

Historic Building Appraisal
Tin Hau Temple
No. 49 Ha Heung Road, To Kwa Wan, Kowloon

Tin Hau Temple (天后古廟) in Ha Heung Road (下鄉道), To Kwa Wan (土瓜灣), was built in the 11th year of the Guangxu (光緒, 1885) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty by the local community of the area for the worship of Tin Hau. It was close to the sea with its entrance facing the sea in the east but became encroached inland due to continuous reclamation. In 1964, Hoi Sum Island (海心島), a small islet to its southeast was connected to the mainland of To Kwa Wan. The Lung Mo Temple (龍母廟) on the islet was demolished and the statue of Lung Mo was relocated to the Tin Hau Temple. The deity of Lung Mo, literally Dragon Mother, is a sea goddess whose worshippers believe she would give protection to fishermen and boat people and prevent them from having dangers at sea. The temple was first managed by the Hakka elders and since 1928 by the Chinese Temples Committee (華人廟宇委員會).

**Historical
Interest**

The temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The courtyard between the entrance and main halls has been covered. The building is constructed of bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. A red-brick surrounding wall is in its front and right. The walls support green ceramic tiled roofs with screen bamboo balustrades for decoration. The walls are plastered and painted with imitation brick lines. The main ridge is decorated with two ceramic *aoyus* (鰲魚) and a pearl in the middle. The ridge ends are with geometric mouldings. The lintel of the stone doorframe is engraved with the name of the temple and flanked by a pair of couplets. The statue of the Tin Hau is housed at the altar of the middle bay of the end wall. The statue of Lung Mo is on the altar of the left bay.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a Tin Hau and Lung Mo temple to witness the development of To Kwa Wan, and has some built heritage value. The temple was renovated in 1888 with other unknown ones. The authenticity is barely kept.

**Rarity, Built
Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

A number of deities are worshipped in the temple other than the two deities including the Kwun Yam (觀音) and others. Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) is on the 23rd of the third lunar month whereas Lung Mos's on the 8th of the fifth and 15th of the eighth lunar months when offerings would be made to the deities. At the Excited Insects Festival (驚蟄) on the 5th or 6th of the third lunar month,

**Social Value,
& Local Interest**

the worshippers would offer pork to the paper White Tiger in order to get rid of all the evils and enemy spirits. Many female worshippers also come to the temple seeking the fortune-teller's advice.

The temple is within walking distance of other historic buildings, including *Group Value* the No. 65 Ha Heung Road (Grade 3) and Ma Tau Kok Animal Quarantine Depot (馬頭角牲畜檢疫站, Grade 2).