Creating a sporting habit for life

Affordable Sports Centres
with Community 50 m Pool Options

October 2014
The development of a sports centre with a 50 m pool will require significant capital investment that will impact on finances for many years to come. Sport England and the ASA have developed guidance ‘Developing the Right Swimming Pool’ that sets out a planning process that will take project developers through the different steps and ensure that decisions are robust and based on evidence of needs.

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/tools-guidance/design-and-cost-guidance/

Three indicative ‘Affordable’ designs for multi-sports centres combine community 50 m swimming pools, sports halls and options for health and fitness facilities. They illustrate a range of tightly-planned buildings that are functionally efficient and have economical building structures. The designs:

- Comply with best practice standards
- Reflect current trends in the leisure industry
- Can be quickly constructed
- Can be tailored to individual sites to create architectural solutions that enhance the local environment
- Create high levels of customer appeal
- Can operate at a surplus (or with reduced subsidies).

The capital cost estimates for the indicative ‘Affordable’ designs have a base date of 2Q2014.

**Indicative base construction costs from:**

Option 1  8 lane 50 m swimming pool with submersible boom and movable floor to half the pool + 5 court sports hall + 100 station health and fitness gym + 2 studios  £11.98m

Option 2  8 lane 50 m swimming pool + 20 x 10 m secondary pool + 5 court sports hall + 100 station health and fitness gym + 2 studios  £12.16m

Option 3  8 lane 50 m swimming pool + 20 x 10 m secondary pool + 5 court sports hall + 150 station health and fitness gym + 3 studios  £12.60m

The main document identifies various procurement routes including ‘Design and Build’ (D&B), ‘Design, Build, Operate and Maintain’ (DBOM) and headline guidance on procurement routes to develop the project efficiently and effectively.
Overview

The new information is aimed at the early briefing and design stages of multi-sports centre projects with a community 50 m pool without permanent spectator seating and aims to give a better understanding of the inter-relationships between the:

- Design
- Specifications and sustainability
- Capital costs
- Programmes of use
- Operating budgets
- Financial viability

It is an essential reference for new community sports projects or where the rationalisation of the existing sports centre stock is being considered.

**Indicative base construction costs to Sport England standards from £1,938 / m²**

**Multi-sports centre with community 50 m swimming pool + sports hall + health and fitness and dance studios £11.98m - £12.60m**

**Typical procurement period 2½ years from inception to operation**

**Potential community use income from £2.2m - £2.8m / year**

**Potential throughput over 830,000 users / year**

Potential uses of this guidance include:

- Forming a benchmark for a future project
- Developing feasibility studies and option appraisals
- Establishing a robust project brief
- Developing the business plan and operational budget
- Selecting a procurement route and project programme
Facility mix and operating considerations

The review provides indicative business models and potential management arrangements for the three options. Key issues such as income generation, expenditure, staff costs, utilities and health and safety are included and the importance of a secondary pool and fitness areas for sustainable revenue generation is explained.

- **Multi-sports centres with community 50 m swimming pools have the potential to operate cost-effectively and generate an operating surplus**
- **The largest sports centre (Option 3) provides greatest sporting benefit for the community and the best financial impact**
- **The inclusion of a secondary pool, a third studio and a larger fitness suite improves financial viability**

Efficient and effective planning

The need for tight planning of all areas of the building to achieve an ‘Affordable’ solution is highlighted. Average area percentages of the gross internal floor areas provided are:

- Core sporting areas: 55.3%
- Essential supporting areas: 16.1%
- Foyer / circulation / public toilets: 9.8%
- Plant areas: 7.4%
- Management areas: 2.2%
- Other (internal walls): 9.2%

Technical update

The review contains updated design, construction and operational information. This includes recent changes in the Building Regulations (Part L2A : 2013) to reduce carbon emissions and the implication for the construction of swimming pools.