AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
LEOMINSTER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - SITE 2 (REDDING HALL)

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LEOMINSTER INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - SITE 2 (REDDING HALL)

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
3b	10.4	79
Other land		
Non-Agricultural	0.5	4
Not Surveyed	2.2	17

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 July 1995. 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 13.1 ha site is situated to the north of Leominster. The land immediately to the north, east and west of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land to the south of the River Lugg is currently being used for waste disposal.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Leominster 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, grass and potatoes. The field to the south of Broad Farm consists of an old orchard which is grazed by cattle.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SO 495603) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	742
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1430

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	168
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	101
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	91

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. This is overlain with deposits of Quaternary alluvium.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which have a silty clay loam texture.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3b - occupies 10.4 ha (79%) of the survey area and is found over the majority of the site.

6.1.1 The soil typically has a silty clay loam texture overlying silty clay loam and silty clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV. The area south of the track which is adjacent to the River Lugg has been disturbed.

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

6.2 Other land includes non-agricultural land which occupies 0.5 ha (4%) of the survey area as a trackway. The remaining area (2.2 ha 17%) of the site was not surveyed due to the presence of a bull in one field and no access being granted for the other field.

6.3 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES FOR SITE 2

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3b	10.4	79	100
Other land			
Non-Agricultural	0.5	4	-
Not Surveyed	2.2	17	-
Totals	**13.1**	**100**	**100**

6.4 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES FOR WHOLE AREA ON THE MAP

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3b	70.6	93.6	100
Other land			
Agricultural Buildings	0.5	0.7	-
Non-Agricultural	1.5	2.0	-
Woodland	0.2	0.3	-
Urban	0.4	0.5	-
Not Surveyed	2.2	2.9	-
Totals	**75.4**	**100**	**100**

File Note

Site 1 Leominster Industrial

Lab analysis of soil samples showed textures in the south i.e. 32, to be of a HZCL (similar to the textures in the site immediately to the south). Therefore, this area to the south (i.e. 17 to 23 and south) is definitely 3b even with borderline WC III/IV.

Textures to the north shown to be borderline MZCL/HZCL (as thought in field). Therefore these soils have been mapped as Subgrade 3b for WC III(?) and IV. All pits show soils to be WC IV with many mottles below the topsoil, the correct SPL structure and low porosity (in field). Soils with variable porosity were bought back to office and wetted up these to field capacity. Upon wetting up these variable porosity soils became low porosity throughout thus, supporting WC IV for pits, which was then used to grade areas around it which had similar colours, depths and textures.

Mr Sparey (Junior) stated that they found the soils of site 1 heavy and that even with underdrainage there was difficulty in harvesting potatoes (grown once every 5 years and producing a fine tilth). Land use tended to centre around cereals.

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