

**WEST LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN
Objection IHCB/OL.1/LM**

**Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Report
October 1997**

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT
WEST LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN
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INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on 9.0 hectares of land. The results of this survey supersede any previous ALC information for this land. The land is located to the west of Up Holland. The survey was in connection with the West Lancashire Local Plan.
2. The survey was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in October 1997 by the Resource Planning Team of the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)- Northern region of FRCA.
3. The land has been graded in accordance with the publication "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land" (MAFF 1988) .
4. At the time of survey the agricultural land on this site was under cereals, grass and potatoes. Land in the centre and north of the site remained fallow.

SUMMARY

5. The site is comprised of two separate parcels of land. The larger western parcel is adjacent to Chequer Lane and the smaller eastern parcel is next to Pimbo Lane.
6. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10 000 with an average auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The ALC map is only accurate at this base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.
7. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed area	% site area
1	-	-	-
2	-	-	-
3a	-	-	-
3b	8.4	100	93
4	-	-	-
5	-	-	-
Agricultural land not surveyed	-	N/A	-
Other land	0.6	N/A	7
Total surveyed area	8.4	100	-
Total site area	9.0	-	100

8. The agricultural land on this site has been classified as Subgrade 3b (moderate quality). The key limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

9. The area of moderate quality land has soils of medium clay loam topsoil texture overlying heavy clay loam and clay to depth.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ALC GRADE

Climate

10. Climate affects the grading of land through the assessment of an overall climatic limitation and also through interactions with soil characteristics.

11. The key climatic variables used for grading this site are given in Table 2 and were obtained from the published 5km grid datasets using standard interpolation procedures (Meteorological Office, 1989).

Table 2: Climatic and altitude data

Factor	Units	Values	
Grid reference	N/A	SD 510 044	SD 513 046
Altitude	m, AOD	115	130
Accumulated Temperature	day°C (Jan-June)	1318	1301
Average Annual Rainfall	mm	993	1004
Field Capacity Days	days	227	229
Moisture Deficit, Wheat	mm	63	61
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes	mm	44	41
Overall climatic grade	N/A	Grade 2	Grade 2

12. The climatic criteria are considered first when classifying land as climate can be overriding in the sense that severe limitations will restrict land to low grades irrespective of favourable site or soil conditions.

13. The main parameters used in the assessment of an overall climatic limitation are average annual rainfall (AAR), as a measure of overall wetness, and accumulated temperature (AT0, January to June), as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality.

14. The combination of rainfall and temperature at this site means that there is no overall climatic limitation. The site is climatically limited to being no better than Grade 2 in quality.

Site

15. The site lies at an altitude of 110 to 130 metres AOD. The land rises from the west of the site towards the east.

16. The three site factors of gradient, microrelief and flooding are considered when classifying the land.

17. These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of this land.

Geology and Soils

18. The solid geology of the area is comprised of Lower Coal Measures - British Geological Survey (1958).

19. The soils that have developed on this geology are generally of a clay loam texture over clay at depth.

Agricultural Land Classification

20. The details of the classification of the site are shown on the enclosed ALC map and the area statistics of each grade are given in Table 1, page 1.

Subgrade 3b

21. Land of moderate quality occupies 8.4 hectares (93%) of the site area and extends across the majority of the site.

22. The soil has a clay loam texture which lies over sandy clay loam and clay loam and clay. The depths to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.

23. In the eastern part of the site (off Pimbo Lane) the soils have been disturbed, with stones and bricks preventing augering below the topsoil. At this scale of mapping it is not possible to show this area separately.

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

Other Land

25. Other land occupies 0.6 hectares (7%) of the site area and includes a trackway, extended field entrances off Chequer Lane and an entrance to the Quarry off Pimbo Lane.

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SOURCES OF REFERENCE

British Geological Survey (1958) Sheet 97, Runcorn Solid Edition.
1:63 360 Scale.
BGS: London.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land.
MAFF: London.

Meteorological Office (1989) Climatological Data for Agricultural Land Classification.
Meteorological Office: Bracknell.