



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 November 2025

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/W/25/3369010

W Brazil and Sons Ltd, The Lodge, Sacketts Hill, Broadstairs, Kent CT10 2QS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by 1948 Group Ltd against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref is F/TH/23/1212.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 13no two storey residential dwellings, comprising of 8no 4-bed and 5no 3-bed, together with associated access, landscaping and parking.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The proposal was originally described on the application form as 'redevelopment of the existing waste transfer site comprising the cessation of existing waste transfer operations and the erection of up to no. 20 residential dwellings (including affordable housing) and associated landscaping and infrastructure, alongside retention of the existing dwelling the Lodge'. However, the proposal was subsequently amended, and the banner above reflects the amended plans and the description of development on the appeal form and decision notice.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the Green Wedge and the character and appearance of the area; and
 - whether the proposal would achieve a satisfactory mix of dwellings.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a dwelling and a surrounding reclamation yard containing some structures including a small office, portacabins, derelict larger buildings and sizeable areas of hardstanding along with much overgrown land. There is a waste transfer licence for the site, but little evidence that this use is currently taking place. Much of the site is contained by hedges and protected mature trees which separate it from the surrounding fields and cluster of buildings around Sacketts Hill Farm to the south. Access is from the A255 Dane Court Road via Sacketts Hill, a narrow lane and public right of way (PROW).
5. In terms of the Thanet Local Plan 2020 (LP), the site lies within the countryside and a Green Wedge. Policy SP25 of the LP sets out the aims of Green Wedges.

This includes safeguarding areas of open countryside to maintain physical separation and avoid coalescence of the towns, retaining their individual character and distinctiveness. Another aim is to conserve the essentially rural and unspoilt character, and distinctive landscape qualities of the countryside that separates the urban areas. New development in Green Wedges should not be detrimental or contrary to these aims. The appeal site lies in the largest Green Wedge which separates Margate and Broadstairs, substantial areas of which consist of large open agricultural fields, with some isolated woodland belts.

6. Policy BSP1 of the Broadstairs & St Peter's Neighbourhood Development Plan 2023-2040 (NDP) reinforces the objectives of Green Wedges set out in Policy SP25 of the LP. With some limited exceptions which exclude residential schemes, it does not support new development in the Green Wedge areas.
7. The site is within the St Peters Undulating Chalk Farmland Landscape Character Area (LCA) where the characteristic features include an undulating landform, large scale fields dissected by several transport routes and well-treed farmsteads. The LP recognises that the agricultural land performs a settlement separation function, and the openness and undeveloped character of the farmland contributes to the essentially rural character. Policy SP26 of the LP requires developments to respond to the character of the LCA. The site comprises a patch of land enclosed by trees amongst the surrounding farmland, and as such positively contributes to the character of the LCA.
8. The proposal is to construct 13 part two, part single storey contemporary flat roof houses with separate garages around a circular access. Several low value trees would be removed due to their poor condition or to accommodate the scheme, with new planting and measures to protect the many remaining trees, resulting in a low-density residential development in a landscaped setting. There would also be a new access and widening of Sacketts Hill, including a new footway alongside it.
9. The scheme would result in the introduction of suburban residential development in a Green Wedge. Unlike the appeal allowed in 2017 for 156 dwellings at Westwood Lodge on the edge of an existing settlement¹, the proposed development would be in the middle of the Green Wedge and countryside away from the built-up areas of Broadstairs and Margate. Due to its location and scale, the proposal would harmfully erode the open countryside which is an important function of the Green Wedge in maintaining the break in development between the towns. Allowing residential developments of the scale proposed in the countryside between the built-up areas of Broadstairs and Margate could eventually lead to the coalescence of these towns which the Green Wedge designation seeks to avoid.
10. There are existing structures and hardstanding on the site, but due to the number of proposed dwellings and garages and the new access road, the appeal scheme would significantly increase the amount and area of built development in this location. Along with the alterations to Sacketts Hill and paraphernalia associated with the new houses, the built development would result in substantial urbanisation of the site. This would unacceptably affect the rural and landscape character.
11. The appellant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment indicates that the dwellings would not be visible from several viewpoints along the A255, A256 and some PROWs in the wider area. Nevertheless, although the boundary planting

¹ Appeal ref: APP/Z2260/W/16/3151686

would help screen the development, the new buildings would be visible from the Sacketts Hill PROW and nearby houses through gaps in the vegetation, particularly in autumn and winter months when many trees are not in leaf. The new access and alterations to Sacketts Hill would create a more engineered appearance, evident to those travelling along the lane and parts of Dane Court Road. As such, the proposed scheme would appear incongruous in this countryside location.

12. Consequently, I conclude that the proposal would harm the Green Wedge and the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to Policies SP24, SP25 and SP26 and Policies BSP1 and BSP9 of the NDP where they seek to safeguard the aims of the Green Wedges and respect the character of the countryside and landscape, amongst other things.
13. Policy BSP2 of the NDP relates to development proposals affecting important views and vistas. As it is not clear that the appeal site falls within any such vistas, I find no specific conflict with Policy BSP2 when reaching my conclusion.

Dwelling mix

14. Policy SP22 of the LP expects proposals for housing development to provide an appropriate mix of market and affordable housing types and sizes having regard to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) recommendations as may be reviewed or superseded.
15. The supporting text to the policy outlines the results of the 2016 SHMA. This indicates that the housing stock is characterised by a combination of dense provision, overprovision of smaller flats and flatted buildings, and a shortage of larger homes of 3 bedrooms or more. It recommends that 40-45% of market units and 30-35% of affordable homes should be 2-beds, with 30-35% of market dwellings and 20-25% of affordable units having 3-beds, and much less provision of 10-15% market and 5-10% affordable homes with 4-beds needed. Whilst it is some time since the SHMA was produced, there is no substantive evidence before me that the sizes of homes needed in Thanet has changed since 2016.
16. The proposed scheme would comprise eight 4-bed and five 3-bed houses. The submitted Section 106 agreement² includes provision for four affordable housing units on the site, or an off-site contribution if a Registered Provider cannot be secured to take on the affordable housing units.
17. The appellant refers to the large share of flatted accommodation in previous dwelling completions in Thanet and to the encouragement in Policy SP22 for residential development to incorporate a higher ratio of houses to flats. By providing only houses, the proposal would accord with this part of the policy.
18. The proposed mix of detached family dwellings could be attractive to small and medium sized building companies. Further, the SHMA states that consideration should be given to the nature of the area in applying the need for different sized homes. In this case, the contained, landscaped setting of the site outside the main urban area could provide an appealing living environment for families.
19. However, whilst the original proposal included a wider housing mix, the amended scheme does not include provision for 2-bed properties for which there is

² Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

significant identified need, and there is little indication on why they could not be accommodated. As such, the proposed development would not provide an appropriate mix of differently sized homes to meet the needs in Thanet.

20. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would fail to achieve a satisfactory mix of dwellings, contrary to Policy SP22 of the LP.

Other Matters

21. The Council did not find harm or development plan conflict in relation to several other matters, including parking, highway safety, infrastructure and affordable housing provision, archaeological assets, energy efficiency, protected species, contaminated land, flood risk, drainage, and air quality. Further, several consultees did not object. However, even if I were to agree with the Council on these points, the absence of harm would be a neutral matter which would not carry weight in favour of the proposed development.
22. The site lies close to the grade II listed Sacketts Hill Farmhouse. Its special interest and significance derive in part from it being a late 17th to early 18th century two storey red brick farmhouse with shaped Dutch gables at the ends. The Council is concerned that the proposed scheme would change the sense of openness around the listed building and cause some harm to its setting. Nonetheless, the reasons for refusal do not refer to the impact on the listed building and as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, I have not considered this matter further.
23. The appeal scheme would be likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination, on the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area and Ramsar site due to its proximity to it. However, notwithstanding the planning obligation to contribute towards mitigation measures in the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Plan, given my conclusion below there is no need to consider the implications of the proposal on the protected site because the scheme is unacceptable for other reasons.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

24. The Council accepts that it cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply required by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). The Council's position is that it has a 3.78 year supply. Further, the 2023 Housing Delivery Test results confirm delivery of 67% over the previous three years, significantly below the 75% referred to in the Framework. The appellant considers that given the LP housing requirements and the lack of a quick review of the LP, the Council's housing needs are likely to further increase in the future. As there is a shortfall in housing provision, paragraph 11(d) of the Framework is engaged.
25. Paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the Framework confirms that in such circumstances, permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes.
26. The Framework seeks to boost housing supply. The proposal would make a modest contribution of 13 homes to the supply of housing, making better use of underutilised land with access to services on foot, by bike and by bus. It would

contribute towards Thanet's housing supply, including provision for affordable housing, making a modest difference to addressing the shortfall. Therefore, I attribute moderate weight to this benefit.

27. There would also be some economic benefits during the construction phase when the development would provide jobs and once occupied when future residents would support local shops and services but conversely a commercial use would be lost. Further, the scheme would improve the ecological value of the site, including net gain in deciduous woodland and enhancement of habitats. There would also be a new 2m wide footway/cycleway alongside Sacketts Hill linking to the A255. Further, removing the previous use would result in environmental benefits, including land remediation, and the Minerals and Waste Authority does not object to the proposal. However, given the scale of the proposed development and the relatively minor nature of the enhancements, these benefits would be limited.
28. The Framework recognises the important contribution that small and medium sized sites can make to meeting the housing requirement of an area, but the site is too large to meet the definition of these outlined in the Framework.
29. There are references to the site being previously developed land (PDL), and the appellant considers that the proposal would meet the Council's objective of prioritising development on PDL which has recently declined. However, whilst parts of it contain buildings and hardstanding, much is overgrown and contains the remains of structures which have blended into the landscape. As such, it is not clear that the whole site meets the Framework's definition of PDL which limits the weight I can attribute to this.
30. In contrast, the proposed scheme would harm the Green Wedge and the character and appearance of the area and fail to achieve a satisfactory mix of dwellings. This would conflict with the Framework where it requires development to be sympathetic to local character and provide an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. The proposal would also be contrary to Policies SP22, SP24, SP25 and SP26 of the LP and Policies BSP1 and BSP9 of the NDP. These matters carry significant weight against the scheme. Indeed, the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
31. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and the material considerations, including the Framework, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Wright

INSPECTOR