

**WALMLEY, SUTTON COLDFIELD
AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION**

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**Resource Planning Team
ADAS Statutory Group
WOLVERHAMPTON**

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR WALMLEY, SUTTON COLDFIELD

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey for this site shows that the following proportions of ALC grades are present:

Grade/Subgrade	ha	% of site
2	9.7	16
3a	13.6	22
3b	31.9	51
Other land	4.1	7
Not surveyed	2.6	4

- 1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 are either topsoil stone content, soil wetness or soil droughtiness.
- 1.3 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a are topsoil stone content and soil wetness.
- 1.4 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is soil wetness.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in May 1996. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).
- 2.2 The 61.9 ha site is situated to the east of Walmley, Sutton Coldfield. The land to the north, and east of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land to the south and west of the site is in urban use. The site is bounded on the east by the A38 road.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the ad hoc development proposal for a "Major Investment Site".
- 2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The attached map is only accurate at the base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.
- 2.5 At the time of the survey the site was under cereals, grass, oilseed rape and fallow.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SP 148 937) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	683
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1369

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	158
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	98
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	87

4 SITE

4.1 Three site factors of gradient, micro relief and flooding are considered when classifying land.

4.2 These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of Triassic Mudstone (Keuper Marl) - British Geological Survey Sheet 168 Birmingham 1: 63 360. This is overlain with deposits of Quaternary fluvio-glacial sand and gravel.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which either have a sandy texture in the south or a clay loam texture in the north of the site.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 9.7 ha (16%) of the survey area and is found in the south west of the site.

6.1.1 These soils typically have a sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand or sandy clay loam to depth. Clay or sand may be encountered in the lower subsoil. The profiles are slightly stony in the topsoil and very slightly to very stony in the subsoil. Where the subsoils are of lighter textures, such as loamy sand, the moisture balance places these soils in to Grade 2 giving a soil droughtiness limitation. Where there are clay subsoils, observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class II or III giving a soil wetness limitation.

- 6.1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land include topsoil stone content and size, soil wetness and soil droughtiness.
- 6.2 Subgrade 3a - occupies 13.6 ha (22%) of the survey area and is found in the south east and the north west of the site.
- 6.2.1 These soils typically have a sandy clay loam texture overlying sandy clay loam and clay to depth. Occasionally sandy loam and loamy sand is present in the subsoil. The profiles are slightly stony in the topsoil and very slightly to moderately stony in the subsoil. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in either Wetness Classes I, II or III.
- 6.2.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land are the topsoil stones content and size and soil wetness.
- 6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 31.9 ha (51%) of the survey area and is found in the centre and north of the site.
- 6.3.1 The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.
- 6.3.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.
- 6.4 Other land includes mature and newly established woodland in the north and the track of Peddimore Lane in the south. Together these amount to 4.1 ha (7%) of the survey area.
- 6.5 The area of land immediately south of Brookhus Farm has not been surveyed (2.6ha and 4%) as it is understood to be in amenity use. Local residents confirmed that the land was mown by the Local Authority and used for recreational purposes by the immediate inhabitants.

6.6 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	9.7	16	17
3a	13.6	22	25
3b	31.9	51	58
Other land	4.1	7	-
Not surveyed	2.6	4	-
Totals	61.9	100	100