

Historic Building Appraisal
Entrance Gate
Tai Tseng Ng Uk Tsuen, Wang Chau, Yuen Long

Ng Uk Tsuen (吳屋村) in Wang Chau (橫洲) was a one-clan village set up in 1556 by Ng Kei-cheong (吳其昌), a 12th generation ancestor who came from Nanyuan (南園) village of Dongguan (東莞). The Ngs were farmers of crops and vegetables having their produce sold at the Yuen Long Market. The entrance gate of the village was built in 1862 for defense purposes. A niche on the ground floor houses the Earth God (土地) statue and another of the deity Fui Shing (魁星) is on the cockloft for worship. The former is the guardian of the village whilst the latter is for worship of expecting official position and successful in literature. *Historical Interest*

The entrance gate is a one-hall two-storey structure of Qing (清) dynasty. It is constructed of green bricks with its walls supporting its pitched roofs of timber purlins, battens, fir boards and ceramic tiles. Its recessed entrance has a rectangular doorway in its front façade and an arched one to the other end. Its door bases and lintel are of granite with a big circular hole above the doorway for *fung shui* reason. Wall friezes under the eave are with flowers-and-birds and landscape paintings. Its ridge is without any decoration. Its flooring is with cement screeding. *Architectural Merit*

The building is of some built heritage value. Its authenticity is kept without much alteration. It is a structure to remind the settlement of the Ngs in the village. *Built Heritage Value, Rarity & Authenticity*

An Earth God shrine nearby and this gate have related group value. *Group Value*

Villagers will take turn for the cleaning of the gate and giving offerings to the two deities. In the old days, the village had Gang Lin (更練) service, security and patrol services, for the protection of the entire village. The gate acted as their defense point against any outside intrusion. Two guns are still left on the cockloft of the gate. Villagers also have martial arts practice around the gate. Fa Pow (花炮) and Chung Yeung Festival (重陽節) celebration activities were held in front of the gate with lion dance, basin meals and others. The security functions of the gate have gone, but it still serves as a passing gate for the villagers. *Social Value & Local Interest*