

REPORT OF MAFF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SURVEY - ALDREDS DISPOSAL POINT

Summary

The land has been classified following the Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - revised guidelines in criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF, 1988). Most of the land, 87%, has been classified as sub-grade 3b. The remainder includes a small area of Grade 4 (1%) and other land (12%).

Climatic Limitations

The main parameters used in the assessment of the climatic limitations are average annual rainfall (AAR), as a measure of overall wetness and accumulated temperature (ATO), as a measure of the relative warmth of the locality. The figures for AAR and ATO indicate that there is a climatic limitation on this site and that the highest grade possible is Grade 2.

Site Limitations

The assessment of site factors is primarily concerned at the way in which the topography influences the use of agricultural machinery and hence the cropping potential of the land. There are no site limitations over most of the site but to the west of Jack's Lane a small irregular valley feature forms a site limitation.

Soil Limitations

The main soil properties which affect the cropping potential and management requirements of land are texture, structure, depth, stoniness and chemical fertility. These may act as limitations separately in combination or through interactions with climate or site factors. The physical limitations which result from interactions between climate, site and soil are soil wetness, droughtiness and erosion.

A soil wetness limitation exists where the soil water regime adversely affects plant growth or imposes restrictions on cultivations or grazing livestock. Soil wetness assessment takes account of the climatic regime, the soil water regime and the texture of the top 25 cms of the soil.

Geology

The underlying geology is mapped as Westphalian Coal measures (sheet 84, Wigan, Geological Survey).

Agricultural Land Use

At the time of the survey, April 1991, the land was under either cereals or grass.

Agricultural Land Quality

Sub-grade 3b: The soil typically has either a medium clay loam or sandy silt loam texture overlying heavy clay loam and clay. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer indicate wetness class IV, which in combination with the field capacity day figure of 235 and topsoil texture, results in a classification of 3b land.

Grade 4: A small irregular valley feature in the South Western part of the site poses a limitation to the use of agricultural machinery and hence has been classified as Grade 4.

Other Land: Includes non-agricultural land such as ponds, small areas of woodland and agricultural buildings at Aldreds.

Agricultural Land Classification

Grade/ sub-grade	ha	as % of total area	as % of agricultural area
3b	33.7	87	99
4	0.3	1	1
	(34.0)		
Other land:			
Urban	3.5		
Non-agricultural	0.2		
Not surveyed	<u>0.9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u> </u>
	38.6	100	100

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