

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Nos. 186 & 188 Tai Kei Leng,**  
**Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long**

First known as Shui Dai Ba Tsuen (水打壩村), the village in which Nos. 186 & 188 is situated was renamed “Tai Kei Leng” (大旗嶺) around the 1920s or 1930s. People from the Siyi (四邑) region, i.e. Xinhui (新會), Kaiping (開平), Enping (恩平) and Taishan (台山); and Hakkas from Shenzhen (深圳) settled in the village in the 1910s-30s. *Historical Interest*

Nos. 186 and 188 Tai Kei Leng (大旗嶺) were built in the early 1930s. It is believed that the houses were built by Li Mau-kei (李茂基), a Hakka who came from Buji (布吉), Shenzhen (深圳) and went to Brazil to run a Chinese restaurant. He is supposed to have built the houses for his aunt and her two sons also from Buji. No. 186 is now vacant, and No. 188 is owned by Chan Ma-fat according to the Land Registry Records.

The houses are two adjoining two-storey traditional Chinese vernacular buildings with Western influence. There is a single storey kitchen annex at the side, the flat roof of which serves as a roof terrace. The walls are built of local grey bricks which have been distempered over except for the annex which has rendered and painted walls. The front façade of the two houses consists of open verandahs at ground floor level, and enclosed verandahs at first floor level. Ornamental balustrade panels still survive. The first floor verandahs have a flat roof with a parapet made up of a projecting moulded cornice and ornamental panels separated by posts. A ball shaped finial on one corner suggests that some may be missing. The centre part of the houses has a pitched roof and the rear part has a flat roof with an ornamental parapet. Windows are steel framed units. The roof of the annex has a parapet wall built of pierced screen blocks. *Architectural Merit*

The mixed style of architecture, known as Chinese Eclectic is not uncommon in rural villages. The parapet panels on the front façade have interesting relief mouldings and applied decorations worth restoring. Together with other mixed style houses in the villages, they have built heritage value as well as group value. The kitchen annex is an addition which spoils the symmetry of the front façade. The glazing to the first floor verandah could be removed. The houses are rather shabby in appearance and could do with some care and maintenance. *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The mixed style of architecture reflects cultural interaction in the village. The reason for building the houses was because of the close knit family culture of the Hakkas who have a strong sense of duty and respect for the elderly. The story gives *Social Value & Local Interest*

local interest to the houses.