

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**No. 71 San Wai Tsuen,**  
**San Tin, Yuen Long, New Territories**

San Wai Tsuen (新圍村), literally meaning “new walled village”, consists of Sheung San Wai (上新圍) and Ha San Wai (下新圍). Initially, the village was called Fuk Hing Lei (福興里), literally meaning “lucky and prosperous lane”. Most of the villagers of San Wai Tsuen acquired wealth by working overseas. The United States and Canada were their main destinations. The villagers participated in the construction of railways in North America around the Xuantong (宣統, A.D. 1909-1911) reign of the Qing dynasty. They sent their income back to San Wai Tsuen through sailors, *xunyangma* (巡洋馬) and money shops in Sheung Wan (上環). The house at No. 71 San Wai Tsuen (新圍村) was built in 1937 by a Pak (白) family with remittances from overseas from a family member. The Pak family emigrated overseas and sold the house many years ago. The house has been vacant since 1988.

***Historical  
Interest***

No. 71 San Wai Tsuen is a typical two-storey **Qing Vernacular** style village house with Western influence. The main part of the house is built of grey-green bricks with a pitched roof of Chinese tiles. Window openings with moulded hoods for weather protection are regularly spaced in the flush gable end walls. Original wooden windows and guard bars still exist. The front of the house consists of a flat roofed portico and verandah supported on columns. The verandah has plain but curiously shaped balustrading. The columns and parapet wall to the roof show Western classical influence. The parapet is decorated with geometric designs and classical urns at the corners. The central pediment is decorated with a bas-relief floral design and is flanked by console shaped supports. By contrast the rear elevation is plainer and lacking in ornamentation. Internally, original wooden doors and partitions still remain also a Western style wooden staircase. The underside of the roof and first floor is exposed showing the structural timbers.

***Architectural  
Merit***

Village houses combining Chinese and Western architectural features are not uncommon in rural villages in the New Territories, so that No. 71 San Wai Tsuen is not rare but it is fairly well preserved and a good example of this style with built heritage value. It appears to have retained its authentic appearance.

***Rarity,  
Built Heritage  
Value &  
Authenticity***

As the house only seems to have been used for residential purposes, its social value to the local community is relatively low. The front façade of the house is particularly interesting with its Western neo-classical appearance.

***Social Value  
& Local  
Interest***

Probably the best use for the house is residential for which it was originally intended. Adaptive re-use would probably affect its authenticity.

*Adaptive  
Re-use*