

Residence No. **4**

**Ahmed Ali Mangi House**

**SHK-UC2-0526 (Enlistment No. 2012-UC2/529)**

*20/ 117 Acharji Street/ Sui Gar Lane off Hathi Gate Lane  
UC2, Shikarpoor, Sindh.*

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Owner's Contact Details:

**Mr. Ahmed Ali Mangi**

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### Introduction to the Property:

Ahmed Ali Mangi residence is located within the nucleus of historic city core on Acharij Street/ Sui Gar Lane close to Hathi Dar. It is a listed property included in the heritage inventory of Shikarpoor, notified and protected under the Sindh Cultural Heritage Preservation Act 1994; bearing the enlistment number 2012-UC2/529 in the records of Department of Culture, Government of Sindh. The house seems to be like any ordinary construction from the street, as the inconspicuous new additions along the front wall of courtyard completely obscure the view of courtyard façade, originally meant to be visible from the street.

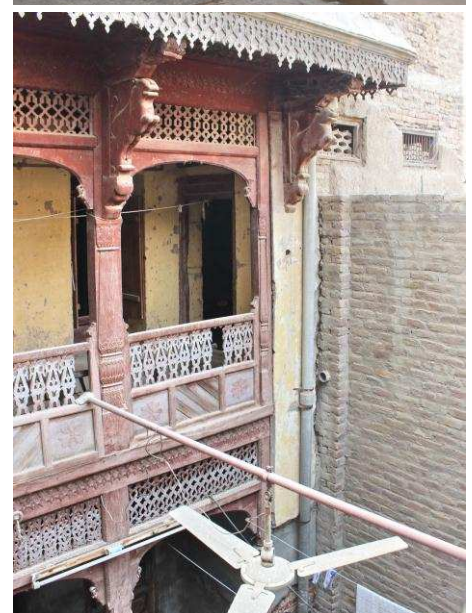
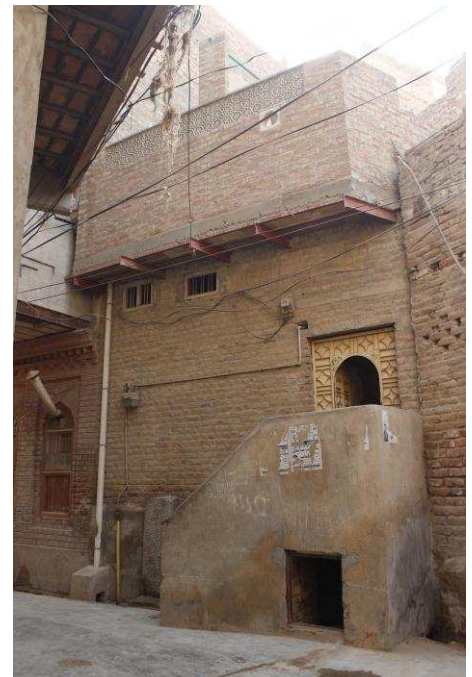
The resident family has a thirty years association with their home, however the first generation of inheritors are now contemplating to sell the place or pull it down and build a new structure, perhaps reusing the most valuable feature of their house i.e. the teak woodwork (*mohari*) on courtyard facing façade in the new construction. Even though maintained in a good state of repair, some parts of timber *mohair* elements have started showing signs of deterioration; forcing the owners to sometimes consider the option of selling out the woodwork while it is still in a less damaged state. The specific form of deterioration is yet not analyzed scientifically, however, it is perceived to be termite infestation. The upper floor of the house, even though in good condition is not in use, as the family claims it as being haunted. It however, seems that the actual reason keeping inhabitants away from this floor is the fear of structural failure particularly of the roof. Lack of maintenance reflected from accumulated dust layers and huge cobwebs is perhaps what gives this upper floor a more spooky appearance. The family's need for additional space has been addressed with construction of a toilet, kitchen and an extra room along the front side of courtyard. A metal staircase is also added in the courtyard providing access to the upper level of the new construction.

### Architectural Analysis:

The building is built on L-shaped plot with a courtyard on the front side. Entering through the entrance gate and stepping inside the courtyard, one is surprised by the impressive woodwork adorning the courtyard facing façade of main building. Its colonnaded verandah flanks the entire length on one side of courtyard; which then opens into the double height main hall or lounge area. The hall is further connected to two small rooms. The upper floor has a similar layout with a verandah/ balcony overlooking the courtyard and two small rooms that have a strong visual link with the hall on ground floor due to its double height. A small mezzanine has been added having



Location plan of Property



View of property from the street (above).  
Courtyard façade (below).



access through one of the upper floor rooms.

Even though the residence has undergone several alternations to accommodate requirements of comfortable living in accordance to present times, it still retains its traditional essence, with the original layout and character of main building very much intact in its original form. This simply planned house has diverse details including the original 'lion' brackets to little swans in the windows. The extensive woodwork on façade with all its intricate carvings and ornate details can still be fully enjoyed from the courtyard as well as the verandahs on both levels. Further A glimpse into the interiors reveals spaces rich in architectural detail; colorful geometric patterns on floors, and decorative timber detailing on ceilings, all reflecting on the mastery of craftsmen who created them. The walls on all sides of rooms at both levels have niches. Wall surfaces are painted in different colors both in interior and exterior. Both interior as well exterior architectural features mostly have a functional aspect to them, however, occasionally these can be only for aesthetic reasons.



The exquisite *mohari* woodwork details on courtyard façade.

Among the most salient features of interiors in this building are the arched windows and ventilators, carved wooden doors and wall cabinets and the arcaded verandah and balcony. On the exterior the most significant feature is the woodwork '*mohari*', including its carved woodwork panels, trellis/ fretwork work, brackets with symbolic iconography and the delicate pelmet bands. Additionally the *qab-sazi* woodwork adorning the verandah ceilings and undersides of cantilevering *chajja* – all together make the entire façade a pleasurable treat to the eye.

The construction of this building is primarily of 1'-6" wide load bearing brick masonry walls, with timber reinforcements. The thick walls are plastered with mud and lime plaster, added with straw. For roofing iron girders and tiers are used, laid with patterned terracotta tiles. Wood is extensively used on façade as well as all doors, windows and wall cupboards.



### State of Conservation - Damage Analysis:

At a quick first glance the property gives an impression of being in good state of maintenance and repair, however, on closer observation it becomes apparent that deterioration of materials and structure is slowly setting in. The most evident forms of deterioration observed in this building include rising damp in ground floor walls and its resulting discoloration and disintegration of plaster along with salt efflorescence, minor cracks in walls, disintegrating mortar joints in masonry, damaged wall plasters in the interiors as well as exterior walls at roof level, and above all the signs of decay in timber façade elements - which could either be termite attack or more likely wet rot due to rain water penetration. The timber trellis work and pelmet bands also have disintegrating and displaced elements. In addition the owners also inform of rain water penetration inside the building through roof.

The identified problems are presently at an early stage thus immediate action for preventive conservation measures would certainly help curtail the deterioration process. If left unattended these factors may lead to a rapid and advanced level of deterioration. The family also desires further changes to incorporate their growing needs, hence timely guidance may lead to better and more sensitive interventions than those already done earlier on this property.



Various areas showing signs of decaying woodwork.





Detail of *qab-sazi* work on ceilings.



View of double height main hall/ lounge at ground floor.





Details of niches and lamp holders.

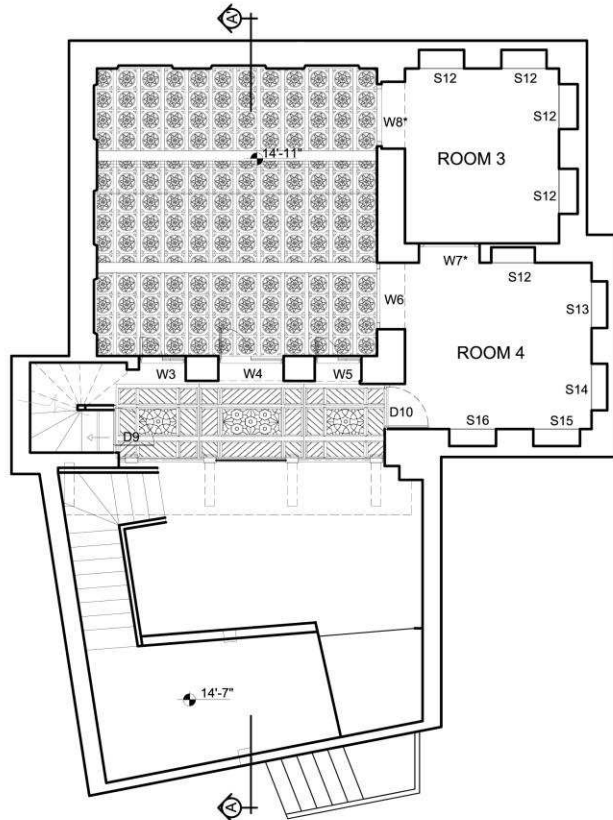


Water stains due to rising damp

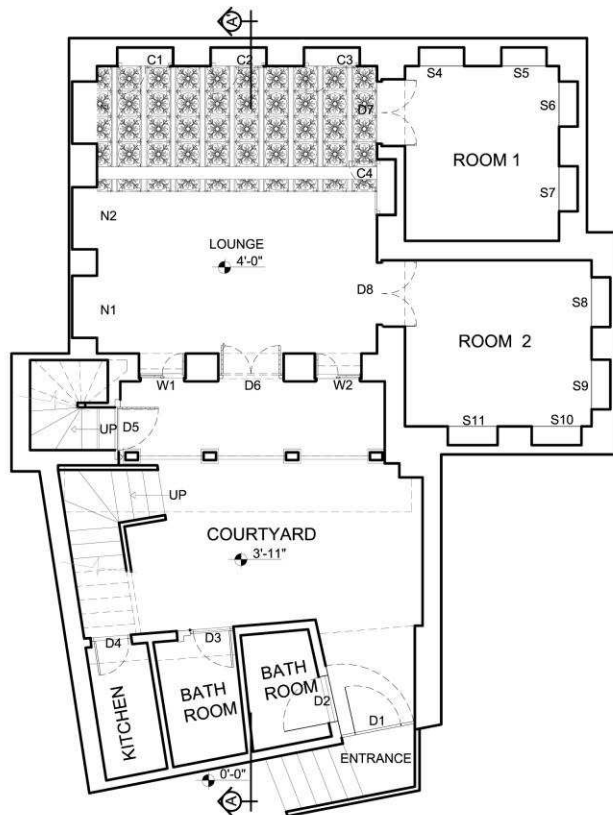
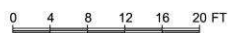


Damaged wall plasters

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



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"ARCHITECTURAL DOCUMENTATION CAMP"  
SHIKARPOOR.

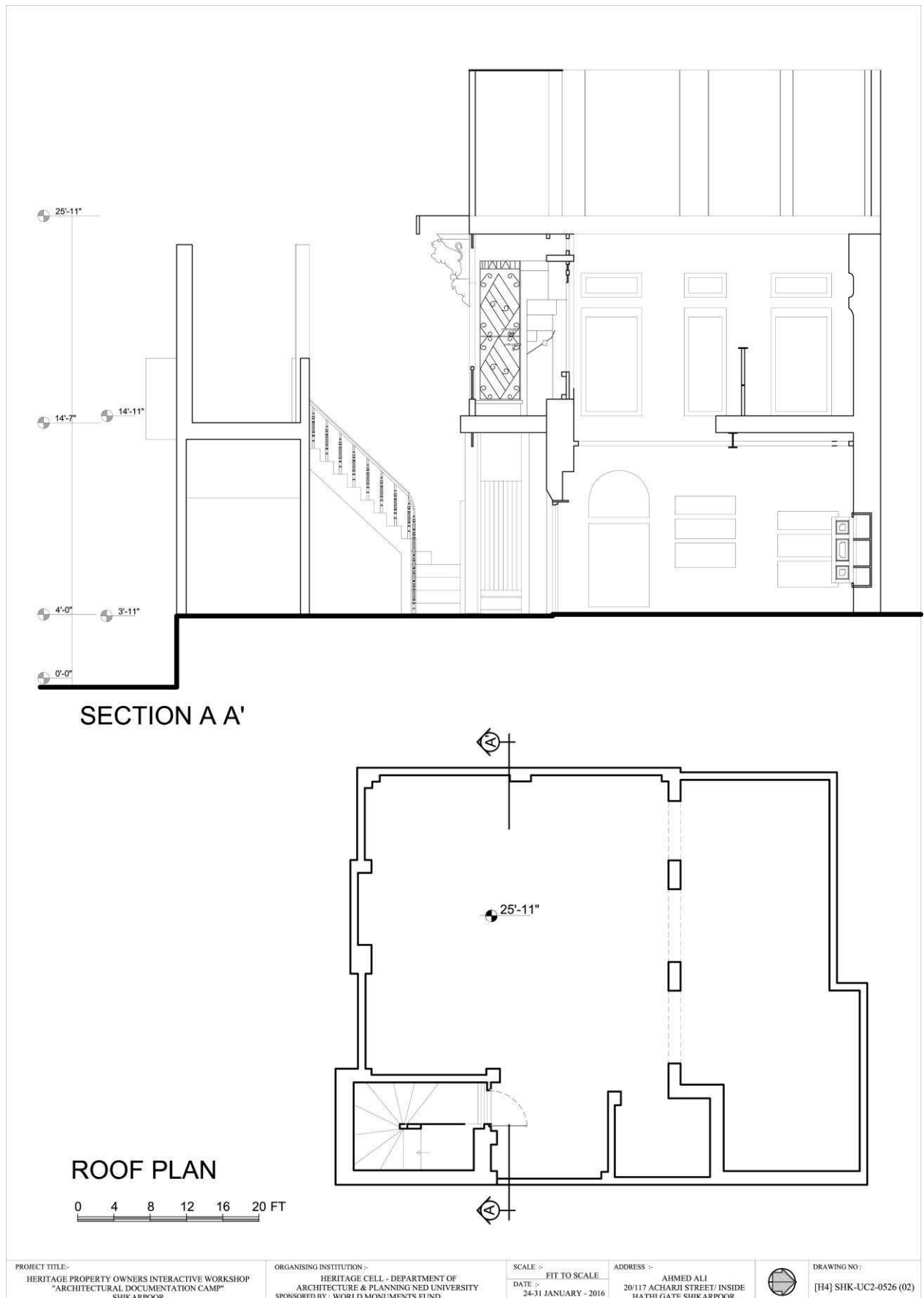
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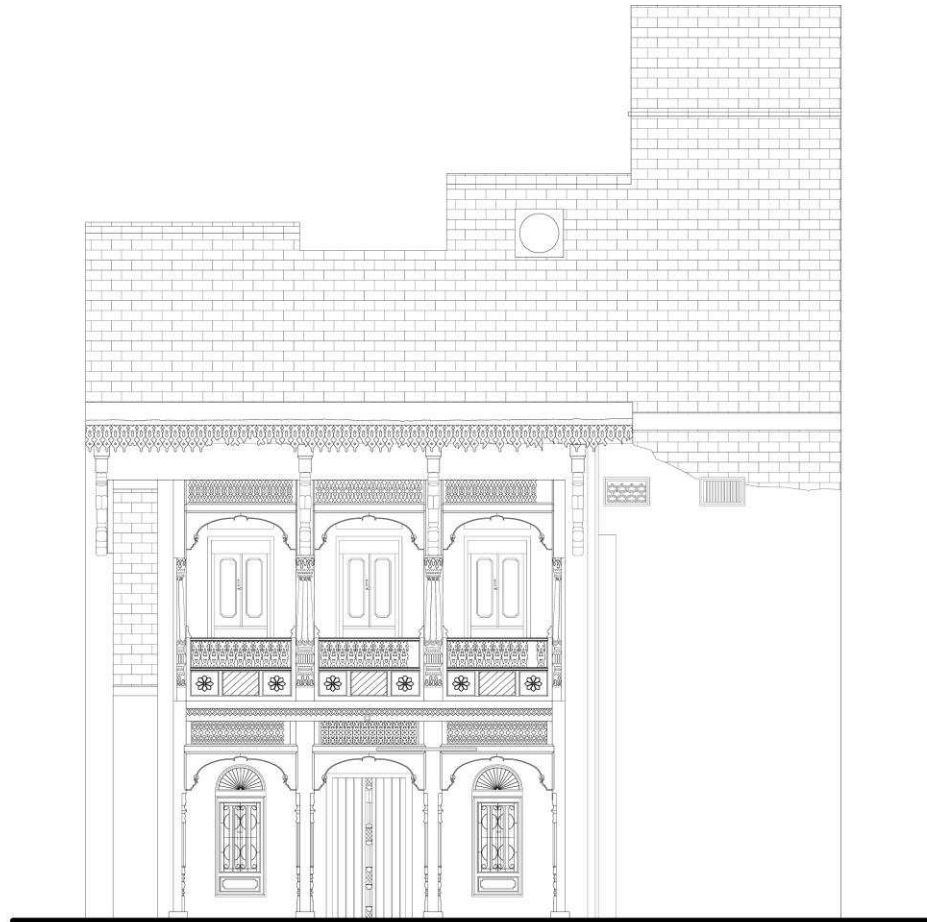
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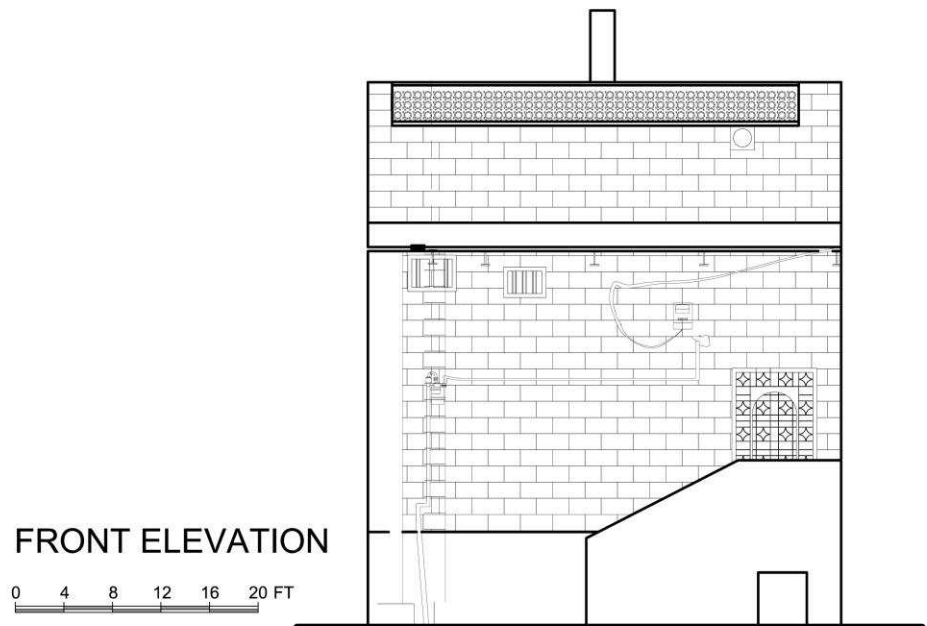
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COURTYARD ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION

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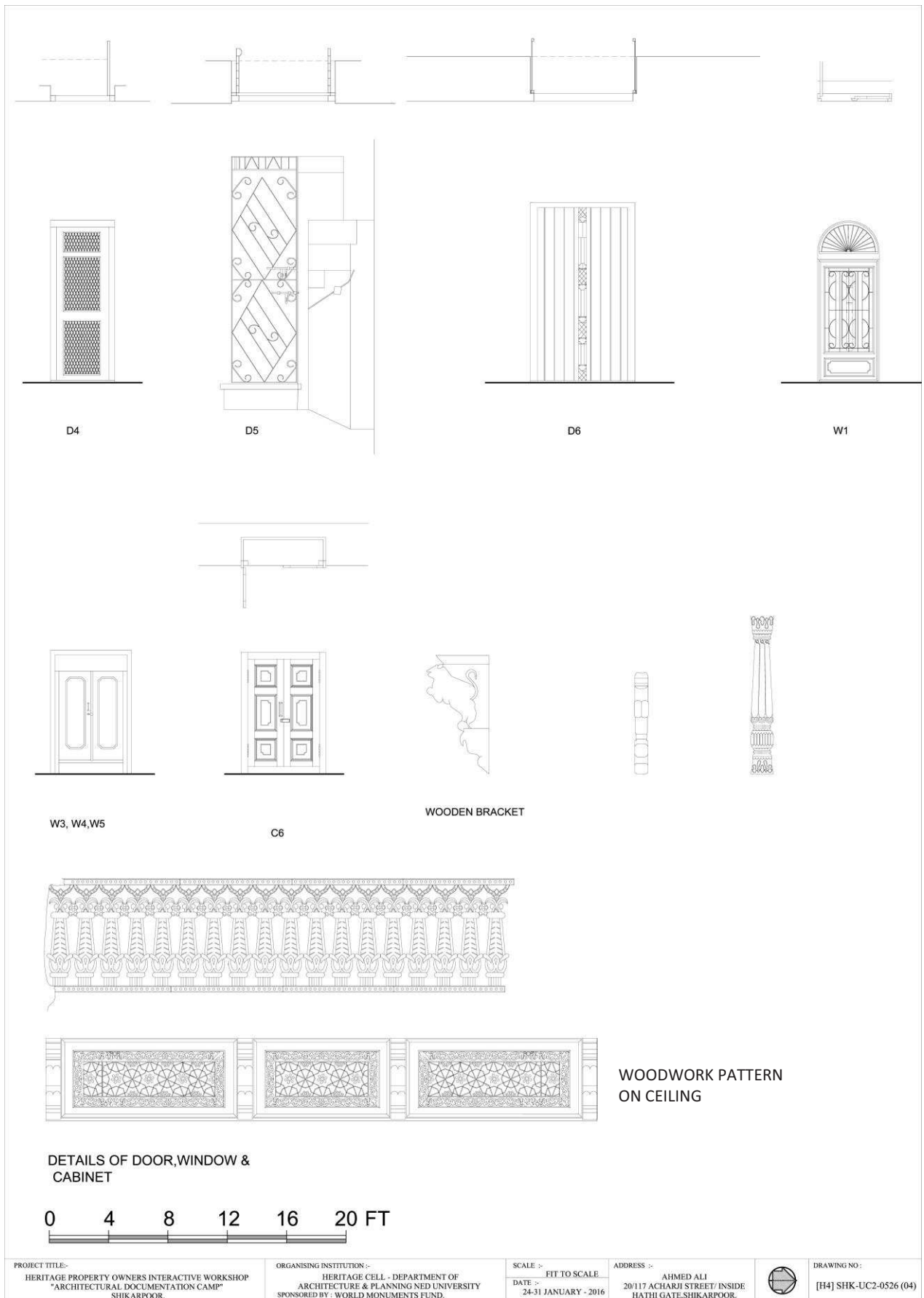
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