

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LAND AT MERE BROW, SOUTHPORT

Introduction

The site was visited by the Resource Planning Group in August 1992. An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the ALC Revised Guidelines/Criteria Booklet (MAFF 1988).

Location

The site involved is situated at Mere Brow (SD 417 187) immediately south of the A565(T). The land varies in altitude from between 3 metres in the south where it is level, to 8 metres in the north where the site is gently sloping in nature.

Altitude and relief do not impose any limitations upon the classification of this site.

Climate and Rainfall

Assessment of climatic limitation is based upon average annual rainfall (AAR) and accumulated temperature (ATO). For this site the figures are 874mm and 1441°C respectively, thus indicating that there are no climatic limitations on this site. The field capacity days figure is 169 days, the mean last frost is late April.

Geology and Soils

The site is underlain by Keuper Marl with a drift deposit of Boulder Clay to the north, Shirdley Hill Sand in the east and peat to the south. The associated soils are the Salop Series (clay loam over clays), the Sollom Series (loamy sand over sand) and the Adventurers Series (Humified Peat over clays/sandy loams) respectively.

Land Use

At the time of the survey cereal and beans were being grown in the northern part of the site, with grass ley and a wide range of horticultural crops to the south (lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower, celery and potatoes). A limited area was being used as a golf driving range.

Agricultural Land Classification

Grade	Hectares	% of Site	% of Agric Land
2	23.152	35	37
3a	4.755	7	8
3b	33.915	52	55
Non Agric	3.466	5	-
Urban	0.237	$\frac{1}{2}$	-
Open Water	0.259	$\frac{1}{2}$	-
Total	<u>67.784</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Grade 2 accounts for 23.2ha and 35% of the site. It is restricted to the southern half of the site where its occurrence is clearly delineated.

Typically these soils are organic rich medium clay loams, overlying humified and fiborous peat with clay or sand occasionally intruding at depth. Soil wetness is seen as the main limitation on this land.

Subgrade 3a accounts for 4.8ha, 7% of the site. This land occurs as a clearly distinct pocket in the southeast of the site.

Topsoils are of a sandy clay loam/sandy loam with a subsoil of loamy sand/medium sand which overlies clay at approximately 60-70cms. Soil wetness is a limitation on this land.

Subgrade 3b accounts for 33.9ha and 52% of the site. This land occurs in the northern half of the site.

Typically these soils are of medium clay loams which overly clay at depths of between 25 and 35cm. Soil wetness is the main limitation on this land.

Non Agricultural accounts for 3.5ha and 5% of the site. This consists of a golf driving range.

Other Land includes urban and open water and accounts for 1% of the site.

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