

## Cerys Jones

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**From:** Matthew Phillips  
**Sent:** 12 March 2015 16:32  
**To:** planning\_admin  
**Subject:** FW: Agricultural Land Classification - Home Farm, Wrexham (P/2014/0905)

Welsh Government response – P/2014/0905

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**From:** Makepeace, Lynda (NR - Environment - LNF) [mailto:Lynda.Makepeace@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK]  
**Sent:** 12 March 2015 15:49  
**To:** Matthew Phillips  
**Cc:** Cooke, James (NR - Environment - LNF); Lane, Jon (SF - NRF - Environment - LNF); Williams, Arwel (NR - Environment - LNF)  
**Subject:** Agricultural Land Classification - Home Farm, Wrexham (P/2014/0905)

Dear Matthew

Thank you for consulting the Welsh Government for technical advice on the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) in accordance with Annex B6 of Technical Advice Note (Wales) 6. This email is confined to matters of technical detail and does not relate to the merits or otherwise of the application.

Document considered:

**ALC report dated November 2014 and prepared by Michael Cunningham Architects Ltd for Soil Environment Services Ltd.**

The Welsh Government have validated the report and make the following observations:

- The survey has been carried out according to the Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF 1988).
- The survey has correctly identified the site to be predominantly non BMV (best and most versatile) due to soil wetness and workability.
- We have reservations over the area mapped as grade 2. The main limitation for this soil type is droughtiness. The report has not used in field assessment for droughtiness and we can find no reference in the report to structural quality for droughtiness calculations and must assume “good” structure has been used. The degree of structural development is critical for determining drought calculations. Our drought calculations grade the area as Subgrade 3a if “moderate” structures are used and grade 2 if “good” structures are used.
- We agree with the areas of BMV and non BMV but have reservations over the ALC grade of the BMV land. Being a single auger boring we would include the area of grade 1 in with the surrounding subgrade 3b. For the grade 2 area our knowledge of the site would indicate a “moderate” structure at best and we would grade the as Subgrade 3a.

As the report has been carried out according to the Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF 1988) our reservations with the report concern issues around best practice.

I appreciate part of this response is of a technical nature and am happy to discuss any aspect with you further.

Kind regards

**Lynda Makepeace**  
Adviser/Ymgynghorydd

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**From:** Matthew Phillips [<mailto:Matthew.Phillips@wrexham.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 26 January 2015 10:53  
**To:** Cooke, James (NR - Environment - LNF)  
**Cc:** Nicola Corbishley  
**Subject:** Agricultural Land Classification

James,

I understand you have been in discussions with my colleague Planning Policy Manager Nicola Corbishley regarding the ALC of a potential LDP housing allocation on the edge of Wrexham.

I am currently dealing with two applications for very large housing developments, one in Rhosrobin (our reference P/2014/0876), the other in Llay (our reference P/2014/0905). Both applications are supported by ALC reports (see attached). In respect of the former the respective report concludes the site should be Grade 3B and in respect of the latter that the majority of the site is found to be Grade 3B with small percentages of Grade 1 and Grade 2 land.

Both sites are quite controversial locally – they are outside of the development boundaries established in the Wrexham UDP and the case of the Rhosrobin site is in a Green Barrier so ordinarily there would be significant policy objections to the scheme irrespective of the ALC but our current lack of a 5 year housing land supply is a factor in favour of both sites and is why the landowners have sought permission now rather than wait for the LDP allocations to be finalised.

I'd be grateful for any comments/advice you have on the two reports.

Regards

**Matthew Phillips**

Planning Officer/Swyddog Cynllunio  
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