

**LAND AT BURGHLEY HOUSE
STAMFORD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Agricultural Land Classification
Summary Report
JULY, 1996**

**Resource Planning Team
Huntingdon Statutory Group
ADAS Cambridge**

**ADAS Reference: 52/96
MAFF Reference: EL 05/2194
LUPU Commission: C02387**

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY REPORT

LAND AT BURGHELY HOUSE STAMFORD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Introduction

1. This summary report presents the findings of a verification Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey of 30.4 ha of land at Burghley House, Stamford, Cambridgeshire. The survey was carried out in July, 1996.
2. The survey was commissioned by Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Land Use Planning Unit (Reading) in connection with an application for mineral extraction.
3. The work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Huntingdon Statutory Group in ADAS. The land has been graded in accordance with the published MAFF ALC guidelines and criteria (MAFF, 1988). A description of the ALC grades and subgrades is given in Appendix I.
4. At the time of survey the land use on the site was a mixture of grass ley, peas and wheat. A small area in the western part of the site has various small buildings on it, and an area in the centre of the site was not surveyed so as not to disturb archaeological features.

Summary

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10 000 and is accurate at this scale but any enlargement would be misleading.
6. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Areas of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed
3a	24.2	79.6
3b	3.2	10.5
Unsurveyed	2.6	8.6
Other land	0.4	1.3
Total agricultural land	30.0	98.7
Total survey area	30.4	100.0

7. The fieldwork was conducted at an average density of approximately 1 boring per hectare. A total of 17 borings and 3 soil pits were described.

8. The vast majority of the site has been assessed as subgrade 3a (good agricultural land), with a moderate droughtiness limitation in the southern and western parts of the site, and a moderate wetness and workability limitation in the northern part of the site. Land on the eastern boundary has been assessed as subgrade 3b (moderate agricultural land) with a more severe wetness and workability limitation.

APPENDIX I

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADES AND SUBGRADES

Grade 1: Excellent Quality Agricultural Land

Land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown and commonly includes top fruit, soft fruit, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables. Yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality.

Grade 2: Very Good Quality Agricultural Land

Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural or horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land of this grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1 land.

Grade 3: Good to Moderate Quality Land

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, the timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. When more demanding crops are grown, yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.

Subgrade 3a: Good Quality Agricultural Land

Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops, especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops.

Subgrade 3b: Moderate Quality Agricultural Land

Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass, or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass that can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.

Grade 4: Poor Quality Agricultural Land

Land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and/or the level of yields. It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (eg. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates, yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.

Grade 5: Very Poor Quality Agricultural Land

Land with severe limitations that restricts use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.