



**EAST HETTON COLLIERY  
RECLAMATION SCHEME**

**Agricultural Land Classification  
and  
Statement of Physical Characteristics  
Summary Report  
May 1996**

**Resource Planning Team  
Leeds Statutory Group  
ADAS Leeds**

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# AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION AND STATEMENT OF PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS SUMMARY REPORT

## EAST HETTON COLLIERY RECLAMATION SCHEME

### Introduction

1. This summary report presents the findings of a detailed Statement of Physical Characteristics and Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey of 13.6 ha of land at East Hetton. The survey was carried out in May 1996.
2. The survey was commissioned by Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Land Use Planning Unit, Northallerton in connection with a proposal reclamation scheme.
3. The work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Leeds Statutory Group in ADAS. The land has been graded in accordance with the published MAFF ALC guidelines and criteria (MAFF, 1988). A description of the ALC grades and subgrades is given in Appendix I.
4. At the time of survey all the land on the site was in agricultural use under grass. The site was restored to agriculture about six years ago as part of an earlier reclamation scheme on the site. Underdrainage has not been installed.

### Summary

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:5,000 it is accurate at this scale but any enlargement would be misleading.
6. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% Total site area	% Surveyed Area
4	13.6	100	100
Total surveyed area	13.6	100	100
Total site area	13.6	100	100

7. The fieldwork was conducted at an average density of one boring per hectare. A total of 13 borings and one soil pit were described.

8. All land on the site is ALC Grade 4. Soils were restored (replaced) about six years ago as part of an earlier reclamation scheme. During this process topsoils and subsoils were mixed and soil profiles on the site typically comprise 60 cm of medium to heavy textured material that includes a mixture of topsoil and subsoil. This soil generally becomes slowly permeable below about 30 cm depth placing it into Soil Wetness Class IV. Generally at about 60 cm depth is found a black impermeable overburden material.

Soil wetness and workability limit the ALC grade of this land.

**ALC Map**

## APPENDIX I

### DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADES AND SUBGRADES

#### **Grade 1: Excellent Quality Agricultural Land**

Land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown and commonly includes top fruit, soft fruit, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables. Yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality.

#### **Grade 2: Very Good Quality Agricultural Land**

Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural or horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land of this grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1 land.

#### **Grade 3: Good to Moderate Quality Land**

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, the timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. When more demanding crops are grown, yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.

#### **Subgrade 3a: Good Quality Agricultural Land**

Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops, especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops.

#### **Subgrade 3b: Moderate Quality Agricultural Land**

Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass, or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass that can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.

#### **Grade 4: Poor Quality Agricultural Land**

Land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and/or the level of yields. It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (eg. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates, yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.

#### **Grade 5: Very Poor Quality Agricultural Land**

Land with severe limitations that restricts use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.