

52/95

**Salisbury District Local Plan:  
Roadside Services,  
A30/Eastern Bypass**

**Agricultural Land Classification**

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**SALISBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN**  
**ROADSIDE SERVICES A30/EASTERN BYPASS**  
**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION**

**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. CLIMATE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. RELIEF AND LANDCOVER</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. GEOLOGY AND SOILS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1</b> <b>References</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2</b> <b>Description of the grades and subgrades</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3</b> <b>Definition of Soil Wetness Classes</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>MAP</b>	

**SALISBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN :**

**ROADSIDE SERVICES A30/EASTERN BYPASS**

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SURVEY**

**SUMMARY**

The survey was carried out by ADAS on behalf of MAFF as part of its statutory role in the preparation of the Salisbury District Local Plan. The fieldwork at Ford, Salisbury was completed in July 1995 at a scale of 1:10,000. Data on climate, soils, geology and from previous Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Surveys was used and is presented in the report. The distribution of grades is shown on the accompanying ALC map and summarised below. Information is correct at this scale but could be misleading if enlarged.

**Distribution of ALC grades: Ford, Salisbury**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>% of Survey Area</b>	<b>% of Agricultural Land (17.2 ha)</b>
3a	17.2	96.6	100
Urban	0.6	3.4	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17.8</b>		

The entire site was graded as subgrade 3a. The soils are limited to 3a due to droughtiness. The soils are shallow silty well drained over chalk.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey was carried out in July 1995 at Ford, Salisbury on behalf of MAFF as part of its statutory role in the preparation of the Salisbury District Local Plan. The fieldwork covering 17.8 ha of land was conducted by ADAS at a scale of 1:10,000 with approximately one boring per hectare of agricultural land. A total of 18 auger borings were examined and 1 soil profile pit used to assess subsoil conditions.

The published provisional one inch to the mile ALC map of this area (MAFF 1974) shows the grade of the site at a reconnaissance scale as grade 3.

The recent survey supersedes previous surveys having been carried out at a more detailed level and using the Revised Guidelines and Criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF 1988). These guidelines provide a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. The grading takes account of the top 120 cm of the soil profile. A description of the grades used in the ALC system can be found in Appendix 2.

## 2. CLIMATE

The grade of the land is determined by the most limiting factor present. The overall climate is considered first because it can have an overriding influence on restricting land to a lower grade despite other favourable conditions.

Estimates of climatic variables were interpolated from the published agricultural climate dataset (Meteorological Office 1989). The parameters used for assessing overall climate are accumulated temperature, a measure of the relative warmth of a locality, and average annual rainfall, a measure of overall wetness. The results shown in Table 1 indicate there is no overall climatic limitation.

Table 1: Climatic Interpolations: Ford, Salisbury

Grid Reference	SU 166 325
Altitude (m)	60
Accumulated Temperature (day °)	1485
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	756
Overall Climatic Grade	1
Field Capacity Days	169
Moisture deficit (mm):	
Wheat	109
Potatoes	102

Climatic data on Field Capacity Days (FCD) and Moisture Deficits for wheat and potatoes are also shown. These data are used in assessing the soil wetness and droughtiness limitations referred to in later sections.

## 3. RELIEF AND LANDCOVER

The site slopes gently towards the south west. The western part of the site was under peas and the remainder had recently been harvested from cereals at the time of the survey.

#### 4. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The geology of the site is shown on the published 1:50,000 scale geology map, sheet 298 British Geological Survey 1976. The entire site is underlain by upper chalk. A small area of valley gravels were shown to the south west but no evidence of these gravels were found in the field. The soils were mapped by the Soil Survey of England and Wales in 1983 at a reconnaissance scale of 1:250,000. The site is shown to be partly covered by Carstens series, and partly by Andover 1 Series.

The soils found during the recent survey were all of the Andover series, being shallow, well drained, calcareous silty soils over chalk.

#### 5. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

The distribution of ALC grades is shown in Table 2 and on the accompanying ALC map. This information could be misleading if shown at a larger scale.

Table 2: Distribution of ALC grades: Ford, Salisbury

Grade	Area (ha)	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land (17.2 ha)
3a	17.2	96.6	100
Urban	0.6	3.4	-
TOTAL	17.8		

##### Subgrade 3a

The entire site has been mapped as Subgrade 3a. The soils are well drained (Wetness Class I, see appendix 3) and have no wetness limitation. The topsoil stoniness would restrict most of the site to Grade 2 on stoniness. The main limitation is droughtiness. Rooting was observed 45cm into the chalk, and the droughtiness grade for all borings was calculated on that basis. Three isolated borings fell just within the 3b grade on droughtiness, but this was a function of the variable depth to chalk, and was not mappable at this scale. The entire site was therefore graded as 3a due to droughtiness.

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September 1995

## APPENDIX 1

### REFERENCES

BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (1976) Drift Edition, Sheet 298 1:50,000

MAFF (1974) Agricultural Land Classification Map, Sheet 167, Provisional 1:63,360 scale.

MAFF (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales (Revised Guidelines and Criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land), Alnwick.

METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE (1989) Climatological Data for Agricultural Land Classification.

SOIL SURVEY OF ENGLAND AND WALES (1983) Sheet 5, Soils of South West England, 1:250,000 scale.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **DESCRIPTION OF GRADES AND SUBGRADES**

#### **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 include 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 and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in 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. Where more demanding crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.

##### **Subgrade 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.

##### **Subgrade 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 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 most 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.

## **Descriptions of other land categories used on ALC maps**

### **Urban**

Built-up or 'hard' uses with relatively little potential for a return to agriculture including: 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 park land, 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.

### **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 landcover types, eg buildings in large grounds, and where may be shown separately. Otherwise, the most extensive cover type will usually be shown.

**Source:** MAFF (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales (Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land), Alnwick.



## **APPENDIX 3**

### **DEFINITION OF SOIL WETNESS CLASSES**

#### **Wetness Class I**

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

#### **Wetness Class II**

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

#### **Wetness Class III**

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

#### **Wetness Class IV**

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

#### **Wetness Class V**

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

#### **Wetness Class VI**

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

**Notes:** The number of days specified is not necessarily a continuous period. 'In most years' is defined as more than 10 out of 20 years.

**Source:** Hodgson, J M (in preparation), Soil Survey Field Handbook (revised edition).