

**A1**  
**Canterbury District Local Plan**  
**CAN 9: Land west of Wincheap Farm,**  
**Thanington**  
**Agricultural Land Classification,**  
**ALC Map and Report**  
**March 1995**

# AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT

## CANTERBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

### CAN 9: LAND WEST OF WINCHEAP FARM, THANINGTON

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 ADAS was commissioned by MAFF's Land Use Planning Unit to provide information on land quality for a number of sites in the Canterbury district of Kent. The work forms part of MAFF's statutory input to the Canterbury District Local Plan.
- 1.2 CAN 9 comprises 0.6 hectares of land adjacent to the A2 and to the west of Wincheap Farm at Thanington, south-west of Canterbury, Kent. This site is contained within CAN 24 and CAN 2, also surveyed for the above Local Plan. An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey was carried out during March 1995. A total of 1 auger boring and one soil inspection pit were described in accordance with MAFF's revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land (MAFF, 1988). 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 survey the site was not under agricultural management and comprised rough grazing. Land mapped as non-agricultural comprises an area of trees and scrub.
- 1.5 The distribution of grades and subgrades is shown on the attached ALC map and the areas and extent 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 survey supersedes previous ALC surveys on this land.

**Table 1 : Distribution of Grades and Subgrades**

Grade	Area (ha)	% of Site	% of Agricultural Land
2	0.4	66.7	100.0 (0.4 ha)
Non-agricultural	<u>0.2</u>	<u>33.3</u>	
Total area of site	0.6	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 land has been classified as Grade 2, very good quality, because of minor soil droughtiness limitations. Profiles comprise deep, well drained and very slightly

stony silty textured soils. The interaction between these soil properties and the prevailing local climate, which is relatively dry in a national context, acts to impart a slight soil droughtiness limitation. This may lead to the soil available water being insufficient to fully meet crop needs. Consequently this land will suffer from a slightly lower yield potential and less consistent crop yields.

## 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, 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. However climatic factors do interact with soil factors to influence soil wetness and droughtiness limitations. The soil moisture deficits are relatively high, in a regional context, at this locality. High soil moisture deficits increase the likelihood of soil droughtiness limitations.

**Table 2 : Climatic Interpolation**

Grid Reference	TR 139 566
Altitude (m)	20
Accumulated Temperature (degree days, Jan-June)	1475
Average Annual Rainfall (mm)	672
Field Capacity (days)	141
Moisture Deficit, Wheat (mm)	120
Moisture Deficit, Potatoes (mm)	116
Overall Climatic Grade	1

- 2.4 No other local climatic factors, such as exposure or frost risk, are believed to affect the site.

## 3. Relief

- 3.1 The site is flat and lies at approximately 20 m AOD.

## 4. Geology and Soil

- 4.1 The published geological sheet (BGS, 1982) maps the entire site as Upper Chalk overlain by drift deposits of head brickearth.

4.2 The most recent published soils information (SSEW, 1983) shows the site as Urban. However, soils of the Coombe 1 Association are shown immediately south of the site. These soils are described as 'well drained calcareous fine silty soils, deep in valley bottoms, shallow to chalk on valley sides in places'. The soils for this area are also similarly described in the Soils of Kent (SSEW, 1980).

4.3 Detailed field examination found deep well drained silty textured soils.

## 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 The land has been classified as Grade 2, very good quality, because of minor soil droughtiness limitations. Medium sandy silt loam topsoils overlie medium silty clay loam subsoils. Profiles are very slightly stony, containing 0-5% total flints by volume, and are well drained (Wetness Class I). Pit 1 typifies such soils and was found to have moderately structured subsoils. The interaction between these soil textures, stone contents and subsoil structures with the prevailing local climate means that this land is likely to have slightly reduced profile available water. Consequently there is a minor risk of drought stress for those crops which are grown. This will result in a slightly lower yield potential and less consistent crop yields.

ADAS Ref: 2002/054/95  
MAFF Ref: EL 20/642

Resource Planning Team  
Guildford Statutory Group  
ADAS Reading

## **SOURCES OF REFERENCE**

British Geological Survey (1982), Sheet No. 289, Canterbury, 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.

Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983), Sheet 6, Soils of South East England, 1:250,000 and accompanying legend.

# 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, 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. 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 <sup>1</sup>
I	The soil profile is not wet within 70 cm depth for more than 30 days in most years. <sup>2</sup>
II	The soil profile is wet within 70 cm depth for 31-90 days in most years <b>or</b> , 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 <b>or</b> , 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 <b>or</b> , 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.

<sup>1</sup>The number of days specified is not necessarily a continuous period.

<sup>2</sup>'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**

**Database Printout - Boring Level Information**

**Database Printout - Horizon Level Information**

## 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

- GRID REF** : national 100 km grid square and 8 figure grid reference.
- USE** : Land use at the time of survey. The following abbreviations are used.

<b>ARA</b> : Arable	<b>WHT</b> : Wheat	<b>BAR</b> : Barley
<b>CER</b> : Cereals	<b>OAT</b> : Oats	<b>MZE</b> : Maize
<b>OSR</b> : Oilseed rape	<b>BEN</b> : Field Beans	<b>BRA</b> : Brassicae
<b>POT</b> : Potatoes	<b>SBT</b> : Sugar Beet	<b>FCD</b> : Fodder Crops
<b>LIN</b> : Linseed	<b>FRT</b> : Soft and Top Fruit	<b>FLW</b> : Fallow
<b>PGR</b> : Permanent Pasture	<b>LEY</b> : Ley Grass	<b>RGR</b> : Rough Grazing
<b>SCR</b> : Scrub	<b>CFW</b> : Coniferous Woodland	<b>DCW</b> : Deciduous Wood
<b>HTH</b> : Heathland	<b>BOG</b> : Bog or Marsh	<b>FLW</b> : Fallow
<b>PLO</b> : Ploughed	<b>SAS</b> : Set aside	<b>OTH</b> : Other
<b>HRT</b> : Horticultural Crops		
- GRDNT** : Gradient as estimated or measured by a hand-held optical clinometer.
- GLEYSPL** : Depth in centimetres (cm) to gleying and/or slowly permeable layers.
- AP (WHEAT/POTS)** : Crop-adjusted available water capacity.
- MB (WHEAT/POTS)** : Moisture Balance. (Crop adjusted AP - crop adjusted MD)
- DRT** : Best grade according to soil droughtiness.
- If any of the following factors are considered significant, 'Y' will be entered in the relevant column.

<b>MREL</b> : Microrelief limitation	<b>FLOOD</b> : Flood risk	<b>EROSN</b> : Soil erosion risk
<b>EXP</b> : Exposure limitation	<b>FROST</b> : Frost prone	<b>DIST</b> : Disturbed land
<b>CHEM</b> : Chemical limitation		
- LIMIT** : The main limitation to land quality. The following abbreviations are used.

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

## Soil Pits and Auger Borings

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

<b>S</b> :	Sand	<b>LS</b> :	Loamy Sand	<b>SL</b> :	Sandy Loam
<b>SZL</b> :	Sandy Silt Loam	<b>CL</b> :	Clay Loam	<b>ZCL</b> :	Silty Clay Loam
<b>ZL</b> :	Silt Loam	<b>SCL</b> :	Sandy Clay Loam	<b>C</b> :	Clay
<b>SC</b> :	Sandy Clay	<b>ZC</b> :	Silty Clay	<b>OL</b> :	Organic Loam
<b>P</b> :	Peat	<b>SP</b> :	Sandy Peat	<b>LP</b> :	Loamy Peat
<b>PL</b> :	Peaty Loam	<b>PS</b> :	Peaty Sand	<b>MZ</b> :	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:

<b>F</b> :	Fine (more than 66% of the sand less than 0.2mm)
<b>M</b> :	Medium (less than 66% fine sand and less than 33% coarse sand)
<b>C</b> :	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. **GLEYS** : 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.

<b>HR</b> :	all hard rocks and stones	<b>SLST</b> :	soft oolitic or dolimitic limestone
<b>CH</b> :	chalk	<b>FSST</b> :	soft, fine grained sandstone
<b>ZR</b> :	soft, argillaceous, or silty rocks	<b>GH</b> :	gravel with non-porous (hard) stones
<b>MSST</b> :	soft, medium grained sandstone	<b>GS</b> :	gravel with porous (soft) stones
<b>SI</b> :	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 appropriate 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 : CANTERBURY LP CAN/9 Pit Number : 1P

Grid Reference: TR13905660 Average Annual Rainfall : 672 mm  
 Accumulated Temperature : 1475 degree days  
 Field Capacity Level : 141 days  
 Land Use : Rough Grazing  
 Slope and Aspect : degrees

HORIZON	TEXTURE	COLOUR	STONES >2	TOT.STONE	LITH	MOTTLES	STRUCTURE	CONSIST	SUBSTRUCTURE	CALC
0- 25	MSZL	10YR32 42	0	3	HR					
25- 42	MZCL	10YR42 54	0	2	HR	F	MDCSAB	FR	M	
42- 80	MZCL	10YR54 00	0	0			MDCSAB	FR	M	
80-100	MZCL	10YR54 00	0	0					M	
100-120	MZCL	10YR54 00	0	5	HR				M	

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

Drought Grade : 2 APW : 157mm MBW : 37 mm  
 APP : 122mm MBP : 6 mm

FINAL ALC GRADE : 2  
 MAIN LIMITATION : Droughtiness

SAMPLE NO.	GRID REF	ASPECT USE	--WETNESS--		-WHEAT-		-POTS-		M.REL		EROSN	FROST	CHEM	ALC	COMMENTS	
			GRDNT	GLEY SPL	CLASS	GRADE	AP	MB	AP	MB	DRT	FLOOD	EXP	DIST		LIMIT
1	TR13905660	RGR			1	1	156	36	120	4	2			DR	2	Pots limit Ap
1P	TR13905660	RGR			1	1	157	37	122	6	2			DR	2	Pit80 Augd120

SAMPLE	DEPTH	TEXTURE	COLOUR	----MOTTLES-----			PED COL.	----STONES----			STRUCT/ CONSIST	SUBS					
				COL	ABUN	CONT		GLEY	>2	>6		LITH	TOT	STR	POR	IMP	SPL
1	0-25	msz1	10YR42 00					0	0	HR	3						
	25-55	mzc1	10YR43 44					0	0	HR	5			M			
	55-120	mzc1	10YR54 00					0	0		0			M			
1P	0-25	msz1	10YR32 42					0	0	HR	3						
	25-42	mzc1	10YR42 54	00M00	00	F		0	0	HR	2	MDCSAB	FR	M			
	42-80	mzc1	10YR54 00					0	0		0	MDCSAB	FR	M			
	80-100	mzc1	10YR54 00					0	0		0			M			
	100-120	mzc1	10YR54 00					0	0	HR	5			M			