AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN: SITE 19 CULCHETH

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN: SITE 19 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	24.5	62
3b	4.4	11
Other land	1.0	3
Not surveyed	9.5	24

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in 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 April 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 39.4 ha site is situated to the east of Culcheth. The land immediately to the north, south and west of the site is predominantly in urban use. Land immediately to the east and south east is predominantly in agricultural use.

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 under a cereal crop.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ665952) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	889
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1422

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 - British Geological Survey Sheet 84 Wigan 1 Inch. This is overlain with deposits of Laminated and Boulder Clay.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which have a clay loam texture.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 24.5 ha (62%) of the survey area and is found over the majority of the site.

6.1.1 The soil has clay loam texture over sandy clay loam and clay to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer 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 4.4 ha (11%) of the survey area and is found in two areas, one in the centre of the site and the other in the west, to the north of the playing field.

6.2.1 The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying clay to depth. 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 occupies 1.0 ha (3%) of the survey area and includes agricultural buildings and two ponds.

6.4 9.5 ha (24%) of the site was not surveyed due to access being denied.

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	24.5	62	85
3b	4.4	11	15
Other land	1.0	3	
Not surveyed	9.5	24	
Totals	**39.4**	**100**	**100**