

HOTEL GAMBLE

A FACTUAL TELEVISION SERIES PROPOSAL

High-Stakes Race to Reinvent a Heritage Estate

From: Ananda Paul, Property Developer & Director, AP Hotel Group Ltd

Subject: Series Proposal – Hotel Gamble: Transforming Amport House into a Luxury Hotel under Extreme Time and Budget Pressure

Supporting material: 1-minute 35-second location & challenge video (attached / linked)

Logline & Hook

“Can a crumbling Grade II listed estate be transformed into a five-star hotel when the developer has only a fraction of the required budget and an unforgiving deadline?”

This is not a polished renovation show. It is a high-stakes, fully transparent factual series that follows one man risking everything to bring a historic Hampshire estate back to life as a luxury hotel — with every financial decision, every planning battle, and every setback filmed in real time.

Why This Story — Why Now

The UK property landscape is shifting. Traditional residential landlords are exiting the sector and many are moving into hospitality. Hotel Gamble captures this transition at its most raw and personal. Viewers will watch a self-made developer who started with nothing attempt something far bigger than anything he has done before — under conditions where failure is a genuine possibility.

The Property — Amport House, Andover, Hampshire

Amport House is a Grade II listed country house near Andover, built in 1857 for the 14th Marquess of Winchester. It later served as the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre until the Ministry of Defence vacated the site. The estate sits in approximately 20 acres and offers around 42,000–46,000 sq ft of internal space. Planning permission has previously been granted for conversion into a boutique hotel (circa 48 rooms). The vision is to deliver a luxury five-star hotel of approximately 40 bedrooms.

Key facts:

- Grade II listed heritage asset with associated listed gardens
- Significant scale: substantial main house plus ancillary buildings
- Rural Hampshire setting with strong transport links (A303 / rail)
- A building of national interest that has stood empty and is now at a pivotal moment

The Protagonist — Ananda Paul

Ananda Paul is a property developer with approximately 30 years' experience. He built his portfolio from scratch after starting life on benefits / signing on, eventually developing and owning nearly 100 flats and residential units. He has survived two property market crashes and personal upheavals, losing significant parts of his business and rebuilding. He is the author of the forthcoming book “An Expensive Curry”.

He currently owns and is refurbishing Woodlands Lodge Hotel (trading as Woodlands) in the New Forest, Hampshire — a country-house hotel with direct forest access that he has owned for around one year. Woodlands demonstrates his ability to take on hospitality assets and operate them. Amport House represents a step-change in scale, risk and public visibility.

No formal qualifications in hotel development. No institutional safety net. No Plan B. The series follows a man who has already beaten the odds once and is now staking everything on a far larger stage.

The Stakes — Why This Is Compelling Television

Full financial transparency

Every major financial decision, cost overrun and funding conversation will be on camera. The realistic capital requirement for a project of this scale is in the region of £7 million. Current available funds are approximately £250,000. The gap is enormous and the pressure is real.

Unforgiving deadline

The ambition is to open a functioning luxury hotel in an extremely compressed timeframe. Whether measured in 90 days for key operational milestones or a 12-month overall programme, the clock is the antagonist. Heritage constraints, planning conditions and construction realities make any delay potentially fatal to the commercial case.

Heritage red tape

Grade II listing, listed gardens and conservation requirements introduce genuine uncertainty. Approvals can be slow, conditions can be onerous, and unexpected discoveries during works are common. This is not a straightforward modern conversion.

Absolute risk

Failure is not theoretical. If the project cannot be financed, consented and delivered, the personal and financial consequences for the developer are severe. Viewers will not be watching a safe “before and after”. They will be watching a real gamble.

Proposed Format & Tone

Format: Premium factual series — 6 × 45-minute episodes (or flexible to broadcaster preference).

Tone: Cinematic yet grounded. Brutally honest. Aspirational luxury colliding with raw construction reality and financial stress.

Comparable titles: Grand Designs (scale & personal journey), Clarkson’s Farm (character-driven risk and chaos), The Hotel Inspector / hotel transformation formats (hospitality stakes), plus the character-led documentary style favoured by Netflix and Amazon.

The series would follow the purchase / acquisition phase, planning and heritage battles, construction chaos, cash-flow crises, the race to open, and the unvarnished outcome — success, partial success, or failure.

Indicative Episode Arc

1. **The Purchase / The Reality Check** — The deal, the dream, the first hard numbers.
2. **The Problems** — Heritage constraints, planning, unexpected discoveries.
3. **The Build** — Construction begins; chaos, delays and cost pressure mount.
4. **The Pressure** — Deadlines, money, tempers, and the personal toll.
5. **The Launch** — Opening for business (or not).
6. **The Reality** — The brutal truth of the outcome and what it means.

Audience & Market Fit

Property, renovation and high-stakes business formats consistently deliver large, engaged audiences in the UK and internationally. Grand Designs has regularly attracted multi-million viewers; Clarkson’s Farm has demonstrated the power of a strong character under pressure in a rural setting. Hotel

Gamble combines the emotional investment of a personal transformation journey with the visual drama of a heritage estate and the tension of real financial jeopardy.

Natural homes:

- **BBC** — Factual / educational transformation and character-led documentary.
- **Channel 4** — Property and high-stakes real-life series specialists.
- **Channel 5** — Accessible, character-driven factual entertainment.
- **Netflix** — Big-ambition, character-driven documentary with international appeal.

What Is Being Offered

Full access to the project, the property, the financial reality and the personal journey. The production would have the cooperation of the developer and AP Hotel Group Ltd to film the transformation of Amport House (and, where relevant, context from the existing Woodlands operation). A short 1-minute 35-second video has been prepared to give an immediate visual sense of the building and the scale of the challenge; this is enclosed / linked with this proposal.

The series would be produced in a spirit of radical honesty. Viewers will see the good decisions, the mistakes, the moments of despair and the determination that keeps the project alive.

Closing

Amport House is a high-stakes transformation where success is not guaranteed and failure is very real. The combination of heritage grandeur, extreme financial pressure, a compressed timeline and a protagonist who has already lived a remarkable underdog story creates a rare opportunity for premium factual television.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal further, share the supporting video in full, and explore how best to structure access and production. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ananda Paul

Director, AP Hotel Group Ltd

Owner, Woodlands Lodge Hotel (New Forest)

Property Developer and landlord of what was 100 residential units built/owned from a standing start

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