AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
MALVERN HILLS LOCAL PLAN
ROYAL SIGNALS (16/03/A02/02)

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR MALVERN HILLS LOCAL PLAN, ROYAL SIGNALS (16/03/A02/02)

1   SUMMARY

1.1   The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey for this site shows that the following proportions of ALC grades are present:

Grade/Subgrade	ha	% of site
2	1.3	8
3a	9.2	56
3b	5.4	33
Other land		
Non-Agricultural	0.4	3

1.2   The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 are soil wetness and soil droughtness.

1.3   The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a and 3b is soil wetness.

2   INTRODUCTION

2.1   The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in May and June 1995. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

2.2   The 16.3 ha site is situated to the north of Great Malvern, west of the Royal Signals and Radar Establishment. The land immediately to the north west and west of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land immediately to the south and east of the site is predominantly in urban use.

2.3   The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Malvern Hills Local Plan.

2.4   At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The attached map is only accurate at the base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.

2.5   At the time of the survey the site was under potatoes.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SO 768480) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	701
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1398

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	159
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	98
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	87

4 SITE

4.1 Three site factors of gradient, micro relief and flooding are considered when classifying land.

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

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The geology of the area is comprised of mudstones and drift (Head).

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which have a clay loam texture.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1   Grade 2 - occupies 1.3 ha (8%) of the survey area and is found in the south of the site.

6.1.1   These soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay loam and/or sandy clay loam to depth, with few to many stones within the profile. The moisture balance places these soils into Grade 2. Observations of gleying place these soils in Wetness Class II.

6.1.2   The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land are soil wetness and soil droughtness.

6.2   Subgrade 3a - occupies 9.2 ha (56%) of the survey area.

6.2.1   The soil has a sandy clay loam or clay loam texture over clay to depth, with few to common stones within the profile. Observations of gleying and the depth of the slowly permeable layer, place these soils in Wetness Class III.

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

6.3   Subgrade 3b - occupies 5.4 ha (33%) of the survey area, and is found in the west and north of the site.

6.3.1   The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV. There is an area of disturbed land in the centre of the site (associated with a demolished building), that has been included in this subgrade.

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

6.4   Other land includes non-agricultural land which occupies 0.4 ha (3%) of the survey area as a trackway on the western periphery of the site.

6.5   SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	1.3	8	8
3a	9.2	56	58
3b	5.4	33	34
Other land			
Non-Agricultural	0.4	3	-
Totals	**16.3**	**100**	**100**