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**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF LICENCE FOR PREMISES TO BE APPROVED  
AS A VENUE FOR MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

**BLACKWELL GRANGE HOTEL, DARLINGTON**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider an application received from the Blackwell Grange Hotel for a renewal of its 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), the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.

**Summary**

2. Blackwell Grange Hotel has been an approved venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships for a number of years, being a successful wedding venue and its three year licence is now due for renewal.
3. During the period of its current three year licence which is due to expire on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016 there have been no issues or problems which contravene the licensing conditions.
4. The majority of the weddings at this Hotel are conducted in either the George Allan Suite, the Jacobean Suite, or in the Garden Gazebo, all of which are equally popular.
5. All of the designated rooms at this venue are fully accessible.
6. As an already approved venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships, the Blackwell Grange Hotel is therefore 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 below.

## Information

7. The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994), the Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005, and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 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.
8. It is proposed that the capacities in the Designated Rooms continue to be a maximum of:

The George Allan Suite – 130  
The Jacobean Suite – 300  
The Havelock Suite – 150  
The Garden Gazebo – 6\*

\*The designated number comprises of the couple, two registrars and two witnesses, the number of guests sat outside of the structure is unlimited.

## Legal Implications

9. This report has been considered by the Assistant Director of Law and Governance, the Fire Service, Building Control and also the Licensing Officer for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Assistant Director Law and Governance considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

## Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

10. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

## Conclusion

11. The Officers are satisfied that it would be appropriate for the renewal of Blackwell Grange Hotel, Darlington as a suitable venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships under the Marriage Act 1949 (as amended) and the Marriage, Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013) and that the Licence be renewed subject to the points above being taken into account. The approval will last for a period of 3 years from the date of issue.

## **Recommendation**

12. It is recommended that approval be granted for The Blackwell Grange Hotel, Darlington as an approved venue for the solemnisation of Marriages and Civil Partnerships in respect of the venue 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 should be as outlined in accordance with the previous licensing conditions.

**Luke Swinhoe**  
**The Assistant Director of Law and Governance and**  
**Proper Officer for the Registration Service**

## **Background Papers**

Application from Blackwell Grange Hotel for renewal of premises as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

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