

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION  
CONGLETON BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN  
SITE 30 BRIDGE FARM ALSAGER**

**R D Metcalfe  
Resource Planning Team  
ADAS Statutory Group  
WOLVERHAMPTON**

**ADAS Ref: 25/RPT/0568  
Job No: 131/95  
MAFF Ref: EL06/00051**

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR  
CONGLETON BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN  
SITE 30 BRIDGE FARM ALSAGER**

**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	10.9	90
3b	0.2	2
Other land	0.9	8

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a is soil droughtiness.

- 1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is gradient

**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in February 1996. 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 12.0 ha site is situated to the north of Alsager. The northern boundary is formed by a disused railway line, the southern one by a brook, and the eastern one by the Sandbach Road. The northern boundary adjoins agricultural land.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Congleton Borough Local Plan.
- 2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10000 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 792 566):

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	768
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1372

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)	88
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	75

### 4 SITE

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

4.2 Micro relief and flooding do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

4.3 A small area in the centre of the site has gradients up to 11°, limiting it to Subgrade 3b.

### 5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of Upper Keuper Salifereous Beds and Middle Keuper Marl - British Geological Survey Sheet 110 Macclesfield 1 Inch. This is overlain with deposits of glacial sand and gravel, boulder clay, alluvium and undifferentiated fluvio-glacial deposits.

5.2 The underlying geology influences the soils which have a sandy loam texture.

## 6. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 10.9 ha (90%) of the survey area and is found over most of the site.

6.1.1 The soil has a sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand and sand to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. The moisture balance places these soils in Subgrade 3a.

6.1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil droughtiness.

6.1.3 In a small central area of the site the soil has a sandy loam texture overlying sandy clay loam and clay to depth. Observation of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 0.2ha (2%) of the survey area and is found in the centre of the site.

6.2.1 The soil typically has a sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand to depth. Gradients in this area are between 8° and 11°.

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

6.3 Other land occupies 0.9 ha (8%) of the survey area and includes agricultural and other buildings in the northeast of the site, and a small abandoned quarry in the centre of the site.

### 6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	10.9	90	98
3b	0.2	2	2
Other land	0.9	8	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>