AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN

SITE 17 CULCHETH

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN SITE 17 CULCHETH

1 SUMMARY

1.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Survey for this site shows that the following proportions of ALC grades are present:

Grade/Subgrade	ha	% of site
3a	4.5	20
3b	17.7	75
Other land	1.3	5

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a is soil wetness.

1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is soil wetness.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in March 1996. An Agricultural Land Classification survey was undertaken according to the guidelines laid down in the "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the Quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

2.2 The 23.5 ha site is situated to the north of Culcheth, 2 km north of Junction 11 of the M62.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Warrington Local Plan.

2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The attached map is only accurate at the base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.

2.5 At the time of the survey the site was in winter cereals, set-aside and part had been ploughed.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ654963) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	891
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1423

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	211
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	86
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	72

4 SITE

4.1 Three site factors of gradient, micro relief and flooding are considered when classifying land.

4.2 These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of Bunter Sandstone overlaid by glacial sand and gravel - British Geological Survey Sheet 84 Wigan 1 inch.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which either have a sandy clay loam or clay loam texture overlying clay.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 4.5 ha (20%) of the survey area and is found over a small central area and along the eastern edge.

6.1.1 These soils have a sandy clay loam texture overlying sandy clay loam occasionally sandy loam subsoils. Observations of gleying place these soils in Wetness Class III.

6.1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 17.7 ha (75%) of the survey area and is found mainly to the south of the motorway.

6.2.1 The soil has either a sandy to clay loam or clay loam texture over clay. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.

6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

6.3 Other land covering 1.3 ha (5%) includes agricultural buildings located centrally with hard access through the site. A strip of land to the east of the site consists of scrub, trees and a brook running south to north.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	4.5	20	20
3b	17.7	75	80
Other land	1.3	5	
Total	**23.5**	**100**	**100**