

A0
Rother District Local Plan
Land west of cemetery,
St Marys Lane, Bexhill.
Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Summary Report
May 1995

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY REPORT

ROTHER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

LAND AT WEST OF CEMETERY, ST MARYS LANE, BEXHILL

Summary

- 1.1 ADAS was commissioned by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on land quality for a number of sites in the vicinity of Bexhill . This work was in connection with the Rother District Local Plan.
- 1.2 The site comprises approximately 1.4 ha of land on the northern side of Bexhill adjacent to the cemetery. The site formed part of a previous ALC survey for the Bexhill area conducted by ADAS at a reconnaissance level in 1984 using the original ALC system. A map at 1:25,000 scale was produced of that survey (ADAS 1984). An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was carried out in May 1995 at a detailed level of approximately one boring per hectare and a total of 3 borings and 1 soil inspection pit were assessed in accordance with MAFF's revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF, 1988). These guidelines provide a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long term limitations on its use for agriculture
- 1.3 The work was carried out by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Guildford Statutory Group of ADAS.
- 1.4 At the time of survey, all the agricultural land was in permanent grassland. A small area of Non-agricultural land was identified which comprised a disused pit which had reverted to woodland.
- 1.5 The distribution of the grades and subgrades is shown on the attached ALC map and the areas are given in the table below. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10,000. It is accurate at this scale but any enlargement would be misleading. This map supersedes any previous survey information for this site.

Table 1 : Distribution of Grades and Subgrades

Grade	Area (ha)	% of Site	% of Agricultural Area
3a	1.2	85.7	100
Woodland	<u>0.2</u>	<u>14.3</u>	
Total	1.4 ha	100%	

- 1.6 A general description of the grades, subgrades and land use categories is provided in Appendix I. The main classes are described in terms of the type of limitation that can occur, the typical cropping range and the expected level and consistency of yield.
- 1.7 The agricultural land on the site has been classified as subgrade 3a with the majority of the area comprising well or moderately well drained silty and loamy soils overlying fine grained sandstones. On the western side of the site however, the lower subsoil horizons were slowly permeable clays. The main limitations associated with the site are therefore are both droughtiness and wetness.

ADAS Reference : 4106/113/94
MAFF Reference : EL 41/00498

Resource Planning Team
Guildford Statutory Group
ADAS Reading

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 which 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 which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing, except for occasional pioneer forage crops.

Urban

Built-up or 'hard' uses with relatively little potential for a return to agriculture including: housing, industry, commerce, education, transport, religious buildings, cemeteries. Also, hard-surfaced sports facilities, permanent caravan sites and vacant land; all types of derelict land, including mineral workings which are only likely to be reclaimed using derelict land grants.

Non-agricultural

'Soft' uses where most of the land could be returned relatively easily to agriculture, including: private parkland, public open spaces, sports fields, allotments and soft-surfaced areas on airports. Also active mineral workings and refuse tips where restoration conditions to 'soft' after-uses may apply.

Woodland

Includes commercial and non-commercial woodland. A distinction may be made as necessary between farm and non-farm woodland.

Agricultural Buildings

Includes the normal range of agricultural buildings as well as other relatively permanent structures such as glasshouses. Temporary structures (eg. polythene tunnels erected for lambing) may be ignored.

Open Water

Includes lakes, ponds and rivers as map scale permits.

Land Not Surveyed

Agricultural land which has not been surveyed.

Where the land use includes more than one of the above, eg. buildings in large grounds, and where map scale permits, the cover types may be shown separately. Otherwise, the most extensive cover type will be shown.