

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Noble M600 vs. Fenix LS9: Design Analysis



**One has to admire the British. The motivation to fight battles that are seemingly lost on paper - often turning the odds in their favour through sheer willpower - demands respect. And one such war is the current supercar battle, where the players Noble and Fenix will simply not die without trying.**

They have unleashed the dogs of war in the form of **Noble's M600** and [Fenix's LS9](#): two, new, British-built supercar efforts that are trying to tempt potential buyers away from **McLaren's innovative MP4-12C**, **Ferrari's gorgeous 458 Italia** and the various junior supercars from **Aston Martin, Lamborghini, Mercedes-Benz AMG** and **Porsche**.

In order to fully understand why any sane individual who respects their hard-earned cash would place a call to **Noble** - or **Mr. Noble** for that matter - instead of acquiring a more modern and infinitely more 'resolved' product from any one of the aforementioned competitors (and in the case of the **M600** still have a significant amount of money left over) needs to be seen in the context of tradition, individuality and national pride.

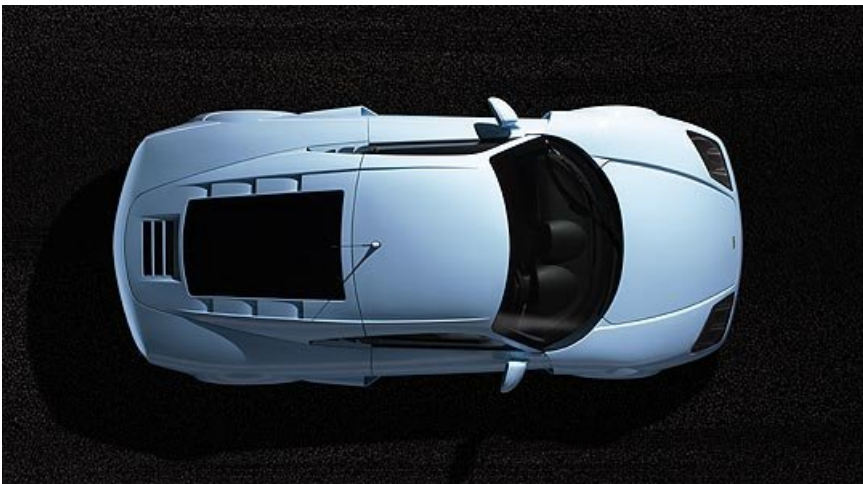


Put it this way: it's a dead cert that if **TVR** were still British, it would still glue together hand-built cars in **Bristol Avenue** and would also still secure the odd order from a lunatic at a local car show to keep the company afloat. And for the very same reason, there will always be someone on Her Majesty's turf who will attempt to build a **Veyron** rival in a shed, for the price of the Bugatti's front-left hubcab.



Looking at the styling of the **M600** (blue car, top) and **LS9** (grey car, above), one can clearly observe a strong DNA link between them. This is easily explained through the former involvement of **Lee Noble** in his namesake brand, prior to setting up Fenix Automotive. Unfortunately, **Lee Noble**'s departure has also revealed that he does not share the same (British) sense of humour as his former colleagues at **Noble Automotive**: the **M600** is to be offered at an astronomical £200,000; a not insignificant £30,455 more than the infinitely more desirable **Ferrari 458 Italia**, while the **LS9** is pitched from a more digestible £68,000.

One of the reasons why dream cars sell is a mix of the emotional factors and non-interchangeable USPs (unique selling propositions). **TVRs** sold in large numbers throughout the noughties partly because there was simply not a single competitive (performance) product at the same price in the market. Additionally, **TVRs** offered unique styling – particularly in the interior – that was outrageous enough to match the ‘wow per pound’ factor as much as it did the ‘pound per bhp’ ratio.



Unfortunately, much as everyone enjoys reading about and supporting an ‘underdog’, a certain lack of substance is to be found in both **Noble** and **Fenix**; especially with regard to their yawn-inducing styling. Design themes and a surface language that quote a now bygone era and, at best, feel like an epilogue to the form language of **Lamborghini's** and **Ferrari's** former finest, will make it hard to tempt even the most loyal and nationalistic pundit to sign on the dotted line.



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