

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
WIRRAL UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SITE 10, CHESTER HIGH ROAD, GAYTON**

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**ADAS Ref: 25/RPT/729
Job No: 062/95
MAFF Ref: EL 25/10909**

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT FOR
WIRRAL UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
SITE 10, CHESTER HIGH ROAD, GAYTON**

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	8.3	29.9
3b	6.1	21.9
Other land		
Non Agricultural	3.8	13.7
Urban	2.6	9.3
Open Water	0.3	1.1
Non Surveyed	6.7	24.1

- 1.2 The main limitation to the agricultural use of land in Subgrade 3a and Subgrade 3b is soil wetness.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site was surveyed by the Resource Planning Team in November 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 27.8 ha site is situated to the north east of Gayton, Heswall. The site is bounded by a railway line to the east, the A540 road to the south and west and residential development to the north.
- 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 cereals, grass ley, permanent grass used for pony paddocks and at the north western end of the site land was under playing fields, a playground and a football ground.

3 CLIMATE

3.1 The following interpolated data are relevant for the site (SJ 284 809) :

Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	765
Accumulated Temperature above 0°C January to June (day °C)	1393

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)	91
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	78

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 Bunter Upper Mottled Sandstone - British Geological Survey Sheet 96, Liverpool, 1:50 000. This is overlain by glacial Boulder Clay.

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

6 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

6.1 Subgrade 3a - occupies 8.3 ha (29.9%) of the survey area and is found in the centre and south of the site.

6.1.1 The soil has a clay loam topsoil texture, overlying sandy clay loam to depth or sandy clay loam and clay to depth. Observations of gleying and depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils into Wetness Classes II and III.

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

6.2 Subgrade 3b - occupies 6.1 ha (21.9%) of the survey area and is found in the north east of the site and north east of Bridges House Farm.

6.2.1 The soil typically has a clay loam texture overlying clay to depth. Observations of gleying and the depth to the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.

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

6.3 Other land includes non-agricultural which covers 3.8 ha (13.7%) of the survey area as a playground and a playing field; urban - covering 2.6 ha (9.3%) of the survey area to the northwest of the site as a football ground and residential housing; open water occupying 0.3 ha (1.1%) of the survey area. An area of land along the eastern boundary of the site, occupying 6.7 ha (24.1%) of the survey area was not surveyed due to access being denied.

6.4 SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

Grade/Sub-grade	Area in Hectares	% of Survey Area	% of Agricultural Land
3a	8.3	29.9	57.6
3b	6.1	21.9	42.4
Other land			
Non agricultural	3.8	13.7	-
Urban	2.6	9.3	-
Open water	0.3	1.1	-
Not surveyed	6.7	24.1	-
Totals	27.8	100.0	100.0