

**GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE
12 NOVEMBER, 2019**

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

Walworth Castle Hotel, Walworth, Darlington

Purpose of Report

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

Summary

2. The Walworth Castle Hotel has been an approved venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships for a number of years and Its current licence is due to expire on 8th January, 2020.
3. As a previously approved venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships the Walworth Castle Hotel is 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.
4. The application for renewal has been published on the council website and no objections or queries have been received.

Information

5. 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.
6. A copy of the application submitted is attached as an Appendix. The renewal fee of £1700.00 had been received.
7. The applicant has confirmed within the application :-
 1. That there are no planning issues which would adversely affect this application and its continued use as an approved venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships.
 2. That it has adequate and current fire precautions in consideration of it being a commercial hotel accessed by members of the public.
 3. That there are no equality issues which would prevent access or use by a member of the public.

The Walworth Castle Hotel is a well established and popular venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships and there have been no issues or concerns with the venue for the duration of its current licence which would adversely affect this application.

8. The applicant does not seek any increase to the maximum number of persons permitted in each room and which is proposed as follows :-

Room	Maximum Capacity
Reception Lounge	40
Ballroom Lounge/Breakfast Room	40
Ballroom	100
Cardinals Court	120
Hansards Restaurant	80
King James Suite	80
Library Tower	10
Prince Bishops Room	45
Dungeon	50
Lady Palmer's Pavilion	6

The pavilion facilitates outside weddings at the venue. The pavilion is a permanent structure which cannot be relocated and meets the requirements as a designated place for civil marriages and civil partnerships in terms of being in a permanent location should a potential objector need to locate the wedding. The pavilion is the place of the signing of the Marriage or Civil Partnership Register and where the couple, witnesses and registrars remain for the ceremony. An unlimited number of guests can observe the ceremony from outside of the pavilion however they do not form part of the legal component of the ceremony. A photograph of the pavilion is attached as an Appendix.

Legal Implications

9. This report has been considered by the Assistant Director, Law and Governance, for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which 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. Officers recommend that the Walworth Castle Hotel, Walworth, Darlington is a suitable venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships under the above legislation and that the licence be renewed for a period of a further three years added to its existing licence providing an expiry date of 8th January, 2023.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that the application for renewal be granted for the Walworth Castle Hotel, Walworth, 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.

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

Background Paper

Application from Walworth Castle Hotel, Walworth, Darlington for renewal of its licence as a venue for Marriages and Civil Partnerships.

