GINHALL LANE
LEOMINSTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

Agricultural Land Classification Survey
ALC Map and Report
December 1996

Resource Planning Team
ADAS Statutory Group
ADAS Wolverhampton

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT
GINHALL LANE, LEOMINSTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on 5.2 hectares of land. The land is located immediately to the north of Ginhall Lane on the western edge of Leominster. The site is adjoined by land in agricultural use to the north and land in urban and non agricultural use to the south, east and west. The survey was undertaken by the Resource Planning Team at Wolverhampton (Northern ADAS Statutory Centre) during November 1996.

2. The survey was commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) from its Land Use Planning Unit, in Crewe. The survey was in connection with the Leominster District Local Plan. The results of this survey supersede any previous ALC information for this land.

3. The land has been graded in accordance with the publication "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

4. At the time of survey the agricultural land on this site was under grass.

SUMMARY

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the attached ALC map. At the request of the Land Use Planning Unit this was a detailed grid survey at a scale of 1:10 000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The ALC map is only accurate at the base map scale and 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 below.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% site area	% surveyed area
2	1.2	23	28
3a	3.1	60	72
Other Land	0.5	7	-
Not Surveyed	0.4	10	-
Total surveyed area	4.3	-	100
Total site area	5.2	100	-

7. The agricultural land on this site has been classified as Grade 2 (very good quality) and Subgrade 3a (good quality), the main limitations being soil droughtiness for the Grade 2 land and soil wetness for the Subgrade 3a land.

8. The area of very good quality land is located in the west and east of the site. The soils commonly comprise of medium silty clay loam overlying medium silty clay loam.

9. The area of good quality land is mapped in the centre and east of the site. The soils in this area comprise a medium silty clay loam overlying a gleyed and slowly permeable heavy clay loam subsoil.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ALC GRADE

Climate

10. Climate affects the grading of land through the assessment of an overall climatic limitation and also through interactions with soil characteristics.

11. The key climatic variables used for grading this site are given in Table 2 below and were obtained from the published 5km grid datasets using standard interpolation procedures (Met. Office, 1989).

12. The climatic criteria are considered first when classifying land as climate can be overriding in the sense that severe limitations will restrict land to low grades irrespective of favourable site or soil conditions.

Table 2: Climatic and altitude data

Factor	Units	Values
Grid reference	N/A	S0 483 591
Altitude	m, AOD	82
Accumulated Temperature	day°C	1420
Average Annual Rainfall	mm	741
Field Capacity Days	days	168
Moisture Deficit, Wheat	mm	100
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes	mm	90

13. The main parameters used in the assessment of an overall climatic limitation are average annual rainfall (AAR), as a measure of overall wetness, and accumulated temperature (AT0, January to June), as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality.

14. The combination of rainfall and temperature at this site means that there is no overall climatic limitation. Local climatic factors, such as exposure and frost risk, are not believed to significantly affect the site. The site is climatically Grade 1.

Site

15. The altitude of the site is in the range 80-95m AOD. The land rises to the east and west of the site and falls to the north towards The Kenwater.

16. Three site factors of gradient, microrelief and flooding are considered when classifying the land.

17. These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of this land.

Geology and soils

18. The solid geology of the area is comprised of Raglan Mudstone - British Geological Survey Sheet 198.

19. The soils that have developed on this geology are generally of a medium silty clay loam.

Agricultural Land Classification

20. The details of the classification of the site are shown on the attached ALC map and the area statistics of each grade are given in Table 1.

Grade 2

21. Land of very good quality occupies 1.2 hectares (23%) of the site area and forms two units, one in the east and one in the west of the site.

22. The soil has a medium silty clay loam texture over medium silty clay loam to depth with few to common stones within the profile. The moisture balance places these soils in Grade 2.

23. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness.

Subgrade 3a

24. Land of good quality occupies 3.1 hectares (60%) of the site area and forms two units, one in the centre and one in the east of the site.

25. The soil has a medium silty clay loam or clay loam texture overlying heavy clay loam or silty clay to depth. The depth to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III.

26. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

Other Land

27. Other land occupies 0.5 hectares (10%) of the site area and consists of a number of trackways and housing.

Not Surveyed

28. The land adjacent to Sunny Bank in the west of the site was not surveyed. This land occupies 0.4 hectares (7%) of the site area. The land was formerly occupied by a brickworks and has undergone disturbance in the past.

Resource Planning Team
Wolverhampton Statutory Group
ADAS Wolverhampton

SOURCES OF REFERENCE

British Geological Survey (1989) *Sheet 198, Hereford. Solid and Drift Edition. 1:50 000 Scale.*
BGS: London.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1988) *Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land.*
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