Richard Taylor can't shed too much light on the HOBBIT films, but the Weta Workshop president, while visiting Hong Kong, did offer some comments on the highly anticipated prequels.

Speaking to the Associated Press, Taylor shared his thoughts on preparing for the start of filming. Asked why LORD OF THE RINGS director Peter Jackson isn't helming THE HOBBIT, Taylor replied, "Because he spent so long in Middle Earth…and probably felt a director such as Guillermo del Toro could bring something passionate and unique and original and new to the content for the sake of the fans.

"It's an absolute delight to be working with Guillermo. We've all enjoyed his craft as seen in PAN'S LABYRINTH and the HELLBOY movies. His unique aesthetic and storytelling style bring a lovely aesthetic to the world, and one we're enjoying being part of."

Taylor's team has already begun designing the landscape and characters for the two films, but he still has no idea when shooting will start in New Zealand. "We're just patiently waiting for it to begin. It has been in early development for a while. I'm sure it will get going some time soon."

Several of the characters from the RINGS series appear in THE HOBBIT, and Taylor wants to maintain a consistent look. "Like any film, there will be an effort to utilize the tools that are available to us today to achieve visual images that will excite and intrigue an audience as we did try 10 years ago."