STATEMENT OF PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

COPLEY LANE, SHERBURN-IN-ELMET

Proposed extension to limestone quarry

ADAS

Leeds Regional Office

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MAPS

1. STATEMENT OF PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

A. INTRODUCTION

The site is located around National Grid Reference SE482349 adjoining the York-Leeds railway on Copley Lane, about 1½ km north west of Sherburn-in-Elmet. It covers a total area of 7.3 ha of which just over 1.5 ha contains soil forming materials. Survey work was carried out in December 1989 when soils were examined by hand auger borings to a depth of one metre at a density of approximately 2 borings per hectare. Additional borings and soil pits were dug where necessary to confirm soil characteristics.

Land Use (situation on December 19 1989)

There is no agricultural land on the site, most of which consists of a working quarry.

The eastern third of the site is already being developed as an extension to the existing quarry and soils have been partially stripped. In the area immediately adjoining the present working area soils have been removed down to bedrock to form a platform of bare limestone. To the east of this topsoils have been stripped and placed along the eastern boundary of the application area leaving an area of exposed subsoil. Subsoil from the bare rock area appears to have been put into a store of variable height along the southern boundary of the site.

Climate and Relief

The average annual rainfall is approximately 653 mm and the median accumulated temperature above 0°C (January-June) is 1379 day °C. The area is at field capacity for about 143 days each year.

The rainfall and temperature figures indicate that there is no overall climatic limitation on ALC grade on this site. Droughtiness, however, would be slightly limiting on any very shallow soils.

The site is at an altitude of about 30 m a.o.d.

Geology

The quarry is working the Permian Magnesian Limestone over which, in this area, there is a cover of loamy and clayey material between 50 cm and 80 cm in thickness. The distinct reddish colour of the clay suggests that this is an outcrop of the Permian Marl, a calcareous clay which occurs at several horizons within the Magnesian Limestone Series.

B. SOIL PROPERTIES

The only in situ soil forming material is a strip of medium and heavy subsoil about 50 cm in thickness along the eastern edge of the site.

C. SOIL RESOURCES

The soil resources on the site are shown on the accompanying maps along with soil depth information.

i. Topsoils

All topsoils have been removed to a store which forms a narrow strip about 2.5 m high along the entire eastern boundary of the site. This soil dump consists mainly of medium and heavy clay loam.

ii. Subsoils

Unit S1

This subsoil unit covers the whole area east of the bare rock platform and consists of medium and heavy textured material extending to a depth of about 50 cm from the present surface. The heaviest reddish clayey material is most common at depth, just above the limestone. Unit S1a is the exposed area of subsoil. Unit S1b is the area, presumably of the same texture, below the topsoil dump. There is also an area of stored subsoil on the southern edge of the site. The approximate position of this is shown on the accompanying maps.

2. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

Urban (7.3 ha)

The whole site would require considerable capital expenditure before it could be returned to any form of agricultural use. It has all, therefore, been placed in the urban category.

RPG Leeds
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