

Historic Building Appraisal

No. 80 Chow Tin Tsuen

Ta Kwu Ling

Chow Tin Tsuen (週田村) is in the closed area in the east of Lo Shu Ling (老鼠嶺). It was first inhabited by the Tos (杜), Hakkas (客家), from Dongguan (東莞) of Guangdong (廣東) province in the 17th century. It was later settled by the Sius (蕭) and the Hos (何) in the late 19th century buying lands from the Tos. House No.80 in the village was built by To Tin-shau (杜添壽), a 14th generation member of the Tos, probably before the 1920s as he died in the 1920s. *Historical Interest*

The village house is in the second last row of six rows of houses in the village facing northeast. It is connected to a house on its right. The residential house is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan. The one-storey building is constructed of green bricks and rammed earth with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The tiny open courtyard now roofed with corrugated sheets is between the entrance and main halls. A stove and a bath corner is respectively at the left and right of the entrance hall. A soul tablet was displayed in the middle of the living room end wall at the main hall. Behind the living room is a bedroom. The external side walls and back wall are plastered. The internal walls are partially plastered. The floor is with cement screeding. The front façade is retained with fair-faced green bricks. Decorative plastered mouldings above the lintel have been completely weathered. *Architectural Merit*

It is a residential house of the Tos to remind their settlement in Chow Tin Tsuen. *Rarity*

It has little built heritage value. *Built Heritage Value*

Its authenticity is kept. *Authenticity*

It has group value with the shrine, the entrance gate and other historic buildings in the village. *Group Value*

The house was inherited by To Kam-yau (杜金有), the only son of Tin-shau. He lived in the house until he passed away in the late 1960s or the early 1970s. Ng Ping (吳萍), his wife, lived in the house until the 1980s when she moved to other place. She came back to the house occasionally to tidy up the house. The house has been left vacated since the late 1980s after she died. The Tos were *Social Value, & Local Interest*

farmers engaged in rice growing and pigs and chickens rearing. Chickens and pigs were kept on the left side of the entrance hall of the house. Ng Ping later switched to vegetable growing. The Tos bought their daily necessities at the Shek Wu Hui (石湖墟) in Sheung Shui (上水), Shenzhen Hui (深圳墟) and Yuen Long Old Market (元朗舊墟). The Tos of Chow Tin Tsuen, Muk Wu (木湖), west of Lo Shue Ling, and Xiangdongcun (向東村) in the mainland had their grave sweeping at the Chung Yeung Festival (重陽節) at their ancestors' graves in Hubeicun (湖貝村) of Shenzhen. After the development of the village, the graves were moved to Sha Tau Kok (沙頭角) where they have their grave sweeping.