
Meeting of the Cabinet – 18 March 2009

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Review of Leisure Centres

Purpose of Report

1. To update Cabinet Members on Council Leisure Centres and safety issues at Coseley Baths specifically.
2. To present options for the future based upon Leisure Centre update.

Background

LOCATION OF FACILITIES

3. Currently there are 4 main Council owned Leisure Centres and 6 secondary schools with swimming pools within the Borough:

Leisure Centre/Baths

- CRYSTAL 25 metre pool + fun pool + fitness suite+ sports halls
- DUDLEY 25 metre pool + learner pool + fitness suite+ sports halls
- HALESOWEN 33 metre pool + learner pool + fitness suite+ sports halls
- COSELEY 33 metre pool

Borough School Swimming Pools

- ELLOWES HALL 17metre pool (Boiler plant issues)
 - SUMMERHILL 25metre pool
 - CRESTWOOD 17metre pool
 - WORDSLEY 17metre pool
 - PEDMORE 20metre pool
 - WOLLESCOTE 15metre pool
4. **Appendix 1 shows the locations of these facilities within the Borough**

SUBSIDY PER FACILITY

5. The 4 main Leisure Centres/Baths are subsidised per visit as follows:

HALESOWEN	Net cost £345k divided by 275,000 visits equates to subsidy of £1.25
DUDLEY	Net cost £466k divided by 271,000 visits equates to subsidy of £1.72
CRYSTAL	Net cost £952k divided by 420,000 visits equates to subsidy of £2.27
COSELEY	Net cost £354k divided by 115,000 visits equates to subsidy of £3.08

Net costs shown are the running costs of the centre less the income that centre generated in 2007/8.

FUTURE PROVISION

6. When the Council considered the Leisure Centre Review and Strategy for future provision report at the then Executive meeting on the 8th September 2004 it resolved:

“That **option 4** in the report of the Director of the Urban Environment submitted to the meeting be approved”.

7. **Option 4** 3.12.1 vi stated:

“Proper care and attention of repair and maintenance issues will ensure that both Dudley Leisure Centre and Crystal Leisure Centre remain in good condition and have an extended life span. Halesowen Leisure Centre requires a reasonable level of capital investment to modernise facilities and ensure compliance with legislative requirements but this is supported by the supply/demand analysis and is good value for money in the context of the technical appraisal.”

8. **Option 4** 3.12.1 vii stated:

*“Coseley Swimming Pool requires some investment in order to comply with legislative requirements which in the short to medium term will ensure continued service delivery. However, for the long-term, refurbishment of this site **is not considered cost effective** and the Council needs to consider in the context of the supply/demand analysis whether replacement facilities are justifiable and, if so, how and where to provide.”*

9. The Council therefore entered into a contractual arrangement with “Alliance Leisure” to rebuild and upgrade fitness suites within Halesowen, Dudley and Crystal Leisure Centres.
10. Alliance Leisure advised against a fitness suite within Coseley Baths due to the unsuitability of the building and its general condition.
See appendix 2.

COSELEY BATHS CONDITION OF BUILDING

11. Given the short to medium term policy agreed by the Executive in 2004 in relation to Coseley Baths linked with the growing concerns over the fabric of the building, Corporate Property formerly, Dudley Property Consultancy, were commissioned to undertake assessments of the building's condition. This assessment provides critical information on the safety of the building and also informs any decisions on the cost effectiveness of major investment.

12. The structural condition is of most concern and a report from Corporate Property structural engineers concludes:

'The RAAC roof slabs, in parts, have deteriorated to such an extent that they are seriously structurally weakened and there is an unquantifiable risk of sudden failure.

This, to some extent is lessened by the presence of intermediate angle members supporting ceiling/services, which would assist if a unit were to fail. Against this, should a unit fail, the adjacent units will no longer be 'locked in' and may become loosened and fall.

The cellular matrix of the aerated autoclaved concrete to the pool hall roof RAAC slabs renders them incapable of structural repair.

Remove RAAC roof slabs and suspended ceiling to full pool hall area. Clean and treat/coat corrosion to steel beams, especially top flanges, or possible beam replacement with galvanised sections. Replace roofing with galvanised sheet decking appropriately insulated and covered. Replace suspended ceiling system to selection by appropriate authority.

The pool hall RAAC roof slabs should be replaced in full within 12 (August 2009) months, and inspected every 3 months until then.

The final chosen roof replacement needs to be subject to research to find appropriate materials for good service in this aggressive environment.

RC beams, columns, escape route balcony and flat roof areas should be inspected by concrete repair specialist and remedial work carried out giving due consideration to laboratory and onsite testing."

13. In addition to the major roof structural problems the following list summarises other significant defects found and the estimated costs to repair or replace:

• ROOF CORRODING NEEDS REPLACING IN 6 MONTHS	£1,100,000
• DISABILITY ACCESS WORKS NEEDED	£300,000
• SLIDE NEEDS REMOVING	£50,000
• GANTRY NEEDS TO BE INSTALLED	£50,000

• VIEWING GALLERY NEEDS UPDATING	£20,000
• ELECTRICAL REWIRE NEEDED	£150,000
• IMPROVED LIGHTING LEVELS REQUIRED	£40,000
• POOL HALL CEILING AND PANELS NEED REPLACING	£50,000
• FIRE RISK IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED	£100,00
• POOL PLANT AND FILTER SYSTEM NEEDS REPAIR	£30,000
• EXTERNAL SECURITY MEASURES NEEDED	£50,000
• CONTINGENCIES/PROFESSIONAL FEES	£260,000
ESTIMATED COSTS TO UPGRADE COSELEY	£2,200,000

14. These costs are estimates and are likely to rise when unrestricted access to the roof is gained during any repair stage. The above works will not upgrade the facility but will merely make safe with little visible improvement to be seen by the public
15. There would be an extensive period of closure needed to undertake the repairs listed above during which time it is likely customers would migrate to other nearby facilities and income generation would be reduced to nil.
16. **Whilst there is no imminent danger of collapse it is the structural engineers strong recommendation that the roof slabs should be replaced in full by the end of August 2009 .The lead in design and tendering process time would take between 6 to 9 months therefore a policy decision is needed in March 2009 at the latest.**

ALTERNATIVE SWIMMING FACILITIES IN VICINITY OF COSELEY BATHS

17. There a number of swimming pools all within 3.3 miles of Coseley. including:

Dudley Leisure Centre

Ellowes Hall School (currently issues with failed boiler plant)

Prouds Lane, Bilston

Queens Road, Tipton

See map on appendix 3.

18. In addition a £15 million new Leisure Centre has been approved in Bilston and would be within as little as 2 miles of the current baths at Coseley with construction planned to start in April 2009 and taking approximately 18 months to complete.

19. This new site includes a 25 metre eight lane swimming pool and will clearly be a major leisure attraction for the surrounding catchment area including Coseley.

See appendices 3 and 4.

20. As part of the Black Country Sports Facilities Strategy, Sport England carried out a “facilities planning scenario” exercise and predicted 50,000 more visits to the new Bilston pool than currently attend Coseley and Bilston Baths facilities combined.
21. Members will be aware that the Borough has attracted funding from the Healthy Communities Challenge Fund and one of the sites selected as a recipient of this funding is Silver Jubilee Park, Coseley. The site will benefit from investment in new facilities and services on the park including a community building with toilet provision, an Outdoor Gym, refurbished play area, cycling routes for all ages and footpath improvements.

OPTIONS FOR URGENT CONSIDERATION

22. There appear to be 3 main options to be considered in relation to Coseley Baths:

a) Invest £2.2 million to bring Coseley up to safety standard.

This would not improve the facility and visitor numbers are likely to decline both during closure for repairs and upon the opening of the new centre at Bilston Village which is less than 2 miles away.

b) Seek circa £4.0 million to build a new Swimming Pool only.

Unlikely to source funding of this level and would be in direct competition with £15 million facility at Bilston less than 2 miles away

Would not be built for 2 years or more in which time any demand would have relocated elsewhere

**c) Close Coseley Baths on or before the end of August 2009
(Structural safety of roof dictates closure date)**

Loss of pool capacity within Borough would need a coordinated effort to help reallocate current users to other sites with swimming facilities.

An opportunity exists to utilise feasibility grant funding from the “free swimming programme” to consider pool provision in the borough generally.

This grant could also be used to explore opportunities to assist schools with swimming facilities with the aim of increasing public access and participation in swimming clubs or lessons

Silver Jubilee Park which is within a mile of Coseley Baths and will be a recipient of the Healthy Communities Challenge Fund aimed at increasing leisure participation in Coseley.

Part of any capital receipt received from the Coseley site plus planning obligation contributions could be utilised to provide alternative leisure provision in Coseley and surrounding north borough area

Finance

23. This report is financial in nature and relevant information is contained within the body of the report.

Law

24. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its statutory functions.
25. Section 19 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.
26. There is a duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to account for the implications of the impact of community safety on actions and decisions relating to service area.

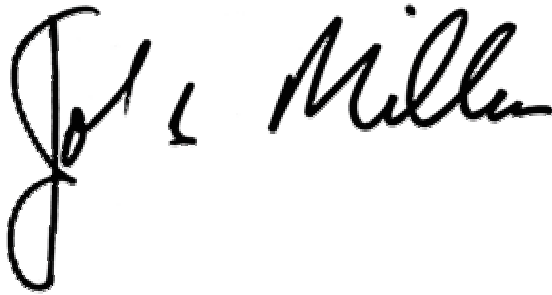
Equality Impact

27. This work has been conducted in full accordance with the Council’s equality and diversity policies and should in no way have any prejudicial impact on different racial groups, disabled people, both genders and/or relevant groups. The needs of children and young people have been considered when undertaking the leisure centre review.

Recommendations

28. The Cabinet note the report and safety concerns raised in relation to Coseley Baths.
29. That option C in paragraph 22 above be approved and implemented before the end of August 2009

30. That a further report on alternative leisure provision for Coseley and surrounding area be prepared for North Dudley Area Committee and Cabinet in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture and the 3 Ward Members for Coseley
31. That a feasibility study using the "free swimming" grant is undertaken in relation to pool provision borough wide to include evaluating any support that could be given to local schools aimed at increasing public access and participation in swimming clubs and lessons



J.B. MILLAR
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officer: Duncan Lowndes
Assistant Director Culture & Leisure
Tel: 01384 815500 E-mail duncan.lowndes@dudley.gov.uk

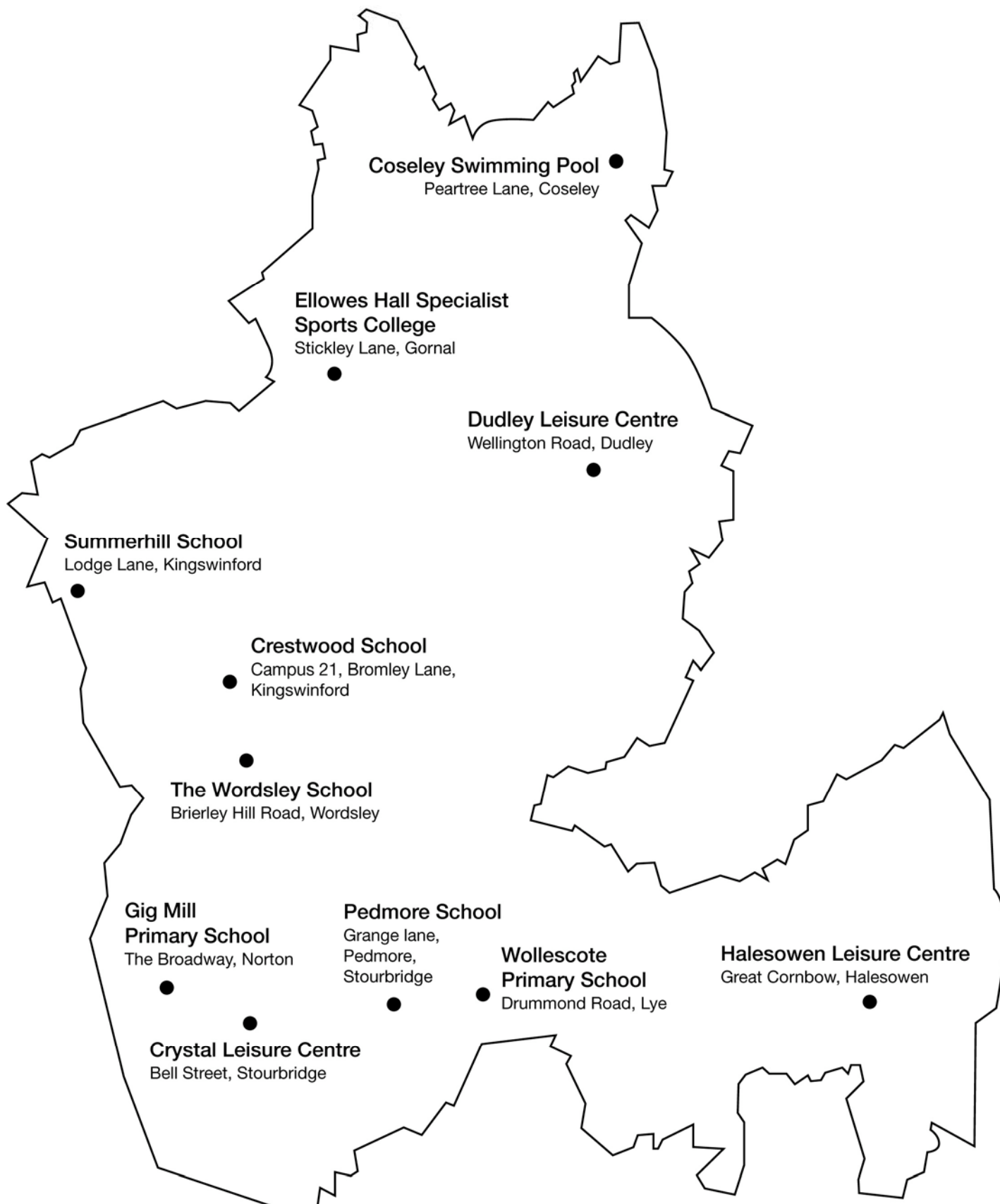
List of Background Papers

Executive meeting on 8th Sep 2004

Structural Condition Report Aug/Nov 2008

Sport England Black Country Sports Facilities Strategy Sep 2008

Dudley Borough Swimming Pools





Duncan Lowndes
Dudley BC
Head of Leisure
Claughton House
Blowers Green Road
Dudley
DY2 8UZ

8th August 2007

Dear Duncan.

Re: **Commercial Opportunity Coseley Pool.**

Further to our discussions in respect of this site, Julia and myself have considered the opportunity and examined the potential latent demand in respect of developing the Fitness Facilities.

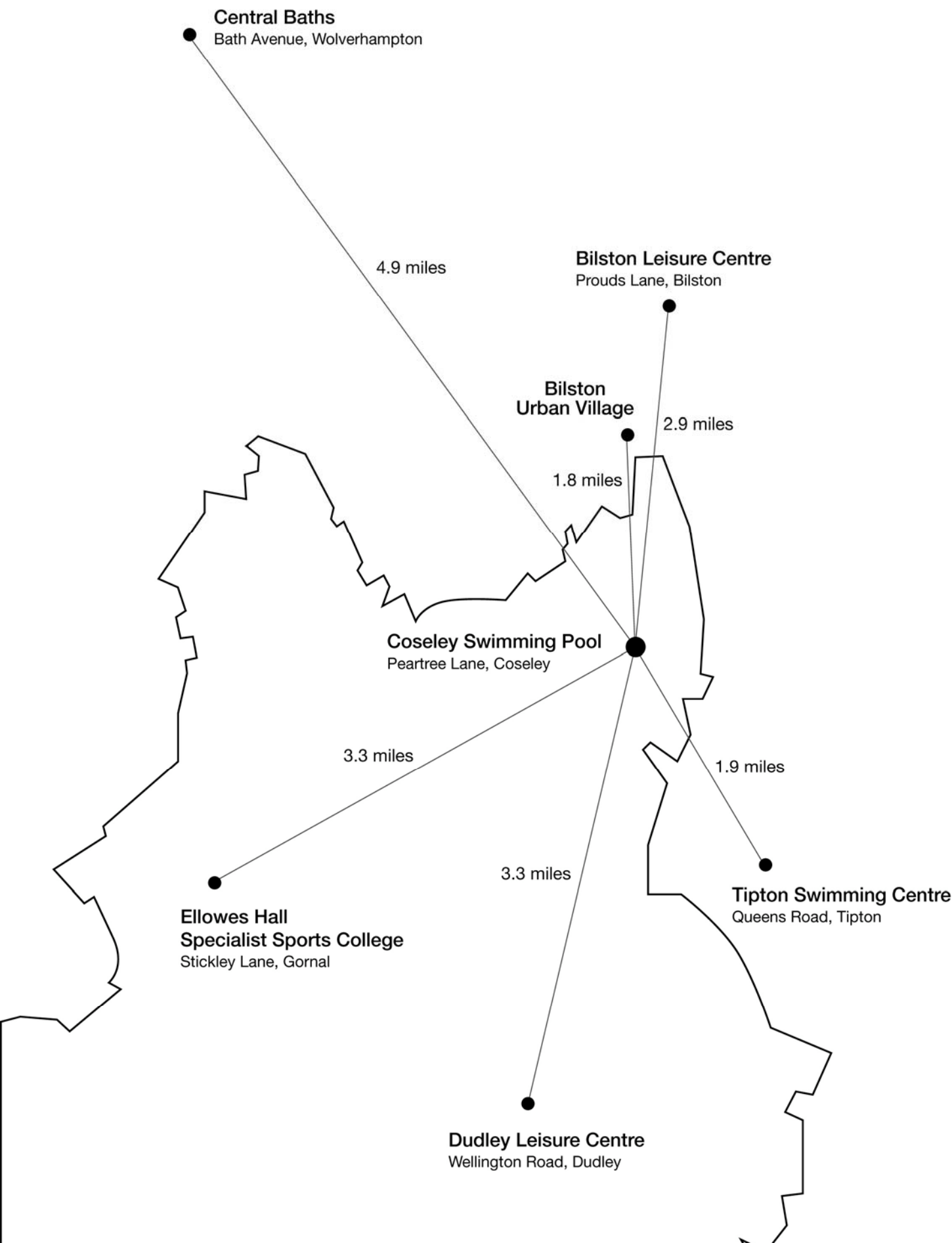
In our professional opinion the commercial viability of a development is not sufficiently robust to advise you to progress.

I am sorry if this is disappointing, but we look forward to working with you at Crystal, Dudley and Halesowen.

Best Wishes.

Sarah.

Swimming Pools in relation to Coseley



sday, January 6, 2009

PB

Artist impressions show curved design

Striking £15m leisure centre now revealed



Artist impressions of how the £15m Bilston Leisure Centre will look when complete



The green centre will have a curved design with floor-to-ceiling glass windows

It is already months behind schedule – but these pictures show how the new £15 million leisure centre in Bilston will certainly make its mark in the town.

The council today unveiled artist impressions of the centre which is set to kick off the next stage of Bilston's £176 million Urban Village development and create a new landmark in the town.

Work to create the centre was initially meant to start in September but has been

Report by Victoria Nash

delayed by the drawing up of the detailed final plans. The imposing green centre will feature a curved design with rows of floor-to-ceiling glass windows.

Official plans have been submitted to create the contemporary structure and, if given the go-ahead, work is expected to start within months.

After months of landscaping and roadworks on the land, which is off the Black Country Route between Morrisons supermarket and Bilston High School, the creation of the centre will mark the start of construction on the 100-acre urban village site.

The centre will replace the council's

current leisure facility in Prouds Lane and feature a 25m eight-lane swimming pool, teaching pool, health and fitness suite, four squash courts, wet and dry changing rooms and meeting rooms. It will also create 33 full-time jobs.

Pipeline

Bilston councillor Bert Turner said: "It is fantastic news that this project is going forward. Nothing is too good for the people of Bilston."

Also in the pipeline as part of the first phase of the urban village project is a health centre twice as big as the successful Phoenix Centre in Parkfields and Wednesfield Gem Centre.

The urban village will also include 1,000

homes, a new academy for Parkfield High, a plaza, shops and a cafe. Seven High Street properties, thought to be around 100 years old, are set to be knocked down and replaced with a tree-lined boulevard linking the development to the town.

The bulk of the village development is to be completed within 10 years and is expected to include allotments, acres of parkland, provision for a new Metro tram stop plus pedestrian and cycle networks.

The plans have been submitted as proposals for the £12m transformation of nearby Bilston Town Football Club forges ahead.

Proposals for a 70-bedroom hotel complex at the Queen Street football ground, named the Stadium Hotel, are expected to be submitted in weeks.