

## Historic Building Appraisal

### Old House

#### Nos. 31-35 Hau Wong Temple New Village, Kowloon City, Kowloon

Hau Wong Temple New Village (侯王廟新村), which has been cleared, is *Historical Interest* in the northwest of the Hau Wong Temple (侯王廟, Declared Monument) in Kowloon City. The name of the village is derived from the temple across the street. The village in general was occupied by squatter houses and cleared in 2001. Nos. 31-35 are the only remaining structures of the village.

The Old House at Nos. 31-35, believed to be built between 1941 and 1945, was a block of two-storey Chinese tenement buildings. When the Japanese invaded Hong Kong in December 1941, there were five houses and a ruinous house known as Ho Ka Yuen (何家園, built in the 1880s/1890s) in this squatter area. The rest of the area was just fields and orchards. During the Japanese Occupation (1941-1945), the Japanese had the ruins of the old Ho Ka Yuen demolished down into lower courses of bricks, just above the foundations, and divided the area into some eleven cottage-sites, in two rows.

During the 1950s and 1960s, there were several famous film studios at the squatter area, including Sai Kwong Film Studio (世光片場), Yau Kiu Film Studio (友僑片場), Kwok Ka Film Studio (國家片場), Wah Tat Film Studio (華達片場) and Great Wall Movie Enterprise Limited (長城電影製片有限公司). Some renowned actresses such as Chan Po-chu (陳寶珠), Siu Fong-fong (蕭芳芳), Fung Po-po (馮寶寶) had once worked in these film studios. Many occupants of this squatter area were employed as amateur actor for the film productions. When such film studios were moved out in the 1970s, the site was rented out to establish small scale factories. For example, the Old House was once rented to Wing Shing Decoration Construction Companies (永盛裝修工程) and Nam Yan Kee Grave and Tombstone Construction Company (藍恩記山墳墓碑工程公司). Today, the Old House has been restored and undergone adaptive re-use. The signboard of Nam Yan Kee has been retained.

The Old House is located by the Junction Road (聯合道) of the village *Architectural Merit* with its entrance facing south. It has got a new address, that is, No. 133 Junction Road, Kowloon City (九龍城聯合道 133 號). It was a block of five residential units separated by plastered and painted internal walls. Each unit was partitioned with bedrooms and living rooms. A pitched-roof masonry Chinese building was built first with a brick extension later constructed on its

north elevation used for kitchens and lavatories. The block is constructed of granite blocks and concrete with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The walls are with mortar in regular courses.

It is a residential house to remind the past village-life in Kowloon, and has some built heritage value. The structure of the stone house is basically kept, with the historic fabrics restored.

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

The Old House was used by a decoration company and a grave tombstone workshop. It was also used as residences. The village was once occupied by a number of film studios such as Sai Kwong Film Studio, Wah Tat Film Studio and some others where many Cantonese films were made in the 1950-60s. Factories of plastics, metal works and furniture were in the village in the 1970s. The area was cleared in 2001 for new development, whilst the Old House is retained.

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

The Old House is within walking distance of other historic buildings, including the Hau Wong Temple (侯王古廟), former Yamen Building of Kowloon Walled City (前九龍寨城衙門) (both Declared Monuments) and Bethel Bible Seminary (伯特利神學院, Grade 2).

***Group Value***