AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

ST HELENS UDP

ELMS FARM, NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS (SITE 8)

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR ELMS FARM, NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS - ST HELENS UDP (SITE 8)

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
2	0.7	33
3b	0.9	43
Other Land		
Non Agricultural	0.2	10
Agricultural Build	0.3	14

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 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 2.1 ha site is located between the A49 and the M6 motorway at Newton-le-Willows. The land immediately to the north of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land immediately to the south, east and west is in urban and non agricultural use.

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 grass.

3.   **CLIMATE**

3.1   The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 587 960):

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)   887
Accumulated Temperature above $0^{o}C$ January to June (day ^{o}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)   209
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)   84
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)   69

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 Sandstone (British Geological Survey, Sheet 84 Wigan 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 Grade 2 - occupies 0.7 ha (33 %) of the survey area and is found in the west of the site.

    6.1.1 These soils typically have a sandy clay loam texture overlying medium sandy loam, loamy medium sand and sand to depth, with few stones within the profile.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 0.9 ha (43 %) of the survey area and is found in the east of the site. There is an old cinder trackway which has now been grassed over, which has been included within this unit at this scale of mapping.

    6.2.1 These soils typically have a medium clay loam texture overlying sandy clay loam which gradates to sandy clay in places to depth. There are few stones throughout the profile. Occasionally pockets of loamy medium sand may be encountered in the subsoil.

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

6.3 Other land includes non agricultural which occupies 0.2 ha (10 %) of the survey area as a 'fenced off' sand pen to turn out horses on and agricultural buildings which occupy 0.3 ha (14 %) of the site and are currently used for storing caravans and farm equipment.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Subgrade	Area (Ha)	% of survey area	% of agricultural land
2	0.7	33	44
3b	0.9	43	56
Other Land			
Non Agricultural	0.2	10	-
Agric Buildings	0.3	14	-
Totals	2.1	100	100