

**AGRICULTURAL LAND  
CLASSIFICATION REPORT**

**SWALE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN**

**FAVERSHAM, SITE 9**

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## SWALE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN FAVERSHAM, SITE 9 AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

### Summary

- 1 1 ADAS was commissioned by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on land quality on land at Faversham, Site 9 This work was in connection with Swale Borough Local Plan
- 1 2 Approximately 6 hectares of land relating to the area was surveyed in August 1994 A reconnaissance survey was undertaken to assess land use on this disturbed site
- 1 3 The work was carried out by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Huntingdon Statutory Group of ADAS
- 1 4 At the time of survey half the site was Non-Agricultural comprising rank grassland not in agricultural use The remainder was 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**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Area (ha)</b>	<b>% of Site</b>
Non Agricultural	2 8	49 1
Woodland	2 9	50 9
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 7 ha</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 1 6 A general description of the grades, subgrades and land use categories is provided in Appendix 1 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 land has been classified as Non-Agricultural and woodland
- 2 0 **Climate**
- 2 1 The climatic criteria are considered first when classifying land as climate can be overriding in the sense that severe limitations will restrict land to low grades irrespective of favourable site or soil conditions

- 2 2 The main parameters used in the assessment of an overall climatic limitation are average annual rainfall as a measure of overall wetness and accumulated temperature, as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality. The combination of rainfall and temperature at this site mean an overall climatic grade 1

**Table 2 Climatic Interpolation**

Grid Reference	TR001 619
Altitude (m, AOD)	10
Accumulated Temperature (° C days Jan-June)	1487
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	637
Field Capacity Days	128
Moisture Deficit, wheat (mm)	123
Moisture Deficit potatoes (mm)	121
Overall Climatic Grade	1

3 0 **Relief**

- 3 1 The land slopes from a maximum height of 20 m in the south of the site to approximately 10 m AOD at the lake. Neither altitude nor gradient are a limitation to land quality

4 0 **Geology and Soils**

- 4 1 The published geology map for the site area, (BGS 1974 Sheet 273) shows the site to be underlain by Head gravel over Thanet Beds
- 4 2 The published soils information for the area (SSEW 1983 Sheet 6 1 250 000) shows the site as unsurveyed/urban

5 0 **Agricultural land Classification**

- 5 1 The ALC classification of the site is shown on the attached ALC map

**Non-Agricultural**

- 5 2 Rank grassland not in agricultural use which is located in the south eastern half of the site is included in this category

**Woodland**

5 3 Woodland covers the north western half of the site

ADAS Reference 2011/177/94  
MAFF Reference EL 20/245

Resource Planning Team  
Huntingdon Statutory Group  
ADAS Cambridge

## Appendix 1

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADES AND SUBGRADES**

The ALC grades and subgrades are described below in terms of the types of limitation which can occur, typical cropping range and the expected level of consistency of yield. In practice, the grades are defined by reference to physical characteristics and the grading guidance and cut-offs for limitation factors in Section 3 enable land to be ranked in accordance with these general descriptions. The most productive and flexible land falls in Grades 1 and 2 and Subgrade 3a and collectively comprises about one third of the agricultural land in England and Wales. About half the land is of moderate quality in Subgrade 3b or poor quality in Grade 4. Although less significant on a national scale, such land can be locally valuable to agriculture and the rural economy where farmland predominates. The remainder is very poor quality land in Grade 5, which most occurs in the uplands.

#### **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 include 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 and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in the grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.

#### **Grade 3 - good to moderate quality agricultural land**

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. Where 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 levels of yields It is mainly suited to grass with occasional arable crops (eg cereals and forage crops) the yield of which are variable In most 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 very severe limitations which restrict use to permanent pasture or rough grazing except for occasional pioneer forage crops

### **Descriptions of other land categories used on ALC maps**

#### **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/airfields. 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 (e.g. polythene tunnels erected for lambing) may be ignored

## **Open water**

Includes lakes, ponds and rivers as map scale permits

## **Land not surveyed**

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