

Historic Building Appraisal

Watchtower (northwest),

Fanling Wai, Fanling

Fanling Wai (粉嶺圍) in Fanling was settled by the Pangs some 700 years ago and the wai (walled village) was constructed in the Wanli (萬曆, 1573-1620) reign of the Ming (明) dynasty. Pang Kwei (彭桂) was the founding ancestor of the Pang clan who went to Lung Shan (龍山, now known as Lung Yeuk Tau 龍躍頭) of Fanling from Dongguan (東莞) in 1220, 13th year of Jiading (嘉定) reign of the Southern Song (南宋) dynasty. He then moved to Fan Ling Lau (粉嶺樓) and established a village over there. As the population of the clan increased, they moved westward to settle in Fanling Wai and other places. The walled village was built to provide security for the villagers residing inside the village. Over the years the wall has lost its protective functions and fell into ruin. The entrance gate-tower and two corner watchtowers were rebuilt in 1986. **Historical Interest**

The wall was constructed of green bricks in Qing (清) design having four corner towers at its four corners with an entrance gate-tower in the middle of the north-west facing wall. The entrance is at the central axis of the walled village with village houses built connected to the walls and seven rows on the left and right of the central axis. Guns were installed at the corners towers for defensive purposes. Around five to seven gun holes were at the tower. This N2 watchtower built in 1986 is constructed of green bricks of flat roof with a row of green ceramic drippers at its front façade and three painted white circles down below for *fung shui* reasons. Lower portions of its walls are finished with brown mosaic tiles. The watchtower is approximately 4 (length) by 3.7 (width) metres. **Architectural Merit**

The remaining structure of the wai is to remind the historic settlement of the Pangs. **Rarity**

It is of considerable built heritage value.

Built Heritage Value

The 1986-retored structure is in good condition.

Authenticity

It has group value with the watchtowers of the wai, the Pang Ancestral Hall (彭氏宗祠), Sam Shing Temple (三聖宮) and other historic buildings nearby. **Group Value**

The watchtower is for storage use.

Adaptive re-use

The Earth God at the niche of the entrance gate-tower is for the protection of the villagers. Regular offerings of incense and fruits are given on the first and fifteen days off each lunar month and at festivals and the Chinese New Year. The Earth God is considered as one of the deities giving blessings to the villagers. Even at the Dim Dang (點燈) ritual at a shed by the gate-tower, a ritual called Chicken Feather Grabbing (搶雞毛) will be held with chicken feathers cast away from its upper floor.

*Social Value
& Local
Interest*