

## **GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**2 NOVEMBER 2021**

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

**Rockliffe Hall Hotel, Darlington**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To consider an application received from Rockliffe Hall Hotel for the renewal of a licence to be approved as a venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships in accordance with the provisions of:
  - (a) The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994);
  - (b) The Civil Partnership Act (2004);
  - (c) The Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and 2021; and
  - (d) The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013).

#### **Summary**

2. Since 1994 local authorities have been able to approve venues where civil marriage and civil partnerships can take place as an alternative venue to a Register Office most of which are hotels.
3. Rockliffe Hall Hotel has been a licensed venue for ceremonies for a number of years and has continued to be a popular wedding venue attracting couples who are marrying both locally and from further afield and the hotel plays an important role in the local economy.
4. Its current licence expires on 24 November 2021.
5. There have been no issues with the venue which would adversely affect its application to renew its licence. The licence as an approved venue is now due for renewal and the committee are asked to consider the application for a licence as an approved venue for civil marriages and civil partnerships for a period of a further three years.

#### **Information**

6. The building has the required fire risk assessments and there are no accessibility or DDA issues which would adversely affect the application.

7. 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.
8. The applicant is not seeking to alter or change any of the areas or capacities of persons who can be present when ceremonies take place.
9. These are currently:

**Approved Venues – Licensed Rooms and Capacities**

(as agreed by the granting Licensing Committee and a condition of a valid licence)

Venue: **Rockliffe Hall Hotel**

GRO Premise No: 007930

Current Licence Expires: 24.11.2021

Room	Maximum Capacity
<b>In the Old Hall:</b>	
The Morning Room	65
The Drawing Room	60
The Cocktail Lounge	60
The Orangery	150
The Boardroom	20
The Campernella	55
The Old Hall Hall	40
The Old Hall Foyer	80
<b>In the New Hall:</b>	
The Rockliffe Suite	170
The Rockliffe Lounge	100
The Bowes Suite	30
The Cotherstone Suite	10
<b>In the Clubhouse:</b>	
The Grassholme	180
The Stanwick	20
<b>External Buildings:</b>	
The Glasshouse	120
The Rosebud Curious Cabin	6 (unlimited guests outside of cabin)

10. A copy of the application submitted is attached and the renewal fee of £1700.00 has been invoiced.
11. As part of its covid pandemic recovery strategy, the government introduced new regulations on 1 July 2021 to enable outdoor ceremonies to take place anywhere within the boundaries of the hotel estate and without restriction upon the maximum numbers of persons who can attend. It remains the requirement of indoor civil marriages and civil partnerships to take place in a designated room which is deemed suitable by the local authority and which has a specified maximum number of persons present.

### **Financial Implications**

12. The renewal of a licence for a premises as a venue for civil marriages and civil partnerships incurs a fee payable to the local authority which is currently £1700.00.

### **Legal Implications**

13. The current licence for Rockliffe Hall Hotel expires on 24 November 2021. The grant of a further licence is required for the hotel to continue with its bookings for civil marriages and partnerships. The standard renewal licence is for three years from the date of expiry of the current licence. The licensing committee can issue a licence on a shorter timescale as a temporary measure should it wish and/or make specific conditions including where the ceremony can take place, how many can attend and improvements for accessibility.

### **Conclusion**

14. Members are asked to renew the licence for Rockliffe Hall Hotel as an approved premises for civil marriages and civil partnerships for a further three years from 24 November 2021

### **Recommendations**

15. It is recommended that:
  - (a) The licence for Rockliffe Hall Hotel, Hurworth, Darlington as an approved premises be granted for a further three years from 24 November 2021.
  - (b) That the places designated where civil marriages and civil partnerships can take place indoors of the premises and the maximum of numbers of persons who can attend those marriages and civil partnerships continue to be:

Room	Maximum Capacity
<b>In the Old Hall:</b>	
The Morning Room	65
The Drawing Room	60
The Cocktail Lounge	60
The Orangery	150
The Boardroom	20
The Campernella	55
The Old Hall Hall	40
The Old Hall Foyer	80
<b>In the New Hall:</b>	
The Rockliffe Suite	170
The Rockliffe Lounge	100
The Bowes Suite	30
The Cotherstone Suite	10
<b>In the Clubhouse:</b>	
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The Glasshouse	120
The Rosebud Curious Cabin	6 (unlimited guests outside of cabin)

## Reasons

- To facilitate the continuation of Rockliffe Hall, Hurworth, Darlington as a premises approved for civil marriages and civil partnerships.

**Luke Swinhoe, Assistant Director, Law and Governance and  
Proper Officer for Darlington Registration District**

## Background Papers

Application for renewal of licence as an approved premises for Civil Marriage and Civil Partnership from Rockliffe Hall Hotel.

Anthony Hall, Superintendent Registrar, Ext 6400