AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT

GREATER YORK LOCAL PLAN,
SITE H, HESLINGTON

ADAS
LEEDS REGIONAL OFFICE

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lds.rpg6.Heslington

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT ON SITE H
OF THE GREATER YORK LOCAL PLAN, HESLINGTON

INTRODUCTION

The site is located at Grid Reference SE 634492, on the southern edge of York, adjacent to the village of Heslington. It covers an area of 105.9 hectares. Soils were examined by hand auger borings at points predetermined by the National Grid at a density of approximately one boring per hectare. Inspection pits were also excavated to provide further details on soil characteristics. Land quality assessments were made using the "Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land" published by MAFF in 1988.

LAND USE

Most of the area is in arable use growing cereals, sugar beet and potatoes. Around Spring Villa and Waite's Plantation, however, there are a few fields under grass.

CLIMATE AND RELIEF

Annual average rainfall is approximately 596 mm. The median accumulated temperature above $0^{o}C$ (January to June) is $1390^{o}C$ and the site is at field capacity for 131 days per year. Although these factors indicate that there is no overall climatic limitation on ALC grade, summer soil moisture deficits are large in this area and droughtiness will be slightly limiting on the lighter soils.

Relief across the site is gentle and does not limit the use of agricultural machinery. Altitude is on average 10 m a.o.d.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Soils over most of the site are formed on post glacial fine and medium sand which forms a cover a metre or so in thickness over the underlying lacustrine clay. Clay occurs at or close to the surface in only a few

places, especially around Waite's Plantation. Here topsoils consist of heavy clay loam over clay subsoil. To the east of the Outgang soils are formed mainly on aeolian sand. Topsoils are usually coarse loamy or sandy with similar or lighter subsoils. The underlying lacustrine clay is often encountered at a depth of 90-100 cm. North of Waite's Plantation there is a complex pattern of clayey and sandy deposits which result in a patchwork of light and heavy topsoil textures. Subsoils here are also variable, but usually pass into clay within 100 cm depth.

DRAINAGE

Soils formed on the aeolian sands, although occasionally gleyed at depth, contain no slowly permeable horizons within 80 cm depth and thus fall within Wetness Class I. The heavier textured fine loamy and clayey soils, however, contain slowly permeable subsoil horizons and meet the criteria for Wetness Classes III and IV.

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

Grade	Area (ha)	Percentage of Agricultural Land
2	61.9	62.1
3a	27.6	27.7
3b	10.2	10.2
Non Agricultural	6.2	-
Total	105.9	100%

Grade 2

This grade is widespread east of the Outgang. Soils are formed on aeolian sandy drift with no clayey subsoil horizon at less than 70 cm depth. Topsoil textures are mainly of fine sandy loam or occasionally loamy fine sand. Droughtiness is likely to be a slight limitation for crops such as potatoes and is the main limitation on ALC grade.

Subgrade 3a

Subgrade 3a land occurs widely north of Waite's Plantation and as smaller areas near Common Lane and Low Lane. The areas north of Waite's Plantation and near Low Lane contain variable soils which fall within Wetness Class III and which are limited to the subgrade by soil pattern, wetness and workability problems. The areas around Common Lane contain very light textured soils restricted to subgrade 3a by droughtiness.

Subgrade 3b

The four areas of this subgrade contain clayey soils within Wetness Classes III and IV. Soils of this type are limited to subgrade 3b by wetness and workability problems.

Non Agricultural

The scrub and woodland in the Outgang and Waite's Plantation are classified as non agricultural.

Reference

MAFF (1988) Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land.

Resource Planning Group
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