AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

ST HELENS UDP

MILL LANE, RAINHILL (SITE 19)

M J W Wood
Resource Planning Team
ADAS Statutory Group
WOLVERHAMPTON

ADAS Ref: 25/RPT/0689
Job No: 112/94
MAFF Ref: EL 25 / 10752

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR MILL LANE, RAINHILL - ST HELENS UDP (SITE 19)

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	0.9	3
3b	25.7	93
Other Land		
Urban	0.6	2
Open Water	0.5	2

1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a are soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

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 January 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 27.7 ha site is situated to the north west of Junction 7 on the M62 motorway. The land immediately to the south and west of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land immediately to the north and east of the site is occupied by housing and non agricultural development.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with St Helens UDP.

2.4 At the request of the MAFF Land Use Planning Unit 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 the survey the site was under cereals.

3. CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 498 898):

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	866
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1393

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	202
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	82
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	67

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 this land.

5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The geology of the area is comprised of Bunter Pebble Beds (British Geological Survey, Sheet 97 Runcorn 1 : 63 360). This is overlain with deposits of boulder clay.

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

6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 0.9 ha (3 %) of the survey area and is found in the south of the site.

6.1.1 These soils typically have a medium clay loam texture overlying sandy clay loam (with occasional sandy loam or loamy sand lenses) to depth, with few stones within the profile. Observations of gleying place these soils in to Wetness Class III.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 25.7 ha (93 %) of the survey area and is found over the majority of the site.

6.2.1 These soils typically have a medium clay loam or sandy clay loam texture overlying sandy clay loam or heavy clay loam over clay. There are few or no stones throughout the profile.

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

6.3 Other land includes urban which occupies 0.6 ha (2 %) of the survey area as a trackway and open water which occupies 0.5 ha (2 %) of the survey area as ponds.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Subgrade	Area (Ha)	% of survey area	% of agricultural land
3a	0.9	3	3
3b	25.7	93	97
Other Land			
Urban	0.6	2	-
Open Water	0.5	2	
Totals	27.7	100	100