

Historic Building Appraisal

No. 50 San Wai Tsuen,
San Tin, Yuen Long, N.T.

San Wai Tsuen, originally called Fuk Hing Lei (福興里), was first founded by the Wongs and the Chius. From the early to late 19th century, the Yeungs, the Lees, the Wongs and the Chans migrated from Siyi (四邑), i.e., Xinhui (新會), Kaiping (開平), Enping (恩平) and Taishan (台山), to San Wai Tsuen due to the social upheavals on mainland. Many of the families in San Wai Tsuen originated from Taishan. House No. 50 San Wai Tsuen (新圍村) was built in 1939 by Wong Lap-shing (黃立勝). The Wong clan were original inhabitants of the village which has a history of over one hundred years. Descendants of Wong Lap-shing still own the house and use it at weekends.

*Historical
Interest*

The two-storey house is built in traditional **Qing Vernacular** style with a portico in front. The portico, which bears some Neo-Classical character, makes it the house of mixed style. The main part of the house is built of local grey bricks with a pitched roof of Chinese tiles and gable walls which are decorated with a plain rendered and painted frieze. Windows are regularly spaced and are fitted with steel framed units divided into small glazing squares. The windows have label mouldings and rendered surrounds. The front portico is two stories high rendered and painted with a flat roof. The corner columns are square with simple bases and capitals. There are two classical style round columns at the first floor balcony level. There is an ornamental balustrade to the balcony with shaped balusters and an ornamental coping. There is a projecting cornice at parapet level. The parapet wall is formed of posts and panels with ball ornaments at the corners. Windows and doors appear to be original.

*Architectural
Merit*

Houses of mixed style are not uncommon in rural villages, and No. 50 San Wai Tsuen is a good example. It is well maintained and does not appear to have been altered thereby retaining its authenticity. As a piece of vernacular architectural with cross cultural influence it has built heritage value.

*Rarity,
Built Heritage
Value &
Authenticity*

As a typical village house of mixed style, it has social as well as group value. Together with its neighbour which is built in a similar style it has local interest.

*Social Value &
Local Interest*

The best use for this old house is for it to continue to be used for residential purposes. Any adaptive re-use is likely to affect its authenticity.

*Adaptive
Re-use*