

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

RAMPSIDE (AREA 2)

BARROW IN FURNESS OUTER BOROUGH PLAN

ADAS
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INTRODUCTION

This 260 hectare area is located around National Grid Reference (NGR) SD 234 675 about 4 km south east of Barrow town centre. The A5087 Barrow to Rampside Road forms the eastern boundary of the area. All agricultural land from this road to the coast was surveyed.

Survey work was completed in December 1988 when soils were examined by hand auger borings to a depth of one metre at points pre-determined by the National Grid. The density of borings was one per hectare.

Land quality was assessed using the "Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land" (MAFF 1988)

LAND USE

The dominant agricultural land use in the area is grassland. Arable cropping is restricted to a few fields scattered across the area. There are also considerable amounts of land in a number of different non agricultural uses.

The Westfield Point Gas Terminal occupies two areas in the west (NGR SD 227 670 and SD 230 674) whilst to the north is a sand quarry (NGR SD 228 682) covering about 15 hectares. These are classified on the accompanying map as urban land uses. Woodland, scrub and marshy ground cover other small areas of non-agricultural land.

CLIMATE

The annual average rainfall is estimated to be 1050 mm. Median accumulated temperature above 0°C (January to June) is 1415°C and the site is at field capacity for approximately 235 days each year.

In terms of temperature and rainfall there is an overall climatic limitation of grade two. The coastal location of the area, however, means that it is very exposed to the prevailing westerly winds. Local experience indicates that strong winds in this area increase the lodging risk in cereals and are likely to cause stress in cattle. For these reasons an additional overall climatic limitation of subgrade 3a has been applied to the whole area.

RELIEF

The area contains many small undulating hills rising to a maximum altitude of about 30 m aod. Slope is a limitation on ALC grade only in a few localised sites where gradients exceed 7° and thus downgrade land from 3a to 3b.

GEOLOGY, SOILS AND DRAINAGE

Soils are developed on superficial glacial and post glacial drift which forms a thick cover over the underlying Triassic sandstones. These deposits consist mainly of glaciofluvial sand and gravel underlain in places by reddish boulder clay. Other deposits of lesser importance are sandy storm beach material on the western coastal strip near Beacon Hill and alluvial sediments north of Rampside.

Topsoils on the glaciofluvial sands are generally of sandy loam or loamy sand over similar or on even lighter textured subsoils which are occasionally moderately stony. These soils are permeable and even though gleyed at depth, fall within Wetness Class I. Where the sands overlies boulder clay near Eastwood House (NGR SD 241 667) the lower subsoil, below about 80 cm consists of slowly permeable reddish clay or clay loam. Soils of this type are placed within Wetness Class II. Soils on the coastal sands near Beacon Hill are very light textured, usually of loamy fine sand topsoil over stoneless fine sand subsoil. Although affected by groundwater this land is easily drained and is placed within Wetness Class I.

The alluvial soils near Rampside consist of organic silt loam or organic silty clay loam topsoils over gleyed silty clay subsoils and fall within Wetness Classes IV and V.

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

The ALC grades in the area are as follows:-

Grade	Hectares	Per cent of total site area
3a	116.4	45
3b	64.6	25
4	15.8	6
Non Agricultural	17.6	7
Urban	<u>45.6</u>	<u>17</u>
	<u>260</u>	<u>100</u>

Subgrade 3a

Land in this subgrade is evenly distributed across the area. Topsoils are usually of sandy loam or loamy sand over loamy sand subsoils. Permeable (Wetness Class I) easily worked slightly stony soils of this type meet the criteria for Grade 2 land, but were downgraded to 3a because of the overall exposure limitation in the area.

Subgrade 3b

This subgrade is common especially in the southern part of the area. Slopes of 8-11° are the overriding limitation on land around St Michael's Church and near the Gas Terminal access road. On the higher ground in the middle of the site stoniness is the main limitation. All other areas within subgrade 3b are limited by soil wetness (Wetness Classes III and IV), even where the top soils are coarse textured.

Grade 4

There are five distinct areas of land within this grade. A small but steep dry valley near the Gas Terminal access road is limited to Grade 4 by slopes of 12-18⁰. All the other areas of grade four land occur within waterlogged often peaty hollows.

Non Agricultural Land

Included in this category are a caravan site, the Gas Terminal access road, a disused railway cutting, woodland and several small ponds.

Urban

The two areas of the gas terminal and the sand quarry are unlikely to be returned to agriculture and are thus classified as urban as are St Michael's churchyard and housing at Rampside.

Reference "Agricultural land classification of England and Wales, revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land." MAFF 1988

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