

Historic Building Appraisal

Cheung Ha Ching Ser

Nos. 43-45 Kam Shan, Tai Po, New Territories

Cheung Ha Ching Ser (長霞精舍) in Kam Shan (錦山) of Tai Po was originally called Mei Tsuen Tong (美全堂). It was changed from a monastery to a Buddhist temple since 1984, when the name Cheung Ha Ching Ser was taken for adoption. In 2002, Cheung Ha Ching Ser was renamed as Cheung Ha Ching Yuen (長霞淨院) which provides Buddhist services, like vegetarian food and ancestral worship services.

**Historical
Interest**

Mei Tsuen Tong was erected by a number of spinsters (especially Amahs) for use as their dormitory and for their worship of the goddess Kwun Yam (觀音). In 1984, due to urban development, the old Kwun Yum Temple called Tze Chuk Lam (紫竹林) at Shau Kei Wan (筲箕灣) was removed to make way for the erection of Yiu Tung Estate (耀東邨). The statues of Kwun Yum (觀音) and the Three Precious Buddhas (三寶佛), as well as the ancestral tablets inside the temple were then moved into Mei Tsuen Tong. Thereafter, Mei Tsuen Tong was renamed as Cheung Ha Ching Ser and was turned into a Buddhist temple opened to the public who come there to worship Kwun Yum and Buddha as well as their ancestor tablets.

The temple is on a southern slope of Kam Shan Road. It is accessed through a long and narrow flight of staircases. The temple comprised a west block built in **1928** and an east block built in **1930**. Kwun Yam Din (觀音殿) is in the east block whilst Daul Leot Kung (兜率宮) is in the west block for the worship of the Three Precious Buddha. The buildings are known as Chinese Renaissance architecture. Both blocks are with yellow walls and roof tiles constructed of concrete. The walls are plastered and painted with its floors of ceramic tiles. The buildings are with modern facilities such as aluminium windows and lighting, air-conditioning and piping systems. The west block is with red columns.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a temple to remind the history of the Mei Tsuen Tong.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

**Built Heritage
Value &**

The two blocks were renovated and much modernized in 2002. However, the decorations and doors are well-maintained, which enable the temples retaining its original appearance.

Authenticity

The temple has most of the worshippers during Yue Lan Festival (盂蘭節, Ghost Festival) and Kwun Yam Festival (觀音誕) when they would have vegetarian meals.

*Social Value,
& Local
Interest*

Besides Cheung Ha Ching Ser, temples regarded as historic items are not deficient in Tai Po. Man Mo Temple (文武廟) is the example of declared monuments while Pun Chun Yuen (半春園) and Kwun Yum Temple at Ta Tik Yan (打鐵坳觀音廟) are the examples of historic items.

Group Value

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time.

*Adaptive
Re-use*