

# **AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LAND AT ETTINGTON ROAD, WELLESBOURNE.**

## **Summary**

16.3 ha of land to the south east of Wellesbourne were graded under the Revised Agricultural Land Classification System. Over half of the agricultural land was found to be grade 2, a further 43.9% to be sub-grade 3b, with a small area classified as sub-grade 3a.

## **Introduction**

The 16.3 ha site was visited by members of the Resource Planning Team in November 1992. An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was undertaken using the ALC Revised Guidelines (MAFF 1988).

## **Location, Altitude and Relief**

The site lies to the south east of Wellesbourne and is bounded by Ettington Road in the west, Walton Road in the east and agricultural land to the north and south. The altitude of the site varies slightly from 50m in the east to 55m in the west, and the site is almost level. Altitude and relief are therefore non-limiting factors in the classification of the site.

## **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 the relative warmth of the locality. For this site the figures are 606mm and 1440°C respectively indicating that there are no climatic limitations on this site. The field capacity days (FCD) are 130 with the mean last frost occurring in late April.

## **Geology and Soils**

The solid geology is composed of the Mercia Mudstone group overlain by a drift of fourth River Terrace Deposits. The River Terrace Deposits cover the majority of the site with a band of Mercia Mudstone being found adjacent to Ettington Road. The associated soils are typically slightly stony sandy loam over slightly stony loamy sand

or clay loam over sand or clay loam in the eastern part of the site. The other main soil type consists of clay loam over silty clay or clay at depth.

### **Interactive Limitations**

Soil wetness and droughtiness are the main limitations on this site. Wetness is measured by reference to climate especially field capacity days (FCD), soil water and topsoil texture. The site is at field capacity for approximately 130 days per year. Some of the soils have gley morphology within 40cm and are slowly permeable within 63cm, falling into Wetness Class III. Other profiles fall into Wetness Class II being gleyed below 40cm and having a slowly permeable layer below 42cm. Profiles containing sandier textures tend to suffer from drought as they are less able to hold water within the profile, these soils fall into Wetness Class I.

### **Land Use**

At the time of survey the eastern half of the site was under a mixture of oilseed rape and fallow, whilst the western half of the site was under oilseed rape.

### **Agricultural Land Quality**

#### **Grade 2**

Land of this grade covers 8.1 ha and 49.9% of the site. It is found over the eastern half of the site. The soils are typically medium sandy loams or sandy clay loams over medium sands onto medium sand or clay at depth.

#### **Sub-Grade 3a**

This sub-grade covers 0.7 ha and 4.6% of the site adjacent to the urban area. The soils are typically medium sandy loam topsoils on to loamy medium sand and sand to depth. Drought is the main limitation of soils within this area.

### **Sub-Grade 3b**

This sub-grade covers 7.2 ha and 43.9% of the site. This sub-grade is mapped over the western half of the site where the profiles are typically heavy clay loam topsoils over clays to depth. Soil wetness is the main limitation over this soil type throughout the site.

### **Urban**

Land classified as urban covers 1.6% of the site or 0.3 ha and is composed of buildings adjacent to Walton Road on the eastern edge of the site.

### **BREAKDOWN OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>% of Agricultural Land</b>
2	8.1	49.9	50.6
3a	0.7	4.6	4.4
3b	7.2	43.9	45.0
Urban	<u>0.3</u>	<u>1.6</u>	—
Total	16.3	100.0	100.0

**Resource Planning Team  
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