AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

OSWESTRY LOCAL PLAN
MAESBURY MARSH

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR MAESBURY MARSH OSWESTRY 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	3.9	100

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 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 3.9 ha site is situated to the south of Oswestry, on the northern edge of the village of Maesbury Marsh. The land to the north and west of the site is in agricultural use.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Oswestry 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 sown with winter wheat.

3. CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 310252):

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	776
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1397

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	184
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	94
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	82

4. SITE

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

4.2 These factors are not a limitation to the agricultural use of the land on this site.

5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The geology of the area is comprised of Lower Mottled Sandstone overlain by Glacial Flood Gravels, (British Geological Survey, Sheet 137 Oswestry, 1: 50 000).

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

6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a occupies 3.9 ha (100 %) of the survey area.

6.1.1 The soil typically has 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.

6.1.3 Within the site there are pockets of peat soils. These soils typically have an organic clay loam texture over peat and have been placed into Wetness Class III.

6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Subgrade	Area (Ha)	% of survey area	% of agricultural land
3a	3.9	100	100
Totals	3.9	100	100