

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION  
STAFFORD LOCAL PLAN  
CASTLEFIELDS**

**Resource Planning Team  
ADAS Statutory Group  
Wolverhampton**

**Job No: 087/93  
MAFF Ref: EL37/00084**

## AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR STAFFORD LOCAL PLAN, CASTLEFIELDS

### 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	Area (ha)	% of site
2	18.4	18.7
3a	40.4	41.1
3b	22.9	23.3
4	4.1	4.2
Other land		
Non agricultural	6.8	7.0
Open water	0.3	0.3
Urban	4.7	4.8

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

### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in December 1993. An ALC 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 98.2 ha site is situated to the west of Stafford and is bounded to the west by the M6 motorway. The land is bisected by a disused railway.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Stafford Local Plan.
- 2.4 At the request of MAFF the survey was at a scale of 1:10,000 with a minimum auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The attached map is only accurate at a base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.
- 2.5 At the time of survey the land was under permanent grass, winter cereals and forage crops. An area of the northern portion of the site was in non-agricultural use. This included a football ground but also a significant area of rank grassland. This grassland was surveyed and the ALC grade has been mapped.

### **3. CLIMATE**

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site:

Average Annual Rainfall	743 mm
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June	1377 day °C

3.21 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant climatic data for agricultural land classification are:

Field Capacity Days	178 days
Moisture Deficit Wheat	93 mm
Moisture Deficit Potatoes	80 mm

### **4. SITE**

4.1 When classifying land three site factors are taken into consideration; gradient, micro-relief and flooding.

4.2 Micro-relief is considered to be a limitation in the north of the site where the drains have created a series of terraces. Flooding is considered to be a limitation on low lying ground adjacent to the drains, and gradient is a limitation on the slopes adjacent to Aston Bank Farm.

### **5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

5.1 The solid geology of the area consists of Keuper Marl overlain by Fluvio-Glacial Gravel and Alluvium, (British Geological Survey Sheet 139, 1 inch).

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which consist predominantly of clay loam textured topsoils over clay and sandy loam textured topsoils over loamy sand and sand.

### **6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION**

6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 18.4 ha (18.7%) of the survey area and occurs as a broad band across the centre of the site.

6.1.1 The soils in this grade typically have clay loam textures over sandy loam or sandy clay loam.

6.1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of this land are soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

6.2 Subgrade 3a - occupies 40.4 ha (41.1%) of the survey area and occurs predominantly as a broad band across the south of the site with smaller areas occurring in the east and the north.

- 6.2.1 These soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay loam or clay.
- 6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.
- 6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 22.9 ha (23.3%) of the survey area and occurs as a continuous area in the north of the site and a number of areas in the south.
- 6.3.1 These soils typically have a clay loam texture overlying clay.
- 6.3.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.
- 6.4 Grade 4 - occupies 4.1 ha (4.2%) of the survey area and is found in one area just south of the disused railway.
- 6.4.1 These soils typically have a clay loam or peaty loam texture over peaty loam or peaty sand.
- 6.4.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of the land in this grade is soil wetness.
- 6.5 Other land includes urban land occupying 4.7 ha (4.8%) comprising dwellings, the disused railway and farm roads, and non-agricultural land occupying 6.8 ha (7.0%) and comprising rank grassland and a football pitch.

**6.6 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES**

<b>Grade/Sub grade</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>% of Survey Area</b>	<b>% of Agricultural land</b>
2	18.4	18.73	21.4
3a	40.4	41.1	47.1
3b	22.9	23.3	26.7
4	4.1	4.2	4.8
Other land			
Urban	4.7	4.8	
Non agricultural	6.8	7.0	
Agricultural Buildings	0.6	0.6	
Open water	0.3	0.3	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>98.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Resource Planning Team  
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Wolverhampton  
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