

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LAND AT BRATTON FARM, TELFORD

Introduction

The site was visited by the Resource Planning Group in July and August 1992. An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the ALC Revised Guidelines/Criteria Booklet (MAFF 1988).

Location

The site is situated at Bratton Farm (SJ 637 142) east of the B5063. The land is gently sloping, with the altitude varying from 58 to 60 metres.

Altitude and relief do not impose any limitations upon the classification of this site.

Climate and Rainfall

The assessment of climatic limitation is based upon average annual rainfall (AAR) and accumulated temperature (ATO). For this site the figures are 660mm and 1418°C respectively, thus indicating that there are no climatic limitations on this site. The field capacity figure is 141 days; the mean last frost is early May.

Geology and Soils

The site is underlain by the Bridgnorth (Lower Mottled) Sandstone. The associated soils with this substratum are the Salop Series (clay loam over clays) to the north and the Salwick Series (sandy loams/sandy clay loams over sand/clay loams) to the south.

Irrigation

At the time of survey the potatoes being grown in the eastern part of the site were being irrigated. The benefits of irrigation have not been included in the grading of this land, but could lead to an improved grading of one grade or sub-grade on the drought-limited soils, ie the areas of sub-grade 3a and 2.

Land Use

At the time of the survey wheat, barley and potatoes were being grown on the site.

Agricultural Land Classification

Grade	Hectares	% of site
2	34.4	43
3a	28.9	36
3b	<u>17.2</u>	<u>21</u>
	80.5	100

Grade 2 accounts for 43% of the site (34.4 hectares). It occurs in the eastern half of the site.

Typically these soils are sandy loams overlying sandy clay loams or loamy sands with sand at depth. Where sandy clay loams occur as a topsoil they overly clay loams and clay at depth, resulting in isolated areas with a wetness limitation.

However, droughtiness is the main limitation of these soils.

Grade 3a accounts for 28.9 hectares and 36% of the site. It is found as a large block in the south west and as a smaller discrete block in the north east of the site.

Typically these soils are sandy loams overlying loamy sands/sand with occasional loamy sand topsoils. It should be noted that to the east of the Gate Inn (SW) the topsoils are lighter (loamy sands over sands at depth).

The main limitation is droughtiness.

Grade 3b accounts for 17.2 hectares of the site (21%). It occurs as a wide strip along the northern boundary of the site.

These soils are typically sandy clay loams/clay loams over clays.

The main limitation is wetness, with the slowly permeable layer being encountered at approximately 35cm.

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