# AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LAND AT RIPPLE

## Introduction

The site was visited by the Resource Planning Group in December 1991 and January 1992. An Agricultural Land Classification Survey was undertaken and soils augered using a 100 metre grid, with supplementary auger borings and soil pits where necessary.

## Location, Altitude and Relief

The site lies to the north of Ripple and to the west of the A38. The land lies at an altitude of between 10 and 20 metres. Relief is a limiting factor in a small area to the east of the stream. Altitude is non-limiting on this site.

## Climate and Rainfall

The main parameters used in the assessment of the climatic limitations are average annual rainfall (AAR) and accumulated temperature (ATO). For this site these figures are 642mm and 1497° respectively indicating that there are no climatic limitations on the site. The field capacity days figure for the site is 138 days. The mean last frost occurs in late April.

## Geology and Soils

The area is underlain by Mercia Mudstones and River Terrace deposits, overlain by sandy soils, typically sandy loams overlying loamy sands and sands or sandy loams overlying clays. A limited area of Alluvium occurs adjoining the stream, and Arden Sandstone is found in the extreme south of the site.

## Land Use

At the time of the survey winter cereals were being grown in the west of the site, with permanent pasture in the eastern part of the site. To the west of Stratfordbridge House, one field was being used for growing vegetables. This field was irrigated.

## Agricultural Land Classification

The majority of the site is of high quality.

Grade 2 is mapped over 37.8 hectares, and accounts for 61.7% of the site. It is widespread throughout the site. Soils are typically medium sandy loams overlying loamy sands, sometimes with sands at depth or heavy clay loams. Within the area mapped as grade 2, small pockets of deep medium sandy loams occur; these are of grade 1 quality, but are too small to map separately at this scale. Conversely there are limited stony areas, or where the clay subsoil comes near to the surface, but these are also too small to map separately. Soil droughtiness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of this land.

**Sub-grade 3a** is mapped over 13.8 hectares, and accounts for 22.5% of the site. Soils are typically sandy loams or sandy clay loams overlying sandy clay loams, clay loams and clays. These soils are typically wetness class III and wetness class IV. Soil wetness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of this land.

**Sub-grade 3b** is mapped over 9.4 hectares and accounts for 15.3% of the site. Soils are typically sandy clay loams, clay loams or silty clay loams overlying clay. These soils are wetness class IV. Soil wetness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of this land.

**Grade 4** is mapped over 0.3 hectares and 0.5% of the site. It occurs in a disturbed area in the east of the site where microrelief is the main limitation to the agricultural use of this land.

**SUMMARY**

| Grade | Area (ha) | % of site |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | 37.8 | 61.7 |
| 3a | 13.8 | 22.5 |
| 3b | 9.4 | 15.3 |
| 4 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| | 61.3 | 100.0 |

*Resource Planning Group*
Wolverhampton RO
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