

NOTE ON AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY OF LAND AT DICKENS HEATH

1. A site visit was made on 15 June 1994 to confirm whether the agricultural land quality was "best and most versatile". Previous survey work carried out in 1978 classified the land as Grades 3b and 3c following the pre-88 guidelines.

Four auger borings were recorded in the vicinity of Dickens Heath Farm and a soil pit was dug on land between the farm and the canal.

2. There is no climatic limitation on the site. The underlying geology consists mainly of Boulder Clay (British Geological Survey Sheet 183). The soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay. In places soils have a sandy clay loam texture overlying clay loam with bands of sandy loam onto clay at depth. At the time of the survey subsoils were wet below 70cm and in places recent surface ponding and poaching were evident

3. The auger borings recorded showed that the soil was gleyed above 40cm with a slowly permeable layer close to the depth of the boundary between Wetness Class III and IV and hence the Subgrades 3a/3b cutoff.

A detailed inspection of a soil pit confirmed the presence of a slowly permeable layer at 45cm. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place the soil in Wetness Class IV and hence Subgrade 3b.

4. The overall conclusion is that much of the the land at Dickens Heath is likely to be classified Subgrade 3b under the revised ALC guidelines (1988).

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No map produced.