WREKIN LOCAL PLAN SITE 1
NORTH WEST OF ADMASTON

Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Report
December 1998

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RPT Reference: **127/97 & 25/RPT/0920**
FRCA Reference: **EL 35/00008B**
LURET Job Number: **ME1AJPM**

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT
WREKIN LOCAL PLAN, SITE 1
NORTH WEST OF ADMASTON

INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on 116.1 hectares of land. The results of this survey supersede any previous ALC information for this land. The land is located to the north west of Admaston, centred on grid reference SJ 621 131. The site is bounded to the north by Rushmoor Lane and agricultural land, to the west by sewage works and agricultural land, and to the south by a railway line and the edge of Admaston village. The survey was in connection with the Wrekin Local Plan.

2. The survey was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) between May and November 1998 by the Resource Planning Team of the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)- Northern region of FRCA.

3. The land has been graded in accordance with the publication "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land" (MAFF 1988) .

4. At the time of survey the agricultural land on this site was under grass, cereals, sugar beet and linseed.

SUMMARY

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10000 with an average auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The ALC map is only accurate at this base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.

6. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed area	% site area
2	2.5	2	2
3a	52.7	55	45
3b	41.4	43	36
4			
Agricultural land not surveyed	12.3	N/A	11
Other land	7.2	N/A	6
Total surveyed area	96.6	100	-
Total site area	116.1	-	100

7. The agricultural land on this site has been classified as Grade 2 (very good quality), Subgrade 3a (good quality) and Subgrade 3b (moderate quality). The key limitations to the agricultural use of this land are soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

8. Very good quality land occurs in one small block in the south of the site. The soil typically has a medium sandy loam texture overlying loamy medium sand and sand. Occasionally a heavy clay loam subsoil is found.

9. Good quality land is found in the southern half of the site extending south from Cheshire Coppice and the sewage works area towards Admaston.

In the most southern and eastern parts of the site the soil typically has either a medium sandy loam or loamy medium sand texture overlying loamy medium sand and sand. In the central part of the site soil profiles are more varied and textures include sandy clay loam and medium sandy loam overlying clay.

10. Moderate quality land is found in the northern half of the site. The soil has either a medium clay loam or heavy clay loam texture overlying clay

FACTORS INFLUENCING ALC GRADE

Climate

11. Climate affects the grading of land through the assessment of an overall climatic limitation and also through interactions with soil characteristics.

12. The key climatic variables used for grading this site are given in Table 2 and were obtained from the published 5km grid datasets using standard interpolation procedures (Meteorological Office, 1989).

Table 2: Climatic and altitude data

Factor	Units	Values
Grid reference	N/A	SJ 621 131
Altitude	m, AOD	60
Accumulated Temperature	day°C (Jan-June)	1418
Average Annual Rainfall	mm	656
Field Capacity Days	days	142
Moisture Deficit, Wheat	mm	100
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes	mm	90
Overall climatic grade	N/A	Grade 1

13. The climatic criteria are considered first when classifying land as climate can be overriding in the sense that severe limitations will restrict land to low grades irrespective of favourable site or soil conditions.

14. The main parameters used in the assessment of an overall climatic limitation are average annual rainfall (AAR), as a measure of overall wetness, and accumulated temperature (ATO, January to June), as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality.

15. The combination of rainfall and temperature at this site means that there is no overall climatic limitation. The site is climatically Grade 1.

Site

16. The site lies at an altitude of 55 - 65 metres AOD. The land form is mainly gently undulating.

17. The three site factors of gradient, microrelief and flooding are considered when classifying the land.

18. *Gradient microrelief and flooding do not impose any limitations on the agricultural* use of this land.

Geology and Soils

19. The solid geology of the area is comprised of Lower Mottled sandstone - British Geological Survey (1977). The drift deposits consist mainly of Lake Clay in the northern part of the site, with Glacial Sand and Gravel in the southern half of the site.

20. The soils that have developed on this geology have a clay loam texture overlying clay in the northern part of the site. In the southern part of the site the soils generally have a sandy texture, mainly sandy loam overlying loamy sand and sand.

In the central parts of the site where the two drift geologies interface the soil profiles are more varied with sandy loam overlying clay or sandy clay loam overlying loamy sand.

Agricultural Land Classification

21. The details of the classification of the site are shown on the enclosed ALC map and the area statistics of each grade are given in Table 1, page 1.

Grade 2

22. Land of very good quality occupies 2.5 hectares (2%) of the site area and occurs in one small block in the south of the site.

23. The soil commonly comprised of medium sandy loam topsoil, over a loamy medium sand and sand at depth. Occasionally a heavy clay loam subsoil is present. The moisture balance places these soils in Grade 2.

24. The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness.

Subgrade 3a

25. Land of good quality occupies 52.7 hectares (45 %) of the site area and extends across the southern half of the site.

26. In the most southern and eastern parts of the Subgrade 3a land the soil typically has either a medium sandy loam or loamy medium sand texture overlying loamy medium sand and sand. The moisture balance places these soils in Subgrade 3a.

27. In the central part of the site the soil profiles are more varied reflecting the interface between the Lake clay and sand and gravel deposits. Soil textures include sandy clay loam and medium sandy loam overlying clay. The depths to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III.

28. The main limitations to the agricultural use of the land are soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

Subgrade 3b

29. Land of moderate quality occupies 41.4 hectares (36 %) of the site area and is found in the northern half of the site.

30. The soil typically has either a medium clay loam or heavy clay loam texture overlying clay. The depths to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.

31. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

Agricultural Land Not Surveyed

32. Agricultural land not surveyed occupies 12.3 hectares (11 %) of the site area, and includes land, close to Admaston, used for turf stripping at the time of the survey.

Other Land

33. Other land occupies 7.2 hectares (6 %) of the site area and is found as farm tracks, farm buildings, woodland, ponds and land associated with adjoining sewage works.

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SOURCES OF REFERENCE

British Geological Survey (1977) Sheet SJ60, Telford, Solid and Drift Edition. 1:25 000 scale. BGS: London.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land. MAFF: London.

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