

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

**OLD COURT FARM
WHITCHURCH
ROSS-ON-WYE**

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**ADAS Ref: 025/RPT/0622
Job No: 022/94
MAFF Ref: EL17/10414**

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR OLD COURT FARM, WHITCHURCH, ROSS-ON-WYE

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 the site |
|------------------------|-------|---------------|
| 2 | 11.8 | 46 |
| 3a | 11.9 | 46 |
| 3b | 2.1 | 8 |
| Agricultural buildings | < 0.1 | |

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a is soil wetness.
- 1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is an annual flood risk.

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 25.8 ha site lies north of Symmonds Yat, Ross-on-Wye and is bounded by the River Wye along its eastern boundary, the A40 Trunk Road along its western boundary, urban development to the south and agricultural land and nursery greenhouses to the north.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with a proposal for a country park.
- 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 survey the site was under grass and cereals.

3. CLIMATE

- 3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SO 555 178).

| | |
|--|------|
| Average Annual Rainfall (mm) | 769 |
| Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C) | 1505 |

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on this site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Field Capacity Days (days) | 174 |
| Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm) | 106 |
| Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm) | 98 |

4. Site

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

4.2 Gradient and micro-relief do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

4.3 Land bordering the River Wye in the South east of the site is frequently (more than once in 3 years) flooded for periods of 2-3 days during winter months.

5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of sandstone, British Geological Survey, Sheet 233, scale 1:50000. Overlying this are deposits of Quaternary river alluvium.

5.2 The soil, influenced by these underlying deposits, generally has either a clay loam or silty clay loam texture.

6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 land occupies 11.8 ha (46%) of the survey area and is found in the north and south of the site and in a band running north south down the centre of the site.

6.1.1 These soils typically have a medium clay loam or medium silty clay loam topsoil texture, over a similar upper subsoil texture, which overlies a heavy silty clay loam lower subsoil below 64cm. These soils fall into Wetness Class II.

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

6.1.3 Within this area isolated borings were found to have a lower subsoil texture of sandy loam.

6.1.4 These better drained soils are of grade 1 in quality and are not limited in their agricultural use.

6.2 Subgrade 3a land occupies 11.9 ha (46%) of the survey area and is found in the middle west of the site and in the east and south east of the site.

6.2.1 These soils typically have a medium clay loam topsoil texture over a medium silty clay loam upper subsoil overlying a heavy silty clay loam lower subsoil texture below 48cm. These soils fall into Wetness Class III.

6.2.2 The land is limited in its agricultural use by soil wetness.

6.3 Subgrade 3b occupies 2.1 ha (8%) of the survey area and is found in the south east of the site bordering the River Wye.

6.3.1 These soils typically have a medium clay loam topsoil texture over a medium silty clay loam and a heavy silty clay loam subsoil texture.

6.3.2 The land is limited in its agricultural use by frequent winter flooding of medium duration.

6.4 Agricultural buildings occupy 0.02 ha.

6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

| Grade/Subgrade | Ha | % of survey area | % of Agricultural Land |
|------------------------|------|------------------|------------------------|
| 2 | 11.8 | 46 | 46 |
| 3a | 11.9 | 46 | 46 |
| 3b | 2.1 | 8 | 8 |
| Agricultural buildings | <0.1 | <1 | |
| Totals | 25.8 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

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March 1994