

Historic Building Appraisal

Tin Hau Temple

Yung Shue Wan, Lamma Island

Tin Hau Temple (天后古廟) in Yung Shue Wan (榕樹灣) of Lamma Island (南丫島) was constructed before the 2nd year of the Guangxu (光緒, 1876) of Qing (清) Dynasty as a stone tablet of renovation in the temple has the dating inscribed on it. Lamma Island, originally called Pok Liu Chau (博寮州), is the third largest island in Hong Kong long inhabited by fishermen. Yung Shue Wan has the biggest settlement in the northern shore of the island whilst Sok Kwu Wan (索罟灣) the biggest in the southern shore. The temple was erected for the worship of Tin Hau (Goddess of the Sea), a most popular deity of the fishing folks.

Historical Interest

The temple is a Qing vernacular building of a two-hall plan. A connected side room was later added to its left. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roofs of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The gables are in *wok yee* (鑊耳) style. The external walls have been plastered and with white paint. Its gable ends are painted with grey boarding. The floors are with cement screeding. The altar at the far end of the main hall houses the Tin Hau deity for worship. The side room is the quarters of the temple keeper. The main ridge is with a pair of geometric pattern mouldings. A pair of *aoyus* (鰐魚) with a pearl mouldings are on top of the ridge. Under which is a moulding of a dragon in cloud patterns. On the front façade walls are two paintings of a dragon and a unicorn on either side. The name of the temple is at the lintel of the entrance flanked by a pair of couplets. Two western-styled seated lions made of cement are in front of the temple which replace the original Chinese ones. A canopy has been added right in front of the entrance courtyard.

Architectural Merit

It is the only Tin Hau temple in Yung Shue Wan and one of the three on Lamma Island. It witnesses the settlement of the fishermen and villagers in the area.

Rarity

It has some built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value & Authenticity

The temple was renovated in 1876, 1910, 1964 and 1977 among some other unknown ones. Unsympathetic repairs have been carried out. On the other hand, the temple is surrounded by a spacious foreground of curved fences, facing a football field. Beyond that, the temple enjoys a nice view of the bay of Yung Shue Wan and is therefore considered to be *fungshui* orientated. To its north, an

incinerator for paper offerings forms a complex with the main temple. The land reclamation provided a larger area for worshippers to carry out ceremonial rites in honour of Tin Hau.

The temple has the patronage of the fishermen as well as other villagers. The Tin Hau Festival (天后誕) on the 23rd day of the third lunar month would be highly celebrated with lion dance, sampan races and Shen Gong opera (神功戲) performance. The performance would be held in a shed in the open playground off the temple for five days and nights where the deity would be invited to attend at the shed. Fa Pow (花炮) activities would also be held.

The Tin Hau Temple in Yung Shue Wan, including the other two in Sok Kwu Wan (索罟灣) and Luk Chau Wan (鹿洲灣) on Lamma Island, are recorded items in the Antiquities and Monument Office. These buildings have good value from a heritage and cultural point of view and together they enrich the historical and architectural scene of the island.

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

**Social Value,
& Local
Interest**

Group Value

**Adaptive
Re-use**