



PLANNING HERITAGE

Conservation Planning Consultancy

THE ANGEL INN, CHURCH STREET, WESTBURY, WILTS

INTRODUCTION:

This assessment has been prepared for an application which seeks the regularisation of the work implemented to replace the previous concrete screed floor on the ground floor with a new one at the Angel Inn, Westbury. The application also seeks permission for the replacement of the Library wall linings and the removal of the bar counter and its replacement with a repositioned counter.

The property is listed at Grade II and was included on the statutory list in March 1978. The listing describes it as **a complex building of various dates from the C16. The exterior to South now uniform and apparently late C18 or early C19. 2 storeys rendered (said to be timber box framed beneath rendering). Treble Roman roof, hipped to right, crested ridge, slightly lower on lefthand bay. 1 ridge and 2 other chimneys. Windows spaced 1-2-wide space-2; late glazed sashes in wind braces (the Western bay has 2 layers of wind braces) moulded wooden frames. Doorway between 1st 2 windows on left hand side: stone block surround with stone brackets to unmoulded pediment, glazed door. Small doorway to right below 2nd window from right (original position of cross passage). 'L' plan extension to North-East later stable extension to North-West. The width of the house increased leaving previous rafters within later roof.**

Timber framing clearly visible on former outside wall of original rear extension. The front roof appears to have 2 boxed in curved crucks on north side. It also has numbered trusses with "A" pieces to ridge and. The great chimney to right of centre opens West on ground floor and East on first floor, where it is given a fine original fireplace with a worked overmantel.

The building is located within the Westbury Conservation Area, which was designated in July 1975 and was reviewed in April 2023. A conservation area appraisal and management plan was published at that time.

The building is prominent located on the corner of Church Street and Edward Street, opposite the Morrison's supermarket, close to the centre of the town. Externally, the property appears to date from C19, however, internally there are surviving features which include elements of a cruck frame, exposed roof structure with wind braces and fine chimney piece all of which indicate earlier C15-C16 origins. The external appearance is of a white painted, rendered building with later C19 extensions to the rear. To the rear is an enclosed yard with access off Edward Street. The yard is compromised by a metal escape staircase, extraction units and a timber covered outside seating/smoking structure, all of which are of no merit. The roof coverings consist of double Roman clay tiles to the front and the rear slopes, which includes a catslide, of clay pantiles.

Internally, the ground floor had a concrete screed floor which was had a mix of coverings including wood block, lino and carpet. The floor dated from the 1930s. In the Library/snug the walls were also lined with bookshelves that were attached to plasterboard wall linings fixed to battens.

On the ground floor, the room plan is arranged around the central open bar area from which the Library/snug and Pool Room/Private bar were accessible. The WCs are located to the right of the bar counter in the extended rear SW range. The kitchen is housed in the north east range to the rear. The inspection revealed the former Private Bar/Pool Room in located in the C16 extension and has a chamfered cross beam, whilst the fire place in this room is compromised by various alterations that have reduced its opening. This range was extended

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in the C19 and by the 1930s was converted into a WC. It had been subsequently extended again by the 1980s.

The archival sources, held in the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre (WSHC) date from 1934 and show the remodelling of the main bar and installation of bar counter, designed by the architects Rigg & Vallis of Frome. These are limited but do show the main public bar occupied a smaller area and was centred around and served from, the bar counter (installed c.1935). Both public and private bars were accessed through a vestibule from Church Street and a lobby from the rear yard. The plans indicate that there was an additional function room located in the eastern half of the main building, noted on plan as '*Buffalo's Room and Private Wing*'. These were shown as being accessible through a pair of swing doors. The public bar had bench seating with a new brick fireplace built to right side (north) of the bar counter where a doorway is now located. The wood block flooring of the public bar area was laid at this time on a concrete screed. The works included the alteration of the flooring, ceiling beams, roof structure and internal walls.

It is apparent from the 1934 plans that the ground floor of the property was divided between the bar/public house use and that of the residential use of the landlord. However, the plans do not show the room plan of the eastern half of the building.

Later sources dating from the 1980s, show the bar had been expanded to include the rooms to the east and that there had by that time been significant alterations to the room plan, including the loss of the brick fireplace to the side of the bar counter, the creation of further WC's, a bar hatch to serve the private bar /pool room, a new rear entrance and the demolition of the walls to the rooms to the east of the public bar.

It is not known when these works to reconfigure the interior were carried out but is apparent these occurred prior to 1987.

On the first floor, the plan form appears to reflect a similar arrangement to that shown on the 1987 plans. The first floor has visible areas of timber framing and historic roof structure. In the southern extension (above the private bar) are a pair of arched wind-braces in the end bays of each roof slope. Alongside the main staircase (itself a later insertion) are 2Nos. curved full crucks on the north wall. Records of the history of cruck framing in Wiltshire held in the WSHC county (*Wiltshire Dendrochronology Project*, 2013), demonstrate that this form of construction was prevalent between 1350-1550. The cruck blades on the southern side appear to have been removed. Likewise, the use of wind bracing in domestic architecture does not occur after the 1550s, indicating that this building was built c.1450-1550 and then extended to the south shortly after. It is likely that it was at this time the hall was floored over built and a central chimney stack inserted. It is from this period that the fireplace with ornamental C16 overmantel was inserted. In the opposite wall in the same room is the exposed partition framing in which there is the head of a depressed Tudor arch doorway.

Notwithstanding these features, the inspection confirmed the building has suffered from a lack of long-term maintenance issues which has resulted in localised failure of the roof coverings that have in turn lead to water damage to the interior.

There is little in the way of planning history relating to this property, thus making it difficult to ascertain when the open plan ground floor arrangement was created. Today, the ground floor plan comprises a large open plan bar area off which are rooms which served as smaller bar areas. It is apparent both from the inspection and the available sources that the ground floor has been altered and changed over many years. The eastern snug (aka the '*Library*') had a concrete screed floor formed, whilst the main bar area concrete screed floor over

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which a wood block flooring and linoleum were laid dates from the 1930s. The former private bar retains a timber floor, whilst the former WC area has undergone significant change and extension. The floor in this room comprises a raised concrete floor surface with DPM. The current floor dates from the 1988 works (as approved under W/87/01817/LBC) and replaced the 1934 floor.

The 1988 plans illustrate the ground floor room plan at that time and that this had evolved from what was shown on the 1934 plan which had a smaller public bar arrangement and was divided into various rooms. The bar counter, which was removed, dates from the 1934 works and was of a modest design with simple counter and paneled bar front. The bar had no back bar and the wall had simple shelving and numerous optics attached, which itself was an alteration of the 1934 back bar, which comprised beer barrels and shelving.

PROPOSALS:

The application seeks retrospective consent for the following:

- Removal 1935 screed floors;
- Removal of wall linings in Library; and
- Removal of 1935 bar counter.

The application also proposes to:

- Reinstatement of wall linings in Library;
- New bar counter located towards the rear of the room, with direct access to the kitchen;
- Redecoration of the rooms;
- New floor timber effect floor covering;
- Reinstatement of boxing to beams; and
- Repairs to roof coverings and internal making good;

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

The NPPF definition of the significance of a heritage asset (Annex 2: Glossary) as **the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.**

The assessment of the Site revealed the historic significance is derived from its period of construction and the survival of the 2Nos partial full Crucks and C16 fireplace, wind bracing and associated features. The property contributes to the historic character of Westbury Town centre.

The Site has a mixture of high to low significance. Its high significance is found in the early architectural features that can be seen internally, whilst the arrangement which in turn contributes to the appearance of the ground floor has low significance. The assessment of the Site and where possible the documentary sources, have revealed the property has undergone various periods of adaptation and alteration. The building has been in commercial use for a great many years in its current lawful use as a pub/bar/restaurant. However, it is now vacant and in urgent need of refurbishment to halt its decline and the fundamental objective must be to secure its optimum viable use to safeguard the listed building and its heritage significance for the future, in accordance with the statutory duty set by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The proposal will achieve that in a sensitive way as amended through the application process, thereby have a considerable positive impact on the main significance of the heritage asset

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The need for a new floor

The new screed floor replaces a 1930s concrete screed floor, which had become uneven and in part had failed. The removal of partitions had left a confused pattern of floor coverings no longer relevant to the areas they occupied.

The replacement of the floor had been implemented on an understanding that it was a like for like replacement, that did not alter the building's character or original/historic material of historic significance. In effect it was thought the work did not affect the special interest of listed building.

The removal of the bar counter was carried on the belief that it was not historic and it did not form an important part of the significance of the heritage asset. Likewise, the wall coverings in the Library/snug, which had been altered regularly throughout the building's life were not part of the original fabric/features of the building, and so were considered to be of less historic significance.

IMPACT OF THE WORKS:

Prior to the implementation of the works, the property had been adapted to provide an open plan bar with separate snug/Library, pool room and back bar. The flooring in the Library and main bar had been previously replaced with a cement screed and it is this which has been removed and replaced with a new insulated cement screed. The bar counter was also removed.

The proposal will achieve its optimum viable use in a sensitive way as amended through the application process, thereby it will have a considerable positive impact on the main significance of the heritage asset. In respect of the proposed new flooring, bar location and wall lining, the planform and fabric of these rooms has, in the past, been amended in various ways thereby already impacting on the significance of the planform in this part of the building. This application will not affect that plan, thereby having a neutral impact on the significance of the planform.

It is the retention of the planform of these rooms which this application will ensure and it is this which is of importance. The works proposed and partially implemented will be undertaken in a sensitive way causing minimum impact to the fabric of the heritage asset. The new work will not affect or detract from the significance of the planform or indeed will it affect those features of high significance that survive in this building. There will be minimal damage to the fabric which dates from the C20 the building.

Turning to the works which have been implemented, this has been the removal of modern flooring, wall linings and the bar counter. These works were implemented under the belief that they were considered to be a 'like for like' replacement and thus, consent was not required. These works did not result in any material damage to the building's original fabric.

The LPA were informed of the situation and following a site inspection in December 2025 the applicant was instructed all works should cease. No further work has since been undertaken.

The inspection of the property revealed areas of damage, which require urgent attention to prevent damage to the historic features/fabric. The extent of repair will be assessed after the erection of a scaffold to allow for access.

THE WORKS:

The NPPF definition of the significance of a heritage asset (Annex 2: Glossary) as **the value of**

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a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

The assessment of the Site revealed the historic significance is derived from its period of construction and the survival of the 2Nos partial full Crucks and C16 fireplace, wind bracing and associated features. The property also makes a positive contribution to the historic character of Westbury Town centre.

The significance kitchen area has been well designed and contribute to the modern use and character of the dwelling, in line with many other examples seen throughout Bath.

In assessing the Site, it is clear the building has been compromised by the conversion to an HMO and that there has been considerable investment made in reversing those interventions. This has brought about significant enhancement and heritage benefits both to the occupants but equally to the wider street, by reinstating the original use as a town house. The reversal of the earlier C20 changes, which appear to have included a high level of substantial alteration and loss of features compromised the character of the building, reducing the historic significance of the heritage asset in terms of its individual character. This was further blighted by the crude sub-division of floors and communal

WEIGHING HARM TO SIGNIFICANCE AGAINST PUBLIC BENEFIT

The applicant's position is that the proposed and implemented works will have a considerable positive impact on the significance of the heritage asset through the investment proposed and the sensitive refurbishment of the property, bringing it back into an optimal viable use as required by the Planning & Listed Buildings Act 1990 and the NPPF. It will have an overall positive benefit on the affected rooms.

This test is the balance between harm and securing the optimum viable use of the heritage asset (ie the listed building as a whole) and not the balance of harm caused by the installation of a new screed floor or wall linings and a repositioned bar counter that relates more closely with the and interpretation of these specific spaces against the public benefit.

As set out above, the harm (if anything) is certainly minimal; reversible and on elements of the heritage asset that are not of primary significance. Against that (minimal) harm must be weighed the considerable public benefits of the proposal, which can be summarised as follows:

- Bringing a vacant listed building back into optimum viable use (a significant public benefit and the principal objective). The proposal will ensure that the property is sensitively maintained in the lifetime of the use which will enhance and future-proof the longevity of the heritage asset, and support its continued conservation, which is a significant positive environmental public benefit to Westbury.

If we cannot secure the required consents, the unit will not benefit from the proposed investment which will quickly impact on the heritage asset both in terms of the building, which is already suffering from water ingress and urgently needs investment to halt its decline, and in terms of the Conservation Area which currently has a vacant unit on a primary retail frontage.

As set out above, there are clear and significant public benefits of the proposal that heavily outweigh the minimal (if any) harm that has been identified with regard to the installation of a new screed floor, wall linings, a new better located bar counter in combination with a programme of agreed repairs. As such the proposal accords with NPPF paragraph 215 and the development plan.

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The sensitive refurbishment of this building represents a sustainable form of development which accords with the development plan. NPPF paragraph 11 sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development and, for decision taking this means approving developments that accord with the development plan without delay.

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PLATES:
EXTERIOR –



1. The Angel Inn, Church Street, Westbury



2. View of the roof and areas requiring repair.

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GROUND FLOOR INTERIOR –



3. The main bar area looking towards WCs



4. Main bar area looking towards Library/snug

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5. The main bar and pool room



6. Access to WCs formed through 1934 fireplace

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7. Back room, location of 1934 WCs



8. The former private bar/pool room, retained timber floor

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9. Chamfered beam and fireplace, private bar/pool room



10. Library room

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11. Library and access to kitchen and cellar



12. The Library entrance

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GROUND FLOOR AS WAS –



13. The bar area with 1934 floor surfaces and bar counter



14. The Library with lined walls and carpeted floor surface

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15. The pool room/private bar



16. The main bar area

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INTERIOR FEATURES



17. Base Cruck alongside staircase



18. Base Cruck in corridor rising from staircase

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19. First floor corridor with base crucks



20. Wind bracing in C16 extension to hall, first floor

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21. Windbracing and timber framing in C16 extension, first floor



22. C16 first floor fireplace

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23. First floor; depressed Tudor arch door lintel.

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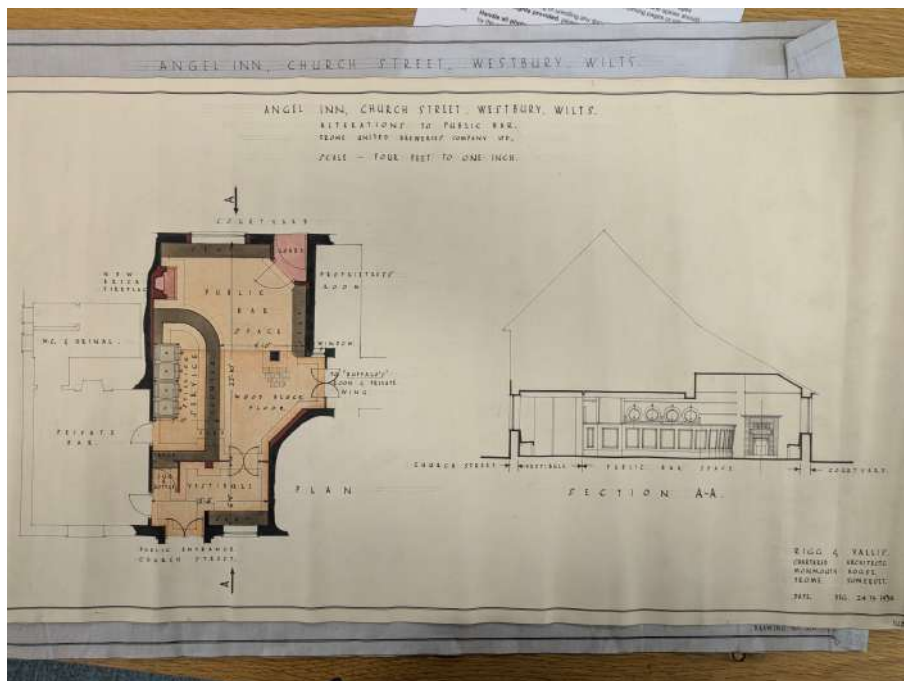
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ARCHIVAL SOURCES:



24. The Angel Inn c.1880-1900



25. Proposals for new bar area to include bar counter, front and rear lobbies, fireplace and flooring, 1934

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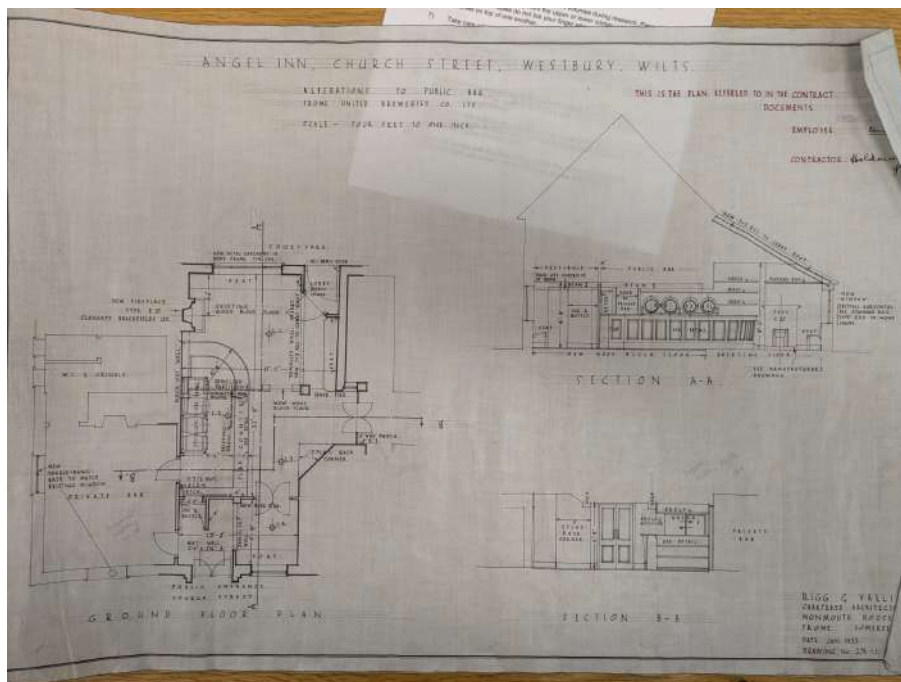
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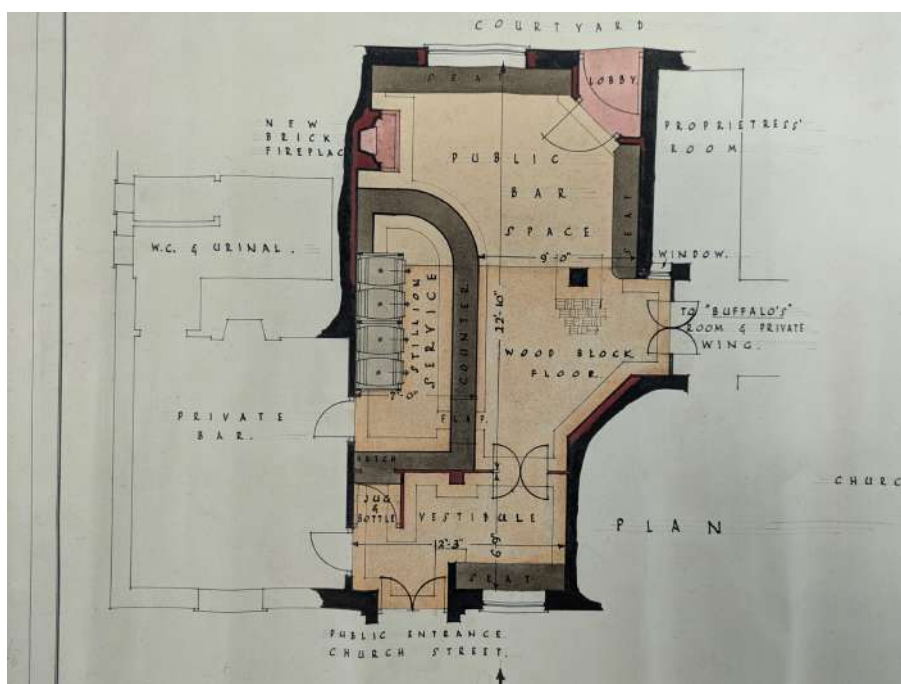


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26. Detailed working drawings for 1934 proposals showing bar design and front entrance and works to private bar

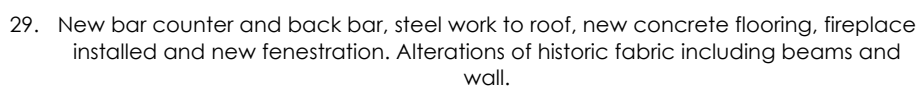
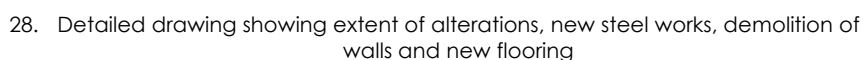


27. The main bar proposals 1934

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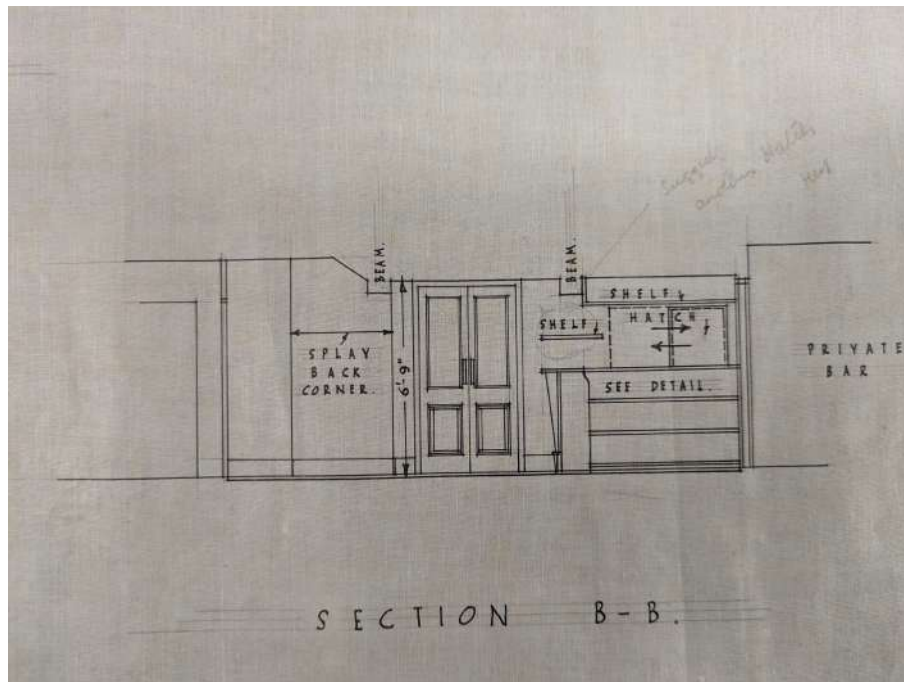
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20. The main entrance, internal elevation

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