AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
CHESHIRE MINERALS PLAN SITE 16: ADLINGTON
(CONSTRUCTION SAND)

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR CHESHIRE MINERALS PLAN SITE 16: (CONSTRUCTION SAND)

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 surveyed area of site
2	5.6	13.9
3a	18.7	46.5
3b	15.9	39.6

1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land on this site are climate, soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in December 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 40.2 hectare site is situated to the west of Adlington in Cheshire. The land to the south, north and east of the site is in agricultural use, and the land to the west is woodland with Woodford Aerodrome beyond.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Cheshire Minerals Plan.

2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request 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 grass.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 903814) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	855	860
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1353	1348

3.2 Two climatic grades exist on this site. Climate is limited to grade 2 in the east of the site, and grade 1 over the remainder of the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	210
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	79
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	63

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 comprises Upper Mottled Sandstone and Pebble Beds (British Geological Survey Sheet 98 Stockport 1 Inch to 1 mile). This is overlain by Glacial Sand and Gravel, Fluvio-glacial Gravel and Boulder Clay.

5.2 The soils developed from these parent materials vary between sandy soils in the east of the site, and a variety of sandy, peaty and clay soils over the remainder of the site.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 5.6 ha (13.9 %) of the survey area.

6.1.1 The soils have a sandy loam or sandy clay loam topsoil texture, overlying loamy medium sand or sand to depth. This area includes soils of grade 1 quality, but they occur within an area with a climatic limitation, which limits them to grade 2. Other soils have a droughtiness limitation.

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

6.2 Grade 3a - occupies 18.7 ha (46.5 %) of the survey area. There are four blocks of subgrade 3a land on this site.

6.2.1 In the north eastern block, the soils have a variable topsoil texture, ranging from sandy clay loam and silty clay loam to organic medium clay loam. These overlie an equally wide range of subsoils including peaty loam, loamy medium sand, medium sand, sandy clay loam and clay.

6.2.2 Isolated borings of grade 2 occur, but these areas are too small to map separately.

6.2.3 In the north western block, the topsoils are typically organic medium clay loams, overlying a range of subsoils including peaty loam, clay, loamy medium sand and medium sand.

6.2.4 In the centre of the site, there is a small block where soils are typically sandy clay loam, overlying clay loams or sandy loams.

6.2.5 In the south east of the site there is a small block where sandy clay loams overlie loamy medium sands with medium sands at depth.

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

6.3 Grade 3b - Occupies 15.9 ha (39.6 %) of the survey area.

6.3.1 The topsoils are typically sandy clay loams or medium clay loams, overlying clay loams and clays, often becoming more sandy with depth. These soils are gleyed with slowly permeable layers.

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

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Surveyed Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	5.6	13.9	13.9
3a	18.7	46.5	46.5
3b	15.9	39.6	39.6
Totals	**40.2**	**100.0**	**100.0**