

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

LAND EAST OF A34, 0921/01-02

STAFFORD LOCAL PLAN

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
LAND EAST OF A34, 0921/01-02
STAFFORD LOCAL PLAN**

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	34.3	55.2
3b	24.4	39.2
4	3.0	4.8
Other land		
Open water	0.5	0.8

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of the land on this site is soil wetness.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in October 1994. 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 62.2 ha site is situated to the north of Stafford. It is bounded to the west by the A34 Stone Road, to the south by the A513 and to the east by Marston Lane. The land to the north of the site is in agricultural use.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Stafford Local Plan.
- 2.4 At the request of the Land Use Planning Unit of MAFF this was a detailed grid survey at 1: 10 000 scale 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 survey the land had been ploughed following the harvesting of cereals.

3. CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 915265):

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	752
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1355

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	181
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	90
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	77

4. SITE

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

4.2 Gradient is a limitation over parts of the site, mostly in the east. Gradients are greater than 7° and limit the land to Subgrade 3b. Microrelief is a limitation where old marl pits occur and limit the land to Grade 4. Flooding is not a limitation on this site.

5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The geology of the area is comprised of Triassic Keuper Marl (British Geological Survey, Sheet 139 Stafford, 1: 50 000).

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which consist of clay loams over clay.

6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a occupies 34.3 ha (55.2 %) of the survey area.

6.1.1 These soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay loam and clay. The clay forms a slowly permeable layer at about 55 cm, placing these soils into Wetness Class III.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b occupies 24.4 ha (39.2 %) of the survey area.

6.2.1 These soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay. The clay forms a slowly permeable layer within 40 cm of the surface placing these soils into Wetness Class IV.

6.2.2 Wetness is the main limitation to the agricultural use of land in this grade.

6.3 Grade 4 occupies 3.0 ha (4.8 %) of the survey area and occurs along the north western edge, in the north eastern corner and in the south eastern corner of the site.

6.3.1 These soils typically consist of a clay loam texture over clay. The clay loam is gleyed and the clay forms a slowly permeable layer at about 35 cm, placing these soils into Wetness Class IV.

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

6.4 Other land on the site comprises a number of small ponds occupying 0.5 ha (0.8 %) of the survey area.

6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Subgrade	Area (Ha)	% of survey area	% of agricultural land
3a	34.3	55.2	55.6
3b	24.4	39.2	39.5
4	3.0	4.8	4.9
Other land			
Open water	0.5	0.8	
Totals	62.2	100.0	100.0