

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
ST HELENS UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
PARKSIDE COLLIERY**

**V P Redfern
Resource Planning Team
ADAS Statutory Group
WOLVERHAMPTON**

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
ST HELENS UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
PARKSIDE COLLIERY**

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	18.4	18.8
3a	14.9	15.3
3b	22.5	23.0
4	0.6	0.6
5	1.0	1.0
Woodland	1.8	1.9
Urban	38.1	39.0
Non-agricultural	0.4	0.4

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 2 and Subgrades 3a and 3b is soil wetness.
- 1.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Grade 4 and Grade 5 is gradient.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in February 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 97.7 ha site is situated to the south east of Newton-Le-Willows. The site is bounded to the north and north west by railway lines, to the north east by the M6 and to the west by housing. The land to the east is in agricultural use.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the St Helens Unitary Development 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, cereals and fallow.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 600949) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	880
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)	208
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	85
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	71

4 SITE

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

4.2 Gradients over 11° limit slopes in the south east of the site to Grade 4 and gradients over 18° to Grade 5.

4.3 Flooding and micro relief are not limitations on the agricultural use of the land.

5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

5.1 The solid geology of the area is comprised of Bunter Sandstone and Marl - British Geological Survey Sheet 84 Wigan 1 Inch. This is overlain with deposits of Boulder Clay and Glacial Sand and Gravel.

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

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 18.4 ha (18.8%) of the survey area and is found on the western side of the site.

6.1.1 These soils typically have either a sandy clay loam texture overlying sandy loam and loamy sand with no stones within the profile, or clay loam to depth. Neither of these profiles is gleyed. The combination of soil texture and field capacity days places these soils in Wetness Grade 2. X

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

- 6.2 Subgrade 3a - occupies 14.9 ha (15.3%) of the survey area.
- 6.2.1 The soil has clay loam texture over clay loam or sandy loam with few or no stones within the profile. The subsoils are gleyed but there is no slowly permeable layer and the soils are placed in Wetness Class II.
- 6.2.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use is soil wetness.
- 6.3 Subgrade 3b - occupies 22.5 ha (0.6%) of the survey area and is found predominantly in the east of the site on reclaimed colliery spoil.
- 6.3.1 The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying colliery spoil. Observations of structure and porosity place these soils in Wetness Class IV.
- 6.3.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.
- 6.3.3 In the west of the site clay loam texture overlies clay. The subsoil is gleyed and the clay forms a slowly permeable layer. These soils fall into Wetness Class IV.
- 6.3.4 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness
- 6.4 Grade 4 - occupies 0.6 ha (0.6%) of the survey area and is found in the south east of the site where slopes exceed 11°.
- 6.4.1 The main limitation to the use of this land is gradient.
- 6.5 Grade 5 - occupies 1.0 ha (1.0%) of the survey area and is found in the south east of the site.
- 6.5.1 This grade occupies land at the edge of the restored colliery spoil. The land is vegetated, however slopes in excess of 18° restrict its agricultural use.
- 6.5.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is gradient.
- 6.6 Other land on the site includes urban which occupies 38.1 ha (39.0%) of the site and comprises the old colliery site and the buildings at Newton Park Farm. Woodland occupies 1.8 ha (1.9%) and comprises small groups of trees around the site. Non agricultural land occupies 0.4 ha (0.4%) of the site and comprises an area adjacent to Newton Park Farm.

6.7 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	18.4	18.8	32.1
3a	14.9	15.3	26.0
3b	22.5	23.0	39.2
4	0.6	0.6	1.0
5	1.0	1.0	1.7
Other land			
Woodland	1.8	1.9	
Urban	38.1	39.0	
Non agricultural	0.4	0.4	
Totals	97.7	100.0	100.0