AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
SITE C (CRADLEY)
MALVERN HILLS DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

Resource Planning Team
ADAS Statutory Group
WOLVERHAMPTON

ADAS Ref: 25/RPT/0723
Job No: 093/95
MAFF Ref: EL 17/00045

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR SITE C (CRADLEY) MALVERN HILLS DISTRICT 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/Subgrade	ha	% of site
3a	5.9	83
3b	0.5	7
4	0.7	10

1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Subgrades 3a and 3b are soil wetness and droughtiness.

1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 4 is gradient.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in October 1995. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

2.2 The 7.1 ha site is situated to the west of Cradley. The land to the north, south east and south of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land to the west and east is in urban use.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with Malvern Hills District Local Plan.

2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 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 oat stubble and grass.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SO 732471) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	696
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1422

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	161
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	102
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	91

4 SITE

4.1 Three site factors of gradient, micro relief and flooding are considered when classifying land.

4.2 Gradient acts as a limitation in the south east of the site, where slopes are approximately 17°. Such slopes limit this area of land to Grade 4 quality.

4.3 The remaining factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The geology of the area is comprised of silty shale and siltstones - Soils of Worcester and the Malverns District, Soil Survey of England and Wales.

5.2 The soils developed on this parent material either have a sandy silt loam or a clay loam texture.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 5.9 ha (83%) of the survey area and is found mainly in the north of the site. The soils in this unit are of two distinct types.

6.1.1 Firstly there are the soils which have a medium clay loam texture over heavy clay loam and clay to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III.

6.1.2 Secondly, there are the soils which have a medium sandy silt loam texture over sandy clay loam to at least 55cm depth. Below this depth hard sandstone is encountered. The moisture balance places these soils in to Subgrade 3a.

6.1.3 Within this unit there are auger borings of Grade 2 quality but they cannot be illustrated separately at this scale of mapping.

6.1.4 The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land are soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 0.5 ha (7%) of the survey area and is found in the south of the site.

6.2.1 The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer places these soils in Wetness Class IV.

6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

6.3 Grade 4 - occupies 0.7 ha (10%) of the survey area and is found in the south east where gradients are approximately 17°.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area
3a	5.9	83
3b	0.5	7
4	0.7	10
Totals	**7.1**	**100**