AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

INTAKE LANE, DUNNINGTON, YORK

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

MAFF
Leeds Regional Office

March 1990

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT ON LAND AT INTAKE LANE, DUNNINGTON, YORK

1. INTRODUCTION AND SITE CHARACTERISTCS

1.1 LOCATION

The site is located around National Grid Reference SE 674526 on the eastern edge of Dunnington which lies between the A166 and A1079 (T) roads about 7 km east of York city centre. It covers 5.7 ha, almost all of which is in agricultural use.

1.2 SURVEY METHODS

Survey work was carried out in February 1990 when soils were examined by hand auger borings at a rate of 2 borings per hectare at evenly spaced points pre-determined by the National Grid. Soil profile pits were also dug where necessary to assess soil structural characteristics and to collect samples for analysis.

All land quality assessments were made using the methods described in "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

1.3 LAND USE

The field adjoining Intake Lane is in arable use. The two fields to the north west of this are both under poor quality permanent pasture with a pronounced ridge and furrow pattern. Two strips of urban land consist of the existing lanes at each end of the site which have apparently been included within the planning application area.

1.4 CLIMATE

Average annual rainfall at Dunnington is approximately 616 mm. Accumulated temperature above 0°C between January and June is 1384 day °C and the land is at field capacity for about 139 days a year. The rainfall and temperature figures indicate that there is no overall climatic restriction on ALC grade. Soil moisture deficits of 110 mm for winter wheat and 103 mm for potatoes indicate a slight drought limitation on the coarse loaming soils which are widespread on the site.

1.5 RELIEF

The site, overall, is almost level at a mean altitude of just under 15 m above ordnance datum. The two permanent fields, however, have a strong microrelief produced by a pronounced ridge and furrow pattern.

1.6 Drainage

The ditch separating the permanent pasture fields is in a poor condition and ground water levels in this part of the site are high. The drain separating this area from the arable land is well maintained and soils in the arable field are well drained. Although part of the site is poorly drained at present it is all capable of improvement to meet at least the requirements of Wetness Class III. In this event wetness would remain as only a slight limitation on ALC grade.

1.7 SOILS AND GEOLOGY

Soils are formed on coarse loamy to sandy drift which forms a cover of variable thickness over the underlying boulder clay.

Typical profiles consist of fine or medium sandy loam topsoils about 25-30 cm in thickness over similar or lighter upper subsoils. These pass into clay loam between 40 and 100 cm depth. Subsoils are all strongly gleyed, but waterlogged (February 1990) only in the permanent pasture fields. Most soils are stoneless to slightly stony.

2. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade 2

All of the agricultural land falls within this grade. Soils are all essentially similar and consist of coarse loamy or sandy upper horizons over heavier slowly permeable lower subsoils. The present differences in drainage status between the arable and grassland areas result largely from different levels of management. All parts of the site are capable of being improved to at least Wetness Class III. The area would then be restricted to Grade 2 by limitations of slight wetness in winter and slight droughtiness in summer.

Urban

This consists of the existing roads at the northern and southern edge of the site.

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