

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
ST HELENS UDP
ROOKERY LANE, RAINFORD
(SITE 18)**

NL

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
ST HELENS UDP
ROOKERY LANE, RAINFORD (SITE 18)**

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
2	12.3	37
3a	16.3	49
5	1.2	4
Other land		
Agricultural buildings	0.7	7
Woodland	2.2	2
Urban	0.4	1

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a is soil droughtiness. Profiles of Grade 2 quality are occasionally limited by soil wetness.
- 1.3 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Grade 5 are soil depth, soil wetness and soil droughtiness due to disturbance.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in February 1995. 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 33.1 ha site is situated to the south east of Rainford, near St Helens. The land immediately to the west of the site is predominantly in urban use; land to the south east is in non-agricultural use and the remainder is in agricultural use.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the St Helens UDP.
- 2.4 At the request of the Land Use Planning Unit of MAFF 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 under grass, cereals and fodder crops.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SD 485000) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	913
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1406

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	214
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	78
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	63

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 Triassic Bunter Sandstone and Carboniferous Lower Coal Measures - British Geological Survey Sheet 84 Wigan 63360. This is overlain with deposits of Quaternary boulder clay and sand.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which have a sandy loam or loamy sand texture.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

- 6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 12.3 ha (37%) of the survey area and is found in the east and centre of the site.**
 - 6.1.1 These soils typically have a sandy loam or loamy sand texture overlying loamy sand and sand to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. Occasionally there may be loamy sand or clay loam in the lower subsoil. The moisture balance places these soils into Grade 2.**
 - 6.1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness. There are isolated profiles that are limited by soil wetness.**

- 6.2 Subgrade 3a - occupies 16.3 ha (49%) of the survey area and is found mainly to the south of the motorway.**
 - 6.2.1 The soil has a sandy loam or loamy sand texture over loamy sand and sand to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. The moisture balance places these soils into Subgrade 3a. There are occasional auger borings of Grade 2 quality within this, but they are of too small an area to map separately at this scale.**
 - 6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness.**

- 6.3 Grade 5 - occupies 1.2 ha (4%) of the survey area and is found in the centre of the site.**
 - 6.3.1 The soil typically has a sandy loam texture over rubble from the foundations to the sewage works. Occasionally there is no soil present. This area has been extensively disturbed.**
 - 6.3.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land is soil depth, soil wetness and soil droughtiness.**

- 6.4 Other land includes agricultural buildings which occupy 0.7 ha (2%) of the survey area and are found at Rookery Farm; woodland - occupying 2.2 ha (7%) of the survey area at Dial House and Mill Plantation and urban covering 0.4 ha (1%) of the survey area as housing, railway (dismantled) and tracks.**

6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	12.3	37	41
3a	16.3	49	55
5	1.2	4	4
Other land			
Agricultural Buildings	0.7	7	-
Woodland	2.2	2	-
Urban	0.4	1	-
Totals	33.1	100	100