

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
CHESHIRE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN
HATHERTON CONSTRUCTION SAND SITE 25**

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
CHESHIRE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN
HATHERTON CONSTRUCTION SAND SITE 25**

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	26.1	29.3
3a	42.9	48
3b	11.9	13.3
4	0.3	0.4
5	0.7	0.8
Other land	7.3	8.2

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrade 3a is soil droughtiness.
- 1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3b is topsoil texture and gradient, and to a lesser extent micro relief.
- 1.4 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 4 is gradient.
- 1.5 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 5 is gradient and the pre cropping limitations.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in January 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 89.2 ha site is situated 6 km south-east of Nantwich directly east of the B5071 at Hatherton.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Cheshire Minerals 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, winter cereals, cereal stubble and land previously in sugar beet.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 695 482) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	759
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1388

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	175
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	92
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	80

4 SITE

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

4.2 Two small central areas are limited to Grade 4 (18°) and Grade 5 (25°). A large area running centrally north to south along the eastern edge of Walgherton Pool and other wood to the south of this are limited to Subgrade 3b by gradient (8° - 10°). Land running centrally either side of the stream is limited by micro relief and flooding. A small strip of land in the south-west of the site, east of Dagfields Farm is also limited by localised micro relief problems.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 No published geology maps are available

5.2 The soils over much of site consist of loamy sand, sandy loam and occasional topsoils over similar subsoils.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 land occupies 26.1 ha (29.3%) of this site and occurs over the west, east and north-east of the site.

6.1.1 Soils consist of very slightly stony medium sandy loam topsoils over stoneless loamy medium sand upper subsoils, in turn over stoneless medium sand subsoils, with occasional clay subsoils.

The soils are well drained (Wetness Class I).

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

6.2 Subgrade 3a land occupies 42.9 ha (48%) in two areas. The majority lies to the east of the site, with the remainder lying in the west.

6.2.1 Soils consist of very slightly stony loamy medium sand topsoils, overlying stoneless to very slightly stony medium sand subsoils.

These soils are well drained (Wetness Class I).

6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is moderate soil droughtiness restrictions.

6.3 Subgrade 3b land occupies 11.9 ha (13.3%) of the site. This land occurs in four areas, two in the south-east, a band running centrally north-south and an area in the north-east, directly south of Banks Farm.

6.3.1 The area of land around Dagfields Farm consists of stoneless medium sand topsoils over similar subsoils. These soils are well drained (Wetness Class I) and limited to Subgrade 3b by topsoil texture.

6.3.2 The strip of land to the east of Dagfields Farm is limited to Subgrade 3b by localised micro relief restrictions. Land running centrally north to south consists of very slightly stony medium sandy loam, loamy medium sand and occasionally medium silty clay loam topsoils over loamy sand and sand subsoils. These soils are well drained (Wetness Class I) but are limited to Subgrade 3b by a combination of topsoil texture, micro relief, localised flooding and gradient restrictions along the eastern edge (8° - 10°).

6.3.3 The remaining area of Subgrade 3b land lies in the north-east of the site directly south of Banks Farm. Soils consist of very slightly stony medium sand topsoils, over similar subsoils to depth. These soils are well drained (Wetness Class I) and are limited to this Subgrade by topsoil texture.

6.3.4 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land are topsoil texture, micro relief, gradient and localised flooding.

6.4 Grade 4 land covers 0.3 ha (0.4%) and occurs in a small area to the west of the site.

6.4.1 Soils consist of a stoneless medium sandy silt loams over a slightly stony medium sandy loam subsoils. This land is well drained (Wetness Class I), but is limited to Grade 4 by a gradient of 18°.

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

6.5 Grade 5 land cover 0.7 ha (0.8%) and occurs in two small areas, one located to the south and the other in the north east.

6.5.1 The land to the south is restricted to Grade 5 by a gradient of 25°. The area of land to the north east is severely restricted in its use by the presence of concrete foundations from demolished buildings.

6.6 Other land on the site consists of agricultural buildings in the south-west, two small areas of open water also in the south-west, with wood and scrubland covering the central region running north/south.

6.7 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	26.1	29.3	31.8
3a	42.9	48	52.4
3b	11.9	13.3	14.5
4	0.3	0.4	0.4
5	0.7	0.8	0.9
Other land	7.3	8.2	-
Totals	89.2	100	100