

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
CHESHIRE MINERALS PLAN SITE 6:
(SILICA SAND)**

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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
CHESHIRE MINERALS PLAN SITE 6:
(SILICA SAND)**

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 surveyed area of site
2	7.9	19.9
3a	24.5	61.6
3b	6.9	17.3
Other land	0.5	1.2

- 1.2 The main limitations to the agricultural use of land on this site are soil wetness and soil droughtiness.

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 39.8 ha site is situated to the west of Congleton in Cheshire. The site is bordered by Wallhill Lane to the east, and the A 534 to the north. The land to the south and west is in agricultural use.
- 2.3 The survey was requested by MAFF in connection with the Cheshire Minerals Plan.
- 2.4 At MAFF Land Use Planning Unit's request this was a detailed grid survey at 1:10,000 scale 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 majority of the site was under grass, with some cereals, and fallow land.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 825620) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	791	802
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1358	1346

3.2 Other relevant data for classifying land include:

Field Capacity Days (days)	193
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	84
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	71

3.3 Climate does not impose a limitation on the agricultural use of the land.

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 comprises Middle Keuper Marl (British Geological Survey Sheet 110 Macclesfield 1 Inch to 1 mile). This is overlain by Boulder Clay.

5.2 The soils developed from these parent materials are typically sandy loams overlying either clay loams and clays or loamy sands and sands.

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Grade 2 - occupies 7.9 ha (19.9 %) of the survey area.

6.1.1 The soils have a sandy loam topsoil texture, overlying loamy medium sand or sand to depth, or sometimes overlying sandy clay loam with heavy clay loam at depth.

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

6.2 Grade 3a - occupies 24.5 ha (61.6 %) of the survey area.

6.2.1 Soils are typically sandy loams overlying either loamy sands or sandy clay loams with heavy clay loams at depth. Within the heavier clay material there are variable amounts of sand.

6.2.2 In limited areas, sandy loams overly loamy sand or sand to depth, and there is a drought limitation.

6.2.3 The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness, although some areas have a soil droughtiness limitation.

6.3 Grade 3b - Occupies 6.9 ha (17.3 %) of the survey area.

6.3.1 The topsoils are typically sandy loams or sometimes sandy clay loams, overlying sandy clay loams, heavy clay loams or clay to depth. These subsoils also contain some sandier pockets.

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

6.4 Other land - occupies 0.5 ha (1.2 %) of the survey area and is comprised of a number of ponds and former ponds not in agricultural use.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Surveyed Area	% of Agricultural Land
2	7.9	19.9	20.1
3a	24.5	61.6	62.3
3b	6.9	17.3	17.6
Other land	0.5	1.2	
Totals	39.8	100.0	100.0