

**Client:** Oak Holdings plc  
**Source:** Leisure Report  
**Date:** 01 July 2005  
**Page:** 11  
**Circulation:** 3000  
**Area(cm<sup>2</sup>):** 147

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## **Oak Holdings says YES! to more leisure schemes**

Oak Holdings, the AIM-listed developer and consultancy behind the £300m YES! development in south Yorkshire, has been appointed to develop two heritage based leisure schemes in Mansfield and Banbury.

The two schemes, both ideas of an unnamed entrepreneur, are called Outlaw's Kingdom, based on the legend of Robin Hood, and Shakespeare's World, based on the works of the Bard.

Steve Lewis, chief executive of Oak Holdings, told *Leisure Report*: "We have been approached to massage the ideas into deliverable schemes. Both are similar in concept in that they are heritage-based, but use modern, interactive, technology to recreate the era of two English heroes."

Lewis said both schemes would require substantial agricultural space, covering up to "a few hundred acres", with the

emphasis on sustainable development. The schemes would involve dress, food and character buildings, authentic to the eras they are trying to recreate.

"The schemes have a strong business case, and both locations are fabulous. With one of them we could be on site by next year, with a fair wind and the right financing I think that's achievable. But there are still a lot of issues of planning and land take. We expect to have something much more concrete in the next four to eight weeks."

Lewis said that the cost of the schemes has yet to be adequately equated.

Oak Holdings is also responsible for the development of the YES! entertainment resort in south Yorkshire, which is currently coming to the end of its planning consultation period.

YES! involves over one million sq ft of entertainment facilities,

including the largest theatre outside of London, operated by Clear Channel Entertainment, an extreme sports centre, indoor sports facilities, golfing range, and a resort spa. The scheme recently learned that Sheffield Borough Council has objected to the scheme on the grounds that it would be detrimental to Sheffield city centre, contrary to green belt planning policy, and "unsustainable".

Lewis said: "YES! is at a crucial stage now. Sheffield council have objected to the plans so we will have to assess those concerns on their merits. We hope to be in a position to make a definite statement in the next two to three weeks."

Although Sheffield council has objected to the proposals, the final decision rests with Rotherham Council, which is developing the scheme in association with Oak Holdings.