



Figure 7.11
Pacific Place.

by road, which leads up the hill onto the platform with views of the harbour in between the buildings. From this level one can enter the lobbies of all three hotels, and office towers and also the Hong Kong Park. The park provides recreation facilities for office workers, tourists and residents, and acts as a connector to the residential area further up the hill. Pacific Place is also connected at this level to the High Court Building and Terry Farrell's British Consulate and British Council Complex.

The shopping centre is connected by a pedestrian bridge to other commercial areas, namely the Admiralty Centre and United Centre, underneath which there is an MTR station that can also be accessed from Pacific Place by an underground connection. At the ground floor of the Admiralty Centre there is a bus terminus. United Centre is further connected through an elevated pedestrian walking system to a commercial site by the waterfront and a car park underneath a small park. The whole complex facilitates the pedestrian movement through the city, offering short cuts and different experiences. It has a positive effect on the businesses located close by. It encourages people living above Pacific Place to walk through the park instead of using cars or public transport. Thus, the complex connects four different parts of the city that otherwise would have remained isolated and inaccessible.

Conclusion

In Bruegel's painting of the Tower of Babel, he depicts sections of the tower at various stages of completion and other sections already in decay, representing the city as a product that is never finished. This raises a valid question for planners and architects as to whether large-scale design in a city should ever be a final project. Cities never stand still; they are in a continual process of reinvention. Too often, master plans intend to provide proposals that are fully resolved and complete. The megastructure defies such attempts at resolution.

All three examples given above share a common strategy of podium and towers, a model adopted throughout Asia for nearly all new public and private housing developments. Putting housing on top of the podium provides residents with not only shopping, sports, community facilities, restaurants and car parking, but also with badly needed recreational facilities. It is a successful way of dealing with high-density development, and maximizing the site intensity. Unfortunately most of these megastructures in Hong Kong remain isolated island developments, having very little connection to the existing city