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WEST SUSSEX MINERALS PLAN  
SITE 1: DRAYTON LANE, CHICHESTER  
AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION  
ALC MAP & SUMMARY REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 1993

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION, SUMMARY REPORT

1.0 Summary

1.1 ADAS was commissioned by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on land quality on a number of sites in West Sussex. The work forms part of MAFF's statutory input to the preparation of the West Sussex Minerals Plan.

1.2 Approximately 12 hectares of land relating to Site 1 West of Drayton Lane on the Eastern edge of Chichester was surveyed during September 1993. The survey was undertaken at a detailed level of approximately one boring per hectare. A total of 16 soil auger borings and 2 soil inspection pit were assessed in accordance with MAFF's revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF, 1988). These guidelines provide a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on its use for agriculture. The work was conducted by members of the Resource planning Team in the Guildford Statutory Group of ADAS.

At the time of the survey the land on the site was recently ploughed.

1.3 The distribution of grades and subgrades is shown on the attached ALC map and the areas are given in the table below. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:5000. It is accurate at this scale, but any enlargement would be misleading. This map supercedes any previous survey information.

Table 1 : Distribution of Grades and Subgrades

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Area (ha)</u>	<u>% of Agricultural Area</u>
2	8.0	54.4
3B	6.7	45.6
Total area of site	14.7	100

1.4 Appendix 1 gives a general description of the grades and subgrades and land use categories identified in the survey. The main classes are described in terms of the type of limitation that can occur, the typical cropping range and the expected level and consistency of yield.

1.5 The site has been classified as Grades 2 and 3B. The key limitation is droughtiness. The area shown as grade 2 is only slightly limited by droughtiness; there is insufficient available water in the profile to qualify for a higher grade given the textures and structures that occur in the subsoil. The area shown as Subgrade 3B is more severely limited due to the presence of a stony subsoils. The high stone volumes significantly restrict profile available water for plant growth and restrict the range of crops that can tolerate such conditions.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADES AND SUB-GRADES

### **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 on the 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.

### **Grade 3 : Good To Moderate Quality Agricultural Land**

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, 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.

#### **Sub-grade 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.

#### **Sub-grade 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 which 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 very severe limitations which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.

## **Urban**

Built-up or 'hard' uses with relatively little potential for a return to agriculture : housing, industry, commerce, education, transport, religious buildings, cemeteries. Also, hard-surfaced sports facilities, permanent caravan sites and vacant land; all types of derelict land, including mineral workings which are only likely to be reclaimed using derelict land grants.

## **Non-agricultural**

'Soft' uses where most of the land could be returned relatively easily to agriculture, including : private parkland, public open spaces, sports fields, allotments and soft-surfaced areas on airports/airfields. Also active mineral workings and refuse tips where restoration conditions to 'soft' after-uses may apply.

## **Woodland**

Includes commercial and non-commercial woodland.

## **Agricultural Buildings**

Includes the normal range of agricultural buildings as well as other relatively permanent structures such as glasshouses. Temporary structures (eg. polythene tunnels erected for lambing) may be ignored.

## **Open Water**

Includes lakes, ponds and rivers as map scale permits.

## **Land Not Surveyed**

Agricultural land which has not been surveyed.

Where the land use includes more than one of the above, eg. buildings in large grounds, and where map scale permits, the cover types may be shown separately. Otherwise, the most extensive cover type will be shown.