



Ministry of
Agriculture
Fisheries
and Food

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
WEAR VALLEY LOCAL PLAN
HOWDEN-LE-WEAR, COUNTY DURHAM
FEBRUARY 1994

ADAS
Leeds Statutory Group

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SUMMARY

An Agricultural Land Classification survey of 2.0 ha of land to the south east of Howden-Le-Wear, County Durham was carried out in February 1994.

At the time of the survey, all of this was in agricultural use. The whole site is of Grade 5 quality. Approximately 15cm of medium clay loam textured topsoil overlies approximately 10cm of gravelly sand fill. This overlies coal rich colliery waste. Soil depth is the main factor limiting this land to Grade 5.

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT. WEAR VALLEY LOCAL PLAN:
HOWDEN-LE-WEAR

1. INTRODUCTION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

1.1 Location and Survey Methods

The site lies to the south east of Howden-Le-Wear on the A689 at Eale Nook Bridge. It is centred on National Grid Reference NZ 164332. It covers a total of 2.0 ha, all of which was in agricultural use at the time of the survey. Survey work was carried out in February 1994. Soils were examined by hand auger borings at 100m intervals at points predetermined by the National Grid. Additional auger borings were made to refine the final grading of land quality. 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 survey, all land on the site was in agricultural use as permanent pasture. The site is a former colliery spoil tip which has been levelled and restored. It lies at an altitude of 113m OD. The land is mostly level, but is very strongly sloping (approximately 30°) on the western site boundary.

1.3 Climate

Grid Reference	: NZ164332
Altitude (m)	: 113
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C (January-June)	: 1241 day°C
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	: 719
Climatic Grade	: 2
Field Capacity Days	: 192
Moisture Deficit (mm) Wheat	: 84
Moisture Deficit (mm) Potatoes	: 68

1.4 Geology, Soils and Drainage

The site is underlain by sandstones and shales of the Carboniferous Coal Measures Series. The site consists of a former colliery spoil heap which has been restored by levelling and the application of small amounts of fill and topsoil.

Soil cover across the site is shallow. Approximately 15cm of medium clay loam textured topsoil overlies approximately 10cm of gravelly sand fill. This, in turn, overlies coal rich colliery waste.

2. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

The ALC grades occurring on this site are as follows:

<u>Grade/Subgrade</u>	<u>Hectares</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Area</u>
1		
2		
3a		
3b		
4		
5	2.0	100
(Sub total)	(2.0)	(100)
Urban		
Non Agricultural		
Woodland - Farm		
- Commercial		
Agricultural Buildings		
Open Water		
Land not surveyed		
(Sub total)	_____	_____
TOTAL	2.0	100
	_____	_____

2.1 Grade 5

The entire site falls within Grade 5. Approximately 15cm of medium clay loam textured topsoil overlies approximately 10cm of gravelly sand fill. This, in turn overlies colliery waste. Soil depth is the main factor limiting this land to Grade 5.

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