

**FYLDE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN REVIEW
SHELL HILL FARM, LYTHAM
Agricultural Land Classification
ALC Map and Report
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**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT
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INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings of a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey on 5.4 hectares of land. The results of this survey supersede any previous ALC information for this land. The land is located to the north of Lytham, west of Saltcotes Road. The survey was in connection with the Fylde Borough Local Plan Review.
2. The survey was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in August 1997 by the Resource Planning Team of the Farming and Rural Conservation Agency (FRCA)- Northern region of FRCA.
3. The land has been graded in accordance with the publication "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales - Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land" (MAFF 1988) .
4. At the time of survey the agricultural land on this site was under wheat.

SUMMARY

5. The findings of the survey are shown on the enclosed ALC map. The map has been drawn at a scale of 1:10000 with an average auger boring density of 1 per hectare. The ALC map is only accurate at this base map scale and any enlargement would be misleading.
6. The area and proportions of the ALC grades and subgrades on the surveyed land are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Area of grades and other land

Grade/Other land	Area (hectares)	% surveyed area	% site area
1	-	-	-
2	-	-	-
3a	4.8	92	89
3b	0.4	8	7
4	-	-	-
5	-	-	-
Agricultural land not surveyed	-	N/A	-
Other land	0.2	N/A	4
Total surveyed area	5.2	100	-
Total site area	5.4	-	100

7. The agricultural land on this site has been classified as Subgrade 3a (good quality) and Subgrade 3b (moderate quality). The key limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

8. The area of good quality land is located across the majority of the site. The soils commonly comprise a medium clay loam topsoil overlying a gleyed medium clay loam upper subsoil passing to a sandy clay loam and, occasionally, clay at depth.

9. The area of moderate quality land is mapped in the east of the site. The soils in this area comprise a medium clay loam topsoil overlying a gleyed heavy clay loam subsoil, passing to clay.

FACTORS INFLUENCING ALC GRADE

Climate

10. Climate affects the grading of land through the assessment of an overall climatic limitation and also through interactions with soil characteristics.

11. The key climatic variables used for grading this site are given in Table 2 and were obtained from the published 5km grid datasets using standard interpolation procedures (Meteorological Office, 1989).

Table 2: Climatic and altitude data

Factor	Units	Values
Grid reference	N/A	SD 375 282
Altitude	m, AOD	4
Accumulated Temperature	day°C (Jan-June)	1437
Average Annual Rainfall	mm	873
Field Capacity Days	days	198
Moisture Deficit, Wheat	mm	85
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes	mm	72
Overall climatic grade	N/A	Grade 1

12. 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.

13. The main parameters used in the assessment of an overall climatic limitation are average annual rainfall (AAR), as a measure of overall wetness, and accumulated temperature (AT0, January to June), as a measure of the relative warmth of a locality.

14. The combination of rainfall and temperature at this site means that there is no overall climatic limitation. The site is climatically Grade 1.

Site

15. The site lies at an altitude of about 5 metres AOD and is generally level.
16. The three site factors of gradient, microrelief and flooding are considered when classifying the land.
17. These factors do not impose any limitations on the agricultural use of this land.

Geology and Soils

18. The solid geology of the area is comprised of Singleton Mudstone. This is overlain with deposits of boulder clay and marine/estuarine alluvium - British Geological Survey (1989).
19. The soils that have developed on this geology are generally of a medium clay loam texture over either silty clay loam or heavy clay loam with clay at depth.

Agricultural Land Classification

20. The details of the classification of the site are shown on the enclosed ALC map and the area statistics of each grade are given in Table 1, page 1.

Subgrade 3a

21. Land of good quality occupies 4.8 hectares (89%) of the site area and extends across the majority of the site in a single unit.
22. The soils have a medium clay loam texture over a medium clay loam upper subsoil and a gleyed sandy clay loam lower subsoil, in some cases passing onto clay at depth. The depths to gleying and where present, the slowly permeable layer, places these soils into Wetness Class III.
23. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

Subgrade 3b

24. Land of moderate quality occupies 0.4 hectares (7%) of the site area and is found in the east of the site in a single unit.
25. The soils have a medium clay loam texture over a gleyed heavy clay loam upper subsoil, passing to a gleyed and slowly permeable clay lower subsoil. The depths to gleying and the slowly permeable layer place these soils in Wetness Class IV.
26. The main limitation to the agricultural use of this land is soil wetness.

Other Land

27. Other land occupies 0.2 hectares (4%) of the site area and is found as buildings and a pond.

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SOURCES OF REFERENCE

British Geological Survey (1989) Sheet 74, Southport Solid and Drift Edition.

1:50 000 Scale.

BGS: London.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land.

MAFF: London.

Meteorological Office (1989) Climatological Data for Agricultural Land Classification.

Meteorological Office: Bracknell.