

Historic Building Appraisal
Entrance Gate, Tai Hong Wai
Kam Tin, Yuen Long

Tai Hong Wai (泰康圍) in Kam Tin (錦田) of Yuen Long was built by Tang Kwong-hoi (鄧廣海) and his son Tang Chung (鄧聰) in the Chenghua reign (成化, A.D. 1465-1487) of the Ming (明) dynasty. The enclosing walls and a moat surrounding the wall was constructed in the Kangxi reign (康熙, A.D. 1662-1722) of the Qing (清) dynasty to safeguard the villagers from attacks of pirates and bandits. Guns were provided at the walls and watchtowers firing at enemies from their gun holes. *Historical Interest*

During the takeover of the New Territories by the British in 1899, the iron gate of the wall was seized and removed to the residence of the then Governor in Ireland. With the petition in 1924 by Tang Pak-kau (鄧伯裘) (1876-1950) of the Tang clan in Kam Tin, a pair of gates was returned. One of which belonged to Kat Hing Wai (吉慶圍) and the other to Tai Hong Wai. The latter gave up its half and the pair was installed to Kat Hing Wai. With its security function diminished, the structure fell into ruin and was occupied by village houses built on it. The surviving historic items include the watchtower at the northwest corner and the inner gate of the wall.

The old Tai Hong Wai was a near-square walled village constructed with high walls surrounding the village having four watchtowers at its four corners and an entrance gate at the central axis. Rows of houses were built parallel to the front wall. The wall was in symmetrical design constructed of green bricks. A moat was constructed around the village and reclaimed in the 1960s. The corridor is consisted of an outer gate and an inner gate. The former rebuilt in 1986 is constructed of reinforced concrete finished with Shanghai plaster with masonry courses to have stonework look. Its pitched clay-tiles roof is retained with reinforced concrete trusses. The inner gate is constructed of green bricks with its walls to support its pitched roof of timber rafters, purlins and ceramic tiles. Its front doorway is rectangular whilst its rear doorway is arched. Its arched doorway is with plastered moulding. Wall friezes are with paintings of chrysanthemums and peonies on its internal walls. Part of the walls is covered with plastered rendering. *Architectural Merit*

It is a remaining structure to show the settlement of the Tangs in Kam Tin. *Rarity*

The structure though not at all authentic has some built heritage value.

***Built Heritage
Value***

The inner gate has its old structure retained whilst the outer gate is rebuilt losing its authenticity.

Authenticity

This structure has group value with the watchtower.

Group Value

A shrine was built at the far end of the central axis of the village for worship of different deities which names were written on a tablet above the altar in the middle. Shrines of the Earth God (土地) and Cheung Tin Shi (張天師) deities were at the entrance tower for worshipped. During the Da Chiu (打醮) of the village held once every seven years and at other Chius, the latter deity would be invited to attend celebrations.

***Social Value
& Local
Interest***