

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION  
DARLINGTON LOCAL PLAN  
HEIGHINGTON  
FEBRUARY 1993

ADAS  
Leeds Statutory Group

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2 FCS 6352

## SUMMARY

An Agricultural Land Classification survey of approximately 35ha of land at Heighington was carried out in February 1993. 26.3ha of this is in agricultural use of which 10.7ha falls within Grade 2. Soils on this land are well drained (Wetness Class I) and consist of medium clay loam topsoils over sandy clay loam subsoils. This land is limited to Grade 2 by climate.

Subgrade 3a land covers 3.1ha. Soils consist of medium clay loam topsoils over extremely stony subsoils. These soils are well drained (Wetness Class I) and limited to Subgrade 3a by soil droughtiness.

Subgrade 3b land covers 12.57ha. Soils consist of medium clay loam topsoils over slowly permeable heavy clay loam subsoils. These soils are poorly drained (Wetness Class IV) and are limited to Subgrade 3b by soil wetness.

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1. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

# AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT: DARLINGTON LOCAL PLAN, HEIGHINGTON

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

### 1.1 Location and Survey Methods

The site lies 3Km south west of Newton Aycliffe and is centred on Grid Reference NZ 252224. Survey work was carried out in February 1993 when soils were examined by hand auger borings at a density of one per hectare at points predetermined by the National Grid. Land quality was assessed using the methods described in "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales. Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land". (MAFF 1988)

### 1.2 Land Use and Relief

At the time of the survey 76.3% of the site was in pasture or arable use. The remainder consisted of urban areas, non agricultural land and agricultural buildings.

Site altitude varies from 110m AOD to 150m AOD. The land is mostly gently to moderately undulating.

### 1.3 Climate

Grid Reference	: NZ 252 224
Altitude (m)	: 115
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C (January-June)	: 1249 day°C
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	: 698
Climate Grade	: 2
Field Capacity Days	: 178
Moisture Deficit (mm) Wheat	: 87
Moisture Deficit (mm) Potatoes	: 72

#### 1.4 Geology, Soils and Drainage

The area is underlain by Upper Magnesian Limestone over which there is a cover of boulder clay and coarser textured drift. Soil profiles vary from well drained (Wetness Class I) medium sandy loam topsoils over medium sandy loam subsoils on the coarser drift to poorly drained (Wetness Class IV) medium clay loam topsoils over heavy clay loam subsoils on the boulder clay. The heavy soils are similar to the Dunkeswick Series as mapped in the area by the Soil Survey and Land Research Centre.

## 2. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

The ALC grades occurring on this site are as follows:

<u>Grade/Subgrade</u>	<u>Hectares</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Area</u>
1		
2	10.7	30.9
3a	3.1	9.0
3b	12.57	36.4
4		
5		
(Sub total)	(26.37)	(76.3)
Urban	1.6	4.6
Non Agricultural	6.3	18.2
Woodland - Farm		
- Commercial		
Agricultural Buildings	0.3	0.9
Open Water		
Land not surveyed		
(Sub total)	(8.2)	(23.7)
TOTAL	<u>34.57</u>	<u>100</u>

## 2.1 Grade 2

Land in this grade occurs in the northern and southern parts of the site. Typical soil profiles consist of very slightly stony medium clay loam topsoils over very slightly stony sandy clay loam subsoils. Profiles are well drained (Wetness Class I) and are limited to Grade 2 by climate and, in places, slight droughtiness.

## 2.2 Subgrade 3a

Subgrade 3a land occurs in the centre of the site to the south of Trafalgar House. Soils consist largely of stoneless medium clay loam topsoils over extremely stony medium clay loam subsoils. Profiles are well drained (Wetness Class I) but are limited to Subgrade 3a by soil droughtiness.

## 2.3 Subgrade 3b

Subgrade 3b land is common in several parts of the site. Profiles consist mainly of slightly stony medium clay loam topsoils over slightly stony gleyed slowly permeable heavy clay loam subsoils. The soils are poorly drained (Wetness Class IV) and are limited to Subgrade 3b by soil wetness and workability problems.

## 2.4 Non Agricultural

The non agricultural land on the site includes the parkland north of Hall Lane and Nursery gardens east of Trafalgar House.

## 2.5 Urban

This consists of houses and roads.

## 2.6 Farm Buildings

This category consists of the farm buildings at Hall Farm on the northern edge of the site.

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MAP