



Planning
RBWM

Dear Sirs,

Re: 22/03374/OUT – Application for film studios in Holyport

Since our original letter dated 4th January objecting to the above application, further information has been provided. We have seen the addition of the travel plan plus there was a public meeting, hosted by Bray Parish Council, at which a representative from Greystoke was available to answer questions.

The representative advised those present that the studios, as well as contributing to the national economy, would bring great benefit to the local community in the form of jobs and training opportunities. He later stated, when asked about traffic movements, that all the film companies would bring in their own teams and contractors, which appears to contradict the first statement. We have learnt from Bray Studios, a project that was largely supported by the community, that there has been little or no job creation, and no tangible benefit to local businesses. Most people who work in the film industry are self-employed and travel to wherever the work is, indeed, a speaker at the meeting who lives almost opposite the proposed site, stated that he had never worked in any of the local studios, thus demonstrating that studios do not need to be in the South East of the U.K.

This Greystoke representative also claimed that they were working with Holyport College to provide a safe walking route to the school and also a cricket club. This claim has been vehemently denied by the headmaster of the college who is opposed to the plan on several grounds.

We now know that the height of the buildings would be up to a maximum of 21metres. Greystoke seem to think that they can screen this with trees. Although there are large trees to the East of the site, the actual build area is flat farmland surrounded by managed hedges so the visual impact from Forest Green Road would be catastrophic. They would be facing a multi-storey car-park with 1,000 car capacity and space for 80 lorries with the massive

sound stages to the rear. The associated light pollution would be unacceptable and devastating to nocturnal animals.

We quote from their submission “To achieve the necessary level of privacy and security it has not been possible to maintain all existing public rights of way”. Indeed, six public footpaths would be lost. All of which are very widely used by local residents. As a compensation they suggest re-routing two paths, one of which would run along the inside of the roadside hedge, “where the frontage of the studios can be experienced”, what a charming alternative! Currently, the community have free access to all of this land and use it as a recreational area and the small site that would remain, as a “country park” would be no comfort.

Gays Lane is instrumental to their plan, running through the middle of the site. This lane is a bridleway, unsuitable for vehicular access, and one of the few places in the Parish that horse riders can safely use. It is also a vital resource for the Windsor Horse Rangers, a local charity who promote riding for children, and who are situated within 1km of the site.

The riders share this route with cyclists and walkers who all appreciate the peace and tranquility presently on offer.

And finally, the travel plan. The LTP has five overarching aims:

1. To improve access to everyday services and facilities for everyone
2. To improve road safety and personal security for all transport users
3. To support economic growth
4. To improve quality of life and minimise the social, health and environmental impact of transport
5. To mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change

1. Access – There are no everyday services and facilities in that area

2. Road safety – This build would have the reverse effect. The roads that would have to be used to access the site are the A330 Holyport Road, the Forest Green Road and Oakley Green Road. All of these are narrow, winding, rural roads with speed limits of 30/40mph, regularly flouted, and are all unlit. There are few or no footways, but they are used by horse riders, cyclists, walkers and farm machinery to gain access to the footpaths. All of these roads are currently subject to 7.5tonne weight restrictions. These restrictions were put in place after years of campaigning by residents, as the roads were deemed to be unsuitable for heavy traffic. To access the studios, the residents would be subjected to a flood of very large vehicles by day and night.

3. There is no evidence to suggest that economic growth would be created, or indeed, of benefit to local people

4. Quality of life is presently pretty good in that area. This build would completely destroy it and the associated effects on the air quality caused by increased traffic would be very harmful in an area where air quality falls far short of the WHO recommendations.

5. Climate change – pouring concrete on 43 acres of farmland will create harm to the environment and exacerbate the issues of flooding that already exist in that area.

The only way to travel to this site is by car. There are no buses and no safe walking routes to access any form of public transport. The use of cycles is currently hazardous and will become more so with the subsequent increase in traffic. They quote footpaths crossing to the site but these are not available to cyclists and the promotion of Gays Lane as an access route will render it totally unsuitable for recreational use.

In conclusion, and as we previously stated, this application is totally unsuitable for this rural setting and they can provide no special circumstances that can justify the devastation of green belt fields. We believe this application should be rejected.

Yours faithfully,

The OGAFCA committee

