

9 October 2023

Buckinghamshire Council

Via email to: [publicaccesscommen.wyc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:publicaccesscommen.wyc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

Dear Sirs

Re: Support for Marlow Film Studios (ref: 22/06443/FULEA)

Buckinghamshire Business First (BBF) is recognised by both the Department for Business and Trade (formerly BEIS) and the Department for Levelling up, Housing & Communities (DLUCH) as the Growth Hub for Buckinghamshire and we provide businesses in Buckinghamshire with knowledge, support and opportunities for growth. We have also been appointed by the Department for Education as the Employer Representative Body (ERB) for Buckinghamshire and we are leading on the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

BBF is led by a Board of local business leaders whose organisations operate across a diverse range of sectors, employee numbers and turnover levels. One of the primary objectives of BBF is to promote business growth and to support a thriving economy.

BBF amplifies the voice of the business community within Buckinghamshire and currently has over 15,000 businesses (of the 32,000 in the county – over 47%) engaged with its activities. 65.2% of private sector employment in Buckinghamshire is within businesses who are engaged with BBF.

The BBF Board has engaged with Marlow Film Studios to receive presentations on the benefits of the proposals to the local business community, the wider Buckinghamshire economy, and the film and television sector and wider UK economy.

We have heard how the proposals will transform a low quality, neglected land infill site into a cultural and economic hub, supporting Buckinghamshire's continued recognition as a global epicentre for film and television production.

We also heard that the studios are forecast to generate up to 4,180 jobs and £338m of economic activity per year, which will provide economic opportunities for local businesses and residents, which the BBF Board fully supports. It is estimated that around two-thirds of production budgets will be spent in the local economy and associated supply chains which will further boost positive economic growth across all of Buckinghamshire and surrounding areas.

BBF is particularly interested in the education and skills commitments, including provision for traineeships for at least 300 new entrants over the first five years, and the proposed Culture and Skills Academy which will provide significant opportunities for the younger generation to gain the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to support a future career in the creative industries.

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We consider that this application adds to a broadening of the ecology of the existing film industry in the county and, therefore, makes an additional contribution to the opportunities generated by the whole sector. It is not simply adding jobs, but also adding opportunities to sustain careers over a long period of time, as well as offering training within the Creative Industries for early career and career transition.

We believe the proposal will also broaden existing supply chains in the county that support the Creative Industries sector in Buckinghamshire.

Transport is a key issue and we have heard about the transport plan for the studios, prepared in coordination with Buckinghamshire Council, that is designed to ensure the film studio application will be a major catalyst to making sustainable public transport options more accessible for the surrounding communities. Connectivity will be improved through the creation of a new transport hub and two new bus services including a direct half-hourly bus between Maidenhead and High Wycombe and a new half hourly hopper service around Marlow, Little Marlow and Bourne End, improving connectivity and bringing wider benefit within this part of the county.

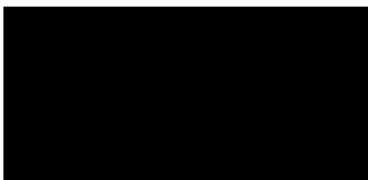
As a new transport hub, providing the above regular services, the film studio application will be a major catalyst to making sustainable public transport options more accessible for the surrounding communities, who are currently not well supported with public transport.

Local residents will benefit from the proposed community building, upgrades to cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, and delivery of a range of measures, including using 25% of the site for public enjoyment and wildlife and additional offsite interventions, that aim to achieve a 20% biodiversity net gain in the natural environment within the local area.

BBF considers that the application delivers significant benefits, meets the clear need for more film and television facilities as the UK continues to be one of Hollywood's preferred destinations for filming big budget feature films, and further grows a sector which Buckinghamshire leads on both nationally and internationally helping achieve local and national government policy objectives.

For the reasons set out above, BBF is supportive of the application and asks that serious consideration is given to this proposal, which will add significant value to Buckinghamshire.

Yours faithfully



**Michael Garvey  
Chairman**

Copy to: Marlow Film Studios at: [support@marlow.film](mailto:support@marlow.film)