

Don't believe the hype! The Unbelievable Truth about The Grand.



This **new** extension nearly doubles the size of the building.

It's also worth noting that this image is misleading, as it is impossible to match a new build with the existing 118 year old historic fabric of the Grand – it will not match – and will be painfully obvious between new and old. Look at the Bell Hotel for what a new build looks like – it's not good!!

Grand Facts: Not Grand distortion! If the current plans are approved the Grand IS no more!

The aim of writing this is to debunk the myths surrounding the redevelopment of The Grand and give some perspective on the facts, and to counter the scaremongering that is going around. The new basement excavation alone puts this building at risk!

Continue to learn more facts about the Grand Hotel redevelopment:

FALSE: *There is no alternative – let him get on with it.....*

The debate goes along the lines that we have to accept the current owners plans as he is a nice guy with deep pockets and there is no alternative other than to loose the building altogether. We are lucky to have him step in.

Only 1 of the above facts is true: Mr Norcross is a nice guy.

TRUTH: There are alternatives to be explored. 99% of the local community canvased say they would much rather the Grand be refurbished to a community pub/hotel as this would better serve the community and not just out-of-town customers.

FALSE: *They're only building flats on the upper part of the existing building -*

TRUTH: They are planning to virtually double the size of the building. Many people believe that only the existing building is being renovated into flats – the current proposals are to almost double the size of the building, to excavate a large basement and pave over the existing garden. The excavation alone could damage the existing structure.

FALSE: *It will cost £9.5m to “do” the Grand. - Not even close.*

TRUTH: Short of gold plated taps, the cost to refurbish the existing building will be nearer £1.7m. Add £250,000 for the landscaping and a little for externals and your up to around £2m. This figure is based on professional RICS Business Construction Information Service (BCIS) databases that captures data on over 160,000 real building costs from across the UK from every project type, including Pub, Restaurant and Hotel refurbishment.

FALSE: *You'll need £5m just to buy it –*

TRUTH: The figure is closer to £1.8m - we know how much was paid for the premises and it is nowhere near the figures being quoted. If a purchase opportunity were to present itself then the building would be independently valued and a price negotiated with the vendor.

FALSE: *Allowing the flats development will be saving the Grand.*

TRUTH: Allowing the flats development will decimate the integrity of this locally listed historic asset, and cause significant harm to it's original scale, proportions and its intended design use as a pub/hotel. It will become an architectural pastiche and a monument to one celebrity developer and his bank balance. It will begin the Disneyfication of Leigh-on-Sea's heritage assets.

FALSE: *The proposed design will still be a pub and have bars – No it won't.*

TRUTH: There will be a private members basement club and Restaurants on the ground floor – apart from a private function room, and the flats, that will be it. NO PUB!

FALSE: *The building is crumbling and will not survive another winter.*

TRUTH: The building has survived 118 winters and whatever happens construction won't start for at least several months; which means after another winter. The general condition of the building is relatively stable with no external signs of subsidence. The building is falling into further disrepair due to the current owners lack of progress over the past 5 years – 5 years of lost revenue and racking up losses.

FALSE: A Pub and Hotel is not financially viable.

TRUTH: Nobody has proved otherwise. Before it closed the Grand was a very profitable Pub – it went down with the failing pub company that owned it. It was their most profitable in all their 300 pub portfolio, but it was not enough to save the parent firm. Based on research, a more moderate refurbishment of the existing spaces, plus with a ground floor rear extension, a Pub/Hotel could be commercially viable and is what the vast majority of local people actually want and will see the Grand restored to it's former glory. Not only will the pub be retained in it's current form, the plan B long-term aim will see the Grand become a community benefit trust and contributor to local causes. We have done some financial planning and have a base plan of how this will work, with a contingency plan.

FALSE: There is no financial backing for an alternative.

TRUTH: There is a viable plan B with two options to raise capital from various means to both purchase and refurbish the Grand – the current owners could be part of this plan.

FALSE: A hotel would create more traffic than flats.

TRUTH: It's Hypothesis that a hotel would create more traffic – plan B proposes a hotel/work-hub, which would not be fully let throughout the year – we think they are about equal, however, further analysis would be needed.

The Grand Again financial situation:

Our financial strategy is mapped out. To say we won't get the finance is conjecture. We aim to raise funds as any investor/developer would do. Our business model works and we are confident we can make a success of it.

£/m2 study

Description: Rate per m2 gross internal floor area for the building Cost including prelims. ?

Last updated: 30-Sep-2017 12:20

At 4Q2017 prices (based on a Tender Price Index of 291) and UK mean location (Location index 100).

Maximum age of results: Default period ↓

Building function (Maximum age of projects)	£/m ² gross internal floor area						Sample
	Mean	Lowest	Lower quartiles	Median	Upper quartiles	Highest	
Rehabilitation/Conversion							
512. Restaurants (20)	2,711	1,075	1,791	2,381	2,535	5,773	5
517. Public houses, licensed premises (15)	934	546	741	866	1,121	1,499	8
852. Hotels (15)	1,749	902	1,337	1,482	1,715	4,469	10

Grand Refurbishment based on professional RICS real time data:

Restaurant and Pub –	£2,000 m2 – x 300m2 =	600,000
Single storey rear	£1,600 m2 – x 90m2 =	144,000
Hotel	£1,750 m2 – x 520m2 =	910,000
Hall, and flat	£1,000 m2 – x 195m2 =	195,000
Landscaping	£0,500 m2 – x 500m2 =	250,000
Purchase of asset	na	= 2,000,000
TOTAL		4,099,000

National Planning Policy Framework:

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

126. Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment,²⁹ including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

127. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

128. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

130. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

Local Listing:

The Grand is locally listed, making it of local Historic value and is featured in the Leigh-on-Sea Wikipedia photo slides. It is also mentioned in the Architectural writings of the Art and Architectural historian Nicholas Pevsner. Both listings are for a reason – the Grand is of historic architectural value and these types of pub buildings have become rare since the end of the great war. The Grand sits as the anchor between Leigh Road and the Broadway

Southend Planning Control for Locally Listed Buildings

Policies for Locally Listed Buildings are in the Southend-on-Sea Borough Local Plan, 1994 which can be inspected at the Civic Centre and local libraries.

The Local List is advisory only, and does not provide the Council with additional powers. Existing powers are used as far as possible to preserve Locally Listed Buildings, especially when considering applications for planning permission. Most developments - external alterations, extensions and changes of use - need planning permission from the Council and proposals should to pay special regard to: preserving or restoring features which contribute to their character maintaining their scale and proportions preserving their setting using appropriate materials

This does not mean Internal alterations and some minor types of external development, especially to houses, do not need planning permission from the Council. If this threatens the character of a Locally Listed Building, however, consideration will be given to making an Article 4 Direction. This removes the automatic right to carry out the development and will require planning permission to be obtained from the Council. Consideration will also be given to the possibility of adding the building to the statutory list and thereby make it subject to more stringent controls. the building has to be preserved exactly as it is, but that any alterations should be carried out in a sympathetic manner.