

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION FOR A GOLF COURSE EXTENSION CLEOBURY MORTIMER

Summary

28.7 ha of land north east of Cleobury Mortimer were graded under the Revised Agricultural Land Classification system. 49% of the site was found to be sub-grade 3a, a further 33% to be sub-grade 3b, 7% was found to be grade 4 with the remainder of the site classified as non-agricultural.

Introduction

The 28.7 ha site was visited by members of the Resource Planning Team in June 1993. An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was undertaken using the ALC Revised Guidelines (MAFF 1988).

Location, Altitude and Relief

The site lies to the north east of Cleobury Mortimer and is bounded by Malpass wood in the north east, a golf course in the south and south east and agricultural land in the west and north west. The altitude of the site varies from c.155m in the south west to 120m in the north east. The relief of the site is generally non limiting with the exception of an area in the north of the site where the angle of slope exceeds 11° therefore the land can be no better than grade 4.

Climate and Rainfall

The main parameters used to assess climatic limitations are Average Annual Rainfall (AAR) as a measure of overall wetness and Accumulated Temperature (ATO), as a measure of relative warmth of the locality. For this site the figures vary due to the range in altitude over the site but average figures would be 789mm and 1347°C respectively indicating no climatic limitation on this site. Where the altitude increases to 155m then the land is limited climatically to grade 2. This covers a very small area and the field within which it occurs has been classified as non-agricultural land.

Geology and soils

The solid geology is composed of Ditton Series, Old Red Sandstone. The associated soils are typically sandy silt loam topsoils onto silty clay or sandy clay loam subsoils to depth.

Limitations

Soil wetness, gradient and soil depth are the main limitations in this site. Soil wetness is measured by reference to Field Capacity Days (FCD), topsoil texture and depth to gleying. The site is at field capacity for approximately 185 days per year. Some of the soils have a gleyed morphology within 40cm and have a slowly permeable layer above about 50cm placing them into wetness Class IV. Other profiles fall into Wetness Class

III where the slowly permeable layer is above about 66cm and gleying below 40cm. In the north and north east of the site the main limitation is gradient with the angle of slope being between 11° and 18° limiting the area to grade 4. Soil depth is limiting in the north eastern part of the site where the sandstone is close to the surface. Soil depth is between 20cm and 30cm limiting this area to grade 3b.

Land Use

At the time of survey the site was under a variety of uses including grass, cereals and Set Aside.

Agricultural Land Quality

Sub Grade 3a

This sub-grade cover 14.1 ha and 49% of the site. It is found along the western half of the site. The soils typically have a sandy silt loam or medium clay loam texture over sandy clay loam and onto clay at depth.

Sub Grade 3b

This sub grade covers 9.5ha and 33% of the site. It is found north of the stream running through Neenshill Coppice along the eastern half of the site. The soils typically have a sandy silt loam texture over silty clay loam onto silty clay at depth. The profiles near the summit of the hill are very shallow as the sandstone is close to the surface at this point.

Grade 4

An area of 1.9 ha and 7% of the site was mapped as grade 4 where the gradient is the limiting factor. The angle of slope in this area exceeded 11° but is no greater than 18°.

Land Primarily in Non-agricultural use

Land in this classification covered 3.2ha and 11% of the site. It covers the western most field which is used as a golf driving range.

Agricultural Land Classification Grades

Grade	Area (ha)	% of total	% of Agricultural Land
3a	14.1	49	55
3b	9.5	33	37
4	1.9	7	8
Non agricultural	3.2	11	
Total Area	28.7	100	
Total agricultural area	25.5		100

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June 1993**