

## Historic Building Appraisal

### Ho Ancestral Hall

#### Kuk Po Lo Wai, Luk Keng

Kuk Po (谷埔), north of Luk Keng (鹿頸), has six villages including Kuk Po Lo Wai (谷埔老圍), Kuk Po San Uk Ha (谷埔新屋下), Yi To (二肚), Sam To (三肚), Sze To (四肚) and Ng To (五肚). Kuk Po Lo Wai is the oldest village. Most of the villagers are Hakkas (客家) including the Yeungs (楊), the Sung (宋), the Chengs (鄭), the Lis (李), the Yaus (邱), the Hos (何) and the Ngs (吳). The Yeungs were the earliest settlers who moved to Kuk Po about 300 years ago. Ho Man-chin (何文仟) was a Hakka moved from Tsim Sha Ha (尖沙下) and settled in the village in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century after the Yeungs and the Sung. It is not known when the Ho Ancestral Hall (何氏宗祠) was built. It was probably constructed in the later half of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The hall is also called Lo Kong Tong (廬江堂).

**Historical  
Interest**

Located in the middle of the village, the ancestral hall is facing north-west like the other village houses of the village. It is a Qing (清) vernacular building having a two-hall-one-courtyard plan. The open courtyard is between the entrance and main halls. It is constructed of green bricks and mud bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are plastered. The altar occupies the entire end wall of the main hall housing a soul tablet of the Ho ancestors for worship. Behind the soul tablet is a piece of red paper on the wall with a big Chinese character “壽” (longevity) flanked by two couplets. Above them are wall paintings of flowers and calligraphy. The gable walls of the entrance hall are in rectangular shape. A pair of geometric mouldings is at two ends of the front ridge. The name of the hall is moulded on the wall above the lintel of the recessed entrance. Wall paintings of flowers and birds are under the front roof.

**Architectural  
Merit**

It is an ancestral hall of the Hos to witness their settlement in Kuk Po.

**Rarity**

It has little built heritage value.

**Built Heritage  
Value**

It is in upkeep condition. The overseas Hos sent money back to repair the building. It was renovated in the mid-1960s. Its authenticity is basically kept.

**Authenticity**

Although most of the Hos have moved out the village, some do come back to worship their ancestors at the ancestral hall during the Chinese New Year and at the Chung Yeung (重陽節) and Ching Ming Festivals (清明節). Wedding and funeral ceremonies were held at the hall. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual for new born baby boys of previous year was held at the hall on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the Chinese New Year.

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