

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION  
ST HELENS UDP  
MUNCASTER DRIVE, RAINFORD (SITE 16)**

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR  
ST HELENS UDP  
MUNCASTER DRIVE, RAINFORD (SITE 16)**

**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	2.0	38
3a	1.7	32
3b	0.8	15
Other land		
Woodland	0.8	15

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 is soil droughtiness.
- 1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrades 3a and 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 5.3 ha site is situated to the east of Rainford, near St Helens. The land to the east is in agricultural use and land to the south and west is in urban use. The land to the north is in non-agricultural use as a playing field.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the St Helens UDP.
- 2.4 At the request of the Land Use Planning Unit of MAFF 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 cereals and grass.

### 3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site SD 484 011 :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	931
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1383

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	217
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	75
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	59

### 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 is comprised of Middle and Lower Coal Measures - British Geological Survey Sheet 84 Wigan 1:63 360. This is overlain with deposits of Quaternary sand.

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

## **6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION**

**6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 2.0 ha (38%) of the survey area and is found in the east and centre of the site.**

**6.1.1 These soils typically have a sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand and sand to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. Occasionally there is clay loam in the lower subsoil. The moisture balance places these soils into Grade 2.**

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

**6.2 Subgrade 3a - occupies 1.7 ha (32%) of the survey area and is found mainly in the west of the site.**

**6.2.1 The soil has a sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand or sandy loam or sandy clay loam over clay to depth with few or no stones within the profile. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class III.**

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

**6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 0.8 ha (15%) of the survey area and is found in the centre of the site.**

**6.3.1 The soil typically has a sandy clay loam or sandy loam texture overlying loamy sand, sandy clay loam and clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.**

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

**6.4 Other land includes woodland - occupying 0.8 ha (15%) of the survey area on the northern and western periphery of the site.**

## 6.5 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	2.0	38	44
3a	1.7	32	38
3b	0.8	15	18
Other land			
Woodland	0.8	15	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>