

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

PERRYFIELDS ROAD, BROMSGROVE

The site was surveyed by ^{the} Resource Planning Group in September 1989 following a planning application for residential development. The site covers approximately 20 hectares and is situated on the north west edge of Bromsgrove. It is bounded by Perryfields Road to the west, a recreation ground to the north, housing to the east and agricultural land at Red Cross Farm to the south. The latter area was the subject of an unsuccessful planning appeal in 1987.

Almost all the land is in agricultural use with a number of smallholdings growing horticultural crops including potatoes, cabbages, cauliflowers, sprouts, leeks, beans, lettuce, raspberries, strawberries and flowers. 3 well used foot paths and tracks cross the site but trespass does not appear to be a major problem.

Climate

Average annual rainfall is about 690 mm and this is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year with a slightly drier period from February to April and a maximum in August and November. The accumulated temperature above 0°C for the period January to June (a measure of relative warmth of a locality) is about 1380 °C, and ~~the~~ combination of rainfall and temperature indicate that there is no overall climatic limitation to the agricultural use of the land.

The median duration of field capacity is 163 days and the combined effect of summer rainfall and summer temperatures gives crop adjusted moisture deficits of 97mm for winter ~~wheat~~ and 85mm for potatoes. The growing season extends to about 250 days from late March to the end of November and the mean date for last frost is early May.

Topography

The altitude of the site ranges from 90 m in the south east corner to 107 m in the extreme north and the land slopes very gently from Perryfields Road down to the urban edge. Relief is not a limiting factor to the use of the land.

Geology

The published 1 inch to 1 mile geology maps of Droitwich (sheet 182) shows this area to be underlain by lower Keuper Sandstone. Some bands within the sandstone

are highly micaceous while others contain occasional thin lenses of red marl, and these bands give rise to the heavier textures in the soil profiles. In a few auger borings blocks of soft weathering sandstone were encountered within the soil profile.

Soils

The soils derived from the soft red sandstone are deep, well drained sandy loams; sandy loam over loamy sand and sand; and slightly heavier textures were found in some subsoils with medium to heavy clay loam.

Agricultural Land Classification

Grade 1. Grade 1 land occurs in a band through the middle of the site. Soils are deep, stoneless, well drained, sandy loams with clay loam subsoils in some profiles. Lenses of loamy sand and blocks of weathering sandstone were encountered in some profiles. There is no major limitation to the agricultural use of the land.

Grade 2

Grade 2 land is found on either side of the grade 1, ~~that~~ is adjacent to Perryfields Road and to the urban edge. In the former area the soils are lighter textured with sandy loam over loamy sand and sand and are restricted to this grade by droughtiness. The other area of grade 2 has more variable soils. It includes light textured droughty profiles, but also heavier profiles with clay loam layers at depth and evidence of wetness such as mottling, manganese concretions and paler colours within the profile. The southern most corner of the site next to the small area of woodland, in particular is a lower lying and wetter area.

Area of Land in Each Grade

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Hectares</u>	<u>% of Agricultural Area</u>	<u>% of Total Area</u>
Grade 1	10.7	56.6	54.6
Grade 2	8.2	43.4	41.8
NA	0.7	—	3.6
TOTAL	19.6	100	100