

100-YEAR-OLD SEAFRONT VENUE LOOKS SET TO BE REPLACED BY RESTAURANT



■ Sold! Mike Gray, and Gerard Biagioni from Dedman outside the pub

Picture: STEVE O'CONNELL BA99506_001

Esplanade pub sold to Swedish company

A PUB that has stood on Southend seafront for more than 100 years is to be knocked down and replaced with a plush restaurant if the new owners have their way.

The Esplanade pub in Western Esplanade, Southend - up for sale for years - has finally been sold for a six figure sum to Swedish firm Redab Properties.

Carl Pettersson, the managing director of Redab, said: "We normally do our work in central London, but we were so impressed by the fantastic site, we wanted to invest in it."

"We're very excited to be involved in such a fantastic project and look forward to bringing the building back to life and making a positive impact on the surrounding area."

"We hope to have some sort of accommodation on the top storey then use it for leisure

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below, perhaps as a pub or a restaurant."

Previous plans have included turning it into a 58-bed-room hotel.

Present manager Janet Hills will be allowed to operate the pub until next Autumn, after which it will be demolished.

Surveyors claim the building, built in about 1900, is crumbling, and an 8mm wide crack extends horizontally across the full width of the first floor.

There are concerns about cliff slippage behind it.

Mr Pettersson said the top floor accommodation could be retirement homes or private properties, and his firm was adept in turning its hand to buildings with structural issues.

Estate agents Dedman Gray were instructed by previous owners Renewals Southend to

sell the building, and after being on the market for £995,000, it was sold last Thursday.

Gerard Biagioni, from Dedman Gray, said: "This could be rebuilt into something very, very special."

"It is a landmark building on the seafront and I hope the new owners have the expectation and vision to turn it into something Southend expects it to be."

Mrs Hills has run the pub at the venue since March 2013, said: "Really I've just been babysitting it while it has been up for sale, and it would be nice if it could stay a pub."

PEARL JAM GIG IN '92

The pub was a pillar of the local music scene for many years.

US grunge titans Pearl Jam, who have sold £60million records worldwide, are the most stellar name to rock up at the venue.

The band picked the tiny Southend venue to play their first ever European gig back in 1992, when they were touring their seminal Ten album.

From the Esplanade pub, the five-piece have played some of the biggest festivals in the world, and have packed out areas. South Essex pub rockers Dr Feelgood also started gigging there 40 years ago, and played the venue twice in the Nineties.

Start of a series of new seafront developments

THE leader of Southend Council has hailed the pub's renaissance as "the start" of a series of seafront developments.

Ron Woodley, the Independent leader of Southend Council, said: "This is the start of developments that are taking place down at the seafront and anything that revitalises that part of

town should be good news."

In that area, works to reinforce the cliffs to prevent slippage have taken place, while a lagoon is coming to Three Shells Beach, in a project that should start next March.

Mr Woodley added: "It's good news for the borough. It shows we are growing and businesses are wanting to invest in Southend."

Call for land: Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Basildon Council is calling on local landowners to come forward with land they own that could potentially provide a gypsy and traveller site.

This appeal is designed to ensure the council is fully aware of all land which is genuinely available for future Gypsy and Traveller site development, should there be a need to allocate sites to meet the borough's development needs in the Local Plan.

How can you take part?

To propose a site(s), please email: sjefferies@peterbrett.com or by post to: Peter Brett Associates, 10 Queen Square, Bristol, BS1 4NT from Monday 1 September 2014.

The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Monday 13 October 2014.

To find out more contact the Planning Policy Team Tel: 01268 294868,

email: planning.policy@basildon.gov.uk

or visit the council's website:

www.basildon.gov.uk/basildon2031

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