

## Into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: New face for campus

**B**eyond the bamboo scaffoldings that now rise from various spots over the podium, it is certainly an interesting exercise to try to imagine the new look of the PolyU campus by the turn of the century.

### Phase VI Development

At the heart of the campus, an "intelligent" 19-storey Tower Block in a largely red-brick colour with window walls will become a new focal point. It will take over the site of the now demolished, 41-year-old, whitish Main Building — once home of the Hong Kong Technical College, predecessor of the Institution.

Director of Estates Mr. Ernest Chiu, who oversees this Phase VI of the campus development, said: "Our architects have designed a contemporary and dynamic outlook to the building with interlocking geometrical forms." He further assured that design cues and architectural languages from existing buildings would be applied so that the building could blend well with the campus.

This \$399m University Grants Committee funded project (at 1995 fourth quarter price, including demolition of the Main Building) commenced early this year, and is scheduled to be completed by August 2000.

The new Tower Block and its two-storey block annex will help ease the present space shortage, providing a total gross floor area (GFA) of 25,120m<sup>2</sup> for academic, administrative and communal use.

The Tower Block will accommodate the Senate Room suite, Offices of the President, central administrative offices, academic departments, Staff Club, computer cluster and teaching rooms for executive teaching programmes. Below the podium level, the accommodation is designated for lecture theatres, general teaching rooms and carpark.



*Artist's impression and usage of the Tower Block.*

The two-storey block annex will accommodate general teaching rooms, lecture theatres and exhibition area of about 200m<sup>2</sup>.

### Jockey Club Auditorium

Another major project is the Jockey Club Auditorium, now nearing completion. This new facility is set to enhance the quality of student life by providing a venue for cultural

activities, international conferences and exchange activities, exhibitions and other functions.

Incurring an overall cost of \$138m (at end-1997 price), this privately funded project is named after the Jockey Club which has generously donated a sum of \$66.26m. The remaining balance is funded by private sources.

Occupying the site which previously

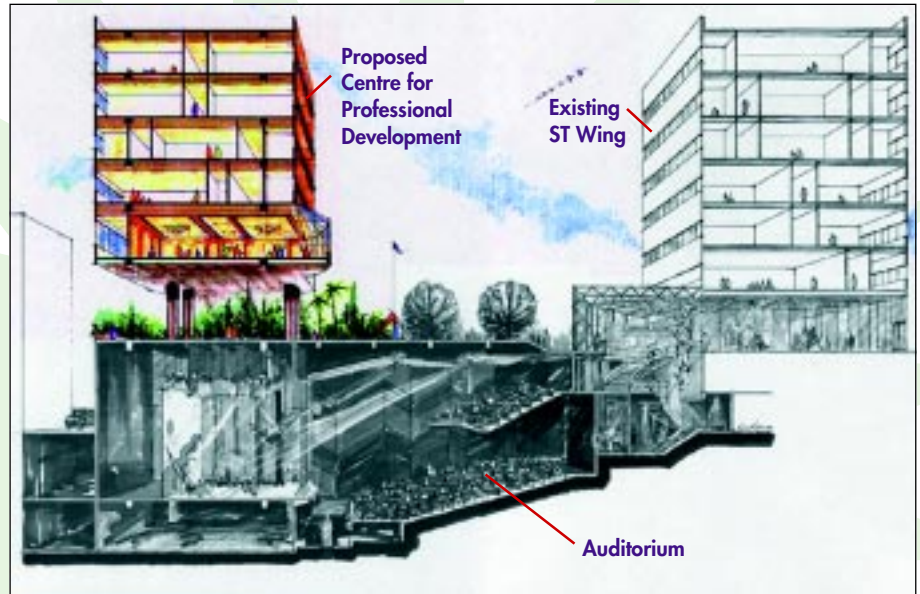
stood the Keswick Hall, the Auditorium will be of 4,859m<sup>2</sup> in GFA with 691 seats in its Main Auditorium and 321 in its balcony. Equipped with high standard seatings, lighting and AV systems, the facility could be hired by outside users as well.

The Superstructure Contract of the Auditorium has commenced in April last year and is scheduled for completion in mid-1999.

### Student Hostels

Right at the heels of these projects is the construction of the Student Hostels, to be located in the Hunghom Bay Reclamation area within 15 minutes' walking distance from the University. Despite the financial constraints faced by the University, it is expected that the project will start soon in mid-1999, so that a total of 3,004 places will be available to students by August 2001.

The overall cost of the hostels project was estimated at \$678m at 1996 fourth quarter price and projected to rise to some \$928m. While the Government will cover three quarters of the building costs, the remaining 25 per cent or about \$250 million have to be borne by the University through private funds.



*Sectional perspective view of the Auditorium and the proposed Centre for Professional Development.*

### Future plans

Looking further through the crystal ball is the Phase VII Development, which involves redeveloping the two-storey low block to the west of GH Wing into a 14- or 15-storey building to accommodate academic and research activities, ideally by 2003/04.

A Residential Centre in the vicinity of the Student Hostels has also been proposed to cater for visiting scholars and exchange students. The Centre is also to bring

educational benefits to the university's hotel and tourism students.

These two projects, however, remain conceptual at this stage and preliminary proposals submitted to UGC have yet to be approved in principle in 1999.

Another project, the Centre for Professional Development, was originally integrated with the building of the Auditorium. The project has, however, been suspended due to a lack of private funds. Designed as a five-storey multi-purpose building straddling across the stage of the Auditorium, the Centre was originally to form the future QR Wing and to house all self-financed centres of the University.

### No more a congested campus?

According to latest reviews, the PolyU will still be falling short of at least 12,444m<sup>2</sup> in space when the Phase VI project is completed in 2000. Despite this, as the upgrading of the campus infrastructure gathers speed — including IT network, teaching and laboratory facilities, and lifts and lobbies — one can be sure that the future PolyU campus will be a more user-friendly place than before. ❖



*Outlook of the planned student hostels in Hung Hom Reclamation Bay.*