
**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF LICENCE FOR PREMISES TO BE APPROVED
AS A VENUE FOR MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS –
BACKHOUSE HALL, BULL WYND, DARLINGTON.**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. To consider an application for Backhouse Hall, Bull Wynd, Darlington (the Register Office's decommissioned Ceremony Rooms) for the renewal of the licence to be approved as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships in accordance with the provisions of the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994) and the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005.

Summary

2. The application has been the subject of the usual officer consultations and has been advertised. No objections have been received. The applicant is seeking a renewal of the licence with no changes to the current arrangements in terms of designated rooms or capacities.
3. The premises are considered to be suitable for approval as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships, subject to the standard conditions and a limit on the number of people permitted to be present in the nominated rooms.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Backhouse Hall be approved as a venue for the solemnisation of Marriages and Civil Partnerships subject to the standard licence conditions and that the maximum number of persons permitted to occupy ceremony rooms on the occasion of Civil Marriages or Civil Partnerships be in accordance with the Fire Officer's recommendations.

**Paul Wildsmith
Director of Resources**

Background Papers

- (i) Application from Backhouse Hall for renewal of premises as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships.
- (ii) Correspondence to Licensing Officer, Fire Officer and Building Control.

Anthony Hall 346604

S17 Crime and Disorder	The report does not contain any Crime and Disorder implications
Health and Well Being	This report has no implications for the Council's Health and Well Being agenda
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impact implications in this report
Diversity	There are no diversity issues
Wards Affected	All wards are equally affected
Groups Affected	All groups are equally affected
Budget and Policy Framework	No budget implication
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report has no particular implications for the Sustainable Community Strategy
Efficiency	There are no efficiency implications in this report

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994) and the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, (Regulation 4) permit a local authority to approve the use of certain premises as venues for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships. This Council is the appropriate authority for premises within the Borough of Darlington.
6. The legal provisions require each Registration District to nominate a 'Register Office' where marriages and civil partnerships can be held for the statutory fee which is currently £40. In Darlington the 'designated Register Office' is the Superintendent Registrars Office which can accommodate a couple plus up to four witnesses for a small basic ceremony.
7. The legal provisions further allow for each Registration District to provide 'decommissioned' ceremony rooms with facilities and fees which can be set according to the policy of that local authority. In Darlington Backhouse Hall is the Register Office's decommissioned ceremony suite and it is used for nearly all ceremonies which are charged at fees set annually by the Council.
8. A copy of the application submitted in respect of Backhouse Hall is attached. Consultations have been undertaken with the following:-
 - (a) Licensing Officer, Darlington Borough Council
 - (b) Building Control Manager, Darlington Borough Council
 - (c) Durham and Darlington Fire Authority.
9. Further, in accordance with the Regulations, a Public Notice of the application was advertised (in the Northern Echo) for the appropriate period and no objections have been received.
10. In accordance with building control requirements, the applicant has confirmed:
 - (a) that a Fire Risk assessment has been carried out within the last three years which covers the proposed areas for use and occupancy.
 - (b) That a Disability Risk Assessment has been carried out and that there is no access issues for persons attending ceremonies in the proposed areas for use and occupancy.
11. The Fire Safety Officer recommends that the maximum number of persons permitted in each room be as follows:-

Designated Room	Maximum Capacity
Pease Suite	80 Persons
Stephenson Suite	40 Persons

Conclusion

12. The Officers are satisfied that it would be appropriate for the renewal of Backhouse Hall as a suitable venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships under the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended) and the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, and that the Licence should be renewed subject to the points above provisions. The approval will last for a period of three years from the date of issue.