AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
WINWICK MSA - JUNCTION 22 M6

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR WINWICK MSA - JUNCTION 22 M6

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	5.4	50
3b	4.7	43
Other land		
Urban	0.8	7

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 December 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 10.9 hectares site is situated to the west of the M6 at Junction 22 and north east of Winwick. The land immediately to the north of the site is in agricultural use, the site is bounded on the east by the M6, by the A49 road on the south side and a minor road on the west.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with a motorway service area proposal.

2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 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 stubble and winter cereals.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 610 939):

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	879
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1417

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	207
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	85
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	71

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 Pebble Beds - British Geological Survey Sheet 97 Runcorn 1 Inch. This is overlain by deposits of 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 5.4 ha (50%) of the survey area and is found mainly in the north and south parts of the site.

6.1.1 The soil has a medium clay loam texture overlying heavy clay loam and clay below 45 cm. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III. There are occasional profiles where the medium clay loam passes on to loamy sand and sand and are of Grade 2 quality, but cover too small an area to map at this scale.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 4.7 ha (43%) of the survey area and is found in the centre of the site.

6.2.1 The soil typically has a medium clay loam texture overlying clay by 38 cms. 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 within the application area includes A49 road and this is classified as urban.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	5.4	50	53
3b	4.7	43	47
Other land			
Urban	0.8	7	
Totals	**10.9**	**100**	**100**