

DOCUMENT

08

Behind the Scenes

at Shepperton Studios

AUGUST 2018



SHEPPERTON
STUDIOS

SHEPPERTON past, present and future

This document is produced by Turley on behalf of Shepperton Studios Ltd to accompany the Shepperton Studios planning application.

AUGUST 2018

The Huntsman: Winter's War © 2016 Universal Pictures
Cover image - *The Mummy* © 2017 Universal Pictures

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The UK has been the most welcoming location for productions due to the excellent crew and facilities. Shepperton Studios is chief amongst them. In recent years Disney has used Shepperton Studios for Mary Poppins, Christopher Robin and Dumbo."

*Walt Disney
Studios Motion Picture Production*



1 INTRODUCING

Shepperton Studios is a hub for skills, technology and creative people. It is recognised as one of the world's premier centres of film and TV production, with a first class range of sound stages, backlots, offices, workshops, support services and other facilities.



01

17th Century
Local nobleman, Thomas Wood, built Littleton Park, the mansion house which still stands at the centre Shepperton Studios

1929
A Scottish businessman buys the estate and a year later registers the land under the name 'Flicker Film Productions', and begins converting the estate into a film studio

Shepperton Studios has a unique place in film history. First opened in 1929 it has an unbroken record of film production and is a studio of world-wide reputation.

This document goes behind the scenes at Shepperton to give a glimpse of the art and industry of film making. It highlights the facilities, businesses, people and skills needed and explores the film production process.

Over 1,000 films have been made at Shepperton Studios. Recent productions have included Beauty and the Beast, Mary Poppins Returns, Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again and Christopher Robin.

- 01 Aerial view of site and surrounding area
- 02 Early workshop
- 03 Water shoot in H Stage
- 04 Anna Karenina © 2012 Universal Pictures
- 05 Alice in Wonderland: Through the Looking Glass © 2014 Disney Enterprises Inc. All rights reserved



02



03



04



05

1945
After World War II, Shepperton Studios re-opens and is purchased by Sir Alexander Korda as part of British Lion Films

1952
The African Queen, directed by John Huston is released in cinemas. It was partly shot at Shepperton and used the River Ash as a back drop

2 APPRECIATING



Shepperton Studios has its origins in the historic Littleton Park Estate of some 70 acres and its country mansion house originally dating from 1600s.

'Flicker Productions' acquired the site in 1931 for a flick book production company which became 'Sound City Film Producing and Recording Studios' in 1932. The 1930s saw a phase of development associated with the emerging 'movie' industry with seven sound stages built supported by cutting rooms, viewing theatres, workshops and a hotel and restaurant.

During the Second World War the Studio was closed and requisitioned for war use. It reopened in 1946 as the 'British Lion Studio Company' and film production resumed.

In 1984 the Studios were acquired, refurbished and extended as Lee International, Shepperton.

From 1995 to 2001 the Studios were owned and operated by the iconic British film directors Sir Ridley and Tony Scott, who also invested in new stages and buildings during their tenure.

In 2001 Pinewood Studios acquired Shepperton and developed additional capacity to offer a large studio complex for inward investment, international productions. The site has been improved under Pinewood Group's ownership to the present time and is now an acknowledged world-leader for large scale film production.



01 Littleton House, 1933

02 Littleton House from the west

03 Littleton House from the east

04 Sound City, early 1930s

05 Sound City, late 1930s



3 FACILITATING

“It’s great to have a facility that’s a one-stop shop. A place that could support a major Hollywood movie, with great facilities like the ones we’re enjoying here at Shepperton and a phenomenal crew.”

Jeffrey Silver
Producer – Beauty and the Beast

“Shepperton, the facilities are fantastic and they really served our needs. Almost the entire film was shot on-stage and we were working hand-in-hand with one of the best technical facilitators anywhere.”

David Heyman
Film Producer

“Here you just feel the art of film making and it’s just so exciting because it’s just such a classic studio.”

Duncan Kenworthy OBE
Film Producer

- Stages

Large scale soundproofed buildings for accommodating film and TV sets.
- Workshops

A variety of spaces primarily for constructing sets and props including timber and plastering workshops.
- Offices

Flexible space which is let to film production companies to act as an HQ or production base for a particular project.
- Ancillary

A range of other uses such as support services, including catering and hospitality, post production facilities and screening rooms.
- Backlots

Open spaces used for constructing large scale outdoor filming sets.

- Information
- Parking
- Canteen
- Cafe
- Pedestrian Turnstile
- Electric Car Charging Point
- Recycling Centre
- Bus Stop
- Bicycle Park
- Stages
- Creative Services
- Offices
- Workshops
- Onsite Amenities & Services
- Theatre 1
- Theatre 2
- Theatre 3
- Theatre 4
- Theatre 5
- Theatre 6
- Theatre 7
- Theatre 8
- Theatre 9
- Theatre 10
- Adrian Biddle Theatre
- Korda Theatre



1973
Rock group 'Led Zeppelin' film scenes at the Studios for their live concert film "The Song Remains the Same"

1977
The band 'The Who' move in and bought large parts of the Studio, filming live concerts scenes there for their 1979 documentary

1982
Ghandi, directed by Sir Richard Attenborough is released in cinemas and wins eight Academy Awards and nominated for a further three

1984
Shepperton Studios changed hands coming under the control of brothers John and Benny Lee

Shepperton Studios has grown over time in line with the evolving needs of the industry.

To walk around Shepperton Studios today is to take a trip through cinematic history. From the internal streets named 'Peter Sellers Way' and 'David Lean Drive', to the Orson Welles Building and the historic A-D stages at the centre of Studio, the site is steeped in film heritage. Today, Shepperton is a world-class production complex with its unique combination of large stages, on-site support services and in-house expertise.

Away from the cameras the realities are a site which accommodates the complex logistics as well as the day-to-day running of commercial film productions. The site's physical constraints mean there is very little scope for any building, facility or space which isn't highly functional.

Each film production has different requirements for accommodation and Shepperton Studios has the capability to provide a bespoke facilities package accordingly. The typical model for a major production however is for the provision of office space to form a production base for a project, with other facilities managed flexibly according to the filming schedule.

This typically involves using a range of workshops, sound stages, backlots, pre-production and post production facilities.

- 01 Post production – Foley Theatre
- 02 Post production – Foley artist at work
- 03 Post production – Mixing Theatre
- 04 Exterior – Littleton House
- 05 Post production – Foley Theatre
- 06 Post production – Korda Theatre, dubbing theatre
- 07 Post production – Littleton House gardens, field recording
- 08 A Stage
- 09 Gainsborough Building – Workshop
- 10 Littleton House – Boardroom



1991
Shot at Shepperton Studios, *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* grosses \$390.5m at the box office worldwide

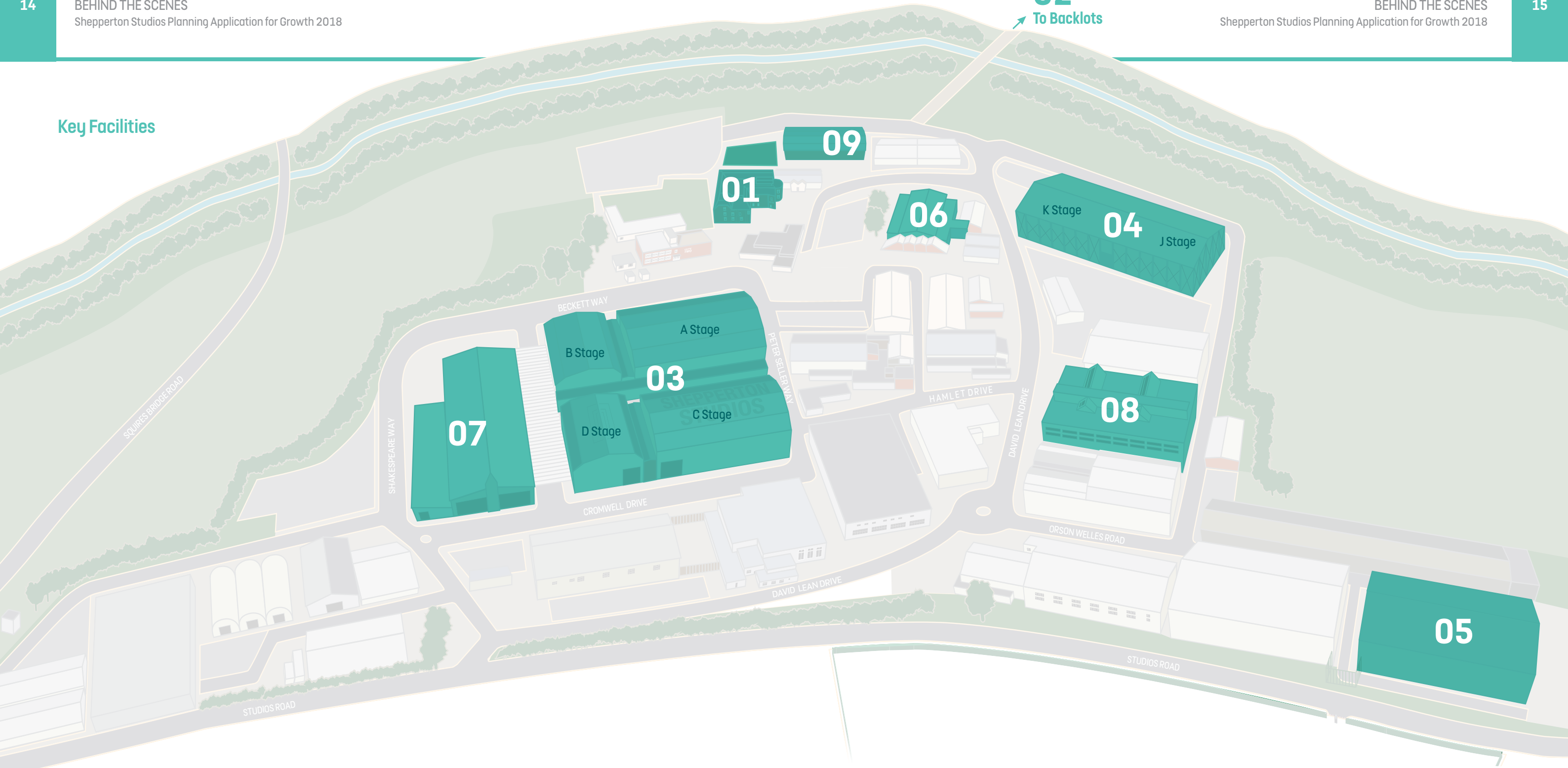
1994
The Madness of King George is filmed at Shepperton and wins three BAFTA Awards in 1995 including Outstanding British Film



1995
The studios were purchased by a consortium headed by Sir Ridley and Tony Scott

1999
Billy Elliot, a British dance drama film hits cinema screens, after being filmed at Shepperton Studios

Key Facilities



01 Littleton House and gardens

In the early years of Littleton Village this was the original Manor House. Today it is a place in which many tenant companies are situated and is still a popular location for filming. The entrance hall is the room where Damien was born in the well-known thriller *The Omen*. The Old House Gardens to the back of the house were used to stage the garden party scene in *Bridget Jones Diary*. Historically, the house contained super star dressing rooms for the likes of Elizabeth Taylor.

02 Backlot

Backlot includes areas of open space used for constructing large scale outdoor filming sets. The Tower of London was constructed in the backlot for *Robin Hood* in 2010.

03 A and D Stages

Stage A offers 18,000 square feet of space, is 40 feet high and can be connected to B Stage via a double set of elephant doors. There is also a small interior tank (36ft x 20ft x 7ft) for water filming. This set up is mirrored on C and D Stages which have played host to

Sherlock Holmes' Dartmoor in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, as well as menacing and magical forests for Neil Jordan's take on Angela Carter's *The Company of Wolves*, then the main Parisian train station hall in Academy Award®-winner Martin Scorsese's *Hugo*.

04 J and K Stage

Large sound stages used for film and TV productions. Has been home to the TV show *Dancing on Ice* with a live studio audience.

05 H Stage

As one of the largest stages, H Stage is 30,000 square feet. It is the well-known site for filming the old and new *Batman* epics, sometimes referred to as *The Batman Stage*. The Stage was also used for *The Guns of Navarone*, among many others.

06 Korda Theatre

This theatre was named after Sir Alexander Korda, a film producer who once owned Shepperton Studios and who produced *The Third Man*.

The Korda Theatre's post production facilities and technicians are recognised as some of the best in the country including Dolby Atmos sound. The theatre operates as a public cinema at weekends.

07 Workshops 1-9

Shepperton Studios provides a range of workshops, including specialist facilities for working with certain materials used in sets such as paint spraying and fibre glass moulding.

08 Gainsborough Building

A bespoke building designed with ground floor workshops with offices above, allowing production teams to work together in a single building.

09 David Lean Building

This building is a redevelopment of former stages and today offers production offices, meeting rooms and art department space for on-site productions. The building was dedicated to director David Lean to mark his contribution to British cinema.

4 CREATING

Shepperton Studios Ltd owns the property and facilities at the site. In addition, there are around 70 related businesses who lease buildings, offices and workshops on site and provide skills, services and equipment to production. These come together to form a unique studio community supporting all types of production activity.

The unique structure of the film and media industry means that each film is a bespoke assembly of personnel and expertise dedicated to the requirements of a particular production.

The range of businesses based at Shepperton is astonishing. Skilled plasterers and sculptors make scenery and props, model makers produce props, sets and vehicles to scale for special effects work, scenic artists paint detailed backdrops, greensmen are involved in landscaping and carpenters make and assemble sets. The work is undertaken by highly skilled teams working to tight deadlines.

As well as these trades, every film needs a huge range of other specialist staff, including make-up and hair, wardrobe (including costume design and manufacture), personal training for actors, transport services, laundry, dry cleaning and catering. These skills and services are located in one place to meet the requirements of a 'manufactured film'.

Shepperton Studios hosts many different businesses offering the full variety of these services to film productions in situ, thus ensuring convenience and efficiency in terms of time and cost, which are critical to the industry.

Each film also needs to hire all the specialist equipment to be used in the production process along with personnel. For example, Shepperton Studios is home to specialist prop making companies and several different camera equipment suppliers.

Similarly, rigging and scaffolding are essential for building and operating complex film and TV sets and there are specialist firms based at Shepperton. The advantages of specialist companies being on-site relate to the volumes of equipment required, the narrow time frames and tight budgets that constrict filming schedules and the need for experts to be 'on hand' at all times.

The cluster of businesses operating at Shepperton Studios has grown to meet the needs of the industry and drive economic benefits from being located close to the studio facilities and each other. The work of the specialist firms based on site and the studios is complementary and reinforcing.

- 01 Model making
- 02 Hair and makeup
- 03 Prosthetics
- 04 Steel fabrication
- 05 Vacforming
- 06 Carpentry
- 07 Spray shop



5 PRODUCING

At its heart, film making is a highly commercial as well as creative enterprise.

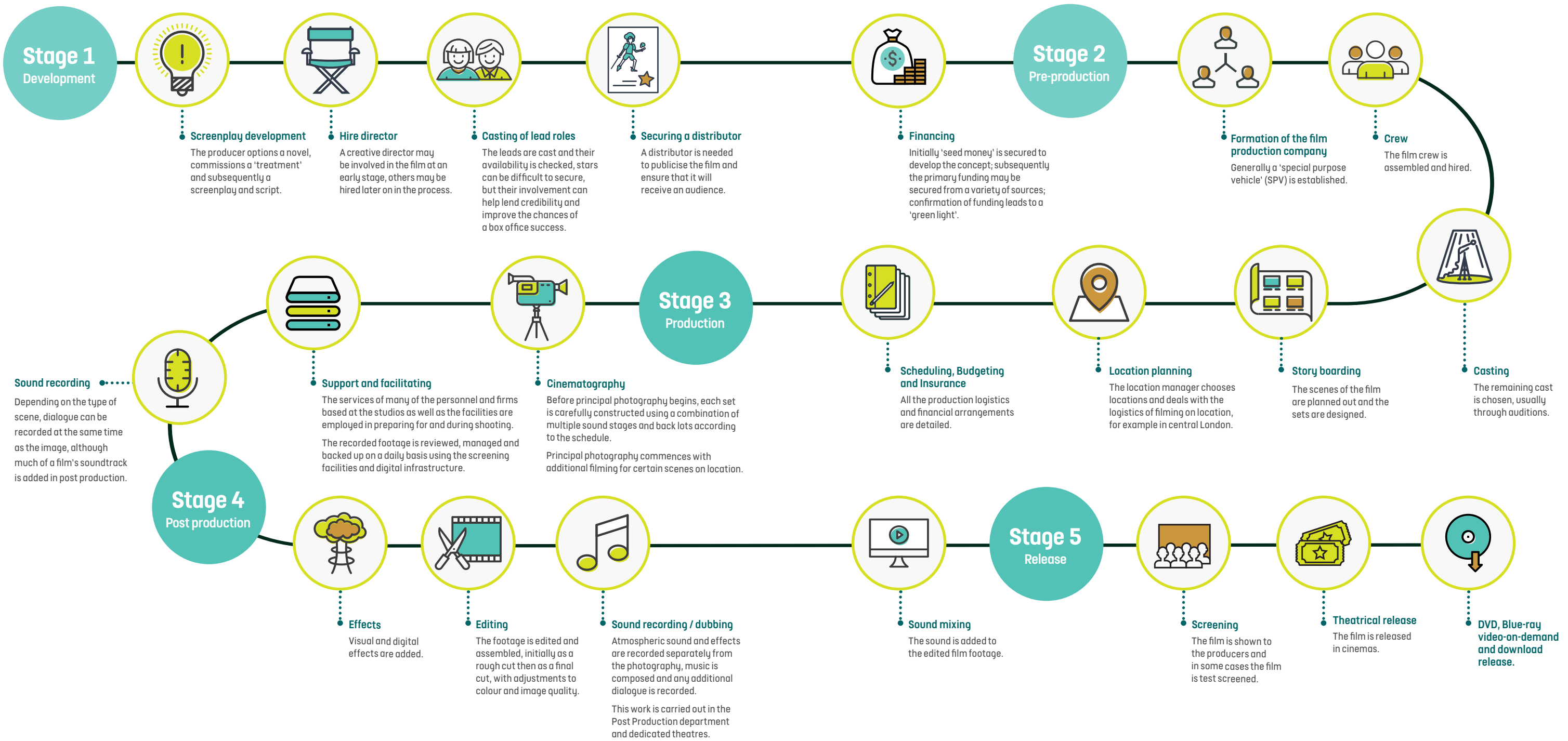
The film world has many unresolved development projects and ideas, many of which have creativity in abundance, but may never see the light of day because they are not commercially attractive or viable.

For a major film project to receive the all important 'green light' a range of different factors need to come together, perhaps most significantly from a practical perspective, securing the backing of a distributor and the required financial investment to pay for the production.

It is typically only after this that a production will arrange studio facilities, such as those at Shepperton Studios, to base the production and shoot the film.

The diagram summarises the stages of the film making process from script to screen for a typical novel-based production.

Developing an understanding of the film making process helps to explain the required facilities, skills and funding.



6 SHOOTING

Each film production requires a vast technical crew. This section describes some of the key crew departments who would typically be on set during a shoot.

Production

The Producer oversees the film from start to finish. The department includes a Production Manager, Unit Manager and Location Managers, as well as numerous assistants and runners who may be on set during a typical shoot.

Direction

The Director is responsible for the creative vision, dramatic interpretation of the screenplay and overall style of a film. The Director is supported by a number of Assistant Directors who deal with logistics, organisation and scheduling. The department also normally includes a Script Supervisor and runners.

Runners act as assistants for the production, undertaking a variety of basic tasks such as transporting documents and equipment and taking messages. Becoming a runner is often a first step on a career ladder in the film industry.

Art Department

The visual appearance of a film is essential to transporting the audience into the world of the story. The settings for each scene in a film need to be carefully planned and designed to be both evocative and realistic.

The Art Department is typically the largest department within a film crew. For large scale productions, in particular science fiction, fantasy or period films, the department may employ many hundreds of staff. The Art Department is overseen by the Production Designer who works with the Director to determine the visual identity of the film. Sketches are prepared to provide inspiration for the detailed design, procurement and construction work required for the sets.

During the shoot, each set needs to be carefully constructed and then dismantled according to the production schedule. The Art Department therefore needs to be on standby before, during and after filming.

Some of the key roles in the Art Department are as follows:

- Production Designer
- Production Buyer
- Drapesmaster
- Art Director
- Artist
- Props Manager
- Set Decorator
- Draughtsman
- Greensman

Construction

The Construction Department works closely with the Art Department to built, paint and plaster the sets. Overseen by the Construction Manager, the department includes skilled and creative tradesman, such as carpenters, riggers and plasterers.

Camera

The Director of Photography (DoP) oversees all the cinematography for the film, composing shots, controlling camera movements and the lighting.

The camera crew works for the DoP and includes a number of specialist and highly skilled roles, such as the Camera Operator and the 1st and 2nd Assistant Camera. These crew members move and position the camera, focus each shot and are responsible for film and/or digital media. The department normally includes a number of trainees and technicians.

Costume, Hair and Make-Up

The costume department is responsible for design, hire, fitting, purchase, manufacture and continuity for all costumes worn by actors. For a period drama or fantasy, costumes often need to be bespoke. The costume department therefore needs to have its own facilities on site and be on set during the shoot.

The cast needs a team of hair and make-up specialists to prepare them for their roles. For certain productions, specialist prosthetic make-up may be required.

Lighting and Electrical

Lighting is essential to film sets, as artificial lighting rather than daylight is normally required. The lighting department needs to set up and control a range of specialist equipment to create various different moods and atmospheres for the film, as well as light the cast in the right way for their roles.

The department staff need to have electrical training and a range of technical roles are required, including the Gaffer, who oversees the electrics, and the Best Boy, who is the lead lighting technician.

Special and Visual Effects

The special effects department oversees the physical effects during shooting. These could be as mundane as weather conditions which need to be simulated or large scale explosions.

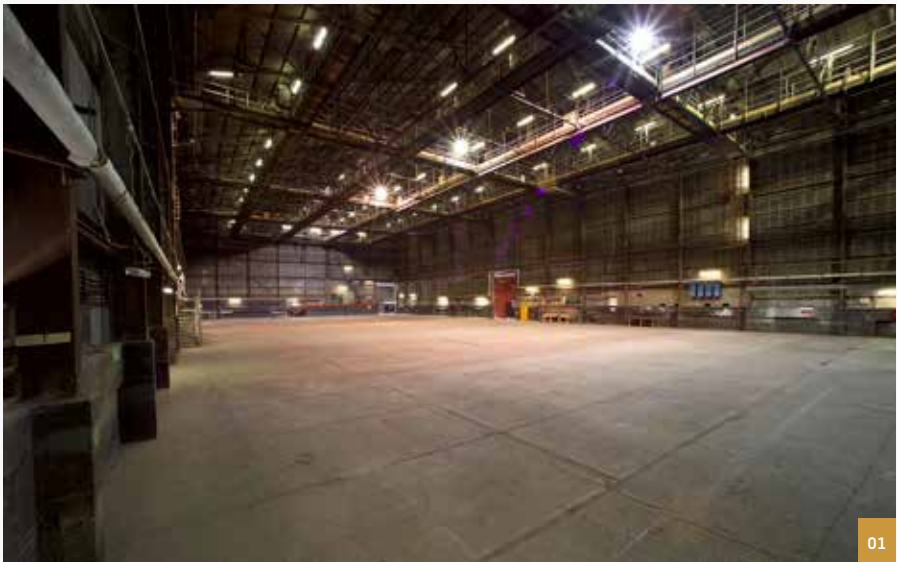
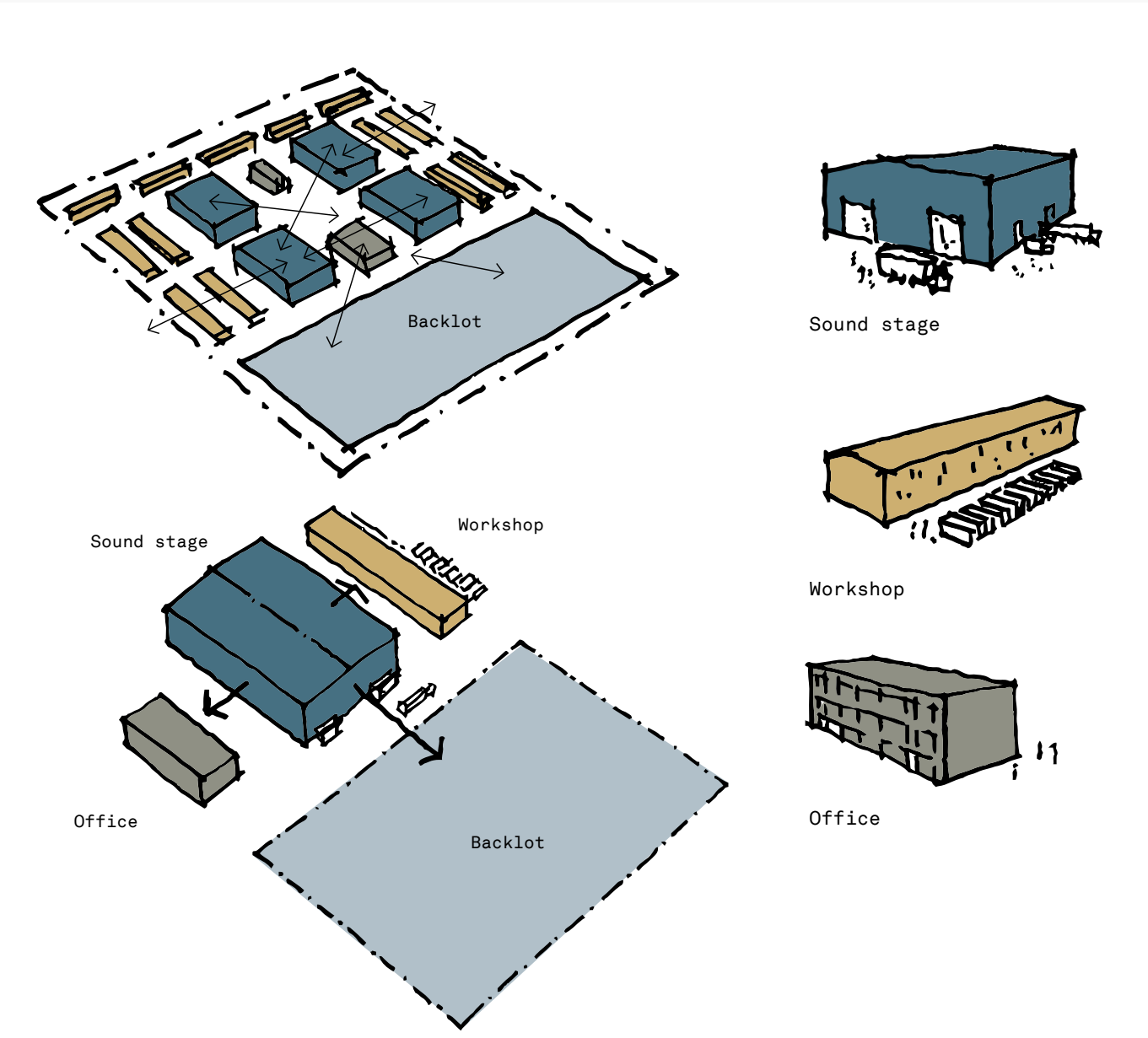
Visual effects can be distinguished from special effects as relating more to post production alterations/additions. However, on set the visual effects department can be responsible for adding markers and controlling green or blue screens.

Production Sound

The sound department on set normally includes a production sound mixer and boom operator as well as technicians to record sound during filming.

7 STAGING

Sound stages and back lots provide the necessary large scale and highly flexible spaces required to construct complex sets as well as accommodate the vast array of crew, cast, props, equipment and support services in close proximity to the main action.



There's such amazing space to work in. You know everything gets from A to B very quickly that we're not waiting for anything, it all happens fast."

Sarah Greenwood
Production Designer

- 01 H Stage
- 02 Beauty and the Beast © 2017 Disney Enterprises Inc. All rights reserved
- 03 Western Street set backlot

The use of sound stages and backlots is typically managed from offices on site, (the production base) according to a filming schedule. Changes to the film industry and increased use of technology have not diminished the need for studio facilities. Dedicated large scale sound stages and back lots, remain central to major film productions as they allow for optimum degree of flexibility and control compared to filming on location.

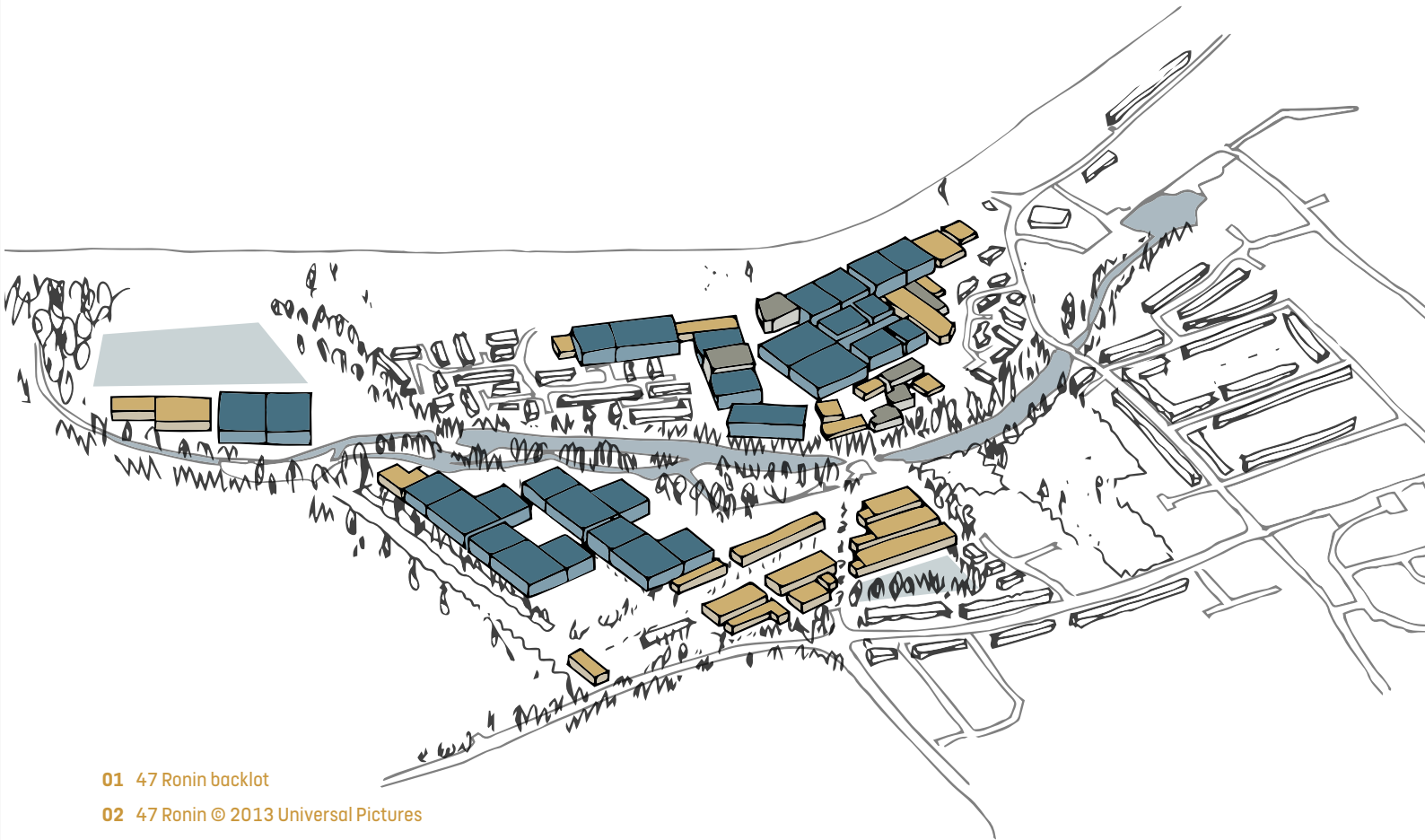
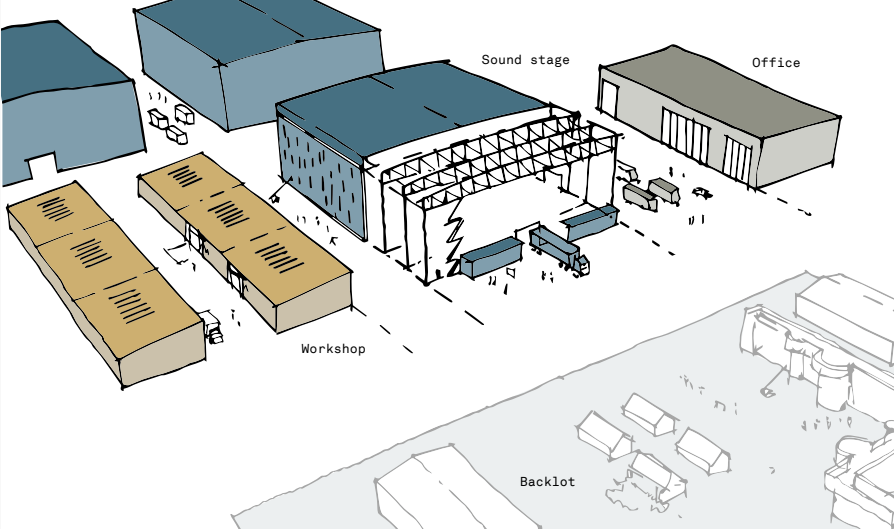
Dedicated sound stages include a number of distinguishing design features. For example, there is a need for substantial internal clear heights and a high level gantry to allow set components and equipment to be moved around safely.

The performance of the studios for film production is driven by the availability of stages of different scales. At Shepperton there are 14 stages ranging from 3,000 sq ft to 30,000 sq ft in size.



The backlots are vital to major film production providing the sites for complex external sets. At Shepperton, there are two principal backlots and other open areas are used for set construction as required.

During shooting, the sound stages and lots will typically be surrounded by vehicles and trailers associated with the production. These accommodate all the equipment for the different crew departments but also include catering units and accommodation for actors.



- 01 47 Ronin backlot
- 02 47 Ronin © 2013 Universal Pictures
- 03 Robin Hood backlot © Pinewood Studios



8 WATCHING

The films made at Shepperton Studios have a global audience and incorporate skills drawn from a wide pool of creative talent.

Shepperton Studios competes for international film business and many filmmakers choose it because of the unique range of services and specialist expertise available, together with the world class facilities. Shepperton Studios benefits from proximity to London and Heathrow Airport and it forms part of a wider network of studios and related creative businesses in the South East.

However, Shepperton Studios is operating in an increasingly global and competitive market. New studios are being developed in US, Canada, Australia and Europe. Shepperton Studios currently maintains a competitive advantage although others are starting to catch up.

Shepperton Studios today is a world-leading hub of creative enterprise at the centre of the UK film industry.

Shepperton Studios is a flexible and successful community of diversely skilled and passionate people dedicated to facilitating world-class productions.

The community thrives and continues to grow because it is an agglomeration of industry and talent.

The facilities can and do accommodate major film productions although it is over subscribed and can be congested because of physical constraints.

The community evolves over time but it is co-dependent and to a great extent physically indivisible. It remains a valuable and unique contributor to the UK economy as well as a cornerstone of its cultural heritage.

Shepperton Studios is a famous UK production facility which is rightly recognised as one of the best in the world. We are delighted to hear that Shepperton Studios intends to build more sound stages and increase their studio space in order to accommodate the level of growth in the UK film-making and production sectors."

*Amanda Nevill CBE
CEO British Film Institute*



Shepperton Studios Ltd have submitted a planning application for the improvement and expansion of the Studios to add a further 43,000 sq m of stages (illustrated opposite).

The scheme directly responds to the shortage of space in the UK and the policy of Government to grow the UK inward investment film and HETV industry.

Further details can be seen at www.sheppertonstudiosconsultation.co.uk

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Designed and produced by Turley
www.turley.co.uk

