

**FYLDE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN
Wesham**

**Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Report
May 1998**

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT
FYLDE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN
Wesham

INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on 15.1 hectares of land. The results of this survey supersede any previous ALC information for this land. The land is located to the north east of Wesham. The survey was in connection with the Fylde Borough Local Plan (First Review).
2. The survey was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in April and May 1998 by the Resource Planning Team of the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)- Northern region of FRCA.
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 and oilseed rape.

SUMMARY

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10000 with an average auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The ALC map is only accurate at this 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.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed area	% site area
1	-	-	-
2	-	-	-
3a	2.3	16	16
3b	11.8	81	78
4	0.5	3	3
5	-	-	-
Agricultural land not surveyed	-	N/A	-
Other land	0.5	N/A	3
Total surveyed area	14.6	100	-
Total site area	15.1	-	100

7. The agricultural land on this site has been classified as Subgrade 3a (good quality), Subgrade 3b (moderate quality) and Grade 4 (poor quality). The key limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.
8. The area of good quality land is located in the centre of the site. The soils have a clay loam topsoil overlying clay loam, sandy clay loam and clay.
9. The area moderate of quality land is mapped over the majority of the site. The soils have a medium clay loam topsoil overlying a gleyed and slowly permeable clay subsoil.
10. The area of poor quality land is mapped adjacent to the moss basin on the north eastern edge of the site. The soils are peaty in texture and waterlogged.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ALC GRADE

Climate

11. Climate affects the grading of land through the assessment of an overall climatic limitation and also through interactions with soil characteristics.
12. The key climatic variables used for grading this site are given in Table 2 and were obtained from the published 5km grid datasets using standard interpolation procedures (Meteorological Office, 1989).

Table 2: Climatic and altitude data

Factor	Units	Values
Grid reference	N/A	SD 418 335
Altitude	m, AOD	20
Accumulated Temperature	day°C (Jan-June)	1416
Average Annual Rainfall	mm	944
Field Capacity Days	days	210
Moisture Deficit, Wheat	mm	79
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes	mm	65
Overall climatic grade	N/A	Grade 1

13. 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.
14. 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.
15. The combination of rainfall and temperature at this site means that there is no overall climatic limitation. The site is climatically Grade 1.

Site

16. The site lies at an altitude of 16 to 25 metres AOD. The land rises from the moss basin to the north east of the site towards the south and west.
17. The three site factors of gradient, microrelief and flooding are considered when classifying the land.
18. These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of this land.

Geology and Soils

19. The solid geology of the area is comprised of the Mercia Mudstone Group. This is overlain with deposits of alluvium, till and glacial sands and gravel - British Geological Survey (1991).
20. The soils that have developed on this geology are generally of a clay loam texture over clay at depth.

Agricultural Land Classification

21. The details of the classification of the site are shown on the enclosed ALC map and the area statistics of each grade are given in Table 1, page 1.

Subgrade 3a

22. Land of good quality occupies 2.3 hectares (16%) of the site area and is found in the centre of the site.
23. The soil has a clay loam texture over clay loam, sandy clay loam and clay to depth with few to common stones within the profile. The depths to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III.
24. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness

Subgrade 3b

25. Land of moderate quality occupies 11.8 hectares (78%) of the site area and extends across the majority of the site.
26. The soil has a clay loam texture overlying clay loam and clay. The depths to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.
27. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

Grade 4

28. Land of poor quality occupies 0.5 hectares (3%) of the site area and is found adjacent to the moss basin on the north eastern edge of the site.

29. The soil profile has a peaty texture and was waterlogged at the time of survey. The soils have been placed in Wetness Class V.

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

Other Land

31. Other land occupies 0.5 hectares (3%) of the site area and includes trackways and a house.

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SOURCES OF REFERENCE

British Geological Survey (1991) Sheet 67, Garstang 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.
MAFF: London.

Meteorological Office (1989) Climatological Data for Agricultural Land Classification.
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