

Historic Building Appraisal

Entrance Gate

Shun Fung Wai, Lam Tei, Tuen Mun, New Territories

Shun Fung Wai (順風圍) in Lam Tei (藍地) of Tuen Mun was a *Historical Interest* multi-lineage village established around 300 years ago. It was first settled by the Laus (劉氏), the Leungs (梁氏) and the Wongs (黃氏) and later followed by the Cheungs (張氏), the Tses (謝氏), the Yips (葉氏) and the Yus (余氏). Due to the departure of the Yips and the Yus, five lineages still are living in the village now. It was a walled village with four watch towers at the four corners of the square village.

The **entrance gate** in the middle of the front outer row of houses was probably first built **300 years ago** when the village was established. There is a shrine at the opposite end on the last row of houses on the central axis of the village. The symmetrical layout of the village had the central axis, that is, the main street in the middle, bisected the village into two halves with five rows of houses running parallel to the front and back rows of houses separated by horizontal lanes between them. The outlying row of houses, the four corner towers and the entrance gate formed as an external wall to protect the inner houses.

The entrance gate is connected to a house on either side, the one on its right is a modern one. The gate is a Qing (清) vernacular building of a one-hall rectangular plan. It is constructed of green bricks and concrete with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. Its front doorway is in rectangular shape whilst its rear doorway in arched shape. Two holes are above the front and rear doorways for *fung shui* benefit and for security watching. Inside the gate entrance on the left front wall by the door is an Earth God (土地公) niche with an offering table in its front. The front façade is plastered and painted. Under the eave is the weathered name of the village. The structure is internally plastered and painted. The central portion of the floor is paved with granite slabs. Its ridge is with a pair of geometric mouldings at its two ends. Grille holes are at the right granite door frame and the wooden *tanglung* (趟籠) still exist. *Architectural Merit*

It is an entrance gate to witness the history of the village. *Rarity*

The entrance gate has some built heritage value. The four corner towers are either demolished or not in shape. Only the shrine and the gate entrance are retained. A renovation of the entrance gate was carried in 1986. *Built Heritage Value & Authenticity*

The entrance gate was an essential structure to protect the villagers living inside the village. It was used to keep away all the enemies, bandits and any threats that would endanger the villagers. It was closed at night. A village guard force was formed to provide a self-defence system in the village. The guards patrolled within the village area. The villagers had Dim Dang (點燈) ritual at the shrine and the Earth God niche would be given incense offerings as well. The villagers also takes part in the Tai Ping Ching Chiu (太平清醮) organized by the villages in Tuen Mun once every ten years.

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

The entrance gate has group value with the shrine and other Earth God shrines in the village. There are quite a number of walled settlements in the neighbourhood; for instance, the walled village of Nai Wai (泥圍) and Tsing Chuen Wai (青磚圍).

Group Value

It is considered that the question of adaptive re-use does not arise at the present time.

***Adaptive
Re-use***