

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON LOCAL PLAN, BRIDGETOWN FARM AND TIDDINGTON

The sites at Bridgetown Farm and Tiddington were surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in February 1993. Bridgetown Farm site covers 58.3 ha. At the time of survey the greater part of the land was under grass and being grazed by sheep; two fields in the north-east of the site were under leeks and cereals. The buildings at Bridgetown Farm are not in agricultural use and there is an area of non-agricultural land, used for tipping to the south of White House.

Bridgetown Farm site is situated on the eastern edge of Stratford bounded to the east and north-east by housing along the A422, to the west and north-west by the Bridge Town housing estate and to the south by Rush Brook and agricultural land. A number of well used footpaths cross the site.

The Tiddington site covers 5.9 ha. At the time of survey sheep were grazing on the remains of a sugar beet crop. The site is situated on the eastern edge of Stratford, bounded by the Tiddington Housing Development to the north and west and by agricultural land to the west and south. A well used track runs along the eastern boundary of the land.

Climate

The average annual rainfall in the vicinity of the sites is 610 mm and the accumulated temperature above 0°C for the period January to June is 1449 day °C; there is no overall climatic limitation to the agricultural use of the sites. The balance between summer rainfall and evapotranspiration gives moisture deficits of 111 mm for winter wheat and 104 mm for potatoes. The median duration of field capacity is 130 days. The growing season extends to about 251 days from late March to late November with the mean date of last frost in late April.

Site

At Bridgetown Farm site the field containing the Bridgetown Farm buildings and the adjoining field to the north are level, other than for minor undulations due to relict ridge and furrow. To the south of this area the land slopes gently down to Rush Brook and rises gently again on the south side.

The highest point on the site is approximately 60 m in the eastern corner of the site adjacent to the A422. From here the land slopes to the south and to the west.

The Tiddington site is almost all level. There is however, a depression inside the southern boundary of the northern field and towards the southern end of the site the land slopes very gently to the south.

Soil

Both sites are underlain by Keuper Marl with a cover of Second Terrace River Gravels. At Tiddington this cover is uniform over most of the site, thinning at the southern end. The soils are sandy loams over loamy sands with a high stone content in the subsoil. At the southern end of the site the subsoil has a heavier texture and sandy clay loams occur below a sandy loam topsoil.

At Bridgetown Farm the cover of Second Terrace River Gravels is more variable. There is a gradual thinning of this cover eastwards from White House to the hill top adjoining the A422 with soils on the hill being heavy, gleyed clays. Heavy clays are also encountered along the banks of Rush Brook. Elsewhere on the site the soils are sandy loams over loamy sands and sands. A high stone content occurs in soils in the northern and most westerly parts of the site.

Agricultural Land Classification

Bridgetown Farm

Grade 2

This is the most extensive grade on the site with most occurring over the central portion of the site. Here the land is gently sloping or level and soils are medium sandy loams over loamy medium sands and slightly stony. Drought is the major limiting factor. Some isolated areas of Grade 1 land was found within this area.

On the southern boundary of the site Grade 2 land has been mapped on sandy clay loams over sandy clays. Here the major limiting factor is wetness.

Grade 3a

Three areas of this grade occur. In the northern corner of the site the soils are medium sandy loams over loamy medium sand and medium sand and are very stony in the subsoil. The major limitation is drought.

To the east of White House the soils are medium sandy loams over medium sands and loamy medium sands. The land is gently sloping and the major limitation is drought. In the eastern most field on the site the soils become heavy textured; sandy clay loams overlies strongly mottled clays. The major limiting factor is wetness.

South of Rush Brook on level to gently sloping land sandy clay loams overlies heavy clay loams and clays. Wetness is the major limiting factor.

Grade 3b

Land alongside Rush Brook has been mapped as 3b. The soils are heavy clay loams over clays and wetness is the major limiting factor.

Land in the western most part of the site, north of Rush Brook has also been mapped as Grade 3b. The soils are medium sandy loams over medium sand with very stony subsoils.

Drought is the major limiting factor in this area.

Area of land in each grade -

	ha	% of total	% of agricultural area
Grade 2	27.9	47.9	50.5
Grade 3a	21.3	36.5	38.7
Grade 3b	5.9	10.1	10.8
Urban	1.1	1.8	
Agricultural Buildings	0.6	1.0	
Non-agricultural	1.13	2.2	
Woodland	0.3	0.5	

Tiddington

Grade 3a

Most of the site has been mapped as Grade 3a. Soils are medium sandy loams over medium sands and loamy medium sands. The subsoils have a high stone content. Drought is the major limiting factor.

Grade 3b

This grade was mapped in a depression in the middle of the site. The soils are medium sandy loams increasingly wet with depth, indicating a shallow ground water table. Wetness is the major limiting factor.

Area of land in each grade -

	ha	% of total	% of agricultural area
Grade 3a	5.17	86.2	97
Grade 3b	0.16	2.7	3
Non agricultural	0.67	11.1	

**Resource Planning Team
Wolverhampton**

11 March 1993