

U.K. Film Studio Enlists James Bond and Harry Potter for Its Junk-Bond Pitch

By Tom Beardsworth – 29 Nov 2017

A life-size train crash, a collapsing Venetian palazzo and Tom Cruise fighting zombies underwater -- welcome to one of the most entertaining bond roadshows of 2017.

Pinewood Studios gave fixed-income investors a tour of facilities used for these movie scenes on Tuesday as the company promoted its first junk-bond sale. The trip west of London took in sound stages, water tanks and workshops that helped in James Bond's exploits, Harry Potter's wizardry and Lara Croft's tomb-raiding.

"You could see and touch and feel how it all works," said Mark Wade, the head of industrials research at Allianz Global Investors, who went on the tour. He declined to say whether Allianz bid for the Pinewood notes.

The sprinkling of movie glamor may have helped. The studio was able to sell notes at the cheaper end of its price range and it expanded the sale, which was partly designed to fund a payout to Pinewood's private equity owner Aermont Capital LLP.

Pinewood priced the six-year notes at 3.75 percent and it increased the sale to 250 million pounds (\$335 million) from 240 million pounds, according to a person familiar with the matter, who isn't authorized to speak publicly and asked not to be identified.

Andrew Smith, a spokesman for Pinewood, declined to comment on the bond sale. An Aermont official also declined to comment.

— With assistance by Svenja O'Donnell, and Katie Linsell