

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
STAFFORD LOCAL PLAN

ADAS
WOLVERHAMPTON STATUTORY GROUP

Job No: 031/93
MAFF Ref: EL37/00084

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR STAFFORD LOCAL PLAN

1 SUMMARY

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

Grade 2	10.7 ha	(29.5 % of the site)
Subgrade 3a	19.1 ha	(52.6 % of the site)
Subgrade 3b	4.1 ha	(11.3 % of the site)
Grade 4	1.1 ha	(3.0 % of the site)
Other land		
Agricultural buildings	0.5 ha	(1.4 % of the site)
Urban	0.6 ha	(1.7 % of the site)
Not surveyed	0.2 ha	(0.5 % of the site)

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a is droughtiness.

1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b and Grade 4 is soil wetness.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in July 1993. An ALC survey was undertaken according to the guidelines given in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of the Land" (MAFF 1988).

2.2 The site consists of 36.3 ha situated to the south of Rickerscote and is bounded to the west by the mainline railway. The land to the north is urban and to the east is agricultural land.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Stafford Local Plan.

2.4 At the request of MAFF this was a "detailed grid survey" at 1:10000 scale 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 permanent grassland.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site:

Average Annual Rainfall	717 mm
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June	1388 day °C
Field Capacity Days	172 days
Moisture Deficit Wheat	95 mm
Moisture Deficit Potatoes	83 mm

3.2 There is no climatic limitation to the agricultural use of the site.

4 SITE

4.1 Gradient, microrelief and flooding are assessed to establish any possible limitation to agricultural use.

4.2 On this site there are no limitations to agricultural use imposed by gradient, microrelief or flooding.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is composed of Keuper Marl (British Geological Survey Sheet 139, Stafford). This is overlain by a drift geology of alluvium and fluvio-glacial sand and gravel.

5.2 The drift geology is the major influence on soil type on this site. The sands and gravels cover most of the site and the soils developed on this material are sandy textured and stony. The alluvium occurs along the course of the brook in the south-east and around the drains in the north-west. The soils here are silty clays.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- 6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 10.7 ha of the site and occurs mostly as a band through the north-west and centre.
 - 6.1.1 The soils within this grade typically are sandy loams over sand at depth. The soils are moderately stony.
 - 6.1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is droughtiness.
- 6.2 Subgrade 3a - occupies 19.1 ha of the site. It is the most extensive grade and occurs across the site.
 - 6.2.1 The soils are typically sandy loam over loamy sand with sand to depth and are moderately stony.
 - 6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land within this grade is droughtiness.
- 6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 4.1 ha of the site. It occurs in two areas; alongside the brook south-east of Barnhurst Farm and in the north-west between two drains.
 - 6.3.1 The soils are typically silty clay loam over silty clay. The silty clay is strongly mottled and the profile is stoneless.
 - 6.3.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in this grade is soil wetness.
- 6.4 Grade 4 land occupies 1.1 ha of the site. It is found in one area, in a slight depression around the drains in the north-central part of the site.
 - 6.4.1 The soils in this grade are either clay loam over silt loam and silty clay or clay loam over clay with loamy sand at depth. Peaty material is encountered within the subsoil.
 - 6.4.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this grade is soil wetness.
- 6.5 Other land includes the agricultural buildings of Barnhurst Farm which occupy 0.5 ha and urban covering 0.6 ha and consisting of housing and a road at the north end of the site and the track to Barnhurst Farm. An area of 0.2 ha was not surveyed as it was fenced off and appeared to be a paddock adjoining the houses at the north of the site.

6.6 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Subgrade	Area (ha)	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	10.7	29.5	30.6
3a	19.1	52.6	54.6
3b	4.1	11.3	11.7
4	1.1	3.0	3.1
Other land			
Agricultural Buildings	0.5	1.4	-
Urban	0.6	1.7	-
Not surveyed	0.2	0.5	
Totals	36.3	100.0	100.0

Resource Planning Team
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