards and working areas, creating loose groupings associated with movement, storage and agricultural circulation. The surrounding environment includes gates, fencing, concrete aprons and service areas characteristic of an active farmstead.

The immediate built context therefore differs significantly from a formally composed rural village setting. It is defined instead by practical agricultural infrastructure operating at a broad field scale.

Whilst utilitarian in character, the arrangement of buildings around yards and enclosed external spaces informed aspects of the design development for the proposed dwelling, particularly the use of fragmented building forms and sheltered landscape spaces rather than a singular isolated object within the field.

Overall, the adjacent built environment reinforces the working agricultural identity of Cockhaise Farm and the dispersed rural character of the wider landscape.



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site



Key plan to photograph locations



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site



Photograph of utilitarian agricultural buildings adjacent to the site

2.3.2 Views onto the Site

Views toward the application site are generally filtered by mature hedgerows, woodland edges and roadside vegetation.

From Montes Hill, visibility occurs intermittently through gaps within the hedgerow structure, with the site experienced as part of a wider pastoral landscape rather than as an isolated field parcel.

From the public footpath to the south, views are more open across the pasture field, though the site remains visually contained by surrounding woodland belts and mature boundary vegetation.

The field does not occupy a ridge-line or visually prominent position. Longer views extend across a wider mosaic of pasture, woodland and dispersed agricultural holdings characteristic of the High Weald landscape.

Overall, the site reads as part of an established agricultural landscape structure enclosed by vegetation and landform rather than as visually exposed countryside.



Photograph showing view of site from Monteswood Lane



Photograph showing view of site from Montes Hill

2.3.3 Views from the Site

Views from within the site are defined by open pasture foregrounds framed by mature hedgerows, woodland belts and scattered trees.

Looking south and west, views terminate largely within woodland edges associated with Brock Shaw. Looking north and east, the landscape opens more gradually across adjacent pasture toward dispersed agricultural buildings and tree belts.

The gently sloping topography and surrounding vegetation create a contained pastoral setting, with longer views directed toward wooded horizons rather than prominent built form.

Overall, the site is experienced as part of a wider agricultural landscape characterised by enclosure, vegetation and dispersed rural occupation typical of the High Weald.



Site photograph showing view from site looking south



Key plan to photograph locations



Photograph showing view of site from existing access to north-east



Photograph showing view of site from Cockhaise Farm and public right of way



Key plan to photograph locations



Site photograph showing view from site looking north

2.3.4 Site Character

The site is characterised by open pasture enclosed by mature hedgerows, woodland edges and scattered trees typical of the High Weald landscape.

The field itself is simple and pastoral in character, with broad areas of grazing land framed by dense vegetation and woodland boundaries. The relationship between open grassland and enclosed woodland edge conditions establishes the primary spatial quality of the site.

Vegetation forms the dominant visual structure. Mature hedgerows, woodland belts and individual trees filter views and create changing conditions of enclosure, light and movement across the landscape.

The site is experienced less as an isolated field and more as one component within a wider mosaic of pasture, woodland and dispersed agricultural holdings extending across the surrounding countryside.

Materially, the landscape is defined by grassland, hedgerows, woodland floor, earth tracks and agricultural boundary conditions rather than formal landscape intervention. The atmosphere of the site is therefore strongly rural and agricultural in character.

Overall, the site possesses a contained pastoral quality shaped by vegetation, landform and long-term agricultural management rather than visual prominence or expansive openness.



Site photograph showing view of existing hedgerow and tree-line to boundary with Montes Hill



Site photograph showing view of existing hedgerow and tree-line to south of site



Site photograph showing view of existing hedgerow and tree-line to south of site



Site photograph showing view of existing hedgerow and tree-line to south of site

2.3.5 Context Character

The surrounding landscape is characterised by a mosaic of pasture fields, woodland belts, hedgerows and dispersed agricultural holdings typical of the High Weald and Low Weald edge condition.

Field boundaries are generally irregular and enclosed by mature hedgerows and belts of trees which create strong visual containment throughout the countryside. Woodland, pasture and watercourses combine to establish a layered and heavily vegetated rural landscape.

Movement through the area occurs primarily along narrow rural lanes, farm tracks and informal agricultural routes. Views are frequently filtered and partial, with the wider landscape revealed gradually through breaks in vegetation and changes in topography.

Settlement within the surrounding area is dispersed and agricultural in nature. Farmsteads, barns and isolated dwellings are embedded within the landscape rather than arranged as continuous settlement form.

The immediate context includes active farmland, woodland paths, grazing fields and working agricultural yards associated with Cockhaise Farm. These elements reinforce the productive and managed character of the surrounding landscape.

Overall, the wider context is defined by the close relationship between agriculture, woodland and dispersed occupation, establishing a landscape character grounded in long-term stewardship and incremental rural development.



Photograph showing view of existing hedgerow and tree-line to south of site at Cockhaise Farm



Photograph showing view of vehicle track at Cockhaise Farm



Photograph showing view of River Ouse at south of Cockhaise Farm



Photograph showing view of woodland at Cockhaise Farm

2.3.6 Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain assessment were undertaken by Ecology Partnership to establish the ecological baseline of the site.

The survey confirms that the application field currently comprises agriculturally improved grassland of relatively low ecological value associated with long-term grazing management. Botanical diversity within the field interior is limited and habitat structure is generally simple.

Ecological interest is concentrated primarily at the field margins. Mature hedgerows, woodland edge conditions and individual trees provide greater habitat diversity and form part of a wider connected ecological network extending across the surrounding countryside.



Habitat Map produced by Ecology Partnership



Site photographs of design team during Ecology Appraisal produced by Ecology Partnership

A mature oak tree within the north-eastern part of the field is identified for retention and contributes habitat value typical of established pastoral landscapes. Woodland associated with Brock Shaw ancient woodland forms a significant ecological feature immediately adjacent to the site.

The wider landscape structure surrounding the site – including woodland belts, hedgerows and adjacent pasture fields – creates ecological connectivity across the broader High Weald landscape.

The ecological baseline therefore demonstrates a site of relatively low-value improved pasture situated within a stronger surrounding ecological framework. This establishes a clear opportunity for habitat enhancement, woodland extension, hedgerow reinforcement and biodiversity improvement through the proposed landscape strategy.

Habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Total habitat units	Units retained	Units lost	User comments
Modified grassland	1.29	Low	Poor	Low	2.58	-	2.58	Cattle grazed pastoral ley
Rural tree	0.0366	Medium	Good	Low	0.44	0.44	0.00	Single large oak in north-east of site
Bare ground	0.007	Low	Poor	Low	0.01		0.01	Bare ground beneath the north-western boundary tree line
Total area (excluding trees)	1.3	Total Units/Area			3.03	0.44	2.59	

On-site habitat breakdown – Pre-Development produced by Ecology Partnership

Habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance	Total habitat units	Units retained	Units lost	User comments
Line of trees	0.01	Low	Poor	Low	0.02	-	0.02	Two small hornbeam in a line of trees which extends beyond the site to the north-east and south-west

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