

Historic Building Appraisal

Tsang Residence

No. 22, Kau Wa Keng Old Village, Kwai Tsing, New Territories

Tsang Residence was built between 1934 and 1937 by **Tsang Hin-san** (曾憲新) who worked as a chief steward in the 1930s. With the money he earned and saved he built this house with its distinctive front façade. During the Civil War in China the house was rented out to left-wing intellectuals and intelligentsia fleeing from oppression on the Mainland. This association has given Tsang Residence (曾氏祖屋) a high historical value. *Historical Interest*

The residence is a long narrow building with plain rendered and white-washed walls and tall narrow windows. The building is two stories high with a flat roof and a parapet wall and pediment at the front. The front façade is an elegant stylised **Neo-Classical** composition with **Italianate Renaissance** influence and possibly some **Art Deco** influence. The main entrance is flanked by Tuscan Order columns which support square projecting vertical fins above. Giant pilasters at each end of the façade rise up to the wide projecting eaves. The three first floor windows are framed with stylised architraves with geometric panels below the cills. The ground floor windows do not appear to be original and spoil the symmetry of the façade. The architectural features are picked out in beige and pink whilst the walls are coloured off-white. *Architectural Merit*

The architectural style of the façade of this house is quite unusual and reflects the wealth and sophistication of the original owner. It should be considered as an interesting piece of built heritage. Some alterations such as replacement of windows are noticeable, and the bays on either side of the main entrance do not appear to be original. These alterations are probably reversible. *Rarity, Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The social value of the house lies mainly in its historical role as a haven for fleeing Mainland leftist refugees during the Civil War in China. This, together with the distinctive architectural features, gives the house historical and local interest. *Social Value & Local Interest*

The house has been left vacant since the early 1990s and probably needs extensive repairs and renovations. Probably the best use is for it to be used for residential purposes. Suitable adaptive re-use depends a lot on the requirements of the local community. *Adaptive Re-use*