A1 LAND NORTH-EAST OF SULHAMSTEAD BERKSHIRE MINERALS PLAN : SITE 8 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION ALC MAP & REPORT AUGUST, 1993

LAND NORTH-EAST OF SULHAMSTEAD, BERKSHIRE BERKSHIRE MINERALS PLAN : SITE 8 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT

1.0 Summary

1.1 In August, 1993, a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) was made on approximately 58 hectares of land south of the River Kennet and north-east of Sulhamstead, south-west of Reading in Berkshire.

1.2 The work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Guildford Statutory Group of ADAS in response to a commission by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on the quality of agricultural land affected by an objection to the non-inclusion of this land in the Berkshire Minerals Plan.

1.3 The classification has been made using MAFF's revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land. 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.

1.4 The fieldwork was carried out with an observation density of approximately one per hectare. A total of 46 borings and 1 soil pit was examined.

1.5 All of the agricultural land (54.3 ha) has been classified as Grade 4. Soil wetness and flood risk combine to severely restrict the potential of this land. It is deemed to be suitable only for grassland and this was the land use over all of the site at the time of survey.

1.6 The areas of the site that were not in agricultural use include Urban (0.2 ha), Woodland (1.8 ha) and Open Water (2.1 ha).

1.7 The ALC information is presented at a scale of 1:10,000; it is accurate at this level but any enlargement would be misleading. This map supercedes any previous ALC information for this site.

1.8 A general description of the grades and sub-grades is provided as an appendix. 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.

2.0 Climate

2.1 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.

2.2 The main parameters used in the assessment of the overall climatic limitation are annual average rainfall, as a measure of overall wetness, and accumulated temperature, as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality.

2.3 A detailed assessment of the prevailing climate was made by interpolation from a 5km gridpoint dataset. The details are given in the table below and these show that there is no overall climatic limitation affecting the site.

2.4 No local climatic factors such as exposure or frost risk affect the site.

Table 2 : Climatic Interpolations

Grid Reference :	SU636694
Altitude (m) :	50
Accumulated Temperature (days) :	1470
Average Annual Rainfall (mm) :	689
Field Čapacity (days) :	144
Moisture Deficit, Wheat (mm) :	113
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes (mm) :	107
Overall Climatic Grade :	1

3.0 Relief

3.1 All of the site is flat at an altitude of 45-50 metres.

4.0 Geology and Soil

4.1 The relevant geological sheet for the site shows the underlying geology to be Alluvium.

4.2 Heavy soil profiles have developed over this parent material, many with poorly structured clay subsoils.

5.0 Agricultural Land Classification

5.1 The ALC information is shown on the attached ALC map and the location of the soil observation points is shown on the attached sample point map.

5.2 <u>Grade 4</u>: Pit 1 is typical of the soils that have been placed in this grade. Heavy Silty Clay Loam topsoils overlie calcareous upper subsoils of similar texture. The subsoils show strong evidence of gleying and are slowly permeable, exhibiting Coarse Prismatic structure, a firm consistence and low porosity. The shallow gleying and slowly permeable layers place thes soils in Wetness Class IV. This, in combination with the topsoil texture and the prevailing Field Capacity level (144 days), limits the land to no better than Sub-grade 3B. The wetness status of these soils is further complicated by a groundwater problem and, at the time of survey (mid-summer), the upper subsoils were still very moist and the lower subsoils (a calcareous marl) were wet. Wetness Class IV may therefore be a more sensitive reflection of the degree of waterlogging that these profiles experience. Given this degree of wetness, the land would generally not be suitable for regular ploughing and Grade 4 is therefore the most appropriate grade for this land.

5.3 Flooding is also a problem for the site. Only anecdotal evidence is available for recent years but this suggests frequent flooding in the winter of at least medium duration which means that the land may be graded no higher than Sub-grade 3B on this alone.

5.5 The areas marked as Urban include houses and gardens.

5.6 The areas marked as Non-agricultural include

ADAS REFERENCE : 0202/131/93 MAFF REFERENCE : EL 2/430 Resource Planning Team Guildford Statutory Group

APPENDIX I

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.

APPENDIX II

REFERENCES

* MAFF (1988), Agricultural Land Classification of England And Wales : revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land.

* Meteorological Office (1989), Climatological Data for Agricultural Land Classification,

* British Geological Survey (1971), Sheet No.268, Reding, 1:63,360

APPENDIX III

DEFINITION OF SOIL WETNESS CLASSES

Wetness Class I

The soil profile is not wet within 70cm depth for more than 30 days in most years.

Wetness Class II

The soil profile is wet within 70cm depth for 31-90 days in most years or, if there is no slowly permeable layer within 80cm depth, it is wet within 70cm for more than 90 days, but not wet within 40cm depth for more than 30 days in most years.

Wetness Class III

The soil profile is wet within 70cm depth for 91-180 days in most years or, if there is no slowly permeable layer within 80cm depth, it is wet within 70cm for more than 180 days, but only wet within 40cm depth for 31-90 days in most years.

Wetness Class IV

The soil profile is wet within 70cm depth for more than 180 days but not wet within 40cm depth for more than 210 days in most years or, if there is no slowly permeable layer within 80cm depth, it is wet within 40cm depth for 91-210 days in most years.

Wetness Class V

The soil profile is wet within 40cm depth for 211-335 days in most years.

Wetness Class VI

The soil profile is wet within 40cm depth for more than 335 days in most years.

(The number of days is not necessarily a continuous period. 'In most years' is defined as more than 10 out of 20 years.)

APPENDIX IV

SOIL PIT AND SOIL BORING DESCRIPTIONS

- Contents : * Soil Abbreviations : Explanatory Note
 - * Soil Pit Descriptions
 - * Database Printout : Boring Level Information
 - * Database Printout : Horizon Level Information

SOIL PROFILE DESCRIPTIONS : EXPLANATORY NOTE

Soil pit and auger boring information collected during ALC fieldwork is held on a database. This has commonly used notations and abbreviations as set out below.

Boring Header Information

1. GRID REF : national grid square and 8 figure grid reference.

2. USE : Land use at the time of survey. The following abbreviations are used.

ARA : Arable WHT : Wheat BAR : Barley CER : Cereals OAT : Oats MZE : Maize OSR : Oilseed rape BRA : Brassicae BEN : Field Beans POT : Potatoes SBT : Sugar Beet FCD : Fodder Crops LIN : Linseed FRT : Soft and Top Fruit HRT : Horticultural Crops PGR : Permanent Pasture LEY : Ley Grass RGR : Rough Grazing CFW : Coniferous Woodland SCR : Scrub DCW : Deciduous Woodland BOG : Bog or Marsh HTH : Heathland FLW : Fallow PLO : Ploughed SAS : Set aside OTH : Other

3. GRDNT : Gradient as measured by a hand-held optical clinometer.

4. GLEY/SPL : Depth in cm to gleying or slowly permeable layers.

5. AP (WHEAT/POTS) : Crop-adjusted available water capacity.

6. MB (WHEAT/POTS) : Moisture Balance.

7. DRT : Best grade according to soil droughtiness.

8. If any of the following factors are considered significant, an entry of 'Y' will be entered in the relevant column.

MREL : Microrelief limitation FLOOD : Flood risk EROSN : Soil erosion risk EXP : Exposure limitation FROST : Frost DIST : Disturbed land CHEM : Chemical limitation

9. LIMIT : The main limitation to land quality. The following abbreviations are used.

 OC : Overall Climate
 AE : Aspect
 EX : Exposure
 FR : Frost Risk
 GR : Gradient
 MR : Microrelief

 FL : Flood
 Risk
 TX : Topsoil Texture
 DP : Soil Depth
 CH : Chemical
 WE : Wetness
 WK : Workability

 DR : Drought
 ER : Soil Erosion Risk
 WD : Combined Soil Wetness/Droughtiness
 ST : Topsoil Stoniness

Soil Pits and Auger Borings

1. TEXTURE : soil texture classes are denoted by the following abbreviations.

 S: Sand
 LS: Loamy Sand
 SL: Sandy Loam
 SZL: Sandy Silt Loam
 CL: Clay Loam
 ZCL: Silty Clay
 SIL: Sandy Clay Loam

 SCL: Sandy Clay Loam
 C: Clay
 SC: Sandy Clay
 ZC: Silty Clay
 OL: Organic Loam
 P: Peat
 SP: Sandy Peat

 LP: Loamy Peat
 PL: Peaty Loam
 PS: Peaty Sand
 MZ: Marine Light Silts
 Note: Sandy Clay
 Silts

For the sand, loamy sand, sandy loam and sandy silt loam classes, the predominant size of sand fraction will be indicated by the use of prefixes.

F : Fine (more than 66% of the sand less than 0.2mm) M : Medium (less than 66% fine sand and less than 33% coarse sand)

C: Coarse (more than 33% of the sand larger than 0.6mm)

The clay loam and silty clay loam classes will be sub-divided according to the clay content.

M : Medium (<27% clay) H : Heavy (27-35% clay) 2. MOTTLE COL : Mottle colour 3. MOTTLE ABUN : Mottle abundance, expressed as a percentage of the matrix or surface described.

F: few <2% C: common 2-20% M: many 20-40 VM : very many 40% +

4. MOTTLE CONT : Mottle contrast

F: faint - indistinct mottles, evident only on close inspection
 D: distinct - mottles are readily seen
 P: prominent - mottling is conspicuous and one of the outstanding features of the horizon

5. PED. COL : Ped face colour

6. STONE LITH : One of the following is used.

HR : all hard rocks and stonesMSST : soft, medium or coarse grained sandstoneSI : soft weathered igneous or metamorphicSLST : soft oolitic or dolimitic limestoneFSST : soft, fine grained sandstoneZR : soft, argillaceous, or silty rocksCH : chalkGH : gravel with non-porous (hard) stonesGS : gravel with porous (soft) stones

Stone contents (>2cm, >6cm and total) are given in percentages (by volume).

7. STRUCT : the degree of development, size and shape of soil peds are described using the following notation:

- degree of development WK : weakly developed MD : moderately developed ST : strongly developed

- ped size F: fine M: medium C: coarse VC: very coarse

<u>ped shape</u> S : single grain M : massive GR : granular AB : angular blocky SAB : sub-angular blocky PR : prismatic
 PL : platy

8. CONSIST : Soil consistence is described using the following notation:

L: loose VF : very friable FR : friable FM : firm VM : very firm EM : extremely firm EH : extremely hard

9. SUBS STR : Subsoil structural condition recorded for the purpose of calculating profile droughtiness.

G:good M:moderate P:poor

10. POR : Soil porosity. If a soil horizon has less than 0.5% biopores >0.5 mm, a 'Y' will appear in this column.

11. IMP : If the profile is impenetrable a 'Y' will appear in this column at the appropriate horizon.

12. SPL : Slowly permeable layer. If the soil horizon is slowly permeable a 'Y' will appear in this column.

13. CALC : If the soil horizon is calcareous, a 'Y' will appear in this column.

14. Other notations

APW : available water capacity (in mm) adjusted for wheat APP : available water capacity (in mm) adjusted for potatoes MBW : moisture balance, wheat MBP : moisture balance, potatoes

SOIL PIT DESCRIPTION

Site Name : BERKS.MINERALS PLAN SUL. Pit Number : 1P											
Grid Refe	arence: SUE	4 F L	Average Annu Accumulated Field Capaci Land Use Slope and As	Temperature ty Level	: 1470 degree days						
HORIZON 0- 17	TEXTURE HZCL	COLOUR	STONES >2 0	TOT.STONE 0	MOTTLES	STRUCTURE					
17- 69	HZCL	10YR66 00	0	0	С	MDSTCP					
69- 90	MCL	10YR72 00	0	50	С						
90-120	PL	10YR32 00	0	0							
Wetness (Grade : 3B	6	Netness Clas Sleying SPL	s : IV :017 :017							
Drought (Grade : 3A	-	VPW : 155mm VPP : 096mm		2 mm 1 mm						
FINAL ALC	GRADE : 3	3B									

MAIN LIMITATION : Wetness

LIST OF BORINGS HEADERS 31/08/93 BERKS.MINERALS PLAN SUL.

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program: ALCO12 LIST OF BORINGS HEADERS 31/08/93 BERKS.MINERALS PLAN SUL.

--WETNESS-- -WHEAT- -POTS- M. REL EROSN FROST CHEM ALC SAMPLE ASPECT NO. GRID REF USE GRDNT GLEY SPL CLASS GRADE AP MB AP MB DRT FLOOD EXP DIST LIMIT COMMENTS 50 SU632 6930 SET 020 020 4 38 000 0 000 0 WE 3B 3B-4 FLD Y 51 SU633 6930 SET 020 020 4 3B 000 0 000 0 WE 3B 3B-4 FLD Y 52 SU629 6910 PP 025 025 4 38 000 0 000 0 Y 53 SU630 6910 PP 025 025 4 38 000 0 000 0 Y 54 SU631 6910 SET 025 025 4 38 000 0 000 0 Y Y WE 38 GH-85 WE 3B WE 3B 3B-4 FLD

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18	0~20 20-120	mzcl zc	10YR31 00	10YR58 00 C		Ŷ	0		0	Y
	20-120	20				•	•	•	•	•
19	0-20	mzcl	10YR43 00				0	0	0	
	20-120	hzc1	10YR62 00	10YR58 00 C		Y	0	0	0	Y
_							_	_		
20	0-20	pl	10YR32 00	10YR58 00 C		Y	0 0		0 0	Y
	20-45 45-120	hzcl szl		10YR58 00 F		Ý	0	-	0	Ŷ
-	45-120	521		101830-001		'	v	•	U	
23	0-15	mzcl	10YR32 00				0	0	0	
23	15-120	zc	10YR62 00	10YR58 00 C		Y	0	0	0	Y
-							_	_		
24	0-30	mzcl	10YR32 00	-			0		0	
	30-120	zc	10YR61 00	10YR58 00 C		Ŷ	U	0 GH	1	Ŷ
	0-25	mzc]	10YR43 00				0	0	0	
	25-120	hzci		10YR66 00 C		Ŷ	0	0	0	¥
26	0-30	hc1	10YR43 00				0		0	
	30-40	zc	25Y 63 00				0	0	0	
	40-120	hzcl	10YR62 00	10YR58 00 C		Ŷ	0	0	0	Ŷ
28	0-20	mzcl	10YR43 00				0	0	0	
	20-100	hzc1		10YR68 00 M		Y	0	0	0	Y
	100120	hzc1	25Y 51 00			Y	0	0 GH	5	Y
28A		mzcl	10YR43 00	-			0	0	0	V
	20-100	hzc1		10YR58 00 C		Y Y	0 0	0 0	0	Y Y
_	100-120	βÌ	10YR32 00			ſ	Ű	0	U	I
29	0-20	mzcl	10YR43 00				0	0	0	
	20-65	hzc]		10YR68 00 C		Y	0	0	0	
_	65-120	hzc1	10YR64 00			Y	0	0	0	
		-					~	•	0	
30	0-20	mzcl	10YR43 00	10YR58 00 C		Y	0	0 0	0 0	
_	20-30 30-120	hzcl hzcl		75YR56 00 C		Ŷ	õ	-	0	Y
	30-120	IIZC I	/Jikoi 00	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,			-	•	·	·
31	0-15	mzcl		10YR58 00 F		Y	0	0 GH	1	
	15-120	zc		10YR68 00 C		Y	0	0 GH	1	Y
							~	A	10	
32	0-15	mzcl	10YR32 00				0	0 HR	18	
33	0-20	hzc1	10YR43 00				0	0	0	
	20-120			10YR68 00 M		Y			ů 0	Y
-										

	MOTTLES	PED	-	-STONES	STRUCT/	SUBS		
SAMPLE DEPTH TEXT	TURE COLOUR COL ABUN CO						SPL (CALC
3 4 0-28 mzc	I 10YR43 00		•	0	0			
28-60 hzc		,	0 (0		0		Y	
60-80 sz1					0		Ŷ	
 80-120 1p 	10YR31 00				0		Ŷ	
			-	•	•			
35 0-30 mzc1	10YR43 00		0	0	Ď			
30-45 hzc]	10YR32 00		0	0	0			
45-65 hzc1	25Y 62 00 10YR58 00 C	١	<i>(</i> 0	0	0		Y	
65-120 sc1	10YR72 00	١	(O	0	0		Y	
37 0-20 mzcl	10YR32 00		0	0 CH	1			
20-120 zc	10YR62 00 10YR68 00 C	١	(0	0 CH	1			
3 9 0-28 mzcl	10YR32 00		0	0	0			
28-120 zc	10YR62 00 10YR66 00 C	١	(0	0	0		Y	
	10YR32 00		0	0	0			
25-40 zc	10YR62 00 10YR58 00 C	١	(0	0	0		Y	
40-120 sz1	10YR81 00	١	/ 0	0	0		Y	Y
4 1 0-20 mzcl	10YR32 00		0	0	0			
20-60 zc	10YR62 00 10YR58 00 C	١	()	0	0		Y	
60-120 sc1	10YR81 00	١	(0	0	0		Y	Y
43 0-30 mzc1	10YR32 00		0	0	0			Y
30-70 zc	10YR62 00 10YR58 00 C	N	(0	0 GH	3		Y	Y
70-90 hc1	10YR61 00	١	(0	0 GH	5		Y	Y
44 0-20 mzc	10YR32 00		0	0	0			Y
20-120 zc	10YR62 00 10YR58 00 C	١			0		Y	Ŷ
					•			.,
45 0-20 mzc]			0		0		Y	Y Y
20-120 zc	10YR62 00		0	0	0		1	Ŧ
46 0-25 mzc1	10YR32 00		0	0	0			
25-85 hzc1	10YR62 00 10YR68 00 F	١	<i>(</i> 0	0	0	м	Y	
47 0-25 mzc1	10YR32 00		0	0	0			Y
25-80 zc	10YR62 00 10YR68 00 C	١	r 0	0	0		Y	
	10YR31 00	١	(O	0	0		Y	
48 0-20 mzc1	10YR32 00		0	0	0			Y
20-120 zc	10YR51 00 10YR58 00 C	١	(O	0	0		Y	Y
49 0-25 mzcl	10YR32 00		0	0	D			Y
25-70 zc	10YR62 00 10YR68 00 C	١	(0		0	м	Y	Y

COMPLETE LIST OF PROFILES 31/08/93 BERKS.MINERALS PLAN SUL.

			•									-01156	CTDUCT /	0100		
							5	PED				ONES		SUBS		.
6AM	PLE	DEPTH	TEXTURE	COLOUR	COL	ABUN	CONT	COL.	GLEY	>2	>6	LITH TOT	CONSIST	STR POR	IMP SPL	CALC
_																
	50	0–20	mzcl	10YR32 00						0	0	0				
		20-80	hzcl	10YR51 00	10YR58	00 C			Y	0	0	0			Y	
-		80-120	zc	10YR51 00	10YR58	00 C			Y	0	0	0			Y	
_																
	51	0-20	hzc1	10YR32 00						0	0	0				
		20-120	zc	10YR62 00	10YR68	00 C			Y	0	0	0			Y	Y
										•						
1	52	0-25	mzcl	10YR32 00						0	0	0				Y
		25-60	hzc1	10YR51 00	10YR58	00 C			Y	0	0	0			Y	Y
		60-85	scl	10YR72 00					Ŷ	٥	0	0			Y	Y
_										-	-	-				
	53	0-25	mzcl	10YR32 00						0	0	0				Y
		25-100	hzc1	10YR51 00	10YR58	00 C			Ŷ	Ó	0	0			Y	Y
		100-120	scl	10YR72 00					Ý	õ	-	GH 2			Ý	Ŷ
		100~120	501	101872 00	101800	00 0			Ţ	0	Ű	Qin 2,			ı	T
	54	0-25	mzcl	10YR32 00						0	0	0				
	•••	25-120		10YR51 00		00 C			Y	õ	0	õ			Y	
_		23-120	ZC	101651-00	101630	00 C			Y	U	0	U			T	