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Your ref: 3/2024/0213
Our ref: 3/2024/0213/HDC/KW
Date: 12 March 2026

Location: Eight at Gazegill Gazegill Organics Dancer Lane Rimington BB7 4EE
Proposal: Retrospective planning application to continue use of single storey restaurant building, outdoor seating area, play area and vehicle parking area.
Grid Ref: 382097 446306

Dear Ben Taylor

With regard to your consultation letter dated 18 October 2024, I have the following comments to make based on all the information provided by the applicant to date and after undertaking a site visit.

Summary

Further information required

Lancashire County Council acting as the Local Highway Authority (LHA) does not consider that the application as submitted fully assesses the highway impact of the proposed development and further information is required as set out in this response.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Introduction

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) are in receipt of an application for the retrospective planning application to continue use of single storey restaurant building, outdoor seating area, play area and vehicle parking area at Gazegill Organic Farm Lower Gazegill Farm Cross Hill Lane Rimington BB7 4EE.

The LHA are aware of the planning application history for the site which is as follows:

- 3/2024/0213 - Regularisation of Restaurant and Car Park. Refused on 28 November 2024.
- 3/2018/0700 - Erection of a new farm butchery with two holiday lets on the first floor. Approved on 18 December 2028.
- 3/2016/1159 - Erection of a farm tea room and car park on agricultural land. Approved on 31 January 2017.

The LHA is aware that the current proposal is retrospective and the restaurant is or has been in operation for some time.

Continued...

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Site Access

The site is accessed from Dancer Lane which is a private access track subject to a national speed limit. Dancer Lane also makes up Public Right of Way, FP0336017.

The application details access improvements, however, a detailed dimensional plan showing the existing site access and the proposed site access has not been included within the application. The supported highway technical note details a number of access improvement such as the verge vegetation clearance to improve visibility and accommodate vehicle passing at the entrance to Gazegill Farm.

The LHA request that detailed dimensional site access plan is provided so that a clear comparison can be made of the suggested improvements. Given the commercial nature of the site, it is expected that the access is at least 6m wide.

The access serves Lower Gazegill, Lower Gazegill Farm, a farm shop as well as the development site which has had previous permission to operate as a tearoom/café.

The Local Highway Authority have raised concerns over the intensification of use of Dancer Lane previously, in response to applications 3/2018/0700, 3/2016/1159 and 3/2024/0213. Dancer Lane which is a privately maintained single-track road, limited forward visibility in sections, the LHA understand that the applicant is proposing informal passing places as part of this proposal. The LHA has previously stated that any increased vehicle movements on Dancer Lane would present highway safety concerns due limited passing opportunities, alongside the rural nature of the road, lack of footways and street lighting. The road also makes up Public Right of Way, FP0336017 therefore it is expected that drivers would likely meet pedestrians within the private track. There are also unprotected drops adjacent to the carriageway where Rimmington Beck runs alongside, which is particularly concerning during the hours of darkness. The LHA has previously advised that further diversification and intensified use of the lane would not be supported.

The applicant advised the LHA in 2018 when in discussions about planning application 3/2018/0700 that while they have some responsibility for the surfacing and maintenance of Dancer Lane, the adjacent land is not within their control and *'at best we could tidy back the over-spilling verges and put some stone in as well as surface the existing gateways to facilitate better passing places'*.

Whilst the Local planning authority at the time of reviewing planning applications 3/2018/0700 and 3/2016/1159 did not pursue our recommendation regarding the need for passing places along Dancer Lane, the requirements of the highway authority must remain the same as future development could increase the vehicular traffic along Dancer Lane to the detriment of the safety of its users.

Highway Technical Note

The Highways Technical Note, November 2025, 5286-HTN01b, has been submitted to address the reasons for refusal issued in November 2024, which related primarily to:

- the suitability of Dancer Lane as the sole means of access,
- lack of formal passing places,



- narrow single-track width,
- lack of footways and lighting,
- interaction between vehicles and pedestrians using the Public Right of Way (PRoW),
- intensified use beyond what was previously approved under the 2017 tearoom permission.

Passing places

In aim to address the LHAs previously raised concerns the applicant identifies five informal passing locations three of which have been recently implemented. These vary greatly in usability; some are simply widened verges or gateway entrances as such the LHA will comment on each location below.

The first location to provide an informal passing place discussed in the Highway Technical Note is identified as at the access point to Mulberry Grange where two way vehicle movement could take place approximately 75m from the junction of Dancer Lane with Cross Hill Lane. However the LHA would not consider an access point as a formal passing place. Using the widened area at a dwelling as a passing place introduces conflict with vehicles turning into or out of the dwelling, increased risk to vulnerable road users existing out of the driveway and potential obstruction of the private access, which is unacceptable in design. A passing facility must not interfere with private residential activity or create new conflict points.

Similarly, the second informal passing place discussed in the Highway Technical Note is identified a further 115m west, located on a bend at this location, a grass verge at a field gate allows a total available width of around 5.5m sufficient to allows two cars to pass one another. Again, the LHA would not consider access points to sufficiently provide safe passage, at this location conflict with agricultural vehicle use is high, there is potential of obstruction, which is unacceptable in highway design. A passing facility must not interfere with private activity or create new conflict points.

A third informal passing place has recently been implemented approximately 45 metres north of the second location and approximately 200 metres from the junction of Dancer Lane. This feature around 40 metres of widened area and reaches a maximum width of 7 metres. A swept path analysis has been provided as seen in drawing 5286-D02, Revision B.

A fourth information passing place is approximately 60 metres beyond the third location where the track has been locally widened at an existing farm access. In this location there are two agricultural field gates as well as the access to Beck Side Farm. Conflict in this area is likely to occur due to the number of accesses within a short section of carriageway. Vehicle waiting in this location could result in conflict with residents and agriculture operations.

A final informal passing place is situated approximately 50 metres further west, where verge vegetation has been cleared to improve visibility and accommodate vehicle passing at the entrance to Gazegill Farm. Although a detailed site access plan has not been provided swept path analysis has been provided as seen in drawing 5286-D02, Revision B. The Swept Path analysis uses a Standard Design Vehicle; however it fails to account for agricultural movement along the lane, give the site forms a farm and there are a

number of agricultural holdings along Dancer Lane, the LHA is of the opinion that agricultural use is common and conflict with agricultural vehicles has not been addressed as part of this proposal.

Whilst the LHA note that two-way vehicle movement could take place in the informal passing place locations one, two and four, this does not omit concerns that conflict is likely in these locations, these access points do not appear to fall within the applicants control and as such third parties access could be detrimentally affected. It is also possible that third parties do not support this use and as they have control over their own access points, they could stop use in this way by physical means at any point in time. As such future proofing these suggested passing place is questionable.

The LHA would also raised concerns over the future proofing of the other passing places as none are suggested to be formalised, formally surfaced, or protected, which means performance in wet weather, darkness, or during verge saturation is questionable. Two are located on bends and could be constrained by limited visibility, it is noted that no forward visibility drawings have been provided. The LHA did raise concerns over forward visibility along the road previously.

The first 200m from Cross Hill Lane still has no viable passing opportunity, given that they can only be provided by utilising existing access points meaning two vehicles meeting head-on may still need to reverse a considerable distance or even out of the junction which is not supported. Therefore, despite the improvements, the route still fails to meet minimum standards for safe two-way movement for an intensified commercial use.

The continued maintenance of these passing places is also questionable due to the ownership or control not being clearly identified. Due to this the applicant cannot include these passing places within their red edge and as such the LHA cannot impose necessary conditions which future proof their existence.

Traffic flows and traffic generation

An Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) was installed at the eastern end of Dancer Lane from Thursday 14th August to Wednesday 20th August 2025. The ATC was installed to capture all existing traffic using Dancer Lane to access Gazegill Organic Farm Shop, Gazegill Organics, Eight Restaurant and Beck Side Farm.

To determine the proportion of traffic attributable to the recently constructed Eight Restaurant, staff recorded all table bookings including arrival and departure times. This data has been compared with the ATC survey results. As the booking system only records party size and not mode of travel, car trips were estimated as bookings of up to 4 people came together in one car and bookings of 5 or more arrived in two cars.

The ATC recorded the highest number of two-way trips as 271 on Saturday 16 August 2025. Friday 15 August 2025 was the highest weekday with 237 two-way trips along Dancer Lane.

The Highways technical note states that the restaurant accounts for 36.7% on Friday and 42.8% on Saturday of all movements along Dancer Lane. This methodology fails to account for booking under four customers arriving in more than one vehicle and five or more customers arriving in more than two vehicles, it also fails to demonstrate that the



site experience additional vehicle trips to the farm shop which shall be accounted for in none-restaurant trips. As well as failing to account for staff who work within the site. As such the LHA are of the opinion that the site restaurant is likely to generate a larger proportion of vehicle movements than what has been shown within the results. However, for completeness the LHA will continue their assessment based of the information provided to date.

Whilst the farm shop activities are not in question, it is important to note that the nature of Dancer Lane does not support additional traffic and that low flows are more appropriate for rural roads, especially where they also form shared spaces with vulnerable road users such as those using the area for recreational purposes as well as agricultural uses often associated with rural areas.

Although the results of the data is questionable, the data shows that the restaurant still accounts for 42.8% of all vehicle movements along Dancer Lane on Saturday. This day represents the highest number of vehicle trips to the site, although it is likely to be higher given the estimation of car sharing as well as staffing consideration.

The following analysis looks specifically at movements after 18:00 recorded as part of the Dancer Lane Traffic Survey, found with Appendix A of the Highway Technical Note. This time period is a particular concern given that the restaurant continues to operate into the evening, unlike the historic tearoom permission.

The ATC and Restaurant-estimated movements after 18:00 on Friday were:

Hour	ATC (Two-Way)	Total	Restaurant Movements	Non-Restaurant Traffic
18:00– 19:00	10		7	3
19:00– 20:00	17		9	8
20:00– 21:00	5		3	2
21:00– 22:00	11		8	3
22:00– 23:00	7		5	2
23:00– 00:00	9		3	6
Total	59		35	24

The finding show that the restaurant does accounts for the majority of evening trips. Between 18:00 and 23:00, restaurant traffic makes up 35 of the 59 two-way movements. During 19:00–20:00, restaurant trips represent 59.3% of all movements. As such there is a clear increase in vehicle movements along Dancer Lane which does not exist under the former tearoom permission. Traffic persists into the 22:00–23:00 hour, with 7 overall movements of which 5 are restaurant-related under the applications assessment and methodology. Resulting in vehicles navigating Dancer Lane at a time with no street lighting. The restaurant therefore materially intensifies traffic during the most sensitive hours from a safety perspective.

The ATC and Restaurant estimated movements after 18:00 on Saturday were:

Hour	ATC (Two-Way)	Total	Restaurant Movements	Non-Restaurant Traffic
18:00– 19:00	12		9	3
19:00– 20:00	7		6	1
20:00– 21:00	0		0	0
21:00– 22:00	9		8	1
22:00– 23:00	8		3	5
23:00– 00:00	10		0	10
Total	46		26	20

The Restaurant again heightens early-evening movement between the hours of 18:00 and 22:00. The data shows that the proposal represents a higher number of trips visiting the restaurant than what would exist on the network naturally. Traffic reappears at 21:00–22:00, with 9 total movements of which 8 are restaurant-related.

The restaurant generates no movements from 23:00–00:00, but 10 non-restaurant trips occur, this could be accounted for as staffing travel or that Dancer Lane continues to be used by multiple users at night, compounding conflict risk.

The evening data forms an important part of the traffic survey because of the concerns raised over vehicle movement in the hours of darkness which was highlighted by the LHA previously. Dancer Lane is unlit and lacks appropriate formalised passing places. There are also unprotected drops to Rimmington Beck in places which further raises highway safety concerns.

The previous tearoom generated no or very little post 18:00 traffic, because it was closed. The proposed restaurant generates additional movements over the evening hours which are likely to be higher than those detailed above due to the quality of the methodology used to assess vehicle movement. Forward visibility is questioned along Dancer Lane and reversing at night still presents a high risk due to the lack of formalised passing places, no street light and unprotected drops.

The survey shows sustained evening activity, which would not exist under the approved development at the site. The survey results show this is not a short peak but repeated, regular evening flows driven by restaurant turnover. On both Friday and Saturday evenings, the restaurant accounts for over 50% of movements after 18:00. This confirms the LHA's concerns that the restaurant materially intensifies traffic during periods of darkness, on an access lane fundamentally unsuitable for evening commercial traffic. As



such the LHA is of the opinion that the evening traffic data alone provides substantial evidence that the access route is not suitable.

Tea room Comparison

The above section details how the Tea room which has existing permissions does not operate after 18:00. The technical note argues that peak-hour movements are similar to those estimated for a theoretical tearoom trip data. The tearoom modelling relies on a single TRICS site based in Scotland, the site was surveyed on Thursday 28 October 2010. The results of the survey are below:

Table 3.1 – Trip Rates and Traffic Generation Forecasts – Previous Tearoom Permission

Time Period	Trip Rates (per 100sqm)			Vehicle Trips		
	Arrive	Depart	Total	Arrive	Depart	Total
09:00-10:00	0.686	0.343	1.029	2	1	3
14:00-15:00	0.571	0.686	1.257	2	2	4
16:00-17:00	0.343	0.457	0.800	1	1	2
Daily	4.571	4.343	8.914	14	13	28

The table shows that the TRICs data used to assess the permitted tearoom is capable of generating approximately 3 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak hour and 2 in the PM peak hour which in this case is 9:00 till 10:00 and 16:00 till 17:00. When assessed on a daily basis a total 28 two-way vehicle trips could have been generated.

This has been compared to the proposed restaurant use with the following table used within the highway technical note to base its comparison. It should be noted that the base data from the below table has been used from Fridays Automatic Count as the TRICs data was also formed on a weekday.

Table 4.1 – Weekday Vehicle Analysis

Time Period	Two-Way Trips		
	Existing Restaurant	Previous Tearoom Consent	Difference
09:00 to 10:00	3	3	0
14:00 to 15:00	3	4	-1
16:00 to 17:00	4	2	+2
24 Hour	87	28	+59

The Highway Technical note suggests that the table above indicates that there is negligible difference in the trips generated by the existing restaurant compared with the previously consented tearoom during the AM and PM peak hours.

However, the LHA would dispute this view because the peak travel times for the tearoom as shown above are not consistent with the peak travel times as shown with the recorded survey for the restaurant. Not only does this indicate a change in travel pattern to the site,

it also fails to provide a clear picture. The Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) undertaken on Friday 15 August shows distinct peak periods for restaurant-related vehicle movements, with the highest morning demand occurring between 11:00 and 12:00, when the survey recorded 8 two-way restaurant trips, representing the late-morning pre-lunch turnover peak. During the afternoon, the busiest daytime period was 15:00 to 16:00, when 10 restaurant movements were recorded, reflecting the strongest mid-afternoon arrival and departure activity. Crucially, the survey identifies a pronounced evening peak between 19:00 and 20:00, during which 9 restaurant-generated two-way movements occurred, the highest level of activity after dark.

A comparison between the TRICS trip generation for the previously approved 310 sqm tearoom and the actual observed traffic generated by the restaurant shows a clear and material intensification of vehicle movements. The TRICS assessment, presented within the Highways Technical Note, forecasts that the tearoom would have generated 28 two-way daily vehicle trips (14 arrivals and 13 departures). In contrast, the traffic survey results identify that the restaurant generates 87 two-way daily movements, derived from booking-based estimates matched against ATC counts which the LHA have questioned above.

This represents an increase of approximately 59 additional daily movements, equating to three times greater than the traffic compared with what was previously anticipated for the tearoom. This difference is especially significant when considering that the tearoom operated only during daytime hours, whereas the restaurant introduces evening traffic peaks, on a narrow, unlit lane with proposed limited passing place opportunities. Taken together, the data demonstrates that the operational characteristics of the restaurant result in a level and pattern of traffic demand fundamentally different from, and notably higher than, what the TRICS-based tearoom assessment predicted, with direct implications for safety and suitability of access along Dancer Lane.

Staggered arrivals and departures

Whilst the applicant has suggested that staggered arrival and departure times can be implemented, this does mitigate some of our concern regarding two-way movement, it would not be enough to fully omit our concern as this may result in a lower opportunity for users of the restaurant to be in conflict it does not remove the conflict of existing users of the lane which come from neighbouring landowners and those enjoying the amenity of the area. It would also be difficult to control visitors' arrival and departure times as some may arrive early and leave when they are finished rather than waiting for their table booking to elapse.

Parking provisions

The parking provision proposed in the Highways Technical Note show the servicing arrangements are clearly demonstrated and raise no operational concerns, the applicant has failed to assess combined parking demand from both the restaurant and the Gazegill Organics Farm Shop, despite explicitly stating that the car park will serve both uses. There are 45 standard spaces within the site which exceed the maximum standard of 39 spaces as required under the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan for a 310 sqm restaurant. Whilst this does not include the outdoor seating area, the applicant has advised that the restaurant can cater for 50 covers, which has been taken into account. This leaves 6 spaces available for use by those who attend the Farm Shop yet no survey of existing

farm shop parking, and no evidence of overlap has been provided, making it difficult to establish whether the provision is adequate in practice.

Sustainability

It should also be noted that given the rural nature of the site, it is likely that most if not all of the staff and customers will travel to the site in private vehicles, particularly in the evenings due to the darkness of the public right of way network and lack of footways on the surrounding network. The closest bus stop is situated over 1km away on Howgill Lane, however the site is not linked by footways and would mean that anyone making use of public transport would need to walk within the carriageway, which is mostly single track from Howgill Lane to the site. Therefore, the LHA is of the opinion that there is a reliance on the private car, particularly in reference to the extended opening hours.

Conclusion

To conclude, the LHA assessment of the site demonstrates that the proposed retrospective restaurant use at Gazegill Farm results in a material intensification of traffic, particularly during the evening hours when the access route is at its most constrained and least safe. The evidence provided within the Highway Technical Note and the Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) confirms that the restaurant generates over half of all vehicle movements after 18:00, with sustained activity continuing into hours of darkness. This pattern of movement is fundamentally different from the historic tearoom use, which generated little to no post-18:00 traffic.

The LHA's concerns remain centred on the unsuitability of Dancer Lane as the sole means of access for an intensified commercial use. The lane is a narrow, privately maintained single-track road with limited forward visibility, no street lighting, unprotected drops to Rimmington Beck, and shared use with pedestrians on a Public Right of Way. While the applicant has identified several informal passing places, these are largely dependent on third-party land, are not formalised, and cannot be secured or conditioned.

The comparison with the previously approved tearoom further reinforces the LHA's position. The TRICS-based assessment for the tearoom predicted 28 daily two-way trips, whereas the restaurant is shown to generate 87 daily movements, representing a three-fold increase. This is compounded by the introduction of evening peaks, which the tearoom did not produce. The LHA therefore concludes that the restaurant use results in a significant and unacceptable increase in traffic, particularly during sensitive hours, on an access route that is not capable of safely accommodating it.

To fully assess the highway implications and determine whether any mitigation could be considered acceptable, the LHA requires the following further information

- A detailed, scaled site access plan, including dimensions and any proposed widening.
- Clear identification of passing places within the applicant's control with evidence that these can be secured, maintained, and conditioned long-term. To confirm which areas of Dancer Lane and proposed passing places fall within the applicant's ownership or influence.
- Drawings demonstrating available visibility along Dancer Lane, at each passing point.

- A more robust traffic generation methodology, accounting for multiple vehicles per booking, staff trips and overlapping with farm shop traffic as well as consideration for seasonal variation.
- A combined assessment of parking survey for both the restaurant and the farm shop.

Yours sincerely

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