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SWALE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN
SITE 16A ISLE OF SHEPPEY KENT
AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION
ALC MAP & SUMMARY REPORT
JULY 1993

ADAS REFERENCE 2011/100/93
MAFF REFERENCE EL 20/245

Resource Planning Team
Guildford Statutory Group

SWALE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN SITE 16A ISLE OF SHEPPEY KENT AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION SUMMARY REPORT

1 0 Summary

1 1 In July 1993 a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) was made on approximately 8 hectares of land south east of Barton Hill Drive on the southern edge of Minster in Kent

1 2 The work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Guildford Statutory Group of ADAS in response to a commission by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on the quality of agricultural land affected by the possible inclusion of this area in the Swale Borough Local Plan

1 3 The classification has been made using MAFF's revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land. 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 4 The fieldwork was carried out with an observation density of approximately one per hectare. A total of 8 borings and 1 soil pit was examined

1 5 All of the agricultural land (8.1 ha) is classified as Sub grade 3B. The key limitation is soil wetness related to heavy topsoils overlying poorly structured clay subsoils which cause significant waterlogging in the soil profile and restrict the workability of the land

1 6 The ALC information is presented on the attached map at a scale of 1:5,000. It is accurate at this level but any enlargement would be misleading. This map supercedes any previous ALC information for this site

1 7 At the time of survey the land use on the site was permanent grass

1 8 A general description of the grades and sub grades is provided as an appendix. 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

APPENDIX I

DESCRIPTION OF THE GRADES AND SUB GRADES

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 on 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 root 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. When more demanding crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in grades 1 and 2.

Sub grade 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.

Sub grade 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 very 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 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

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