

BuildingFutures
AWARDS
2013



Award Category: Retrofit for the Future sponsored by Weber Saint-Gobain

Project: Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden

Client: Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden

Project Team: Terence O'Rourke, KMG Partnership, Colin Buchanan and Partners Ltd, Hoare Lee, Barrell Tree Consultancy, Cyril Sweett, Environ UK, Bowmer and Kirkland Group



In 2010, Warner Bros invested £100 million in the refurbishment and expansion of the former Rolls Royce factory at Leavesden. The facility contains one third of all the stage space within the UK and is one of only a few locations in the country where large scale productions can be made.

The studios contain approximately 50,000m² of undercover flexible space, and house some of the largest stages in Europe, including a dedicated 6m deep underwater filing tank. The 40ha 'backlot' allows extensive sets and film locations to be created without having to leave the site, providing exceptional economic advantages for film makers and the local area.

Over 80% of employees come from the local area and many work at the Studio Tour 'The Making of Harry Potter,' which showcases the artistry, technology and talent behind the series of films made at Leavesden.

The overriding aim of the project was to greatly improve the sustainability and energy efficiency of the site. The studios now benefit from a range of initiatives introduced to

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conserve resources, reduce energy consumption and diminish waste. Prior to refurbishment, air permeability across the site measured 30-40 cubic metres/hour/sqm. After refurbishment, air permeability had been reduced to 3-4 cubic metres/hour/sqm.

The result is that CO2 emissions have been reduced by 30%, and through a combination of photocell controls, BEMS controlling heating, natural lighting/ ventilation, and a waste management & recycling strategy has led to a BREEAM Very Good rating being achieved for the 70 year old buildings.

Judges comments:

“The refurbishment of the Warner Bros. Studios provides a fantastic example of how with imagination, drive and dedication old buildings can be given a new lease-of-life. Semi-derelict steel-frame buildings have been brought back to life to provide not only excellent environmental performance (in terms of substantially reduced heat loss) but also economic & social sustainability benefits associated with employment, urban regeneration and income generation. The Warner Bros. Studio complex is now a state-of-the-art world-class facility which provides comfortable efficient space for major motion picture production, without the environmental & economic consequences associated with demolition and reconstruction.”