

Proposed Health Spa & Holiday Lodge Scheme at Wellsborough Road, Market Bosworth

Agricultural Land Classification Report

Client: Bosworth Lakeside Lodges

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GL2223 A1 Agricultural Land Classification



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following report has been carried out in accordance with the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines for the grading and quality of agricultural land – October 1988 (revised 2015)

1.2 This report considers the principal factors influencing agricultural production that are climate, site and soil. The agricultural landscape classification has been assessed in accordance with the identified grades 1 to 5 as set out below:

- Grade 1 - excellent quality agricultural land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown and commonly includes 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 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 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.
 - o Subgrade 3a - good quality agricultural 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.
 - o Subgrade 3b - moderate quality agricultural 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 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 (e.g. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist 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 with very severe limitations which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.

1.3 This assessment has been guided by the use of agricultural mapping published by Natural England – Agricultural Land Classification Map East Midlands Region (ALC005).



2 THE SITE

- 2.1 The site is located to the east of Coton Lane and south of Wellsborough Road, Market Bosworth comprising a single arable field used for the production of Christmas trees that extends to approximately 4.6 hectares of farmland; see **GL2223 A1**.
- 2.2 The site is broadly triangular in shape, bound to the north and east by native field boundary hedgerows with intermittent tree cover, and to the west by a belt of mature tree cover. Beyond the immediate boundaries of the site to the west is the Bosworth Lakeside Lodges site, to the east the Market Bosworth Sports Club and an open setting of farmland, and to the north the Bosworth Marina.
- 2.3 The site falls from the north-east corner at a high point of just below 92m above ordnance datum (AOD) to a low point of approximately 88m AOD at the southern corner of the site. The site falls at a relatively shallow gradient of approximately 1 in 50. The wider setting of landform rises to the east where the settlement is located in the ridgeline rising above 125m AOD. To the west the landform continues to fall gently to approximately 82m AOD before rising towards Hoo Hills at approximately 109m AOD.
- 2.4 The soils within the site are generally clayed soils with a heavy to medium texture classification.
- 2.5 Soil depths are classified as intermediate to shallow with digging depths of more than half a metre but less than one metre for topsoil and subsoil combined. The dominant grain size is classified as mud. The soil acidity and nutrient levels have not been recorded.

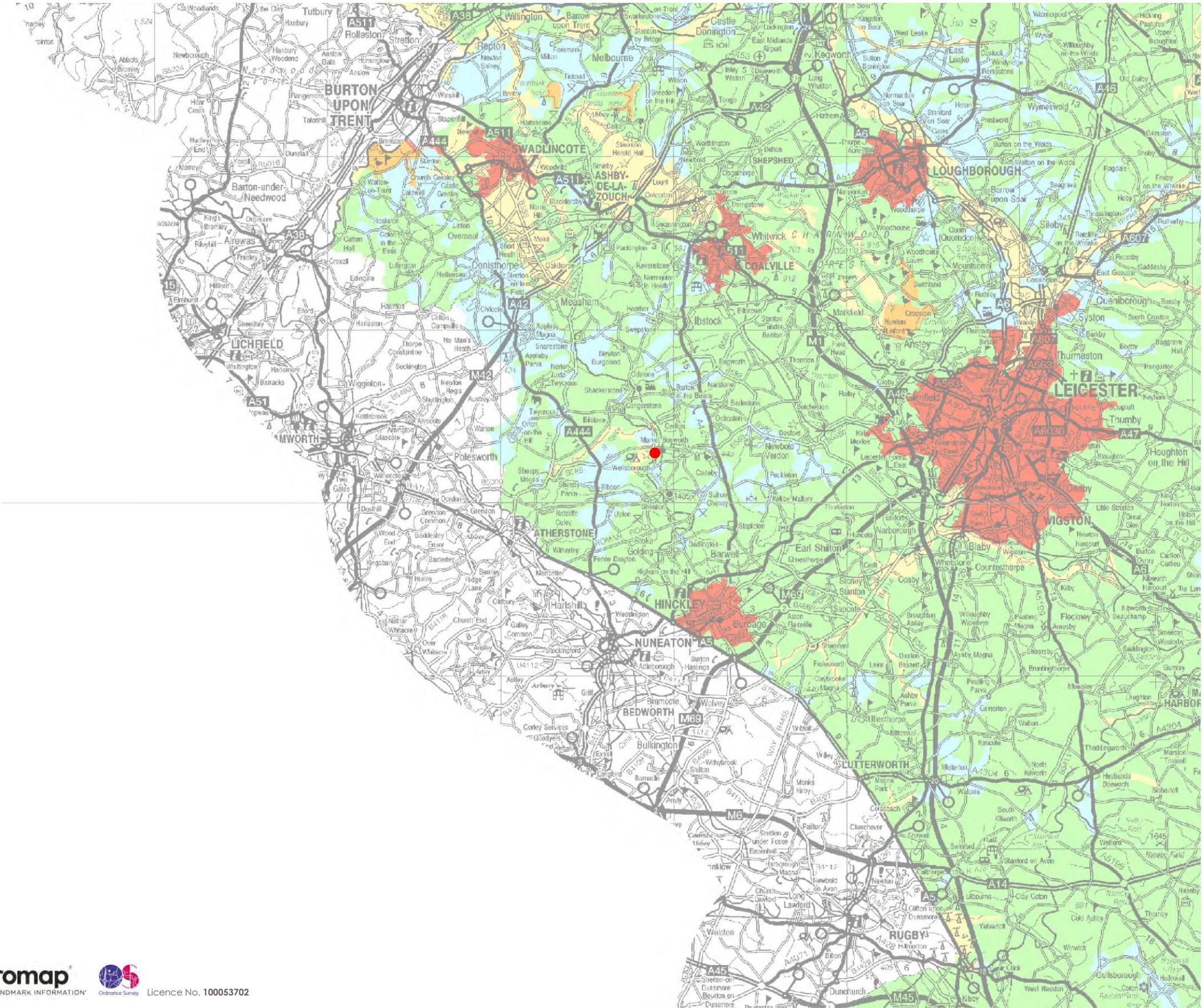


3 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- 3.1 The site identified within an area of mixed Grade 3 and Grade 4 land that is assessed as being good/moderate to poor quality agricultural land; see **GL2223 A1**.
- 3.2 Given the verbal evidence provided by the client of recent crop production yield has been relatively poor hence the client took the decision to move the land into Christmas Tree production. This would suggest the land is at best Grade 3b (moderate quality) 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, or Grade 4 (poor quality) and 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 (e.g. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates, yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.
- 3.3 The land is flat and therefore is not subject to any gradient limitations, and being located in the Midlands is not subject to climatic issues that would affect production.
- 3.4 The land is not subject to flooding.
- 3.5 The site comprises a typical Leicestershire slayed soil that is generally heavy and prone to holding water in autumn/winter months and excessive drying in summer months that result in fracturing. The soil generally has a coarse structure with peds that sell on wetting closing fissures and reducing permeability.
- 3.6 The soil is stoney throughout with stone content increasing with ploughing bridging large stone material to the surface.
- 3.7 Given the character and nature of the soils within the site and ALC mapping confirming the site is located within an area of Grade 3/4 agricultural land classification, it can be concluded that the site is unlikely to meet the definition of the best and most versatile agricultural land.



Figures



Key

- Site boundary
- Grade 2 - Very Good
- Grade 3 Good to Moderate
- Grade 4 - Poor
- Other land primarily in non-agricultural use
- Land predominantly in urban use

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