



Project Pinewood

A report on the Employee, Stakeholder and Tenant
Workshops

14th May, 16th May and 20th May 2008

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Summary of Feedback	5
2.1 Transport and Movement Strategy	5
2.2 Green Infrastructure	8
2.3 Community Facilities	11
2.4 Education, Employment & Training	15
3. Conclusions and Next Steps	18

1. Introduction

The vision for 'Project Pinewood' was announced in November last year. This launched the process to evolve a vision for the development of land owned by Pinewood Studios which lies to the North East of the existing site. In January The Pinewood Studios Group appointed a project team to develop the concept into a proposal which will be the subject of extensive public consultation.

Pinewood Studios is holding a series of public consultation events to consider the views of local stakeholders, councillors and residents. The first of these events was a series of workshops held on 14th, 16th and 20th May 2008 in the Hitchcock Room at Pinewood Studios. Key local stakeholders, employees and tenants at Pinewood Studios were invited.

Please see Appendix One for a copy of the stakeholder workshop invitation letter.

Following an initial presentation outlining the background and the planning process, participants were invited to break out into groups and discuss the key issues in turn.

The groups were organised along four themes:

1. Transport and Movement Strategy

- Highway Improvements
- Public Transport Provision/Improvements
- Car parking
- Cycle routes
- Informal footpaths

2. Green Infrastructure

- Energy
- Waste
- Ecology
- Landscape

3. Community Facilities

- Education
- Skills & Training
- Health Provision

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- Local Shops
 - Crime Prevention

4. Education, Employment & Training

- Education
- Creative Centre
- Training & Skills
- Job Opportunities

2. Summary of Feedback

Below is a summary of the feedback received over the course of the three sessions. Pinewood Studios will seek to address these issues in the development of a masterplan for the area.

Please note feedback recorded should be treated in the context of assuming any development can overcome the identified challenges and therefore come forward. It is not an indication of support or otherwise for Project Pinewood.

2.1 Transport and Movement Strategy

Local roads and traffic

- The overall concern raised by participants was the impact additional traffic created by Project Pinewood would have on local roads and traffic levels. Safety issues due to the narrow local roads, blind spots and condition of the roads were raised strongly. There were worries that any additional traffic would raise the likelihood of an accident, in the context of the existing highway network.
- Concerns were raised regarding the scale and timescale of construction traffic and potential impact.
- Participants were concerned over road safety issues and suggested the speed limit on Pinewood Road should be reduced.
- It was reported that the M25/M40 roundabout is frequently congested and the A40 is congested at evening times.
- Participants informed us that current traffic hotspots include the A412, Denham roundabout, the Five Points roundabout, Iver Station and the mini roundabouts at Denham Road and Pinewood Green.
- Participants informed us that the Bangor Road double roundabout has operational problems.
- Participants said both Pinewood Road and Seven Hills Road are too narrow and in poor condition.
- Concern was voiced regarding speeding on Pinewood Road.
- It was strongly suggested Pinewood Studios should look into making improvements to Pinewood Road. In the same vein it was pointed out there is currently only one exit and entrance onto Pinewood Road and this may become congested with film and residential traffic.
- Participants said Seven Hills Road is not a good access road and gets worse between the M25 bridge and Pinewood Road. It is also not gritted in the winter

and pulling out is very difficult. We were informed satellite navigation always directs people via Seven Hills Road.

- Participants from Fulmer raised specific traffic concerns and informed us traffic currently cuts through Fulmer to avoid the A412.
- According to local residents, only 40% of drivers obey the speed limit in Fulmer. Vehicle activated signs were requested. The residents were also concerned the roads in Fulmer would not be able to cope with additional traffic.
- One participant from Fulmer also said a local school teacher was nearly hit by a car.
- Participants asked if Pinewood could look into ways to reduce the impact of HGVs for the local residents.
- Participants felt there is an important requirement for better signage for big vehicles to direct them to the most suitable routes with height and weight restrictions clearly shown.

Public transport

- Participants informed us that there is a lack of public transport provision in the area. Currently buses run to Denham, Gerards Cross, High Wycombe, Beaconsfield and Uxbridge. The only public bus service near Pinewood Studios is a 25 minute walk. All groups questioned whether Pinewood could look at working with the local transport provider to improve bus services at peak times, ideally running every 15 to 30 minutes.
- Participants asked if the Pinewood shuttle bus could be opened to the community. It was also suggested the shuttle service needed to have bigger vehicles and an increased frequency of service.
- Participants suggested a railway station was needed for Pinewood, or better links to local stations.
- Employees pointed out that there are currently no public transport links between the studio sites. (Pinewood/Shepperton/Teddington).
- Participants suggested that one of the reasons people drive is because public transport in the area takes so long; more frequent and accessible services might reduce this dependency.
- Some participants at the employee workshop explained that the type of work they do and the hours they work make it difficult to use public transport e.g. photographers with kit and late working hours.

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- The merits of car and cycle pools were discussed with mixed response and employees in particular felt this was not appealing. However, some participants disagreed and also suggested the use of hybrid cars. Employees also pointed out that the current Pinewood Travel Plan needs to be updated.
 - The idea of cycle provision was discussed with several participants suggesting the provision of a cycle path through Pinewood Green and a segregated cycle lane on Pinewood Road.
 - Some participants at the employee workshop took the view that the unusual hours they work makes cycling difficult and the narrow lanes make it dangerous.
 - Participants suggested provision of a shop would lessen the requirement for car trips at lunchtimes.
 - The idea of taking away incentives to drive such as mileage allowance was raised. On the other hand, some participants said it would be more positive to provide incentives to use public transport such as an allowance paid towards green travel.
 - The consensus among participants appeared to be that unless Pinewood proposes something dramatic, cars will continue to be dominant.

General comments

- Participants suggested Pinewood needs to look carefully at how to manage traffic coming into the site to minimise impact on the local transport network.
- One informal comment pointed out that South Bucks did not conform to the national average of cars per household because of the lack of public transport. This was caused by the fact that, unlike other countries, there was no central county capital or market town from which public transport links could radiate. The local authority was making a case for South Bucks to be an exception at two cars per household.
- Participants welcomed the new footpath to Black Park but highlighted that people have to walk along and cross a busy road to access it.

2.2 Green Infrastructure

Green Belt Considerations

- Participants at the stakeholder workshop expressed their thoughts regarding the Green Belt. They felt this is a disadvantage for the proposal and was likely to result in a refusal of a planning application at a local level.
- Several participants at the stakeholder session suggested that Pinewood should aim, as a minimum, to provide 'green belt' activities for recreation. They said that when looking at a planning application on Green Belt land a key consideration will be the impact on landscape and mitigation measures proposed.

Design & Character

- A number of participants stressed there was a need for a centre/hub for Iver Heath.
- There was also concern expressed over the size of Iver Heath (approx 1000 households) compared to the size of the proposed residential element.
- Participants expressed the wish to create attractive places to live and work.
- There was concern that the development of a new site might not be to the same standard as the existing development in the area and that the character would be inappropriate.

Environment

- Participants agreed that they were keen to have a 'green' development exhibiting the use of green energy.
- Participants asked what incentives would be implemented to encourage recycling.
- Participants informed us that noise shielding will be a big issue and questioned how it would and could be addressed.

Use of existing spaces

- Participants asked for better links to Black Park.
- It was suggested Langley Park and Black Park should be joined up to improve the access between the two areas.
- Participants asked for the provision of other managed community spaces.

Landscaping

- Participants thought there was a need for trees to be retained to reduce any carbon emissions and to mitigate the impact on the existing landscape.
- The general consensus seemed to be a desire to keep 'The Clump'.
- Several participants brought up the importance of archaeology and investigation of potential remains.
- Participants suggested planting of native species, particularly to provide screening, and asked what sort of planting would be carried out around the film sets.
- Participants asked about the impact the potential creation of a lake would have on hydrology.

Relationship to existing site

- A number of participants suggested whether the studio site will need to develop alongside Project Pinewood by increasing the size of premises to cope with increase in workload.

Filming considerations

- It was suggested that space should be left within the proposed development to build additional temporary sets which will make the permanent sets more versatile and adaptive.
- Participants in the employee and tenant workshops stressed working in the film industry can be stressful and the provision of break-out areas such as parks and cafes would be desirable. There is currently a lack of such facilities/spaces.

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- Participants questioned security measures and whether on site patrols would be carried out by Pinewood security teams.
 - There was concern that the intense environment of living on a film set might not be appropriate to those outside the industry.
 - A number of participants raised concerns about the proposal turning into a theme park and questioned the strategy for addressing this risk and balancing the need for openness and accessibility of the site, with the privacy needed for the film industry.

2.3 Community Facilities

Facilities

- Participants pointed out there are currently no facilities for the community on site and this will need to be addressed.
- Suggestions for potential facilities included: a general convenience store which needs to be open out of hours, a gym, tennis and badminton courts, cinema, hotel, a bowling alley, a hairdresser, a high quality restaurant and a cafe or coffee house.
- It was suggested the facades provided for filming could be used for provision of such facilities for example a restaurant in Paris.
- A number of participants asked for a medical centre to be provided on site. Participants said any new medical facility should enhance the existing facilities available in the area and open more extensive hours.
- Some participants asked if the canal/waterside area could be opened for community use.
- Participants said it was important any residential area had a 'community feel'. There would need to be a provision of places to congregate, which would need to be well landscaped and include green spaces.
- Participants wanted to ensure the community was integrated with Iver Heath.
- Participants raised the issue of faith provision and the need for any provision to cater for a number of religions.
- Participants suggested the creation of a High Street-type area, which could be used by residents and employees. It was suggested that this should be a village style area with a focal point to provide a sense of community. It should be accessible to both the new and existing community.
- Given the connection Pinewood has with the arts community, it was suggested that some sort of arts facility could be created for use by the local community which could also provide training facilities for dance and musical activities.
- Participants thought the location of the facilities within the site is important and it was suggested they should be accessible and near the road. The issue of access to facilities was raised and participants wanted to ensure any new facilities would be for community use and not closed to employees only as is the current situation at the Studios.

Corporate Social Responsibility

- Participants thought the Studios approach to CSR needs to be improved and is integral to the future success of any planning application. There is a need for intensive engagement with the local community. More detail of the intended strategy should be given in relation to materials shown to the community in future.
- It was noted that the linking of all community provision will be integral to providing a healthy, sustainable community.
- Participants asked that a vision for what Pinewood will do for the local community in the developing of the proposed scheme.
- Participants emphasised that the development will have to work as a creative hub as well as a community and questioned how this would be achieved.

Filming Implications

- It was felt that the overall challenge will be to reconcile the anti-social hours of filming with pleasant residential living.
- Participants thought film crews may be concerned by their sets having public access. They wanted to know how this would be managed.
- There were concerns regarding the type of resident who would be attracted to living on a film set and the area ending up as a tourist attraction.
- Participants suggested that responsibility for the maintenance of the street scenes should be clarified, (i.e. would it be the responsibility of the local council or would it be privately managed).
- There was discussion over how far to separate the filming areas from the residential areas, as it is likely residents may want to access areas such as the canal when filming is not taking place.
- The question was raised as to whether the residential area would be a gated community, and how security would work, particularly during filming.
- The noise implications and anticipated mitigation measures to minimise any impact on filming were questioned.

Education

- Participants thought nursery provision would be welcomed.
- There was a discussion regarding primary and secondary school provision. It was generally agreed that this should be discussed further and in more detail at the public exhibition once meetings had taken place with the County Council.
- It was identified that there is likely to be a need at all levels, but the appropriateness of any provision is dependant upon good integration with existing facilities and programmes in the area.

Youth Provision

- Participants felt it was important to provide youth facilities and initiatives. A participant at the employee workshop said there is currently a scheme in place with a group of Chalfont College pupils. They come to the Studios on a number of occasions culminating in their producing a short film about living in the area. The film is then screened in Cinema 7. This has been a great success and it was agreed there is an opportunity to expand this type of programme.
- There was also discussion about the provision of a small training college which could encourage more young people in the area to become interested in the film industry.
- The proposal was identified as providing an opportunity to 'open up' accessibility to film and to wider cultural industries.

Type of Housing

- Participants asked who would be living in the residential area and would priority be given to employees of the Studios or in the cultural industries.
- Participants asked if the properties would be let out on a short-term basis to production crews while filming.
- Participants discussed the possible mix of housing. They asked if Pinewood intended to hold onto some of the houses.
- Participants also asked about the type and scale of affordable housing and where it would be situated.
- A participant asked whether it is anticipated that the Pinewood name would raise the cost of the housing.

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- A detailed breakdown of housing type/mix etc was requested for the next public consultation event.

Crime Prevention

- Participants thought crime prevention was very important. The merits of trying to 'design out' crime were discussed. It will be important to work with the local police on this.
- The idea of a possible office for the police on site was discussed.

Hospital/Health provision

- Participants thought additional residents would have an impact on healthcare provision at Wexham Park and Hillingdon. However, it was generally agreed the need will be for Pinewood to provide funding towards existing facilities rather than additional provision. It was thought this could be discussed further at the exhibition following discussions with the local PCT.
- Participants said a detailed health impact assessment would need to be undertaken to inform local need and the likely additional demand generated by the proposed development.

Links to the local community

- Participants thought the existing Studios could be better linked to the community, as it is currently perceived as isolated. It has an 'industrial estate feeling' and limited access on site for local people.
- Some participants suggested the allocation of routes for dog walking, public footpaths and location of trees and open spaces and questioned whether these would be available to the public.
- The overall feeling was that this scheme provides an opportunity to link the Studios with the wider community, but it was questioned how this could be achieved and what provision would be made.

2.4 Education, Employment & Training

Education

- Participants thought there was an opportunity for Pinewood to build on links with local higher education facilities and offer opportunities to those on creative courses.
- It was highlighted that some local colleges are now getting involved with diplomas for 14-19 year olds, and it was questioned what opportunities there might be to build on synergies between these courses and the Studios.
- Several participants raised the issue of the lack of a local secondary school. They informed that students are bused to Chalfont, which is now oversubscribed and highlighted that there is likely to be an increased requirement for secondary education.
- A possible creation of an Academy of Creative Arts on site was suggested as a very significant potential benefit.
- Participants suggested there may be value in an area put aside for a small college focused on offering opportunities and training in the film industry to young people.
- Both employees and tenants mentioned there was a high demand for work experience from local schools with approximately 200 requests a month. It was questioned whether the work experience provision could be expanded upon as a result of this proposal? There are also currently about 50 work placements a year, though participants said it is sometimes difficult placing students with independent companies and health and safety implications can also put firms off.
- Some participants asked if Pinewood representatives give talks to local schools. It was generally agreed there is room to build on this and increase Pinewood's profile in the locality.
- A number of participants suggested Pinewood could increase links with educational establishments providing media courses, e.g. Bournemouth University, Amersham School and the National Film and Television School.
- It was suggested it would be worth Pinewood making contact with the head teacher at Chalfont School regarding potential opportunities and future links.
- Participants considered it very important that training and educational opportunities arising from Project Pinewood should fit in with the existing

educational structure. Any educational facility provided should also have benefit for local people.

- Participants mentioned that a core part of contracts with developers requires them to deliver employment/education and community facilities and this needs to be detailed in further consultation.

Apprenticeship & Training Opportunities

- It was generally agreed that the provision of apprenticeships is very important and that this proposal is likely to provide the opportunity to increase this provision. The point was made that the apprenticeships do not just have to be directly tied to the film industry but could also focus on crafts such as carpenters, plasterers and electricians etc.
- Participants in the employee and tenant workshops said many people in the industry learned from their peers. It was agreed that there is a perception that it can be hard to get into the film industry, and often connections are relied upon. It was agreed that opportunities need to be created for young people and opportunities opened up where possible.
- It was suggested that existing Pinewood staff could benefit from the provision of evening classes.
- The question was raised over whether the Government could do more to encourage tenants at Pinewood to take on people to train. Train2Gain was mentioned. This could be built on by encouraging tenants to use people trained at an on-site college.
- Several participants said there had been discussions regarding a MAC make-up school at Pinewood.
- The issue of connectivity between local people and businesses was discussed, it was felt it is important to look into ways people who have been trained can give back to local employers and the community.
- Some participants wanted to know who would undertake the training and whether a trial could be run during the planning process in conjunction with the Centre of Excellence.

Employment

- Some participants suggested local people should be given first priority for any potential employment opportunities.
- A number of participants thought the principle of getting people living near their jobs is important.
- Participants thought it was important to clarify the number of jobs which could be created as this would be crucial locally. They also suggested it is made clear what the risk to jobs would be if Project Pinewood doesn't happen.
- Participants also asked what percentage of jobs would be technical/film & TV and what percentage would be more mainstream.
- It was questioned whether Pinewood could link to the National Centre of Entrepreneurship near Aylesbury.
- Participants asked if an infrastructure map of working and living patterns could be produced.

Creative Centre

- Participants asked what degree of certainty could be given as to demand.
- Participants questioned where the tenants will come from, who they will be and what effect this would have on existing studio operations.
- Participants asked what types of businesses are likely to be attracted and how much space would be provided for them.

3. Conclusion and Next Steps

This report summarises extensive discussions over four topic areas and has produced a range of detailed issues for further thought and discussion. Pinewood Studios will respond to the points raised at the end of the consultation process in a separate report.

The general themes that emerged include:

- An overall feeling that all aspects of Project Pinewood must be presented clearly and in detail. It is extremely important that the residential element is a 'living community' and does not feel like an industrial estate and the community and economic elements must work in tandem with each other and with the existing business and local community.
- Road conditions, traffic flow and lack of public transport provision are viewed as serious local issues and a detailed transport proposal should be shown at the next consultation event.
- The loss of Green Belt land means it is essential for the design to be as 'green' as possible. Mitigation measures need to be highlighted and participants felt a need for open spaces and a 'countryside feel' are essential.
- The scheme provides an opportunity for provision of apprenticeship opportunities and the idea for a college or educational/training facility on site was raised by a number of groups and would be seen as a key community benefit. The need to build on relationships with nearby colleges and universities is also key to an innovative proposal.

A Public Exhibition will be organised, to enable the local community to view and directly comment on the emerging proposals.