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**Proposed re-location of Canterbury College,
Canterbury, Kent**

**Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Summary Report**

March 1998

**Resource Planning Team
Eastern Region
FRCA Reading**

**RPT Job Number: 2002/013/98
FRCA Reference: EL 20/1854**

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION, SUMMARY REPORT

PROPOSED RE-LOCATION OF CANTERBURY COLLEGE, CANTERBURY, KENT

INTRODUCTION

1. This summary report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on approximately 27 hectares of land to the north of the A2 (T) and to the east of Hackington Road, to the south-east of Canterbury in Kent. This area is subject to a current planning application, regarding the proposed re-location of Canterbury College.

2. The above area was surveyed during February and March 1993, as part of a larger area of land (FRCA Ref: 2002/008/93). The latter was one of several sites surveyed as part of the Canterbury District Local Plan, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF). This survey supersedes any previous ALC information for this land.

3. The 1993 ALC work was conducted by members of the Resource Planning Team in the Guildford Statutory Group of ADAS. ALC work is currently carried out (from 1 April 1997) by the same team, but as part of the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)¹, Reading. 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 the 1993 survey, the land to the east of Hackington Road was in a variety of uses, including intensive horticultural cropping (hop gardens and top fruit orchards) and arable cropping (winter cereals). The areas mapped as 'Other land' include woodland and a track.

SUMMARY

5. An extract from the findings of the 1993 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.

6. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades, on the land to the east of Hackington Road, are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed area	% site area
1	17.5	67.3	65.1
2	8.5	32.7	31.6
Other land	0.9	N/A	3.3
Total surveyed area	26.0	100.0	96.7
Total site area	26.9	-	100.0

¹ FRCA is an executive agency of MAFF and the Welsh Office

7. The fieldwork was conducted at an average density of approximately one boring per hectare. In the area being proposed for the college re-location, 27 borings and one soil pit were described.

8. Approximately two-thirds of the land on the site has been classified as Grade 1 (excellent quality). This land has no or very minor limitations to agricultural use, the soils generally being deep, well drained clay loams or silty clay loams. The remainder of the land has been classified as Grade 2 (very good quality). This land is derived from similar soil profiles, but is subject to slight soil droughtiness limitations mainly due to stony lower horizons.

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.