

Conference capability for Winter Show buildings



Stage one of Show Building renovation completed

The first stage in the Taranaki Agricultural Society's multi-million dollar revamp of its Gill St Winter Show buildings in New Plymouth has been completed. And New Plymouth people will get their chance to examine the new facilities this weekend. A cocktail evening for invited guests tomorrow night will officially mark the completion of stage one, said society president David Smith, New Plymouth.

An open day on Sunday afternoon will allow everyone else the opportunity to see for themselves the changes which have lifted the former basic interior of the show buildings into an up-market slot. Plush red carpeting, rimu tongue-and-groove panelling, a fully lined interior and elaborate lighting creates an impressive image for people used to years of concrete floors, and a dingy, shed-like environment. The upgrading had

resulted in a versatile and valuable facility for the city, David Smith said. The focus of the stage one renovations was on the conference room. Extensive kitchen facilities were also associated with this development. Up to 2000 people could be comfortably accommodated in the complex if the adjacent Queens Hall area was also used. In this case large video equipment could give visual contact

with events in the main conference area for the more remote delegates. On its own the main conference area will seat about 850 depending on the layout. This can be reduced for smaller conferences. Sophisticated communications capabilities are allowed for in the hookup to Post Office equipment, he said. The building is now connected to Post Office Telecommunication data circuits and Videotex circuits together with all other standard services currently supplied by the corporation.

More than \$700,000 has been spent on stage one, David Smith said. This meant the society had to market the facility widely. "With that big an investment we can't sit here and hide it," he said. A strong inquiry rate for conference venues in New Plymouth promised good use of the new complex and the first occasion was booked for later this month. Others were to be confirmed.

Trevor Simons (right) and Brian Bollond discuss the best places to mount the speaker system in the Taranaki Agricultural Society's plush new conference facility within its Winter Show building complex in New Plymouth.