

**LAND NORTH OF M42, CATSHILL,  
BROMSGROVE**

**Agricultural Land Classification**

**October 1996**

**Resource Planning Team  
ADAS Statutory Group  
WOLVERHAMPTON**

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR  
LAND NORTH OF M42, CATSHILL, BROMSGROVE**

**1. SUMMARY**

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

Grade/Other Land	Area (hectares)	% of surveyed area
2	30.5	39.6
3a	27.9	36.2
3b	6.5	8.5
Other Land	12.1	15.7
<b>Total Survey Area</b>	<b>77.0</b>	<b>100</b>

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

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in September and October 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 77.0 ha site, situated south of Catshill, is bounded to the south by the M42 motorway, to the west by the M5 motorway, to the east by the A38(T) Birmingham Road and to the north mainly by urban development.
- 2.3. The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with possible future development sites in the Bromsgrove District Local Plan area.
- 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, sugar beet, kale, cereal stubble and permanent grass.*

### 3. CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site :

Factor	Units	Values		
Grid Reference	N/A	SO955734	SO963734	SO969737
Altitude	m, AOD	137	127	152
Accumulated Temperature	day °C	1340	1352	1323
Average Annual Rainfall	mm	732	729	747
Field Capacity Days	days	175	174	178
Moisture Deficit, Wheat	mm	91	92	89
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes	mm	78	79	74
Climatic Grade	N/A	1	1	2

3.2 Climate limits the agricultural use of land in the extreme north east of the site to Grade 2. There is no climatic limitation across the remainder of the site.

### 4. SITE

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

4.2 Gradients of over 7° limit the agricultural use of land north of Barnsley Hall Farm and in the extreme north east of the site to Subgrade 3b.

4.3 Micro relief and flooding 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 Bromsgrove and Wildmoor Sandstone - British Geological Survey Sheet 183, Redditch, 1:50000. This is overlain by periglacial flood gravels and alluvial fan deposits.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which have sandy loam and clay loam textures and are variably stony.

## 6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

### 6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 30.5 ha (39.6%) of the survey area.

- In the west of the site, around and north of Washingstocks Farm; south of Little Barnsley Farm to the M42 motorway and in the central north of the site the soils have:
  - medium clay loam or medium sandy silt loam topsoil textures overlying moderately to very stony sandy loam and sand to depth or
  - medium sandy loam or medium sandy silt loam topsoil textures overlying sandy clay loam and sandstones to depth,
  - slightly to moderately stony sandy loam over sand to depth.

The moisture balance places these soils into Grade 2.

- The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land are soil droughtiness and topsoil stone content.
- In the centre of the site around the marked drain north west of Barnsley Hall Farm, the soils have an organic sandy loam topsoil texture which is slightly stony, overlying loamy sand and sand to depth. Topsoil stone content of up to 10% limits these soils to Grade 2. There are isolated areas where stone content increases but these are too small to map at this scale.
- The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is topsoil stone content.

### 6.2 Subgrade 3a occupies 27.9 ha (36.2%) of the survey area.

- In the west and south east of the survey area, the soils predominately have a sandy loam topsoil texture overlying sandy loam and sand to depth. In the south east of the site these soils are slightly stony.
- The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness.
- To the south east of Little Barnsley Farm the soils have a slightly stony sandy loam topsoil texture overlying moderately stony loamy sand and sand to depth. The soils have up to 13% topsoil stone content. The moisture balance places these soils into Subgrade 3a.
- The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land are topsoil stone content and soil droughtiness.

6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 6.5 ha (8.5%) of the survey area.

- In the north east of the site, the soils typically have sandy loam or clay loam topsoil textures, which have up to 22% topsoil stones, overlying very stony (45% total stone) sandy silt loam subsoils over sandstone to depth.
- The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is topsoil stone content.
- Land north of Barnsley Hall Farm and land immediately south of Byron Way is limited by gradients of 9-10° to Subgrade 3b.
- The main limitation to the agricultural use of these areas of land is slope gradient.

6.4 Other land occupies 12.1 ha (15.7%) of the survey area and includes residential buildings, farm buildings, a garden centre, roads and woodland.

**S Y HUNTER**  
**Resource Planning Team**  
**ADAS Statutory**  
**ADAS Wolverhampton**