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Isle of Thanet Local Plan
Site 3 Rose Farm, Ramsgate
Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Report
September 1994

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT

ISLE OF THANET LOCAL PLAN
SITE 3 ROSE FARM, RAMSGATE

1 Summary

1 1 ADAS was commissioned by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on land quality for five sites in the Thanet district of Kent The work forms part of MAFF's statutory input to the preparation of the Isle of Thanet Local Plan

1 2 Site 3 comprises approximately 40 hectares of land to the north of Stirling Way and to the east of Haine Road in Ramsgate Kent This site was the subject of a previous survey in April 1988 (ADAS Ref 2012/004B/88) to assess agricultural land quality This survey was however carried out prior to the revision of MAFF's guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF 1988) which came into effect on 1 January 1989 Consequently this site was re-evaluated during September 1994 when two soil inspection pits were described in accordance with the revised guidelines These guidelines provide a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose a long term limitation 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 the survey the land use was a mixture of cereal stubble and cauliflowers A small area in the south west of the site was not surveyed

1 5 The distribution of grades and subgrades is shown on the attached ALC map and the areas are given in the table below These results supersede the earlier 1988 survey The map has been drawn at a scale of 1 10 000 It is accurate at this scale but any enlargement would be misleading

Table 1 Distribution of Grades and Subgrades

Grade	Area (ha)	% of Site
2	39 1	96 8
Not surveyed	1 3	3 2
Total area of site	40 4	100 0

1 6 Appendix I gives a general description of the grades subgrades and land use categories identified in the survey 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 previous survey classified the site as predominantly Grade 1 land excellent quality with a small area of Grade 2 land very good quality north of Haine Farm At that time topsoils were assessed as sandy clay loams medium silty clay loams and occasionally silt loams These overlay well drained similarly textured subsoils which sometimes became heavier or passed into chalky rubble at depth The recent (September 1994) survey confirmed very similar soils to those described above However applying the revised ALC guidelines which have more refined droughtiness (and wetness) criteria compared with the original guidelines the majority of the site is now classified as Grade 2 due to a minor soil droughtiness limitation The local climate is particularly dry in a national context and the interaction between the soils and the climatic regime at this site causes a minor soil droughtiness limitation which results in the soil available water being insufficient to fully meet crop needs A part of the site was also found to have a slight soil wetness limitation sufficient to cause it to be included in Grade 2 using the revised ALC criteria This is caused by slowly permeable clays at depth within the soil profile

2 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 (degree days Jan-June) as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality

2 3 A detailed assessment of the prevailing climate was made by interpolation from a 5km gridpoint dataset (Met Office 1989) The details are given in the table below and these show that there is no overall climatic limitation affecting the site The crop adjusted soil moisture deficits at this locality are very high both in a regional and national context High soil moisture deficits increase the likelihood of soil droughtiness limitations

2 4 No local climatic factors such as exposure or frost risk are believed to affect the site

Table 2 Climatic Interpolations

Grid Reference	TR362675	TR361667
Altitude (m)	50	50
Accumulated Temperature (degree days Jan-June)	1431	1432
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	606	612
Field Capacity (days)	121	123
Moisture Deficit Wheat (mm)	125	124
Moisture Deficit Potatoes (mm)	124	123
Overall Climatic Grade	1	1

3 Relief

3 1 The site is flat lying at an altitude of approximately 50 m AOD

4 Geology and Soil

4 1 The relevant geological sheet (BGS 1980) shows the entire site to be underlain by drift deposits of head brickearth over Upper Chalk

4 2 The published Soil Survey map (SSEW 1980) shows the entire site to comprise argillic brown earths These soils are described as silty soils in brickearth associated with loamy soils in Thanet and Woolwich Beds free drainage, locally with slight impedance (SSEW 1980)

4 3 Detailed field examination generally found well drained silty soils which occasionally exhibit slight impedance to drainage

5 Agricultural Land Classification

5 1 Table 1 provides the details of the area measurements for each grade and the distribution of each grade is shown on the attached ALC map

5 2 The location of the soil observation points are shown on the attached sample point map

Grade 2

5 3 All of the agricultural land surveyed has been classified as Grade 2 very good quality The principal restriction is that of soil droughtiness with discrete parts in the extreme south of the site also being subject to slight soil wetness limitations Topsoils typically comprise non-calcareous medium clay loams which are very slightly stony (c 1% total flints by volume) These overlie well drained medium and heavy silty clay loam upper subsoils which pass into a slightly gleyed clay lower subsoil which is moderately structured at about 70 cm depth These subsoils are stoneless to very slightly stony (c 0-4% total flints by volume) At approximately 90 cm depth these profiles pass into a calcareous moderately stony (c 25% total chalk fragments) heavy clay loam lower subsoil Such profiles are represented by Pit 1 The interaction between these soil textures profile stone contents and moderate subsoilstructural conditions with the very dry climate which prevails at this locality results in slightly restricted soil available water for uptake by crops This minor soil droughtiness limitation will tend to reduce the level and consistency of crop yields and give rise to a minor risk of drought stress for those crops which are grown

5 4 Pit 2 represents profiles equally limited by minor soil wetness and droughtiness limitations Profiles comprise non-calcareous medium clay loam topsoils over medium silty clay loam upper subsoils At approximately 65 cm these pass into poorly structured clay lower subsoils which are slightly gleyed at 65 cm and gleyed from about 85 cm depth The slowly permeable characteristics of these lower

subsoils acts to impart a slight restriction to drainage such that Wetness Class II is appropriate The interaction between these drainage characteristics and topsoil textures with the very dry climate which prevails at this locality may impose minor restrictions on the flexibility of cropping stocking and cultivations

ADAS Ref 2012/217/94
MAFF Ref EL 20/248

Resource Planning Team
Guildford Statutory Group
ADAS Reading

SOURCES OF REFERENCE

British Geological Survey (1980) Sheet No 274 Ramsgate 1 50 000 Series (solid and drift edition)

MAFF (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land

Meteorological Office (1989) Climatological Data for Agricultural Land Classification

Soil Survey of England and Wales (1980) Bulletin No 9 Soils of Kent and accompanying maps at 1 250 000

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 religous buildings cemetries 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

APPENDIX II

FIELD ASSESSMENT OF SOIL WETNESS CLASS

SOIL WETNESS CLASSIFICATION

Soil wetness is classified according to the depth and duration of waterlogging in the soil profile Six soil wetness classes are identified and are defined in the table below

Definition of Soil Wetness Classes

Wetness Class	Duration of Waterlogging[1]
I	The soil profile is not wet within 70 cm depth for more than 30 days in most years [2]
II	The soil profile is wet within 70 cm depth for 31 90 days in most years **or** if there is no slowly permeable layer within 80 cm depth it is wet within 70 cm for more than 90 days but only wet within 40 cm depth for 30 days in most years
III	The soil profile is wet within 70 cm depth for 91-180 days in most years **or** if there is no slowly permeable layer present within 80 cm depth it is wet within 70 cm for more than 180 days but only wet within 40 cm depth for between 31 90 days in most years
IV	The soil profile is wet within 70 cm depth for more than 180 days but not wet within 40 cm depth for more than 210 days in most years **or** if there is no slowly permeable layer present within 80 cm depth it is wet within 40 cm depth for 91-210 days in most years
V	The soil profile is wet within 40 cm depth for 211-335 days in most years
VI	The soil profile is wet within 40 cm depth for more than 335 days in most years

Soils can be allocated to a wetness class on the basis of quantitative data recorded over a period of many years or by the interpretation of soil profile characteristics site and climatic factors Adequate quantitative data will rarely be available for ALC surveys and therefore the interpretative method of field assessment is used to identify soil wetness class in the field The method adopted here is common to ADAS and the SSLRC

[1]The number of days specified is not necessarily a continuous period

[2] In most years is defined as more than 10 out of 20 years

APPENDIX III

SOIL PIT AND SOIL BORING DESCRIPTIONS

Contents

Soil Abbreviations - Explanatory Note

Soil Pit Descriptions

SOIL PROFILE DESCRIPTIONS EXPLANATORY NOTE

Soil pit and auger boring information collected during ALC fieldwork is held on a computer database This uses notations and abbreviations as set out below

Boring Header Information

1 **GRID REF** national 100 km grid square and 8 figure grid reference

2 **USE** Land use at the time of survey The following abbreviations are used

ARA	Arable	**WHT**	Wheat	**BAR**	Barley
CER	Cereals	**OAT**	Oats	**MZE**	Maize
OSR	Oilseed rape	**BEN**	Field Beans	**BRA**	Brassicae
POT	Potatoes	**SBT**	Sugar Beet	**FCD**	Fodder Crops
LIN	Linseed	**FRT**	Soft and Top Fruit	**FLW**	Fallow
PGR	Permanent Pasture	**LEY**	Ley Grass	**RGR**	Rough Grazing
SCR	Scrub	**CFW**	Coniferous Woodland	**DCW**	Deciduous Wood
HTH	Heathland	**BOG**	Bog or Marsh	**FLW**	Fallow
PLO	Ploughed	**SAS**	Set aside	**OTH**	Other
HRT	Horticultural Crops				

3 **GRDNT** Gradient as estimated or measured by a hand held optical clinometer

4 **GLEY/SPL** Depth in centimetres (cm) to gleying and/or slowly permeable layers

5 **AP (WHEAT/POTS)** Crop-adjusted available water capacity

6 **MB (WHEAT/POTS)** Moisture Balance (Crop adjusted AP - crop adjusted MD)

7 **DRT** Best grade according to soil droughtiness

8 If any of the following factors are considered significant 'Y' will be entered in the relevant column

MREL	Microrelief limitation	**FLOOD**	Flood risk	**EROSN**	Soil erosion risk
EXP	Exposure limitation	**FROST**	Frost prone	**DIST**	Disturbed land
CHEM	Chemical limitation				

9 **LIMIT** The main limitation to land quality The following abbreviations are used

OC	Overall Climate	**AE**	Aspect	**EX**	Exposure
FR	Frost Risk	**GR**	Gradient	**MR**	Microrelief
FL	Flood Risk	**TX**	Topsoil Texture	**DP**	Soil Depth
CH	Chemical	**WE**	Wetness	**WK**	Workability
DR	Drought	**ER**	Erosion Risk	**WD**	Soil Wetness/Droughtiness
ST	Topsoil Stoniness				

Soil Pits and Auger Borings

1 **TEXTURE** soil texture classes are denoted by the following abbreviations

S	Sand	**LS**	Loamy Sand	**SL**	Sandy Loam
SZL	Sandy Silt Loam	**CL**	Clay Loam	**ZCL**	Silty Clay Loam
ZL	Silt Loam	**SCL**	Sandy Clay Loam	**C**	Clay
SC	Sandy Clay	**ZC**	Silty Clay	**OL**	Organic Loam
P	Peat	**SP**	Sandy Peat	**LP**	Loamy Peat
PL	Peaty Loam	**PS**	Peaty Sand	**MZ**	Marine Light Silts

For the sand loamy sand sandy loam and sandy silt loam classes the predominant size of sand fraction will be indicated by the use of the following prefixes

F Fine (more than 66% of the sand less than 0 2mm)
M Medium (less than 66% fine sand and less than 33% coarse sand)
C Coarse (more than 33% of the sand larger than 0 6mm)

The clay loam and silty clay loam classes will be sub-divided according to the clay content **M** Medium (<27% clay) **H** Heavy (27-35% clay)

2 **MOTTLE COL** Mottle colour using Munsell notation

3 **MOTTLE ABUN** Mottle abundance expressed as a percentage of the matrix or surface described

F few <2% **C** common 2 20% **M** many 20-40% **VM** very many 40% +

4 **MOTTLE CONT** Mottle contrast

F faint - indistinct mottles evident only on close inspection
D distinct - mottles are readily seen
P prominent - mottling is conspicuous and one of the outstanding features of the horizon

5 **PED COL** Ped face colour using Munsell notation

6 **GLEY** If the soil horizon is gleyed a Y will appear in this column If slightly gleyed an S will appear

7 **STONE LITH** Stone Lithology - One of the following is used

HR	all hard rocks and stones	**SLST**	soft oolitic or dolimitic limestone
CH	chalk	**FSST**	soft fine grained sandstone
ZR	soft argillaceous or silty rocks	**GH**	gravel with non-porous (hard) stones
MSST	soft medium grained sandstone	**GS**	gravel with porous (soft) stones
SI	soft weathered igneous/metamorphic rock		

Stone contents (>2cm >6cm and total) are given in percentages (by volume)

8 **STRUCT** the degree of development size and shape of soil peds are described using the following notation

degree of development	**WK** weakly developed	**MD** moderately developed
	ST strongly developed	
ped size	**F** fine	**M** medium
	C coarse	**VC** very coarse
ped shape	**S** single grain	**M** massive
	GR granular	**AB** angular blocky
	SAB sub angular blocky	**PR** prismatic
	PL platy	

9 **CONSIST** Soil consistence is described using the following notation

L loose **VF** very friable **FR** friable **FM** firm **VM** very firm
EM extremely firm **EH** extremely hard

10 **SUBS STR** Subsoil structural condition recorded for the purpose of calculating profile droughtiness **G** good **M** moderate **P** poor

11 **POR** Soil porosity If a soil horizon has less than 0 5% biopores >0 5 mm a 'Y' will appear in this column

12 **IMP** If the profile is impenetrable to rooting a Y' will appear in this column at the appropiate horizon

13 **SPL** Slowly permeable layer If the soil horizon is slowly permeable a Y' will appear in this column

14 **CALC** If the soil horizon is calcareous a 'Y will appear in this column

15 Other notations

APW available water capacity (in mm) adjusted for wheat
APP available water capacity (in mm) adjusted for potatoes
MBW moisture balance wheat
MBP moisture balance potatoes

SOIL PIT DESCRIPTION

Site Name ISLE OF THANET LP SITE 3 Pit Number 1P

Grid Reference TR36186750 Average Annual Rainfall 606 mm
Accumulated Temperature 1431 degree days
Field Capacity Level 121 days
Land Use Field Vegetables
Slope and Aspect degrees

HORIZON	TEXTURE	COLOUR	STONES >2	TOT STONE	LITH	MOTTLES	STRUCTURE	CONSIST	SUBSTRUCTURE	CALC
0- 30	MCL	10YR43 00	0	1	HR					
30- 50	MZCL	10YR56 00	0	0			MDCSAB	FR	M	
50- 70	HZCL	10YR56 00	0	0			MDCSAB	FR	M	
70- 90	C	75YR44 00	0	4	HR	C			M	
90-120	HCL	10YR64 00	0	25	CH				M	Y

Wetness Grade 1 Wetness Class I
Gleying 070 cm
SPL No SPL

Drought Grade 2 APW 151mm MBW 26 mm
APP 121mm MBP -3 mm

FINAL ALC GRADE 2
MAIN LIMITATION Droughtiness

SOIL PIT DESCRIPTION

Site Name ISLE OF THANET LP SITE 3 Pit Number 2P

Grid Reference TR36086664 Average Annual Rainfall 606 mm
Accumulated Temperature 1431 degree days
Field Capacity Level 121 days
Land Use
Slope and Aspect degrees

HORIZON	TEXTURE	COLOUR	STONES >2	TOT STONE	LITH	MOTTLES	STRUCTURE	CONSIST	SUBSTRUCTURE	CALC
0- 30	MCL	10YR32 00	0	1	HR					
30- 65	MZCL	10YR54 00	0	0			MDCSAB	FR	M	
65- 80	C	10YR54 00	0	0		C	MDMPR	VM	P	
80-120	C	10YR52 00	0	0		M			P	

Wetness Grade 2 Wetness Class II 80
Gleying 085 cm
SPL 065 cm

Drought Grade 2 APW 141mm MBW 16 mm
APP 119mm MBP -5 mm

FINAL ALC GRADE 2
MAIN LIMITATION Soil Wetness/Droughtiness

SAMPLE NO	GRID REF	USE	ASPECT	GRDNT	GLEY	SPL	--WETNESS-- CLASS	GRADE	-WHEAT- AP	MB	-POTS- AP	MB	DRT	M REL FLOOD	EROSN EXP	FROST DIST	CHEM LIMIT	ALC	COMMENTS
1P	TR36186750	VEG		070			1	1	151	26	121	-3	2				DR	2	Pit70Augd120
2P	TR36086664	STB		085	065		2	2	141	16	119	-5	2				WD	2	S1 gleyed 65

SAMPLE	DEPTH	TEXTURE	COLOUR	MOTTLES COL	MOTTLES ABUN	MOTTLES CONT	PED COL	GLEY	STONES 2	STONES >6	STONES LITH	STONES TOT	STRUCT/ CONSIST	SUBS STR	SUBS POR	SUBS IMP	SUBS SPL	SUBS CALC
1P	0-30	mcl	10YR43 00						0	0	HR	1						
	30-50	mzcl	10YR56 00						0	0		0	MDCSAB FR	M				
	50-70	hzcl	10YR56 00						0	0		0	MDCSAB FR	M				
	70-90	c	75YR44 00	10YR58 00	C			S	0	0	HR	4		M	Y			
	90-120	hcl	10YR64 00						0	0	CH	25		M				Y
2P	0-30	mcl	10YR32 00						0	0	HR	1						
	30-65	mzcl	10YR54 00						0	0		0	MDCSAB FR	M	Y			
	65-80	c	10YR54 00	10YR58 00	C			S	0	0		0	MDMPR VM	P	Y		Y	
	80-120	c	10YR52 00	10YR68 00	M			Y	0	0		0		P	Y		Y	