

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
DARLINGTON LOCAL PLAN
SITE 4, MAIDENDALE
MARCH 1993

ADAS
Leeds Statutory Group

Job No:- 73/93
MAFF Ref:-

2 FCS 6406

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SUMMARY

An Agricultural Land Classification survey of approximately 72.5 ha of land at Maidendale on the southern edge of Darlington was carried out in March 1993.

50.7 ha of this land was in agricultural use, all of which falls within Subgrade 3b. Soils within this subgrade are poorly drained (Wetness Class IV) and generally consist of heavy clay loam topsoils over slowly permeable reddish clay subsoils. This land is limited to Subgrade 3b by soil wetness and workability problems. The remainder of the site (29.4 ha) is formed of non-agricultural land consisting of public open space, sports grounds and unused industrial land, and small areas of Urban land and Agricultural Buildings.

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1. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT: DARLINGTON LOCAL PLAN, SITE 4,
MAIDENDALE

1. INTRODUCTION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

1.1 Location and Survey Methods

The site is located on the south eastern edge of Darlington, between the Darlington-Stockton railway and the industrial estate, around National Grid Reference NZ 315134. Survey work was carried out in March 1993 when soils were examined by hand auger borings at a density of one per hectare at points predetermined by the National Grid. 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 survey 69.9% of the site was in agricultural production, most of which was in arable use. The remainder consisted of Non Agricultural land (public open space, football ground and derelict unused industrial and agricultural land), Urban land (electrical substation and a railway siding) and Agricultural Buildings (Maidendale Farm). The site lies at an altitude of 50m and is level to very gently undulating.

1.3 Climate

Grid Reference	: NZ 315 134
Altitude (m)	: 50
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C (January-June)	: 1326 day°C
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	: 623
Climatic Grade	: 1
Field Capacity Days	: 149
Moisture Deficit (mm) Wheat	: 99
Moisture Deficit (mm) Potatoes	: 87

1.4 Geology, Soils and Drainage

The site is underlain by Permian mudstones over which there is a thick cover of stoneless reddish till and lacustrine clay. All soils are poorly drained (Wetness Class IV) and most profiles consist of heavy clay loam topsoils over slowly permeable clay subsoils.

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	50.7	69.9
4		
5		
(Sub total)	(50.7)	(69.9)
Urban	0.9	1.2
Non Agricultural	20.4	28.2
Woodland - Farm		
- Commercial		
Agricultural Buildings	0.5	0.7
Open Water		
Land not surveyed		
(Sub total)	(21.8)	(30.1)
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TOTAL	72.5	100
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2.1 Subgrade 3b

All of the agricultural land on this site falls within Subgrade 3b. Profiles generally consist of heavy clay loam topsoils over gleyed slowly permeable reddish clay subsoils. In some places the topsoil is formed of medium clay loam and in others of silty clay. Profiles are poorly drained (Wetness Class IV) and the land is limited to Subgrade 3b by wetness and workability problems.

2.2 Non-Agricultural

This consists of public open space, a football ground and derelict agricultural and industrial land.

2.3 Urban

This category includes an electricity substation and a railway siding.

2.4 Agricultural Buildings

This consists of Maidendale Farm.

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MAP