

AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

FAVERDALE FARM, DARLINGTON

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LEEDS REGIONAL OFFICE

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AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION REPORT
ON LAND AT FAVERDALE FARM, DARLINGTON

1. Introduction and General Site Characteristics

1.1 Location and Survey Methods

The site is located around National Grid Reference NZ 273172 adjoining the A68 to the north west of Darlington. It covers 48 hectares all of which is in agricultural use.

Survey work was carried out in February 1991 when soils were examined by hand auger borings at 100 metre intervals predetermined by the National Grid. All assessments of land quality were made using the methods described in "Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised Guidelines and Criteria for Grading the quality of Agricultural Land" (MAFF 1988).

1.2 Land Use

The land is roughly divided into 2 parts; arable (cereal) cropping in the west and permanent pasture in the east. There are also 2 small strips of woodland.

1.3 Climate and Relief

Mean Annual Rainfall (AAR) is approximately 647 mm Accumulated temperature above 0°C between January and June (ATO) 1314 days°C and the field capacity period is around 160 days per year.

The temperature and rainfall values impose an overall climatic limitation of Grade 2 on all agricultural land in the area. Summer moisture deficits of 97 mm for wheat and 85 mm for potatoes indicate that soil droughtiness will be slightly limiting or very light and/or shallow soils.

Altitude is around 60 metres above Ordnance Datum in a gently undulating relief. Slopes do not exceed 7° and so do not restrict the use of agricultural machinery or affect ALC grade.

1.4 Geology and Soils

Soils on the site are formed on boulder clay which forms a thick cover over the underlying Permian Marls and Limestones. To the west of Middle Faverdale Farm soils consist predominantly of medium clay loam topsoils over gleyed slowly permeable clay subsoils. These are slowly permeable below 25-30 cm depth and fall mainly within Wetness Class IV. East of Middle Faverdale Farm textures are generally similar, but drainage is more variable. Slowly permeable subsoil horizons often occur at greater depth resulting, in many places, in better drainage (Wetness Classes I and II).

2. AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION GRADES

The ALC grades occurring on this site are as follows:

Grade	Hectares	Percentage of Total Area
2	10.8	22.4%
3a	6.9	14.3%
3b	27.9	57.9%
Farm Buildings	1.1	2.3%
Farm Woodland	0.7	1.5%
Urban	<u>0.8</u>	<u>1.6%</u>
	48.2	100

2.1 Grade 2

Land in this grade occurs in a belt running from Tower Cottage through Faverdale Farm to near Cockerton Grange. Soils consist mainly of medium clay loam topsoils over heavy clay loam or sandy clay loam subsoils to depth. Subsoils are rarely slowly permeable and most profiles fall within Wetness Classes I and II. The main restriction on this land is the overriding climatic limitation.

2.2 Subgrade 3a

Subgrade 3a land is extensive to the west of Faverdale Hall. Smaller areas occur to the north west of Faverdale Farm and on the north eastern boundary of the site. Soils consist of medium clay loam topsoils over heavy clay loam and clay subsoils. Most are slowly permeable and gleyed between 50 cm at 70 cm depth and this falls within Wetness Class III. They are limited to subgrade 3a by wetness and workability problems.

2.3 Subgrade 3b

The majority of land on the site falls within this subgrade. Most soils consist of medium clay loam or medium silty clay loam topsoils 25 cm to

35 cms in thickness overlying gleyed and slowly permeable clay and heavy clay loam subsoils to depth. Soils of this type fall within Wetness Class IV and are limited to subgrade 3b by wetness and workability problems which are more severe than on the adjoining subgrade 3a land.

2.4 Farm Buildings

These consist the buildings in use at Middle Faverdale Farm and Cockerton Grange along with derelict buildings at Faverdale Farm.

2.5 Farm Woodland

This consists of a fenced strip of mixed woodland between Middle Faverdale and Faverdale Farm and a similar strip to the north of Cockerton Grange.

2.6 Urban

The access road crossing the site falls into this category.

RPG
Leeds RO
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