

Historic Building Appraisal

Nos. 1, 2 and 3 First Street

Tai Wai, Sha Tin

Tai Wai (大圍, Big Walled Village) was the biggest walled village in Sha Tin established in the Ming (明, 1368-1644) dynasty. It was a village mixed with Punti (本地) and Hakka (客家) villagers of about 15 surnames in the 16th century. It was first inhabited by the Wais (韋) and followed by the Chans (陳), the Yeungs (楊), the Wongs (黃), the Lees (李) and others. It was also called Chik Chuen Wai (積存圍) and the entrance gate was erected in the 2nd year of Wanli (萬曆二年, 1574) reign of the Ming dynasty. The Chans moved from Baoan (寶安) of Guangdong (廣東) province. The block of house at Nos. 1, 2 and 3 of the village was built by Chan Tsan-sheung (陳贊上), an 8th generation member of the eldest branch of three branches of the clan in 1915 and is still owned by the Chans. .

**Historical
Interest**

The block of building was situated at the moat of the walled village. The site was filled up for the construction of houses. It is facing northeast like the other houses of the village. The building materials were shipped from Guangdong province to Sha Tin and delivered to Tai Wai. A spacious forecourt is in front of the house. A low wall of grey bricks and granite block is constructed surrounding the forecourt with a pitched-roof entrance gate in its front. The building is a Qing (清) vernacular design building of three bays. The middle recessed bay is sandwiched by a projected bay on either side. An entrance is at each of the three bays. The entrances of the two projected bays were probably added in later stage. The building is constructed of grey bricks and granite blocks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Lower courses of the front facade wall and right side wall and doorframes are of granite. A fascia board of birds and flowers carving and wall frieze paintings of flowers, birds and rocks are under the eave of the recessed bay. A black-and-white wall frieze is under the cornice of right side bay with plastered moulding of flowers and rocks.

**Architectural
Merit**

It is a residential building to witness the settlement of the Chans in Tai Wai village. It has some built heritage value. Alterations to the facade of the building were identified which diminish the authenticity of the building.

**Rarity, Built
Heritage Value &
Authenticity**

The building was first occupied by over 20 members of the Chans. The three bays of the house were inherited by the three sons of Tsan-sheung. They do not have their ancestral hall in the village and they have their grave sweeping at their ancestors graves at Ho Chung (蠓涌) of Sai Kung and at Needle Hill (針山) during the Ching Ming (清明節) and Chung Yeung (重陽節) festivals. Chan Kai-yung (陳啟庸), a grandson of Tsan-sheung, was a Village Representative of Tai Wai in 1979-1990s and was a member of the Sha Tin Rural Committee (沙田鄉事委員會).

***Social Value,
& Local Interest***

The building is physically close to the entrance gate of Chik Chuen Wai (Grade 2), both bearing witness to the development of Tai Wai.

Group Value

REFERENCES

Document Records at The Land Registry Office, Hong Kong

Property Particulars of D.D. 180 Lot No. 851 Sec. B

Property Particulars of D.D. 180 Taxlord Lot No. T152 Sec. D

Property Particulars of D.D. 180 Lot No. 36 Sec. B

Books, Articles, and Other Sources

《沙田古今風貌》編輯委員會編。《沙田古今風貌》。香港：沙田古今風貌編輯委員會，1997年。

蕭國健：「沙田積存圍之候王宮」。《華僑日報》。1979年4月24日。

John, Elizabeth. *Recording a Rich Heritage: Research on Hong Kong's "New Territories"*.
Hong Kong: The Leisure & Cultural Services Department, 2000.

Oral history interview with a member of the Chan family of the building under study on 11 November 2003 by the Antiquities and Monuments Office.