

The project was developed together with Olympic Station, one of the new stations of the mass transit railway (MTR) that runs parallel to Airport-Express northwards through the western side of the Kowloon peninsula. Olympic City occupies 13.1 ha and was developed in three stages:

- **Stage one: the Island Harbour view, has nine 40-storey towers and provides 2314 flats, estimated to accommodate 6942 residents**
- **Stage two: Central Park, has four 50-storey towers and provides 1344 flats for approximately 4032 residents**
- **Stage three: Park Avenue, has five 50-storey towers with 1592 flats for approximately 4776 residents**

In total the project will be able to accommodate around 15,750 residents. Like many other private housing developments, the project has its own clubhouse and two shopping malls and extensive sports facilities. The MTR station is located within the complex, which in theory should encourage people to go through the shopping centre when using the system, to shop before going home. The shopping centre also provides an air-conditioned environment, which in the Hong Kong climate could be very desirable. Unfortunately the shopping complex remains deserted for the most part of the day. It only becomes busy late in the afternoon and during the holidays.

The area around the development remains consistently deserted despite the fact that a great amount of money has been put into developing landscape features, street furniture and the installation of enormous television screens. Nothing seems to attract people or make the place vibrant and lively. The development has nothing to do with the existing city structure. The two towers of office space provide too few customers to support the many restaurants within the complex, which remain empty, despite very favourable prices. From the outside the development appears a defensive structure, isolated and not integrated with the existing environment. Most of the ground floors consist of blank concrete walls with few entry points. The area around the development has less and less chance of survival. The small shops and once thriving-street life has been eroded, and the old grain of the traditional city is disappearing with incredible speed, giving room for yet another isolated development, turning its back on the overall city structure.

The Olympian City was placed on newly reclaimed land, not far from existing old and very dense communities of Yau Ma Tei, and Tai Kok Tsui, and within the walking distance of Mong Kok. These old districts may be overcrowded and run down but they offer a vibrant atmosphere. Mong Kok, one of the densest areas in Hong Kong, is extremely popular with young people. It offers the best shopping in town in terms of the fashion and prices: 75% of young people, when asked what is the most popular destination they visit in their spare time, responded Mong Kok. Yau Ma Tei is also a popular destination and often frequented by tourists, who come for the Night Market, Jade Market or Cinema Complex. Tai Kok Tsui does not have anything special to offer but it has a thriving community and benefits greatly from its location, very close to Mong Kok and Yau Ma Tei. The real worry is that similar isolated islands could in the near future replace these vibrant parts of Hong Kong.

Tai Koo Shing (Figure 7.10)

The second type of megastructure has less of a negative influence over the existing city structure, taking the form of an island which can survive on its own but which remains connected to the existing environment. One such example, and possibly the first real example of a megastructure in Hong Kong, could be said to be the Tai Koo Shing development, at the Eastern end of Hong Kong Island. Tai Koo Shing covers a total area of 21.4 ha. The area was originally used as a dockyard by the Swire conglomerate for the construction and repair of ships but, in 1972, Swire Properties Ltd proposed a redevelopment scheme for new residential community with shopping and entertainment centre. The project was completed in 1984 and consists of 61 residential blocks of various heights from 22 to 30 storeys.

The housing occupies in total 956,000 m², producing a domestic plot ratio of about 4.5. There are approximately 48,000 people living in 13,800 flats. The overall site density is approximately 2240 people per hectare or 645 flats per hectare. The heart of the development is the City Plaza, a large commercial project, which includes a shopping mall with restaurants, cafes, fast food centre, an ice-skating rink, a bowling alley, a cinema complex and adjoining office blocks. The complex is connected to the MTR below and green