



Ministry of
Agriculture
Fisheries
and Food

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
HAMBLETON LOCAL PLAN
(LAND AT SOWERBY)
NORTH YORKSHIRE
APRIL 1996**

ADAS
Leeds Statutory Group

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SUMMARY

A detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey of 3.8 ha of land south of Sowerby, near Thirsk was carried out in relation to Hambleton Local Plan. The central part of the site was surveyed in June 1995 and the remaining areas in April 1996. At the time of the 1996 survey 92% of the site was in agricultural use and 2.1 ha of this has been placed in Grade 1. The soils are well drained, with very slightly stony medium sandy loam topsoils and slightly stony medium sandy loam subsoils. Horizons of moderately to very stony loamy medium sand occur below 100 cm depth in places but this land has no or only very minor limitations to agricultural use. 1.4 ha of land has been placed in Grade 2. These soils are similar to those on the Grade 1 land but the moderately to very stony loamy medium sand lower subsoils begin at between 50 cm and 80 cm depth, and a slight soil droughtiness restriction limits the ALC grade.

Other land on the site covers 0.3 ha and consists of scrub and buildings in the north.

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1. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION (ALC) REPORT ON LAND AT SOWERBY, IN RELATION TO HAMBLETON LOCAL PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

1.1 Location and Survey Methods

This site lies 1½ km south of Thirsk town centre and covers 3.8ha. 1.7 ha in the centre of the site had been subject to a detailed ALC survey in June 1995 while remaining areas were surveyed in April 1996. Survey work involved carrying out hand auger borings at 100 m intervals predetermined by the O.S. National Grid, and two soil pits were dug to allow full profile descriptions to be made and to collect samples for laboratory analysis. In addition, a number of extra borings were made where necessary to refine grade boundaries. The land quality was assessed using the methods described in "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales. *Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land*" (MAFF, 1988).

1.2 Land Use and Relief

At the time of the 1996 survey 92% of the site was in agricultural use (growing winter cereals or under ley grass) while 8% consisted of scrub and buildings in the north.

The site lies at an altitude of approximately 32 m AOD and the land is generally level.

1.3 Climate

Grid Reference	: SE 432808
Altitude (m)	: 32
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C (January - June)	: 1358 day °C
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	: 648
Climatic Grade	: 1
Field Capacity Days	: 155
Moisture Deficit (mm) Wheat	: 102
Moisture Deficit (mm) Potatoes	: 92

1.4 Geology, Soils and Drainage

The area is underlain by deposits of the Mercia Mudstone Group, over which lie deep deposits of glacial sand and gravel.

The soils on the site are well drained (Wetness Class I) and consist of very slightly to slightly stony medium sandy loam topsoils and upper subsoils overlying slightly to very stony medium sandy loam or loamy medium sand lower subsoils.

2. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

The ALC grades occurring on this site are as follows:

<u>Grade/Subgrade</u>	<u>Hectares</u>	<u>% of Total Area</u>
1	2.1	55.3
2	1.4	36.8
3a		
3b		
4		
5		
(Sub total)	(3.5)	(92.1)
Other Land	0.3	7.9
TOTAL	3.8	100

2.1 Grade 1

Grade 1 land covers the centre and south-west of the site. The soils are well drained (Wetness Class I) and consist of medium sandy loam topsoils and subsoils with horizons of loamy medium sand occurring below 100 cm depth in places. The topsoils are generally very slightly stony, with between 5% and 6% very small to medium-sized sandstones and hard stones (1% >2 cm in size), while the subsoils are generally slightly stony, with around 11% sandstones and hard stones. However, the horizons of loamy medium sand are generally moderately to very stony, with between 25% and 45% very small to medium sandstones and hard stones. This land has no or only very minor limitations to agricultural use.

2.2 Grade 2

Grade 2 land occurs in the north and south-east. The soils are again well drained (Wetness Class I), with medium sandy loam topsoils and upper subsoils overlying loamy medium sand lower subsoils. The topsoils and upper subsoils are typically very slightly to slightly stony (with around 5% very small to medium sandstones and hard stones in the topsoil, rising to around 12% in the upper subsoil) whilst lower subsoils are moderately to very stony, with up to 45% very small to medium sandstones and hard stones. This land is limited to Grade 2 by a slight soil droughtiness restriction.

2.3 Other Land

Other land on this site consists of scrub and buildings in the north.

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MAP