



Agricultural Land Classification:

Land North of Rectory Lane, Ashington,
Horsham, West Sussex.

Prepared for:
Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land, a division of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land, a division of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd, commissioned this report to determine the quality of approximately 7.39 hectares (ha) of agricultural land proposed for new residential development off Rectory Lane, on the north-western edge of Ashington, near Horsham, West Sussex (the 'Study Area'), as shown in **Figure 1**. The approximate centre of the Study Area is located at British National Grid (BNG) reference TQ126165. The Study Area is bordered by Rectory Lane to the south, with agricultural land surrounding it to the north, east, and west.
- 1.1.2 This assessment of agricultural land quality and soil follows the approach of the '*Agricultural Land Classification: Guidelines for grading the quality of agricultural land*' published by the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Welsh Government (Joint Publication – 069) on the 12th of December 2025 (henceforth referred to as the 'ALC Guidelines')¹, see 'Methodology' below.

1.2 Competency

- 1.2.1 The work has been carried out by a Chartered Scientist (CSci), who is a Fellow (F.I. Soil Sci) of the British Society of Soil Science (BSSS). The soil surveyor meets the requirements of the BSSS Professional Competency Standard (PCS) scheme for ALC (see BSSS PCS Document 2 '*Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales*')². The BSSS PCS scheme is endorsed, amongst others, by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Natural England, the Science Council, and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management (IEMA), now the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)³.

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 This assessment is based upon the findings of a study of published information on climate, geology and soil in combination with a soil investigation carried out in accordance with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF)⁴ '*Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land*' of October 1988 and updated in December 2025.
- 1.3.2 The ALC system of England and Wales, which was first published in October 1988 and updated in December 2025, provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. The ALC system divides agricultural land into five grades (Grade 1 '*Excellent*' to Grade 5 '*Very Poor*'), with Grade 3 subdivided into Subgrade 3a '*Good*' and Subgrade 3b '*Moderate*'. Agricultural land classified as Grade 1, 2, and Subgrade 3a falls in the '*best and most versatile*'

category in Paragraphs 187 and 188 (and Footnote 65) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024 (revised February 2025). Further details of the ALC system and national planning policy implications are set out in Natural England's '*Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land*' online⁵.

- 1.3.3 A detailed soil survey and ALC of the approximately 7.39ha Study Area was conducted on the 13th of April 2026. The ALC survey involved examining the soil's physical properties at eight sampling points, spaced approximately 1 auger bore per hectare of agricultural land. The soil profile was examined at each sample location to a maximum depth of approximately 1.2 m by hand using a 5cm diameter Dutch (Edleman) soil auger. One soil pit, i.e., Pit 1, near auger bore 4, was excavated by hand with a spade to examine specific soil physical properties, such as stone content and the structural condition of the subsoil, more closely. The locations of the auger bores and the soil pits are shown in **Figure 1**. A log of the soil profiles recorded at each auger bore location within the Study Area is given in **Appendix 1**, and a detailed description of the soil pit is given in **Appendix 2**.
- 1.3.4 The auger bore locations were located using a hand-held Garmin E-Trec Geographic Information System (GIS) to enable the sample locations to be relocated for verification, if necessary. Where auger locations on a 100 m grid pattern fall on headland, tramlines, or within 3 m of a hedgerow or tree, they were relocated on agricultural land close by, i.e., to avoid compacted ground or land affected by tree roots, etc.
- 1.3.5 The soil profile at each sample location was described using the '*Soil Survey Field Handbook: Describing and Sampling Soil Profiles*' (Ed. J.M. Hodgson, Cranfield University, 1997). Each soil profile was assigned an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grade in accordance with the MAFF ALC Guidelines.
- 1.3.6 The texture of the topsoil and subsoil was determined on site by hand-texturing following Natural England's best practice guidance⁶. To validate the hand-texturing, a topsoil sample was collected at two auger bore locations, i.e., 4 (Pit 1) and 6, as shown in **Figure 1**. The samples were sent to an accredited laboratory for particle size analysis, i.e., the proportions of sand, silt, and clay. This is to determine the definitive texture class of the topsoil and especially to differentiate medium clay loams (i.e., <27% clay) from heavy clay loams (27% to 35% clay). A test report outlining the findings of the laboratory topsoil texture analysis is provided in **Appendix 3**.

1.4 Structure of the Remainder of this Report

- 1.4.1 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
- Section 2 – Planning Policy Framework
 - Section 3 – Agricultural Land Classification;
 - Section 4 - ALC in the Study Area in a Wider Geographical Context; and
 - Section 5 – Summary and Conclusions.

2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND RELEVANT GUIDANCE

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 This section of the report sets out the national and local planning framework to assess the opportunities and constraints to development at the Site in agricultural land quality terms.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024 (revised February 2025)

- 2.2.1 National planning policy guidance on development involving agricultural land is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), December 2024 (revised February 2025). The NPPF aims to provide a simplified planning framework that sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England. The NPPF includes policy guidance on *'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'* (Section 15). Paragraphs 187 and 188 (and Footnote 65) are relevant to this assessment of agricultural land quality and soil, as follows:

'187...Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;...'

- 2.2.2 Paragraph 188 states that *'Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework⁶⁵...'*. Footnote number 65 states that *'Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.'*

2.3 Soil Functions and Soil Health

- 2.3.1 Aims and objectives for safeguarding and, where possible, improving soil health are set out in the Government's *'Safeguarding our soils: A strategy for England'*⁷. The Soil Strategy for England, which builds on Defra's *'Soil Action Plan for England (2004-2006)*, sets out an ambitious vision to protect and improve soil to meet an increased global demand for food and to help combat the adverse effects of climate change.
- 2.3.2 The Soil Strategy for England states that *'...soil is a fundamental and essentially non-renewable natural resource, providing the essential link between the components that make up our*

environment. Soils vary hugely from region to region and even from field to field. They all perform a number of valuable functions⁸ or ecosystem services for society’.

2.3.3 The main soil functions are:

- Food and other biomass production;
- Environmental Interaction: storage (including carbon sequestration), filtering, and transformation;
- Biological habitat and gene pool;
- Source of raw materials;
- Physical and cultural heritage; and
- Platform for man-made structures: buildings, highways.

2.3.4 The vision of the Soil Strategy for England has been developed in the Government’s 25-Year Plan for the Environment⁹. Soil is recognised as an important national resource, and the Plan states that:

‘We will ensure that resources from nature, such as food, fish and timber, are used more sustainably and efficiently. We will do this (in part) by:

....improving our approach to soil management: by 2030 we want all of England’s soils to be managed sustainably, and we will use natural capital thinking to develop appropriate soil metrics and management approaches...’

2.3.5 The maintenance and improvement of soil health is, therefore, a material consideration when deciding if development is appropriate on agricultural land. Soil health is the soil’s ability to support plant, animal, and human life within the ecosystem. Further details on soil health are given in the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)’s advice note ‘Soil health in environmental assessment’¹⁰.

2.4 Best Practice Guidance

2.4.1 This assessment of agricultural land and soil has drawn on best practice guidance set out in the key documents below:

- The Institute of Civil Engineering (ICE) provides guidance on assessing agricultural land quality and soil in the ‘*Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook: A practical guide for planners, developers and communities*’¹¹.
- The Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management (IEMA) has produced a ‘*New Perspective on Land and Soil in Environmental Assessment*’¹², encouraging a new approach to assessing soil functions, ecosystem services and natural capital provided by land and soils.

- The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has published '*Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England*' (24th September 2009)¹³. The Soil Strategy was published in tandem with a '*Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites*'¹⁴. The Soil Strategy for England, which builds on Defra's '*Soil Action Plan for England (2004-2006)*', sets out an ambitious vision to protect and improve soil to meet an increased global demand for food and to help combat the adverse effects of climate change.
- This project also follows best practice published by the British Society of Soil Science on 'Benefitting from Soil Management in Development and Construction.'
- Best practice will also be followed for soil handling, published by the Institute of Quarrying (2021) '*Good Practice for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings*' (Sheets A to E are mainly relevant to this assessment)¹⁵.
- This assessment also considers recent guidance produced by the Soils in Planning Construction Task Force (Lancaster University *et al*) regarding '*Building on soil sustainability: Principles for soils in planning and construction*' (September 2022)¹⁶. This report contains guidance for local authorities, contractors, clients, developers, and design teams on managing soil in construction and planning. This guidance for conserving soil resources on-site follows the principles of sustainable development and the circular economy (defined as '*The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the **life cycle of products is extended**. In practice, it implies **reducing waste** to a minimum. When a product ends its life, its materials are kept within the economy wherever possible. These can be productively used repeatedly, thereby **creating further value***'¹⁷.

3 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

3.1 Background

3.1.1 This section of the report sets out the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) findings. It is based on a desktop study of relevant published information on climate, topography, geology, and soil in conjunction with a soil survey. As described in the ALC Guidelines, the main physical factors influencing agricultural land quality are:

- climate;
- site;
- soil; and
- interactive limitations.

3.1.2 These factors are considered in turn below.

3.2 Climate

3.2.1 Based on a dataset of 5km grid points¹⁸, site-specific, interpolated climate data relevant to the determination of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) grade of land at the Site is given in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: ALC Climate Data for Rectory Lane, Ashington, Horsham, West Sussex	
Climate Parameter	Grid Ref. TQ126165
Average Altitude (m)	29
Average Annual Rainfall (AAR) (mm)	849
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C (AT0) (January – June) ¹⁹	1505
Field Capacity Days (FCD)	179
Moisture Deficit (mm) Wheat	107
Moisture Deficit (mm) Potatoes	100
Grade According to Climate	1

3.2.2 Regarding Figure 1 ‘Grade according to climate’ on page 6 of the ALC Guidelines, agricultural land quality in the Study Area is not limited by the climate factors used for ALC grading, i.e., the relationship between the amount of energy (sunlight) available for photosynthesis during the growing season (i.e., AT0) and the water supplied to plant roots (i.e., AAR).

3.2.3 Agricultural land in the Study Area is predicted to be at field capacity (i.e., the amount of soil moisture or water content retained after excess water has drained away but before it becomes dry enough to work) for 179 Field Capacity Days (FCD) per year, mainly over the late autumn, winter, and early spring. The combination of topsoil texture, drainage status

(Wetness Class) of the profile, and the number of FCD affects the degree to which agricultural land is limited by soil wetness. The climate at the Site falls in the 176-225 category (regarding Table 6 of the ALC Guidelines), as described in more detail under '*interactive limitations*' below.

3.3 Site

3.3.1 As described in the introduction, the approximate centre of the Study Area is located at British National Grid (BNG) reference TQ126165. The Study Area is bordered by Rectory Lane to the south, with agricultural land surrounding it to the north, east, and west.

3.3.2 Regarding the ALC Guidelines, agricultural land quality can be limited by one or more of the three main site factors as follows:

- gradient;
- micro-relief (i.e., complex change in slope angle over short distances); and
- risk of flooding.

I. Gradient and Micro-Relief

3.3.3 The Study Area is located on a gentle, north-facing slope at approximately 31 metres (m) above ordnance datum (AOD) at the highest point in the southeast near auger bore 8 and approximately 21mAOD at the lowest elevation in the north near auger bore 1. The quality of agricultural land is not limited by gradient (i.e., less than 7°, as per Table 1 of the ALC Guidelines). The quality of agricultural land in the Study Area is not limited by micro-relief, i.e., complex changes in slope angle and direction over short distances.

II. Risk of Flooding

3.3.4 From the Government Flood Map for Planning website²⁰, the Study Area is in Flood Zone 1 at a low risk of flooding. The MAFF ALC Guidelines (1988) take account of the frequency, duration, and timing of flooding in the summer and winter (re Table 2 '*Grade according to flood risk in summer*' and/or Table 3 '*Grade according to flood risk in winter*'). There is no evidence (i.e., data for frequency, duration, and timing of flood events) that the grade of agricultural land at the Site is limited by flooding during the summer or winter following the criteria in the ALC Guidelines.

3.4 Soil

I. Geology/Soil Parent Material

3.4.1 British Geological Survey (BGS) information online²¹ has been used to identify the Bedrock underlying the Site and any Superficial (Drift) Deposits over the Bedrock. This information helps to determine the parent material from which the soil has formed.

- 3.4.2 The BGS information shows the Study Area is mainly underlain by mudstone of the Weald Clay Formation, with a band of sandstone of the Weald Clay Formation along the southern boundary, from east to west. The bedrock is not covered by any superficial deposits, apart from some Head deposits consisting of silt, sand and gravel, along the southwest to northwest site boundary.

II. Published Information on Soil

- 3.4.3 The National Soil Map²² reports that most of the agricultural land in the Study Area is covered by soils in the Wickham 1 Association. As described by the Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW)²³, this association, which is confined to Kent, Surrey and Sussex, is the most extensive in the Low Weald, where intermittent thin drift rests on Atherfield and Weald Clays. The main soils in the Wickham 1 Association are grey coloured with prominent ochreous mottles in the subsoil. The topsoil is fine silty or fine loamy over clayey subsoil, i.e. typical stagnogleys. They are wet for long periods over the winter (Wetness Class IV), where undrained. Where the outfall/gradient of the land allows, under-drainage can help lower the Wetness Class to III. The Association includes some clayey Denchworth and Dale soils, i.e. pelo-stagnogleys, on moderate slopes, often associated with thin bands of limestone. The Association also includes some Oxpasture soils, which are similar to Wickham but less mottled, i.e. stagnogleyic argillic brown earths.

III. Soil Survey

- 3.4.4 A log of the soil profiles recorded in the Study Area (see **Figure 1**) is given in **Appendix 1**. A description of Soil Pit 1 is given in **Appendix 2**. The detailed soil survey determined two main soil types. The first, consists of a brown (Munsell colour 10YR5/3) heavy clay loam topsoil over light yellowish brown (2.5Y6/3) clay upper subsoil, over light brownish grey (2.5Y6/2) clay subsoil. The soil profiles gleyed in the top 40cm and they are slowly permeable and are waterlogged for long periods in winter (Wetness Class IV).
- 3.4.5 The second soil type consists of a brown (Munsell colour 10YR4/3) medium sandy silt loam topsoil over brown or pale brown (7.5YR5/4 or 10YR6/3) heavy clay loam upper subsoil, over grey (10YR6/2) clay subsoil. The soil profiles gleyed in the top 40cm and they are slowly permeable and suffer seasonally waterlogging (Wetness Class III).

Topsoil Particle Size Analysis

- 3.4.6 As described under 'Methodology' earlier, to validate soil texture recorded on site, a topsoil sample was collected at auger bore locations 4 (Pit 1) and 6, as shown in **Figure 1**. Based on the British Standard Institution particle size grades, the topsoil samples were sent to an accredited laboratory for particle size (texture) analysis. The certificate of analysis is given in **Appendix 3**. The findings of the topsoil texture analysis are shown in Table 3.2 below:

Table 3.2: Topsoil Texture (re Table 10, ALC Guidelines)				
Topsoil Sample Location (See Fig. 1)	% sand 0.063-2.0 mm	% silt 0.002- 0.063 mm	% clay <0.002 mm	ALC Soil Texture Class
4 (Pit 1)	21	45	34	Heavy Clay Loam
6	36	47	17	Medium Sandy Silt Loam

3.5 Interactive Limitations

3.5.1 From the published MAFF ALC information above, it has been determined that the quality of agricultural land within the Study Area is limited by soil wetness, as described below.

I. Soil Wetness

3.5.2 From the ALC Guidelines, a soil wetness limitation exists where *'the soil water regime adversely affects plant growth or imposes restrictions on cultivations or grazing by livestock'*. Agricultural land quality at the Site is limited by soil wetness according to the combination of (i) number of Field Capacity Days (FCD), (ii) topsoil texture, and (iii) soil wetness class, as set out in Table 3.3 below (based on Table 6 *'Grade According to Soil Wetness – Mineral Soils'* in the ALC Guidelines):

Table 3.3: ALC Grade According to Soil Wetness		
Wetness Class	Texture of the Top 25 cm	176-225 Field Capacity Days
I	Sand, Loamy Sand, Sandy Loam, Sandy Silt Loam	1
	Sandy Clay Loam/Medium Silty Clay Loam /Medium Clay Loam*	2
	Heavy Clay Loam**	3a
	Sandy Clay/Silty Clay/Clay	3b
II	Sand, Loamy Sand, Sandy Loam, Sandy Silt Loam	2
	Sandy Clay Loam/Medium Silty Clay Loam /Medium Clay Loam*	3a
	Heavy Clay Loam**	3a
	Sandy Clay/Silty Clay/Clay	3b
III	Sand, Loamy Sand, Sandy Loam, Sandy Silt Loam	3a
	Sandy Clay Loam/Medium Silty Clay Loam /Medium Clay Loam*	3a
	Heavy Clay Loam/Clay**	3b
	Sandy Clay/Silty Clay/Clay	4
IV	Sand, Loamy Sand, Sandy Loam, Sandy Silt Loam	3b
	Sandy Clay Loam/Medium Silty Clay Loam /Medium Clay Loam*	3b
	Heavy Clay Loam**	4
	Sandy Clay/Silty Clay/Clay	4

Key * <27% clay; and ** >27% clay

3.5.3 In a climate area with 179 Field Capacity Days (FCD):

- (i) Soil profiles that are slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged (i.e., Wetness Class III) are limited by soil wetness to Subgrade 3b, where the topsoil is heavy clay loam. One soil profile (i.e., auger bore 7) has medium sandy silt loam topsoil and is limited by soil wetness to Subgrade 3a; and
- (ii) soil profiles that are slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged for long periods in winter (Wetness Class IV) are limited by soil wetness to Subgrade 3b, where the topsoil is medium clay loam or heavy clay loam. One soil profile (i.e., auger bore 6) has medium sandy silt loam and is limited by soil wetness to Subgrade 3b.

3.6 ALC Grading at the Site

3.6.1 A detailed ALC survey has determined that agricultural land within the 7.39ha Study Area is limited by soil wetness to Subgrade 3b in the south and Grade 4 in the north.

3.6.2 As described on page 8 of the ALC Guidelines ‘...a degree of variability in physical characteristics within a discrete area is to be expected. If the area includes a small proportion of land of different quality, the variability can be considered as a function of the mapping scale.’ By convention, two or more contiguous auger bores of the same grade are mapped as a single unit. Where a single auger bore has a different ALC grade from those surrounding it, it is included in the predominant ALC grade. Accordingly, an isolated auger bore (7) that has been determined to be Subgrade 3a has been included in the predominant Subgrade 3b mapping unit in the southern part of the Study Area (see **Appendix 1**).

3.6.3 The land area in each ALC grade in the Site has been measured from **Figure 2**, and the area (ha) and proportion (% of Site) are given in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Agricultural Land Classification – Rectory Road, Ashington, West Sussex		
ALC Grade	Area (Ha)	Area (%)
Grade 1 (Excellent)	0	0
Grade 2 (Very Good)	0	0
Subgrade 3a (Good)	0	0
Subgrade 3b (Moderate)	3.49	47.2
Grade 4 (Poor)	2.90	39.2
Grade 5 (Very Poor)	0	0
Other Land / Non-agricultural	1.00	13.6
Total	7.39	100

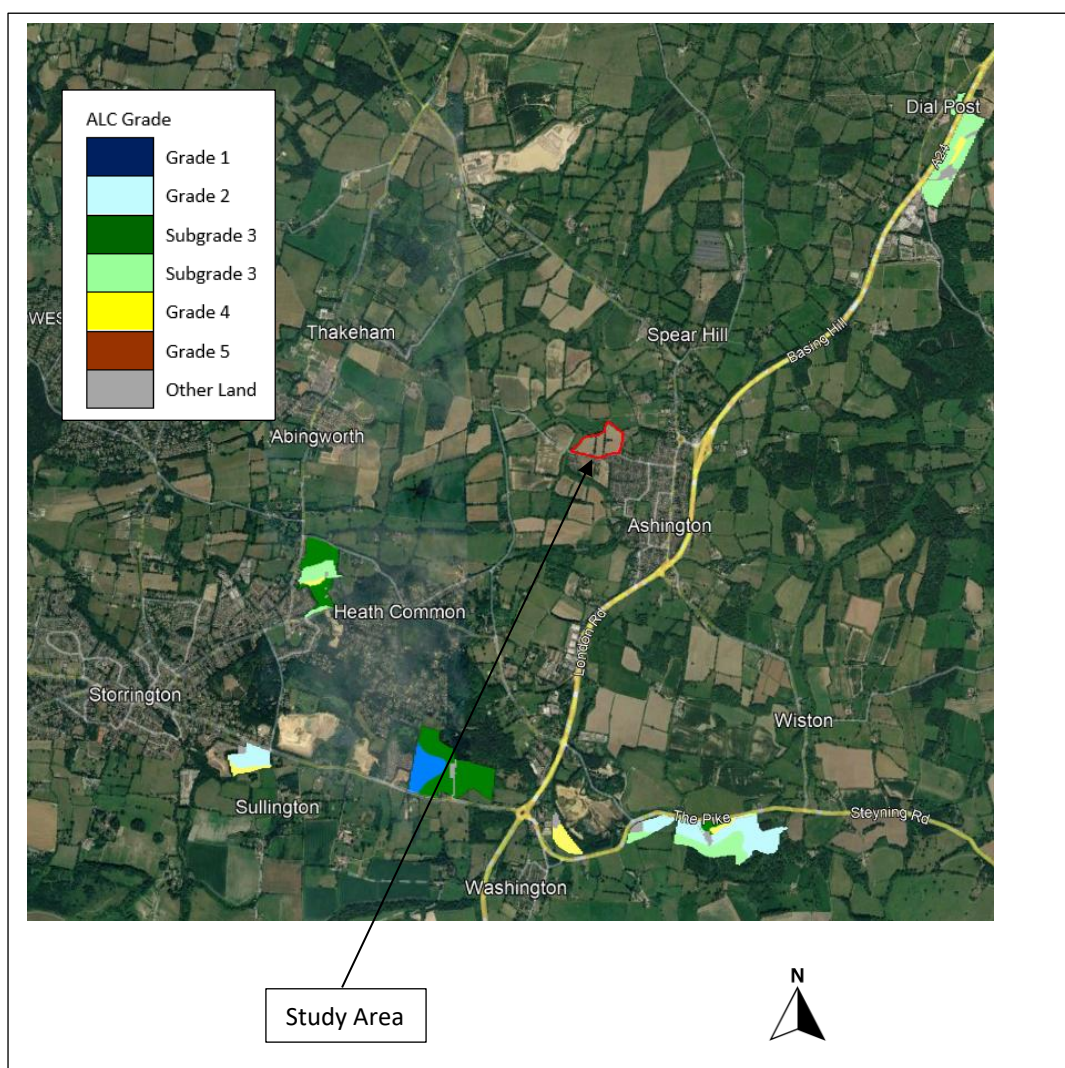
4 ALC AT THE SITE IN A WIDER GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section aims to examine agricultural land quality in the Study Area in a wider geographical context.

4.2 Post-1988 ALC Information

4.2.1 The former MAFF has not carried out a Post 1988 ALC survey covering the Study Area but has surveyed land to the northeast and south of Ashington. An extract from the online²⁴ Post-1988 Agricultural Land Classification map around the Study Area is given below.



4.2.2 As shown on the Post-1988 ALC survey above, MAFF has determined there is a mixture of Grade 1, Grade 2, Subgrade 3a, Subgrade 3b, and some Grade 4 to the south of Ashington. Therefore, the Subgrade 3b and Grade 4 land in the Study Area are among the poorest land available in the Ashington area.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land, a division of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd, commissioned this report to determine the quality of approximately 7.39 hectares (ha) of agricultural land proposed for new residential development off Rectory Lane, on the north-western edge of Ashington, near Horsham, West Sussex (the 'Study Area'), as shown in **Figure 1**. The approximate centre of the Study Area is located at British National Grid (BNG) reference TQ126165. The Study Area is bordered by Rectory Lane to the south, with agricultural land surrounding it to the north, east, and west. This assessment was carried out in accordance with the ALC Guidelines of October 1988, updated in December 2025.
- 5.1.2 A detailed soil survey and ALC of the approximately 7.39ha Study Area was conducted on the 13th of April 2026. The ALC survey involved examining the soil's physical properties at eight sampling points, spaced approximately 1 auger bore per hectare of agricultural land. The soil profile was examined at each sample location to a maximum depth of approximately 1.2 m by hand using a 5cm diameter Dutch (Edleman) soil auger. One soil pit, i.e., Pit 1, near auger bore 4, was excavated by hand with a spade to examine specific soil physical properties, such as stone content and the structural condition of the subsoil, more closely. The locations of the auger bores and the soil pits are shown in **Figure 1**. A log of the soil profiles recorded at each auger bore location within the Study Area is given in **Appendix 1**, and a detailed description of the soil pit is given in **Appendix 2**.
- 5.1.3 British Geological Survey (BGS) information shows the Study Area is mainly underlain by mudstone of the Weald Clay Formation, with a band of sandstone of the Weald Clay Formation along the southern boundary, from east to west. The bedrock is not covered by any superficial deposits, apart from some Head deposits consisting of silt, sand, and gravel along the southwest-to-northwest site boundary.
- 5.1.4 A detailed ALC survey has determined that agricultural land within the 7.3ha Study Area is limited by soil wetness to Subgrade 3b (i.e., 3.49ha or 47.2% of the Study Area), and Grade 4 (i.e., 2.90ha or 39.2% of the Study Area). Approximately 1.00ha or 13.6% of the Study Area is classified as non-agricultural land. Based on detailed Post-1988 ALC surveys, MAFF has determined that there is a mixture of Grade 1, Grade 2, Subgrade 3a, Subgrade 3b, and some Grade 4 to the south of Ashington. Therefore, the Subgrade 3b and Grade 4 land in the Study Area are among the poorest land available in the Ashington area.
- 5.1.5 In conclusion, the proposed development on Subgrade 3b and Grade 4 land in the Study Area would not significantly harm national interests in agricultural land quality terms regarding paragraphs 187 and 188 (and Footnote 65) of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024 (revised February, 2025), which recognises that, where significant development of agricultural land is necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred where reasonably available.

Figures



Key

- Study Area
- Auger Location
- ⊙ Auger and Topsoil Sample Location
- Soil Pit

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Client:

Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land, a division of Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd

Project:

Land North of Rectory Lane, Ashington, West Sussex

Title:

Figure 1: Sample Locations

Scale @ Size:

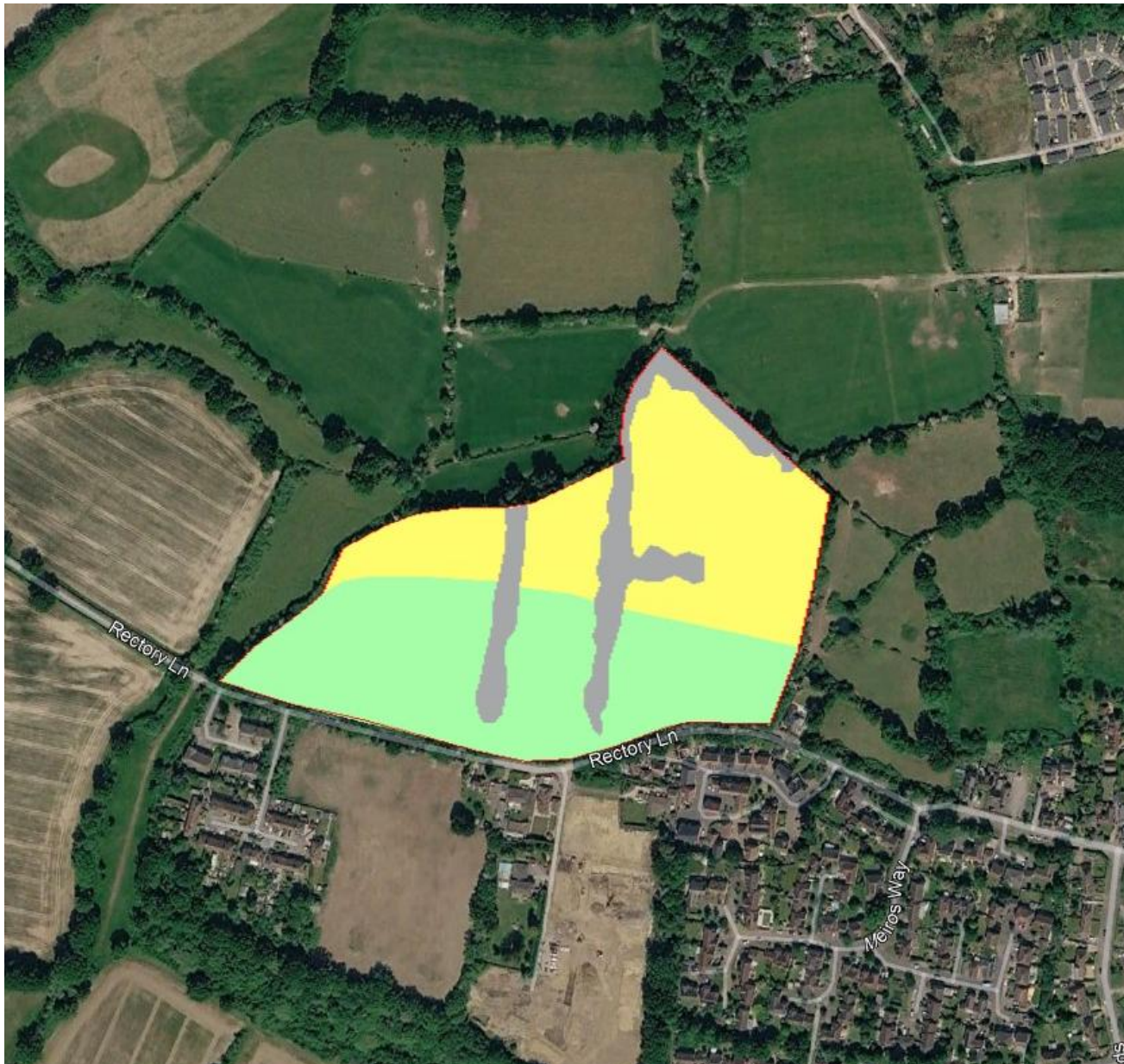
Not to Scale

Date:

16/06/2026

Project No: C1381

Drawing No: RWA/01



Key:

— Study Area

ALC Grade

	Grade 1
	Grade 2
	Subgrade 3a
	Subgrade 3b
	Grade 4
	Grade 5
	Other Land

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Client:

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Project:

Land North of Rectory Lane, Ashington, West Sussex

Title:

Figure 2: Agricultural Land Classification

Scale @ Size:

Not to Scale

Date:

16/06/2026

Project No: C1381

Drawing No: RWA/01

Appendix 1: Soil Profile Logs

Project Number	Project Name	Parcel
C1381	Ashington	

Date of Survey	Survey Type	Surveyor(s)	Company
13/04/2026	Detailed ALC	RTL	Askew Land and Soil

Weather	Relief	Land use and vegetation
Dry, Warm	Gentle north west facing slope	WHT (Wheat)

Grid Reference	Postcode	Altitude	Area
TQ126165	RH20 3GL	29	7.3

MAFF prov	MAFF detailed	Flooding
Grade 3 and Grade 4	None	Flood Zone 1

AAR	AT0	MDw	MDp	FCD	Climate grade
849	1505	107	100	179	1

Bedrock	Superficial deposits
Weald Clay Formation	Head in west

Soil association(s) 1:250,000	Detailed soil information
Wickham 1	1 to 250k only

Revision Number	Date Revised
2	29/05/2026

Point	Grid ref.			Alt (m)	Slope °	Aspect	Land use	Depth (cm)			Matrix		Ochreous Mottles		Grey Mottles		Gley	Texture	Stones - type 1				Stones - type 2				Ped			SUBS STR	CaCO3	Mn C	SPL	Drought			Wet		Final ALC			Grade
	NGR	X	Y					Top	Bottom	Thick	Munsell colour	Form	Munsell colour	Form	Munsell colour	%			> 2cm	> 6cm	Type	%	> 2cm	> 6cm	Type	Strength	Size	Shape	MBw					MBp	Gd	WC	Gw	Limitation 1	Limitation 2	Limitation 3		
1	TQ 12700	16700	512700	116700	21	≤7	Level	CER	0 26 26	26 40 14	10YR5/3 2.5Y6/3 2.5Y6/2	CD - G.7.5YR5/8 MD - 1.7.5YR5/8			No Yes Yes	HCL - Cla C - Clay C - Clay	2 2 2	1 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Moderate Poor	NON - N NON - N NON - N	No No Yes	No 22 6	2 2 2	WC IV 4 4	Wetness				4												
2	TQ 12500	16600	512500	116600	23	≤7	Level	CER	0 28 28	28 120 92	10YR5/3 10YR5/3	MD - 1.7.5YR5/8			No Yes	HCL - Cla C - Clay	3 2	1 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Poor	NON - N NON - N	No No Yes	No 18 3	2 2 2	WC IV 4 4	Wetness				4												
3	TQ 12600	16600	512600	116600	22	≤7	Level	CER	0 26 26	26 40 14	10YR5/3 2.5Y6/3 2.5Y6/2	CD - G.7.5YR5/8 MD - 1.7.5YR5/8			No Yes Yes	HCL - Cla C - Clay C - Clay	2 2 2	1 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Moderate Poor	NON - N NON - N NON - N	No No Yes	No 22 6	2 2 2	WC IV 4 4	Wetness				4												
4	TQ 12700	16600	512700	116600	21	≤7	Level	CER	0 28 28	28 120 92	10YR5/3 10YR5/3	MD - 1.7.5YR5/8			No Yes	HCL - Cla C - Clay	3 2	1 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Poor	NON - N NON - N	No No Yes	No 18 3	2 2 2	WC IV 4 4	Wetness				4												
5	TQ 12800	16600	512800	116600	21	≤7	Level	CER	0 26 26	26 40 14	10YR5/3 2.5Y6/3 2.5Y6/2	CD - G.7.5YR5/8 MD - 1.7.5YR5/8			No Yes Yes	HCL - Cla C - Clay C - Clay	2 2 2	1 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Moderate Poor	NON - N NON - N NON - N	No No Yes	No 22 6	2 2 2	WC IV 4 4	Wetness				4												
6	TQ 12500	16500	512500	116500	26	≤7	Level	CER	0 26 26	26 48 22	10YR5/3 10YR6/1 10YR6/2	MD - 1.7.5YR5/6 MD - 1.7.5YR5/6			No Yes Yes	MSZL - M2 MSZL - M2 C - Clay	2 2 2	1 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Moderate Poor	NON - N NON - N NON - N	No No Yes	No 29 13	2 2 2	WC IV 3b 3b	Wetness				3b												
7	TQ 12600	16500	512600	116500	29	≤7	Level	CER	0 28 50 50 60	28 22 10 10 60	10YR4/3 7.5YR5/4 10YR6/3 10YR6/1	CD - G.7.5YR5/6 CD - G.7.5YR5/6			No Yes Yes Yes	MSZL - M2 HCL - Cla2 HCL - Cla2 HCL - Cla2	2 2 2 2	1 0 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Moderate Moderate Poor	NON - N NON - N NON - N NON - N	No No No Yes	No 31 14	1 1 1 1	WC III 3a 3a 3a	Wetness				3a												
8	TQ 12700	16500	512700	116500	31	≤7	Level	CER	0 28 50 50 60	28 22 10 10 60	10YR4/3 7.5YR5/4 10YR6/3 10YR6/1	CD - G.7.5YR5/6 CD - G.7.5YR5/6			No No Yes Yes	HCL - Cla2 HCL - Cla2 HCL - Cla2 HCL - Cla2	2 2 2 2	1 0 0 0	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched w	Not Applic Moderate Moderate Poor	NON - N NON - N NON - N NON - N	No No No Yes	No 28 11	2 2 2 2	WC III 3b 3b 3b	Wetness				3b												
END																																										

Mottle form

FF - Few Faint
FD - Few Distinct
FP - Few Prominent
CF - Common Faint
CD - Common Distinct
CP - Common Prominent
MF - Many Faint
MD - Many Distinct
MP - Many Prominent
VF - Very many Faint
VD - Very many Distinct
VP - Very many Prominent

Texture

C - Clay
CHK - Chalk
CS - Coarse Sand
CSL - Coarse sandy loam
CSZL - Coarse sandy silt loam
FP - Fibrous and semifibrous peats
FS - Fine Sand
FSL - Fine sandy loam
FSZL - Fine sandy silt loam
HCL - Clay loam (heavy)
HP - Humified peats
HZCL - Silty clay loam (heavy)
IMP - Impenetrable to roots
LCS - Loamy Coarse Sand
LFS - Loamy fine sand
LMS - Loamy medium sand
LP - Loamy peats
MCL - Clay loam (medium)
MS - Medium Sand
MSL - Medium sandy loam
MSZL - Medium sandy silt loam
MZ - Marine Light Silts
MZCL - Silty clay loam (medium)
OC - Organic clays
OL - Organic loams
OS - Organic sands
PL - Peaty loams
PS - Peaty sands
SC - Sandy clay
SCL - Sandy clay loam
SP - Sandy peats
ZC - Silty clay
ZL - Silt loam

Stone Type

CH - Chalk or chalk stones
FSST - Soft fine grained sandstones
GH - Gravel with non-porous (hard) stones
GS - Gravel with porous stones (mainly soft stone types listed above)
HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched with a finger nail)
MSST - Soft, medium or coarse grained sandstones
SI - Soft 'weathered' igneous or metamorphic rocks or stones
SLST - Soft oolitic or dolomitic limestones
ZR - Soft, argillaceous or silty rocks or stones

Ped. Shape

SG - Single grain
GRA - Granular
SAB - Subangular Blocky
AB - Angular Blocky
PRIS - Prismatic
PLAT - Platy
MASS - Massive
NA - N/A

Subsoil Structure Condition

Not Applicable
Good
Moderate
Poor

Soil or Ped. Strength

Loose
Very friable
Friable
Firm
Very firm
Extremely firm
Extremely hard
N/A

Calcareousness

NON - Non-calcareous (<0.5% CaCO₃)
VSC - Very slightly calcareous (0.5 - 1% CaCO₃)
SC - Slightly calcareous (1 - 5% CaCO₃)
MC - Moderately calcareous (5 - 10% CaCO₃)
VC - Very calcareous (>10% CaCO₃)

Ped. Size

VF - Very Fine
F - Fine
M - Medium
C - Coarse
VC - Very Coarse
NA - N/A

Degree of Ped. Development

W - Weak
M - Moderate
S - Strong
NA - Not applicable

Wetness Class

WC I
WC II
WC III
WC IV
WC V
WC VI

ALC Grades

1
2
3a
3b
4
5
Non-Ag

Gley

None
Gley
N/A

Appendix 2:

Soil Pit Description

Soil Survey				Surveyor	RTL
Easting (X)	512700	Northing (Y)	116600	Alt (m)	21
Land Use	CER	Reference	4 (Pit 1)	Slope °	≤7
Bedrock	Weald Clay Formation	Superficial	None recorded	Aspect	Level
				Grid Reference	TQ 12700 16600
				Date	13/04/2026

Layer		Topsoil	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lower Depth (cm)		28	120					
Texture		HCL - Clay loam	C - Clay					
Matrix Colour		10YR5/3	10YR5/3					
Gley (Y/N)		No	Yes					
Ochreous Mottles	Form		MD - Many Distinct					
	Munsell Colour		7.5YR5/8					
Grey Mottles	Form							
	Munsell Colour							
Manganese (Y/N)		No	Yes					
% Stones (type 1)		3	2					
Stones > 2cm		1						
Stones > 6cm		0						
Stone Type		HR - All hard roc	HR - All hard rocks or stones (i.e. those which cannot be scratched with a finger nail)					
% Stones (type 2)								
Stones > 2cm								
Stones > 6cm								
Stone Type								
CaCO3		NON - Non-calca	NON - Non-calcareous (<0.5% CaCO3)					
Shape of Peds.		AB - Angular Blo	PRIS - Prismatic					
Size of Peds.		M - Medium	M - Medium					
Subsoil Structure		Not Applicable	Poor					
Soil or Ped. Strength		Firm	Very firm					
Degree of Ped. Development		M - Moderate	W - Weak					
Slowly Permeable Layer (Y/N)		No	Yes					

MDw	MDp	FCD	Wetness	Class (WC)	WC IV
107	100	179		Grade (WE)	4

Notes	Moisture Balance (MB): Wheat = 18mm; Potatoes = 3mm (Grade 2 according to soil droughtiness)
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Appendix 3:

Topsoil Texture Analysis

ANALYTICAL REPORT

Report Number	49760-26	N717	ROB ASKEW
Date Received	17-APR-2026		RW ASKEW
Date Reported	27-APR-2026		THE OLD STABLES
Project	C1381		UPEXE
Reference	ASHINGTON		EXETER
Order Number	C1381		DEVON EX5 5ND

Laboratory Reference		SOIL792992	SOIL792993								
Sample Reference		AB4	AB6								
Determinand	Unit	SOIL	SOIL								
Sand 2.00-0.063mm	% w/w	21	36								
Silt 0.063-0.002mm	% w/w	45	47								
Clay <0.002mm	% w/w	34	17								
Textural Class **		HCL	SZL								

Notes

Analysis Notes	The sample submitted was of adequate size to complete all analysis requested. The results as reported relate only to the item(s) submitted for testing. The results are presented on a dry matter basis unless otherwise stipulated.
Document Control	This test report shall not be reproduced, except in full, without the written approval of the laboratory.

** Please see the attached document for the definition of textural classes.

Reported by

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ADAS (UK) Textural Class Abbreviations

The texture classes are denoted by the following abbreviations:

Class	Code
Sand	S
Loamy sand	LS
Sandy loam	SL
Sandy Silt loam	SZL
Silt loam	ZL
Sandy clay loam	SCL
Clay loam	CL
Silt clay loam	ZCL
Clay	C
Silty clay	ZC
Sandy clay	SC

For the *sand*, *loamy sand*, *sandy loam* and *sandy silt loam* classes the predominant size of sand fraction may be indicated by the use of prefixes, thus:

vf	Very Fine (more than 2/3's of sand less than 0.106 mm)
f	Fine (more than 2/3's of sand less than 0.212 mm)
c	Coarse (more than 1/3 of sand greater than 0.6 mm)
m	Medium (less than 2/3's fine sand and less than 1/3 coarse sand).

The subdivisions of *clay loam* and *silty clay loam* classes according to clay content are indicated as follows:

M	medium (less than 27% clay)
H	heavy (27-35% clay)

Organic soils i.e. those with an organic matter greater than 10% will be preceded with a letter O.

Peaty soils i.e. those with an organic matter greater than 20% will be preceded with a letter P.

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