

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
CONGLETON BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN
SITE 19 : HOUNDINGS LANE , SANDBACH**

**S. KANGH
Resource Planning Team
ADAS Statutory Group
WOLVERHAMPTON**

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
CONGLETON BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN SITE 19 : HOUNDINGS LANE,
SANDBACH**

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	3.4	75
3b	0.3	7
Other land	0.8	18

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 Subgrade 3b is soil wetness.

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 4.5 ha site is situated to the south of Sandbach. The land immediately to the north, east and west of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The south and south east of the site is adjacent to Houndings Lane.

2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with 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 permanent grass.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ759601) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	764
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1389

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	177
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	90
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	78

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 Upper Keuper Saliferous Beds - British Geological Survey Sheet 110 Macclesfield 1 Inch. This is overlain by fluvio-glacial deposits.

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

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 3.4 ha (75%) of the survey area and is found over the central, southern and western part of the site .

6.1.1 These soils typically have a sandy loam texture overlying sand to depth, with few or no stones within the profile. 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 3b - occupies 0.3 ha (7%) of the survey area and is found to the south east of The Fields Farm. The topography of the area is undulating.

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

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

6.3 Other land occupies 0.8 ha (18%) of the survey area and includes agricultural buildings, a pond, urban and non-agricultural land used as a horse jumping area.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	3.4	75	92
3b	0.3	7	8
Other land	0.8	18	
Totals	4.5	100	100