AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

WREKIN DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN, WHEATLEY GRANGE

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR WREKIN DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN, WHEATLEY GRANGE

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey of this site shows that the following proportions of ALC grades are present:

Grade/Subgrade	Area (ha)	% of the site
2	20.1	41.9
3a	18.2	38.0
3b	7.4	15.4
Woodland	0.5	1.0
Urban	1.8	3.7

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a is soil droughtiness.

1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is soil wetness.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in August 1994. An ALC 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 48ha site is situated to the north of Hadley. It is bounded to the south by the Queensway (A442) and to the north by minor roads and agricultural land. The land is bounded to the east by agricultural land and a canal.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Wrekin Local Plan.

2.4 At the request of MAFF the survey was at a scale of 1: 25,000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per 4 hectare. The attached map is only accurate at the base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.

2.5 At the time of survey the agricultural land on the site was predominantly under sugar beet and potatoes with a small area east of Wheatley Grange lying fallow.

3.0 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site:

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	675
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C for January to June (day°C)	1411

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant climatic data for agricultural land classification are:

Field Capacity Days (days)	149
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	99
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	87

4.0 SITE

4.1 When classifying land three site factors are taken into consideration; gradient, microrelief and flooding.

4.2 These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of this land.

5.0 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area consists of Upper Carboniferous Red Sandstone and Marls overlain by Boulder Clay, Sands and Gravels, (British Geological Survey Sheet 153, 1inch).

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which include sandy loam or clay loam topsoils overlying sandy clay loam and clay to depth or loamy sands to depth.

6.0 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 occupies 20.1ha (41.9%) of the survey area and occurs as a large unit in the western part of the site and as a narrow strip running east - west in the northern part of the site.

6.1.1 These soils typically have a sandy loam texture topsoil overlying sandy loam or sandy clay loam or loamy sand over sand to depth. Heavier subsoil bands of clay were recorded within some profiles.

6.1.2 Droughtiness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of the land in this grade. Where heavier subsoils are encountered both droughtiness and wetness are limiting.

6.2 Sub-grade 3a occupies 18.2ha (38%) of the survey area and occurs as a broad band across the centre of the site and as a small unit in the southwest.

6.2.1 These soils typically have a sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand and sand to depth. Occasionally sandy clay loam topsoils overlie clay to depth. These soils are gleyed within 40cm and a slowly permeable layer is present at about 60cm.

6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness with heavier profiles limited by soil wetness.

6.3 Subgrade 3b occupies 7.4ha (15.4%) of the survey area and occurs in the northwest part of the site.

6.3.1 These soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay. A slowly permeable layer is present at about 25-35 cm.

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

6.4 Urban land occupies 1.8ha (3.7%) and comprises land associated with local houses, and electricity sub-station and engineering works. Woodland occupies 0.5ha (1%) and comprises small planted copses.

6.5 **Summary of Agricultural Land Classification Grades**

Grade/ sub-grade	Area (ha)	% of survey area	% of agricultural land
2	20.1	41.9	44.0
3a	18.2	38.0	39.8
3b	7.4	15.4	16.2
Woodland	0.5	1.0	-
Urban	1.8	3.7	-
Agricultural buildings			
Totals	48.0	100	100

Resource Planning Team
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