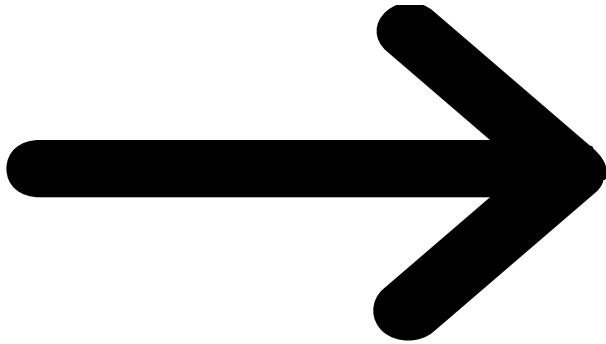


SNP set to finally give go ahead on Pentland Studio

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The Scottish Conservatives have welcomed the news that a major new film studio looks set to receive planning permission after ministers said they were minded to approve it.

The decision about whether to give the go ahead on the proposed £55 million Pentland Studio on the outskirts of Edinburgh had been with the Scottish Government for months, despite all funding being in place.

But developers received notice from the Scottish Government's chief planner that ministers were intending to approve the application, subject to conditions and the completion of a planning obligation.

One of these conditions related to improving infrastructure on the Edinburgh city by-pass, but if completed it would provide Scotland with a world class 96-acre site with a water stage and six sound stages.

The latest instalment of the Avengers franchise recently began filming in Edinburgh, but not all of the filming can take place in Scotland due to the lack of a world leading film studio.

It is hoped that once completed, the new facilities could attract more programmes to be shot in Scotland, and help retain industry expertise.

Scottish Conservative culture spokesman Jackson Carlaw, who recently raised the matter of studio capacity at FMQs, said:

"Having dragged their feet for months I'm delighted that the Scottish Government has seen sense and decided to give this project the go ahead.

"Provided that the conditions of the approval are met, this should provide Scotland with an international, world leading film studio complex.

“I have no doubt that this will help attract major film and television productions to Scotland, and finally allow us to match and exceed facilities elsewhere in the UK.

“It will also give us a real opportunity to develop and nurture creative arts skills in Scotland, and give us the ability to retain talent rather than see it go elsewhere.

“Once finished, this new development will see us have a capacity and talent base to match the unrivalled variety of our natural landscape locations.”

The Scottish Conservatives urged the SNP to approve the application back in January:

<http://www.scottishconservatives.com/2017/01/ministers-must-reveal-fate-of-55m-film-studio/>