

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
VALE ROYAL LOCAL PLAN, LOSTOCK TRIANGLE**

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR LOSTOCK TRIANGLE, VALE ROYAL LOCAL PLAN

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 | 12.9 | 73 |
| 3b | 3.7 | 21 |
| Other land | 1.1 | 6 |

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a is soil wetness.
- 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 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 17.7 ha site is situated to the east of Lostock Gralam. The land immediately to the north and east of the site is predominantly in agricultural use. The land immediately to the west and north west of the site is predominantly urban. The land is bounded to the east by the A556.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Vale Royal 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 cereals.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 697 750) :

| | |
|--|------|
| Average Annual Rainfall (mm) | 780 |
| Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C) | 1417 |

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site.

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Field Capacity Days (days) | 185 |
| Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm) | 92 |
| Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm) | 81 |

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 Keuper Marl - British Geological Survey Sheets 110 & 98 Macclesfield & Stockport 1:63 360. This is overlain with deposits of Quaternary Boulder Clay.

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

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 12.9 ha (73%) of the survey area and is found over the majority of the site.

6.1.1 The soil has sandy clay loam texture over either sandy clay loam, heavy clay loam or medium sandy loam, 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.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 3.7 ha (21%) of the survey area.

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

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

6.3 Other land includes a community centre and playing fields which occupy 0.7 ha (4%) of the survey area; woodland - occupying 0.3 ha (1.8%) of the survey area; a small depression of rough grass and trees currently not in agricultural use on the north eastern boundary of the site and a pond together covering 0.1 ha (0.6%) of the survey area.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

| Grade/Sub-grade | Area in Hectares | % of Survey Area | % of Agricultural Land |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 3a | 12.9 | 73 | 78 |
| 3b | 3.7 | 21 | 22 |
| Other land | 1.1 | 6 | - |
| Totals | 17.7 | 100 | 100 |