

Historic Building Appraisal
Entrance Gate
Sha Lo Wan Tsuen, Sha Lo Wan, Lantau Island

The entrance gate probably has an age of around 200 years. Sha Lo Wan Tsuen (沙螺灣村) on the northern coast of Tung Chung (東涌), Lantau Island, was erected probably in the 18th century as a Ba Kong Temple (把港古廟) for the worship of Hung Shing (洪聖) deity was built by the villagers in the 39th year of Qianlong (乾隆, 1774) reign of the Qing (清) dynasty at the northwest of the village close to the seashore. The villagers were engaged in fishing and farming. Its population was small reaching up to a few hundreds before the Second World War. The Kungs (龔) were the first settlers of the village. It was later settled by the Mans (文), the Lees (李) and the Chans (陳).

*Historical
Interest*

As the village is close to the sea, it was often attacked by pirates and bandits. The village was occupied by a group of pirates in the late 1930s for one year. A linear wall was built at the mouth of the village to protect the village which was constructed in the form of four parallel rows of houses. The wall lost its protective function towards the 20th century and was demolished leaving the entrance gate only for the in and out function. During the Japanese Occupation (1941-45) the pirates in the area was cleared by the Chinese guerrillas.

Wolfram was discovered in Sha Lo Wan that the ore was quarried in the area in the 1950s. The population increased up to 2,000. It reached to 4,000 in 1971. The population dropped since the 1970s leaving mainly the elderly in the village.

The entrance gate is in the northern mouth of the village. The wall together with the entrance gate served as a defensive means to protect the village houses in its south. The entrance gate is a Qing vernacular structure with a rectangular opening. It is a flat-roof structure and its height is the same as the walls on either side about three metres tall. It is constructed of granite blocks and slabs. The gateframe is of long granite slabs and the wall structure on either side is in horizontal bonding. The gate is recessed on the front and rear elevations. Holes are on the floor of the gate for installation of timber poles. The floor is with cement screeding. An open ground is behind the entrance gate.

*Architectural
Merit*

It is an entrance gate of the village to witness its past history and settlement.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

***Built Heritage
Value***

Though without maintenance, the authenticity of the entrance gate is kept.

Authenticity

The villagers celebrate the Hung Shing Festival (洪聖誕) on a day in the 7th lunar month by throwing the oracles (擲聖杯) on the 15th of the first lunar month. A small statue of the deity would be put on a sedan chair together with a parade touring round the village giving blessing to the villagers. Cantonese opera performances are also held in the village during the celebration period.

***Social Value,
& Local Interest***