

38/92



# ADAS

FOOD, FARMING, LAND & LEISURE

## MEMORANDUM

TO [REDACTED]  
FROM [REDACTED]  
DATE 2 July 1992  
SUBJECT RAMSEY MERESIDE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

1. A reconnaissance survey of soil types and land quality was carried out during June 1992 on the land at Ramsey Mereside (71.2 ha in total).

### Soils

2. This survey indicated the predominance of organic soils derived from the marine clay deposits. Soils typically comprise organic clays over porous marine clays.
3. Within fields slight variations occur in the microtopography where silt rodham ridges are present. In addition a small area of peaty soils overlie the marine clay east of High Lode pumping station (G Ref: TL 286866), occasionally subsoils are acidic.

### Agricultural Land Classification

4. The majority of the farm comprises grade 2 land, with smaller areas of grade 1 associated with the silt rodhams.
5. Slight profile droughtiness and topsoil workability restrict the land to grade 2. On the rodhams the silt soils hold large reserves of available water and are freely draining, consequently these areas have been graded 1.

### Crop Suitability

6. Land on the farm is suitable for growing a wide range of crops such as cereals, potatoes, sugar beet, peas and field vegetables. The areas east of High Lode pumping station are peaty in the upper horizons and should therefore be flexible for growing a range of field vegetables such as carrots, celery, onions etc. Crop yields may also benefit due to availability of surface water irrigation from the adjacent ditches.

7. Since the success of growing field vegetables is linked to the ability to harvest and work the land outside of the drier months the organic clay soils (forming the majority of the site) may be less flexible for growing these crops. In particular the success of field vegetables may be more limited where topsoils are low in organic matter (ie 10%) as in the vicinity of Mere Side, Cottage Farm, Oilmills Road and Oil Mills Drove (31.7 ha; 45%).