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Our Ref: TOHA/21/77104/1/SS  
Your Ref: PO 0000002370

Dear Sirs

**Topsoil Analysis Report: BLS20-P**

We have completed the analysis of the soil sample recently submitted, referenced *BLS20-P*, and have pleasure reporting our findings.

The purpose of the analysis was to determine the suitability of the sample for general landscape purposes (trees, shrubs, amenity grass). In addition, this sample has been assessed to determine its compliance with the requirements of the British Standard for Topsoil (*BS3882:2015 – Specification for Topsoil – Table 1, Multipurpose Topsoil*).

This report presents the results of analysis for the sample submitted to our office, and it should be considered 'indicative' of the topsoil source. The report and results should therefore not be used by third parties as a means of verification or validation testing or waste designation purposes, especially after the topsoil has left the Boughton Loam site.

**SAMPLE EXAMINATION**

The sample was described as a dark brown (Munsell Colour 10YR 3/3), dry, friable, very slightly calcareous SANDY CLAY LOAM with a weakly developed, very fine to fine granular structure\*. The sample was slightly stony and contained a moderate proportion of organic fines and occasional woody fragments. No unusual odours, deleterious materials, roots or rhizomes of pernicious weeds were observed.

\*This appraisal of soil structure was made from examination of a disturbed sample(s). Structure is a key soil characteristic that may only be accurately assessed by examination in an in-situ state.

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## **ANALYTICAL SCHEDULE**

The sample was submitted to a UKAS and MCERTS accredited laboratory for a range of physical and chemical tests to confirm the composition and fertility of the soil, and the concentration of selected potential contaminants. The following parameters were determined:

- particle size analysis (sand, silt, clay);
- stone content (2-20mm, 20-50mm, >50mm);
- pH and electrical conductivity values;
- exchangeable sodium percentage;
- major plant nutrients (N, P, K, Mg);
- organic matter content;
- C:N ratio;
- heavy metals (As, B, Cd, Cr, Cu, Pb, Hg, Ni, Se, Zn);
- total cyanide and total (mono) phenols;
- speciated PAHs (US EPA16 suite);
- aromatic and aliphatic TPH (C5-C35 banding);
- benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene (BTEX).

The results are presented on the attached Certificate of Analysis and an interpretation of the results is given below.

## **RESULTS OF ANALYSIS**

### **Particle Size Analysis and Stone Content**

The sample fell into the *sandy clay loam* texture class, which is usually considered suitable for general landscape applications provided the soil's physical condition is maintained.

Such soils usually have good water and nutrient retention capacities, but they are also prone to structural degradation and compaction during handling, and especially when plastic in consistency. Any damage to the structural condition of this soil is likely to reduce its drainage and aeration properties.

The stone content of the sample was low and, as such, stones should not restrict the use of the soil for general landscape purposes.

### **pH and Electrical Conductivity Values**

The sample was slightly alkaline in reaction (pH 7.3), with a pH value that would be suitable for general landscape purposes.

The electrical conductivity (salinity) value (water extract) was low, which indicates that soluble salts should not be present at levels that would be harmful to plants.

The electrical conductivity value by CaSO<sub>4</sub> extract (*BS3882* requirement) fell below the maximum specified value (3300 µS/cm) given in *BS3882:2015 – Table 1*.

### **Organic Matter and Fertility Status**

The sample was adequate to well-supplied with organic matter and all major plant nutrients.

The C:N ratio of the sample was acceptable for general landscape purposes.

### **Potential Contaminants**

With reference to *BS3882:2015 - Table 1: Notes 3 and 4*, there is a recommendation to confirm levels of potential contaminants in relation to the topsoil's proposed end use. This includes human health, environmental protection and metals considered toxic to plants. In the absence of site-specific assessment criteria, the concentrations that affect human health have been compared with the *residential with home grown produce* land use in the Suitable For Use Levels (S4ULs) presented in *The LQM/CIEH S4ULs for Human Health Risk Assessment* (2015) and the DEFRA SP1010: *Development of Category 4 Screening Levels (C4SLs) for Assessment of Land Affected by Contamination – Policy Companion Document* (2014).

Of the potential contaminants determined, none exceeded their respective guideline values.

## **Phytotoxic Contaminants**

Of the phytotoxic (toxic to plants) contaminants determined (copper, nickel, zinc), none was found at levels that exceeded the maximum permissible levels specified in *BS3882:2015 – Table 1*.

## **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the analysis was to determine the suitability of the topsoil sample for general landscape purposes. The analysis has also been undertaken to determine the sample's compliance with the requirements of the British Standard for Topsoil (*BS3882:2015 – Specification for Topsoil – Table 1, Multipurpose Topsoil*).

From the soil examination and subsequent laboratory analysis, the sample was described as a slightly alkaline, non-saline, very slightly calcareous sandy clay loam, with a weakly developed structure and low stone content. The sample contained sufficient reserves of organic matter and all major plant nutrients. Of the potential contaminants determined, none exceeded their respective guideline values.

Based on our findings, the topsoil represented by this sample would be considered suitable for general landscape purposes (trees, shrubs, amenity grass (low footfall only)), provided the physical condition of the soil is satisfactory.

The organic matter content of the topsoil would probably be considered acceptable for lower foot traffic amenity grass areas (e.g. road verges). However, the high organic matter content of the topsoil may lead to variable settlement and a soft, uneven surface if used for higher performance amenity grass establishment, e.g. sports pitches or formal lawns.

The topsoil was also fully compliant with the requirements of the British Standard for Topsoil (*BS3882:2015 – Specification for Topsoil - Table 1, Multipurpose Topsoil*).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Soil Handling Recommendations**

It is important to maintain the physical condition of the soil and avoid structural damage during all phases of soil handling (e.g. stockpiling, respreading, cultivating, planting, seeding or turfing). As a consequence, soil handling operations should be carried out when soil is reasonably dry and non-plastic (friable) in consistency.

It is important to ensure that the soil is not unnecessarily compacted by trampling or trafficking by site machinery, and soil handling should be stopped during and after heavy rainfall and not continued until the soil is friable in consistency. If the soil is structurally damaged and compacted at any stage during the course of soiling or landscaping works, it should be cultivated appropriately to relieve the compaction and to restore the soil's structure prior to any planting, turfing or seeding.

Further details on soil handling are provided in Annex A of *BS3882:2015*.

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We hope this report meets with your approval and provides the necessary information. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned if we can be of further assistance.

Yours faithfully



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For & on behalf of Tim O'Hare Associates LLP

