

Historic Building Appraisal

Entrance Gate

Sheung Cheung Wai, Hang Tau Tsuen, Ping Shan, Yuen Long

Sheung Cheung Wai (上璋圍), a walled village in Ping Shan (屏山), was built by the Tangs of Hang Tau Tsuen (坑頭村) to its east in the 18th century for the Tangs' servile families. Most of the families were surnamed Chan (陳) and Wong (黃) who had only hovels in the village. Due to the expansion of the Tangs, the families were removed out of the village and occupied by the Tangs in the 19th century. The original wai was a near square structure having four walls enclosing four rows of village houses in the middle with four corner watch-towers. At its central axis to the southern end of the wall is the entrance gate and at the far opposite end of the northern wall is the shrine. A fishing pond, now filled up, in front of the wai acted as a moat for protective uses. Three of the watch-towers have collapsed and only the lower storey of the southwest one remains and converted for use as a residence. Only parts of the wall retained and the entrance gate and shrine rebuilt in 2003.

**Historical
Interest**

The new pitched-roofed entrance gate is constructed of concrete with green bricks and granite bases as its outer skin in Qing vernacular design. Above the granite lintel is a red sandstone plaque engraved with four Chinese characters '南陽世澤' (Nam Yeung Sai Jat reminding the Tangs' original place they came from, Nanyang (南陽) of Hebei (河北) province). Two arched tiny windows with granite frames are opened above the plaque. The some 12-feet tall gate has a mezzanine floor accessed by a stair case. Other than a set of two timber folding doors for the gate, it has a horizontal wooden-bar sliding fence for dual protection. Whilst the outer entrance of the gate is rectangular its inner entrance is in arched form. The wall friezes and gable friezes are decorated with curling grass, flowers-and-birds and geometric motifs patterns.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a 2003 rebuilt entrance gate of a historic walled village having 300 years old.

Rarity

The rebuilt entrance gate has little built heritage value though it has copied from the original and the old name plaque retained. The rebuilt project of the entrance gate has removed its authenticity.

**Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity**

It has relative group value with the walls, watch-towers and the shrine.

Group Value

The entrance gate of the wai is the only means of access to the village. Public notices are put up at the walls for villagers' attention. A recessed shrine for the Earth God is at an internal wall of the gate. The mezzanine floor of the gate is for storage use. Da Chiu and Fa Pow activities are not held in the village but a Pa Tin Kei (扒天箕) ritual to collect and cremate the filthy things will be held in the Chinese New Year.

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*