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**PODE HALL FARM, THORNEY,
PETERBOROUGH, CAMBS**

**Agricultural Land Classification
Summary Report
July 1996**

**Resource Planning Team
Huntingdon Statutory Group
ADAS Cambridge**

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY REPORT

PODE HOLE FARM, THORNEY, PETERBOROUGH, CAMBS

Introduction

1. This report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey of 37.4 ha of land at Pode Hole Farm, Thorney, Peterborough, Cambs. The survey was carried out in summer 1991.
2. The survey was commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Land Use Planning Unit, Cambridge in connection with an application for the extraction of sand and gravel on a larger application area corresponding with the site in 1991. The site is now subject to another application for the extraction of sand and gravel, with restoration to agriculture at low level including irrigation reservoir and the importation of 100 000 Cu. metres of inert waste from the A1(M) road scheme. This survey supersedes previous ALC surveys on this land.
3. The work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Huntingdon Statutory Group in ADAS. 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 the land use on the site was ploughed agricultural land. The present site differs in extent from the 1991 application and therefore two small areas of land were not surveyed which are now included in the present application.

Summary

5. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% Total site area	% Surveyed Area
2	10.9	29	32
3a	23.4	63	68
Agricultural land not surveyed	3.1	8	-
Total surveyed area	34.3	92	100
Total site area	37.4	100	-

6. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10 000 it is accurate at this scale but any enlargement would be misleading.
7. The fieldwork was conducted at an average density of 1 boring per hectare. A total of 37 borings and one soil pit were described.
8. The north of the site is graded 2 (very good quality agricultural land) while a larger area in the south of the site is graded 3a (good quality agricultural land). The limitation to both these areas of land is droughtiness caused by profile textures and the occurrence of gravelly material in the subsoil.

APPENDIX I

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADES AND SUBGRADES

Grade 1: Excellent Quality Agricultural Land

Land with no or very minor limitations to agricultural use. A very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown and commonly includes top fruit, soft fruit, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables. Yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality.

Grade 2: Very Good Quality Agricultural Land

Land with minor limitations which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural or horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land of this grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1 land.

Grade 3: Good to Moderate Quality Land

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, the timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. When more demanding crops are grown, yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.

Subgrade 3a: Good Quality Agricultural Land

Land capable of consistently producing moderate to high yields of a narrow range of arable crops, especially cereals, or moderate yields of a wide range of crops including cereals, grass, oilseed rape, potatoes, sugar beet and the less demanding horticultural crops.

Subgrade 3b: Moderate Quality Agricultural Land

Land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops, principally cereals and grass, or lower yields of a wider range of crops or high yields of grass that can be grazed or harvested over most of the year.

Grade 4: Poor Quality Agricultural Land

Land with severe limitations which significantly restrict the range of crops and/or the level of yields. It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (eg. cereals and forage crops) the yields of which are variable. In moist climates, yields of grass may be moderate to high but there may be difficulties in utilisation. The grade also includes very droughty arable land.

Grade 5: Very Poor Quality Agricultural Land

Land with severe limitations that restricts use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.