

Agricultural Land Classification

Land of School Lane

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The site is agricultural land consisting of ground of widely differing topography. The land generally slopes east to west, but the bottom half of the site (east), is flat, with a slight fall towards the south and west. Whilst the top half (west) raises significantly from the northern and western boundaries.

2.0 Discussion

- 2.1 The land is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land, which is defined as “*Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. Where more demand crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grade 1 and 2*”. As the maps below highlights, the majority of Wyre’s agricultural land falls within grades 2-3. Thus, considering that large swales of land immediately to the west of the application site fall within Grade 2 the proposed development land is representative of the lower quality agricultural land present in the local area.

- 2.2 Wyre Council’s Planning Policy ENV3 states that:

The Borough Council will safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land classified by the ministry of agriculture, fisheries and food unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the council that the need for development overrides agricultural considerations. The council will particularly require that:

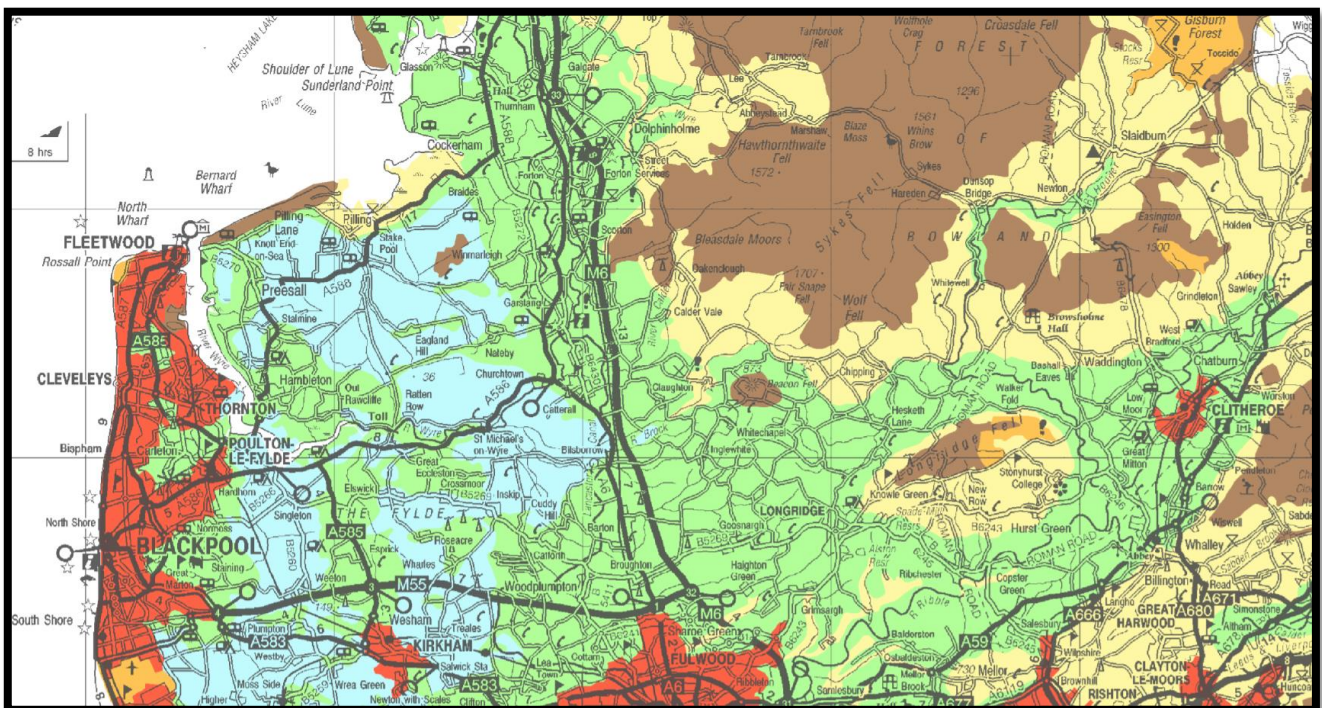
- a) *Any agricultural land taken should be the minimum required to meet essential needs, and*
- b) *Land of a higher quality should not be taken for development where suitable land of a lower quality is available, and*
- c) *The severance and fragmentation of viable farm holdings and areas of uninterrupted farmland should be avoided wherever possible.*

2.3 GA Associates consider that this development site represents relatively poor quality agricultural land, in context of its surroundings, thus the proposal is considered compliant with Policy ENV3.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 The government aims to minimise the loss of the most versatile farmland, however in this instance it is understood that this site constitutes relatively poor-quality land in comparison to other land within the borough. Henceforth, the loss of this site on the edge of the Forton’s settlement boundary is considered acceptable in both national and local policy terms.

North West Region – Agricultural land classification



Grade	Description
1	Excellent
2	Very Good
3	Good to Moderate
4	Poor
5	Very Poor