

LAND CHARACTERISTICS OF URBANISED AREAS AND CROPPING PATTERN CHANGES IN THE UNION TERRITORY OF DELHI

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ABSTRACT

About 31% of the total 357 villages in the Union Territory of Delhi have become urbanized during 1951-1981. The lands in these villages were prime agricultural lands belonging to land capability classes II and III.

Area earlier used for growing gram and barley is now being devoted to growing wheat. Horticultural crops are getting higher priority and large area is being devoted to vegetables and flowers commensurate with the increasing needs of the urban areas.

INTRODUCTION

Large tracts of prime agricultural lands are being put to irreversible non-agricultural uses very rapidly all over the country. In the Union Territory of Delhi also, increasing conflicts over land use are an indication of widespread concern with environmental quality and uneasiness over urban sprawl.

The Union Territory of Delhi, a semi-arid zone, lies between latitudes 28°24'17" N and 28°53'00" N and longitudes 76°50'24" E and 77°20'37" E. It occupies an area of about 148,000 ha, of which 46,604 ha are urban. The Territory has a total of 357 villages, out of which 111 villages are urbanised and the land is put in for non-agricultural uses. Land characteristics of the recently urbanised area and overall cropping patterns of the Territory have been studied.

Peripheral Growth

The growth of Delhi from 1951 to 1981 (Fig. 1) shows that during the period 1951-61 the largest amount of agricultural area was brought under urbanisation. This spread occurred uniformly all around the existing urban area. By 1971 substantial growth had taken place towards south and south-west of the 1961 urban area. Comparatively the growth towards the north-west and east was much less. By 1981 the growth was concentrated towards the north-west and south of the urban area where presently large residential complexes of Rohini and Mehrauli are being built. Maps on soil,

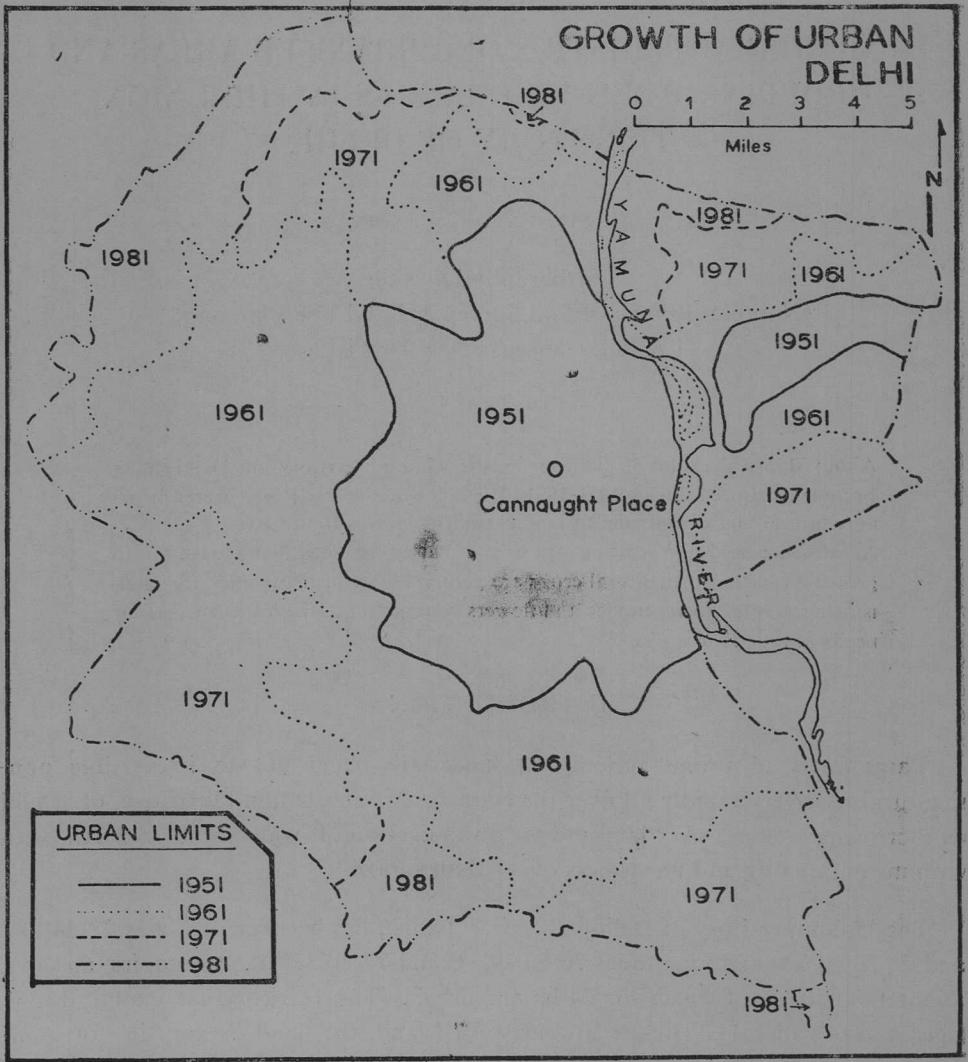


Fig. 1

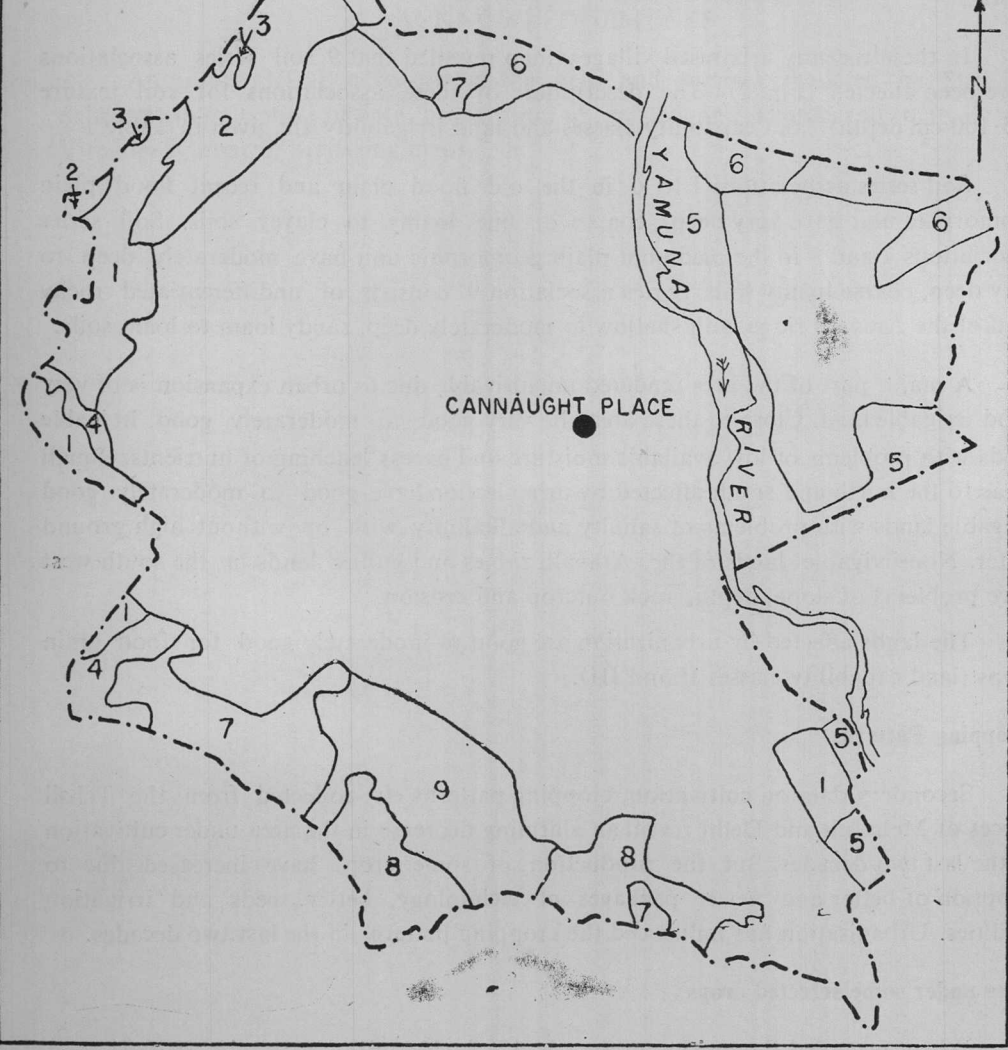
Table 1. Soil, land capability and land irrigability classes of urbanised villages of Delhi

S.No.	Soil Series association	Texture	Land Capability	Land Irrigability
1	Kakra Holambi	Sandy loam Loam to silt loam	Very good to good land with low available moisture	Very good to moderately good irrigable land
2	Holambi	Loam to silt loam	Very good to good lands with low available moisture	Very good irrigable land
	Nabha	Loam to silt clay loam	Good land with erosion	
3	Daryapur	Loam to silt loam/ clay loam	Very good to good land with low available moisture	—Do—
	Hissar	Loam to silt clay loam		
4	Daryapur	Loam to silt loam/ clay loam	Very good land with low available moisture	—Do—
	Hamidpur	Sandy loam to loam	Moderately good land with salinity & or alkalinity	
5	Hamidpur	Sandy loam to loam	Very good land with low available moisture	Very good to moderately good irrigable land
	Palla	Sandy loam over sand	Good lands with low available moisture, and erosion	
6	Hiranki	Clay loam/loam over sandy loam/loamy sand	Very good to good lands with low available moisture	Good to moderately good irrigable land

S.No.	Soil, Series association	Texture	Land Capability	Land Irrigability
	Palla	Sandy loam over sand	Moderately good land with salinity & or alkalinity	
	Wazirabad	Very highly variable stratified texture		
7	Mehrauli	Sandy loam to loam	Good land with erosion	Very good irrigable land
	Garhi	Loam to silt loam or clay loam		
8	Palam	Sandy loam to loam	Good land with erosion	Very good to moderately good irrigable land
	Undifferentiate	Sandy loam to loam	Good and moderately good lands with erosion and shallow depth	
9	Undifferentiated Rocky land	Sandy loam to loam Sandy loam to loam	Moderately good and poor land with erosion and shallow depth	Non-irrigable

Fig. 2

SOIL MAP OF URBANISED VILLAGES OF DELHI TERRITORY



Soil Series association

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Kakra
Holambi | 4. Daryapur
Hamidpur | 7. Mehrauli
Garhi |
| 2. Holambi
Nabha | 5. Hamidpur
Palla | 8. Palam
Undifferentiated |
| 3. Daryapur
Hissar | 6. Hiranki
Palla
Wazirabad | 9. Undifferentiated
Rocky land |