

Historic Building Appraisal
No. 176 Shung Ching San Tsuen
Shap Pat Heung, Yuen Long

No. 176 Shung Ching San Tsuen was built in the 1930s by **E Lim Fat** (林發), *Historical Interest* an overseas Hakka businessman of Mauritius. He operated retail trade and was the Chairman of the Mauritius Free Port Authority. He lived in the house for only a short time and after his death the ownership of the house was transferred to the **E Lim Fat Company**. The current custodian of the house is E Lim Fat's descendant **Lim Yum-ding** (林欽丁). Another descendant of E Lim Fat is **Lim Kwat-chow O.B.E.** who is Ambassador of Mauritius in the People's Republic of China.

The building is a large rectangular house situated apart from the other village houses. It is a two-storey house built in mixed Western and Chinese styles which can be classified as **Chinese Eclectic**. The walls are plainly rendered and grey in colour. Windows are rectangular and regularly spaced with curved hood mouldings for weather protection. The front of the house has open verandahs at ground and first floor levels with wide central openings flanked by narrow arched openings. The façade is topped by an ornamental parapet featuring a central pediment, panels, posts and ball ornaments. The roof over the verandahs is flat but the main roof is pitched and tiled with Chinese tiles. The two gable ends have stepped apexes and one has an ornamental finial. There appears to be a flat roof matching the front at the rear of the building. An unusual feature is the splayed corners probably for *fung shui* reasons. *Architectural Merit*

Mixed style houses are quite common in the rural villages and were the result of Hakka businessmen who had worked overseas bringing back Western ideas to incorporate in their residences. No. 176 Shung Ching San Tsuen is a good example of this style and has obvious built heritage value. The condition of the interior is not known, but the exterior does not appear to have been altered and therefore retains its authenticity. *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The social value of the house appears to be rather limited as it seems to have been built from accumulated wealth as a residence for E Lim Fat and his descendants. It is one of three such houses in the villages and thus has some local interest. *Social Value & Local Interest*

It is difficult to suggest an adaptive re-use for the house as much depends on the requirements of local community. It seems to have quite a large piece of land attached to it with some outbuildings. Further investigations would need to be carried out before making any recommendations. *Adaptive Re-use*