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**MILTON KEYNES EXPANSION STUDY
AREA 8 - WEST BLETCHLEY**

**Agricultural Land Classification
Semi-Detailed Survey
ALC Map and Summary Report**

May 1998

**Resource Planning Team
Eastern Region
FRCA Reading**

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY REPORT

MILTON KEYNES EXPANSION STUDY AREA 8 - WEST BLETCHLEY

SEMI-DETAILED SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

1. This summary report presents the findings of a semi-detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on 194.8 hectares of land to the west of Bletchley, Buckinghamshire. The survey was carried out during April 1998.
2. The survey was undertaken by the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)¹ on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF), in connection with its statutory input to the Milton Keynes Expansion Study. This survey supersedes any previous ALC information for this land.
3. The work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Eastern Region of the FRCA. The land has been graded in accordance with the published MAFF ALC guidelines and criteria (MAFF, 1988). A description of the ALC grades and subgrades is given in Appendix I.
4. At the time of survey agricultural land use on the site comprised winter cereals, oilseed rape and grassland, both ley and permanent. The areas mapped as 'Other land' include farm buildings, residential dwellings and a recycling centre.

SUMMARY

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:15,000. It is accurate at this scale, but any enlargement would be misleading.
6. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in the Table 1 overleaf.
7. The fieldwork was conducted at an average density of 1 boring per 1.6 hectares. In total, 120 borings and 4 soil pits were described.
8. The agricultural land on this site has been assigned predominantly to Subgrade 3b, (moderate quality) with more restricted areas of Subgrade 3a (good quality) land occurring in the northwest, centre and southeast. The heavy soils are derived mainly from glacial Boulder Clay and the underlying Oxford Clay.

¹ FRCA is an executive agency of MAFF and the Welsh Office

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed area	% site area
3a	17.0	9.1	8.7
3b	170.8	90.9	87.7
Other Land	7.0	-	3.6
Total Surveyed Area	187.8	100	96.4
Total Site area	194.8	-	100

9. The majority of the land on this site has been classified as Subgrade 3b on the basis of soil wetness/workability restrictions. Typical profiles comprise non-calcareous clay loam topsoils (with occasional clay topsoils) over clayey subsoils which impede soil drainage. The combination of soil drainage status and the heavy topsoils causes significant soil wetness/workability problems, such that the flexibility of cropping and the opportunities for cultivation or grazing by livestock are reduced. Land of Subgrade 3a quality occurs in three restricted areas of the site, where soils are less clayey, calcareous and/or better structured and thereby better drained.



	Total survey area	Total site area	% within survey area
Area occupied by vegetation	60.9	78.2	12.8
Area occupied by bare ground	39.1	21.8	17.9
Area occupied by water	0.0	0.0	0.0
Area occupied by other	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Scale - £15,000
0 200 400 600 Metres

Further details contained in MAFF: (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land. MAFF (publications), London SE99 7TP.

The information is accurate at base map scale but any enlargement would be misleading.

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Surveyed and drawn by the Resource Planning Team, FRCA, Reading

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