AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
WIRRAL UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN,
SITE 7, LAND EAST OF HARROCK WOOD, IRBY

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR WIRRAL UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN SITE 7, LAND EAST OF HARROCK WOOD, IRBY

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	1.5	17.2
3b	7.2	82.8

1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a 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 October 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 8.7 site is situated to the south east of Irby and to the east of Harrock Wood. The land immediately to the south of the site and to the west (beyond Harrock Wood) is predominantly in agricultural use, land to the north and east of the site is in urban use as residential housing.

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

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 265 846) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	755
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1390

3.2 There is no overall climatic limitation on the site

3.3 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	179
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	92
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	79

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 Keuper Waterstones overlain by Glacial Boulder Clay - British Geological Survey Sheet 96, Liverpool, 1:50 000.

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

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 1.5 ha (17.2%) of the survey area and is to the south of the site.

6.1.1 The soil has a clay loam topsoil texture overlying shattered waterstone bedrock which becomes massive with depth. The moisture balance places these soils into Subgrade 3a.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 7.2 ha (82.8%) of the survey area and is found over the remainder of the site.

6.2.1 The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying sandy clay loam or heavy clay loam and clay 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 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	1.5	17.2	17.2
3b	7.2	82.8	82.8
Totals	**8.7**	**100**	**100**