

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
IRBY ROAD, WIRRAL**

The site, which covers approximately 51 ha, was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in October 1992. It is located to the north west of Heswall between the A540 Telegraph Road and Irby Road. At the time of survey most of the site was in agricultural use with cereals and some permanent pasture.

Climate

Average annual rainfall-760 mm

Accumulated temperature above 0°C January to June-1366 day °C

Field capacity days-179

Moisture deficit wheat-89 mm

Moisture deficit potatoes-76 mm

Site

The site is gently undulating and ranges in altitude from 77 m adjacent to Irby Road to 88 m on its north west edge.

Soils

The solid geology in the vicinity of the site comprises red sandstones of the Sherwood Sandstone Group. This crops out in the northern part of the site. Elsewhere it is overlain by drift deposits of Boulder Clay. The soils derived from these parent materials are greyish brown clay loams over clay on the heavier drift deposits, and reddish brown sandy loams over sand often with hard sandstone within 80 cm on the solid deposits.

Agricultural land classification

Grade 3a. Land has been mapped as Grade 3a in the north and west of the site with a small area in the south. Soils include sandy loam and medium clay loam on to sandstone at depths of about 45-70 cm; sandy loam over sand; and heavier profiles of sandy clay loam and medium clay loam over clay below about 60 cm. Major factors limiting the agricultural use of this land are droughtiness on shallower and lighter soils and wetness on the heavier soils.

Grade 3b. Land mapped as Grade 3b occurs in the south and east with 2 small areas towards the north of the site. Over most of this area soils are heavier than those above with medium clay loam over clay below about 30 cm, and are limited to this grade by wetness. The small area of Grade 3b on the highest part of the site has shallow sandy loams on to sandstone at 35-40 cm and is limited by droughtiness. The area around the pond is somewhat irregular and disturbed and thus is restricted to this grade.

Area of land in each grade

Grade	Hectares	% of total area	% of agricultural area
3a	30.0	59	60
3b	20.4	40	40
Non-agricultural	0.4	1	
Total	50.8	100	100

**Resource Planning Team
Wolverhampton**