

Elstree Studios, Borehamwood



The Challenge

- To clear the 30 year-old 'mound' – 4 acres and 33,000 cubic metres of asbestos-contaminated spoil – to support Elstree Studios' long-standing plans to build film and television facilities including a third large stage, together with additional business premises.

The Ambition

- To allow the studios to expand significantly and build on its fantastic film heritage.
- To attract major film/TV productions, such as The Crown, to the studios, creating jobs and increasing spending in the local economy.
- To reinforce Hertfordshire's position as a substantial hub within a wider film and TV cluster in and around London.

The Solution

- Hertfordshire LEP provided studio owner Hertsmere Borough Council a £1m Growing Places Fund loan towards the £4.5m project to help finance and kick-start the multi-million pound clearance operation. This enabled the huge mound of spoil to be removed with 4,150 lorry movements, allowing the studios to create a new backlot and expand by 25 per cent.

“Our Strategic Economic Plan prioritised investment in key sectors such as Film & Media which increased Hertfordshire's ability to attract major film and TV productions, including The Crown, and has had a huge impact on the local economy.”

Neil Hayes, Executive Director of Hertfordshire LEP

“The new backlot cleared with the advance from the Hertfordshire LEP has been the catalyst for all this increase in business and employment.”

Roger Morris, Managing Director of Elstree Studios

The Impact: bringing The Crown to Hertfordshire

- The new backlot led to the studios successfully securing the contract for the £100m Netflix series The Crown. Elstree Studios has been the production's base of operations since early 2015, and it is hoped the series will continue filming in Hertfordshire to 2019.
- While much of the filming was shot on location, standing sets of Buckingham Palace, interiors and offices of 10 Downing Street, as well as the building's famous front door, were recreated at the studios.
- The impact of the studio's expansion on the local economy has been huge. Hertsmere Borough Council, owner of the studios, achieves £1.4m in annual revenue and around 400 additional personnel have been employed for The Crown alone. Hertsmere Borough Council calculates related spending in the local economy to have reached £17,000 per day during television productions and £30,000 per day during film productions since the new backlot was cleared.
- Plans are already in place to build a 21,000 square foot film stage area at the rear of the site, similar to the highly successful George Lucas Stage.

