AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
OPTION SIX - LEOMINSTER LOCAL PLAN

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WOLVERHAMPTON

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR OPTION SIX - LEOMINSTER LOCAL PLAN

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey for this site shows that the following proportions of ALC grades are present:

Grade/Subgrade	ha	% of site
1	25.5	70
2	4.3	12
3b	6.5	18

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 is soil droughtiness and topsoil stone content.

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is soil wetness.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in March 1994. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

2.2 The 36.3 ha site is situated to the south of Leominster. The land immediately to the north is in urban use, the remainder of the site is predominantly in agricultural use.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Leominster District Local Plan.

2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The attached map is only accurate at the base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.

2.5 At the time of the survey the site was under cereals and grass.

3. CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site:

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	729
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1434

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	165
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	102
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	92

4. SITE

4.1 Three site factors of gradient, micro relief and flooding are considered when classifying land.

4.2 These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of Devonian and Silurian Mudstones - British Geological Survey Sheet 198 Hereford 1:50000. This is overlain with Quaternary fluvio-glacial deposits, till and alluvium.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which either have a silty loam texture in the centre and west of the site or a silty clay loam texture in the east.

6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 1 - occupies 25.5 ha (70%) of the survey area and is found over the majority of the site.

6.1.1 The soil typically has a silty loam or sandy silt loam topsoil texture overlying silty loam and sandy clay loam to depth. There are few or no stones throughout the profile.

6.1.2 There are no major limitations to the agricultural use of this land.

6.2 Grade 2 - occupies 4.3 ha (12%) of the survey area and is found in the centre and west of the site.

6.2.1 These soils typically have a silty loam or silty sandy loam texture overlying silty loam and sandy clay loam to depth with subsoils becoming moderately stony. The moisture balance places these soils in Grade 2. In the south west of the site these soils are also limited by topsoil stone content.

6.2.2 The main limitations to the agriculture use of this land is soil droughtiness and topsoil stone content.

6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 6.5 ha (18%) of the survey area and is found in the east of the site.

6.3.1 The soil typically has a silty clay loam or silty clay topsoil texture overlying silty clay loam or silty clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer places these soils in Wetness Class III or IV

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

6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
1	25.5	70	70
2	4.3	12	12
3b	6.5	18	18
Totals	36.3	100	100