

	HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT
Name of Place:	<i>Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware</i>
Date:	July 2023
Prepared by:	H + H Architects
Prepared for:	[REDACTED]

Revision #	Issue	Distribution
00	Pre DA Submission – April 2023	[REDACTED]
01	DA Submission – July 2023	City of Albany

Heritage Listings:

Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware was included as a place of 'Considerable' significance on the City of Albany's Heritage List and Local Heritage Survey in 2020. It was not identified on the earlier Municipal Heritage Inventory (2001).

The place has no other heritage listings.

Methodology

This heritage impact statement has been prepared on the basis of the place having significance at a 'local' level only.

Statement of Significance:

The Place Record Form for *Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware* provides the following Statement of Significance for the place:

The place relates to the post-war building boom after the shortages in building supplies and construction during the Second World War;

The place is a relatively rare (albeit late) example of Inter-War Functionalist style in Albany;

The place was built by local builder and timber merchant, Neville Reeves, as a showcase building for his business;

the place has some rarity value in being an uncommon industrial/commercial building located in the historic town centre area;

Significance and Description of Specific Structure:

Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware comprise two commercial buildings located on Lot 213 and 214 on the corner of Spencer Street and Frederick Street in Albany, which were once part of a much larger lot, S16, that originally belonged to Captain John Hassell, but was in the ownership of George Cheyne by 1841 (Chauncy's 1851 Map of Albany). The two buildings are believed to date from c1948 when Neville Reeves set up his timber yard and shop on this Spencer Street lot, constructing the corner building and likely renovating the other small commercial building (neither building has had its construction date confirmed but title records show that Neville Reeves gained ownership of the lot in 1944).

Corner Building No. 1

The corner large corner building is constructed with nil setback to the intersection of Frederick Street and Spencer Street and comprises a single storey warehouse building with internal loft space, with solid masonry walls and a corrugated iron roof set behind a decorative parapet. The building has a smooth rendered façade with some elements of the Art Deco style/Functionalist style, particularly to the parapet, which has a curved stepped form with decorative vertical moulded fins. The corner of the building is curved, and there is a large fenestration comprising glass blocks (not original, most likely dating from the 1980s). There are only three

small window openings on the Frederick Street façade, and two large shop windows and door to the Spencer Street façade. The building has a bull-nosed verandah which was added in 1990 and is of little significance. There is a loading bay on the south side of the building, which opens onto a laneway between the buildings. This south façade is a mixture of masonry walls and lightweight infill and has been modified over the decades since 1973 when the building use changed from hardware store to retail space for Activ Foundation.



Photo 1. Spencer St (west) elevation



Photo 2. Rear (east) elevation from carpark



Photo 3. Frederick St (north) elevation



Photo 4. South elevation with loading bay

Internally, the building has a more contemporary fit-out, with some sections of early timber floor still evident, as well as the timber and steel-framed roof structure that spans the ground floor volume. The interior fit-out is generally of little significance and comprises suspended acoustic ceiling panels, vinyl floors and partition walling. A contemporary steel-framed stair (1982) provides access to an internal loft space.



Photo 5. Interior view of shopfront

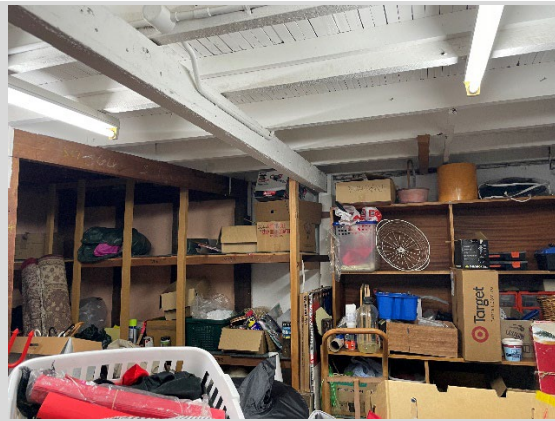


Photo 6. Interior view to store under loft space



Photo 7. Interior view of exposed roof structure



Photo 8. Typical office fit-out to rear of retail space

Spencer Street Commercial Building No. 2

Located to the south of the corner building is a free-standing single-storey commercial building which was once used by Neville Reeves to accommodate his joinery shop and office. There is no evidence of the construction date for this building, but an early photo (see below) shows it as having a simplified Art Deco/Functionalist parapet façade with two large fenestrations facing Spencer Street, one expressed as a re-entrant glazed shopfront, and the other infilled with a corrugated-iron clad workshop door. The current façade was likely created in the 1950s, during the time when the property was owned by Douglas Jones Ltd (1956-1973), with the bullnosed verandah added in 1990. Externally, the front façade has been modified with the original openings in the southern portion both infilled, and a glazed shopfront to the northern portion.



Photo 9. Spencer St (west elevation)



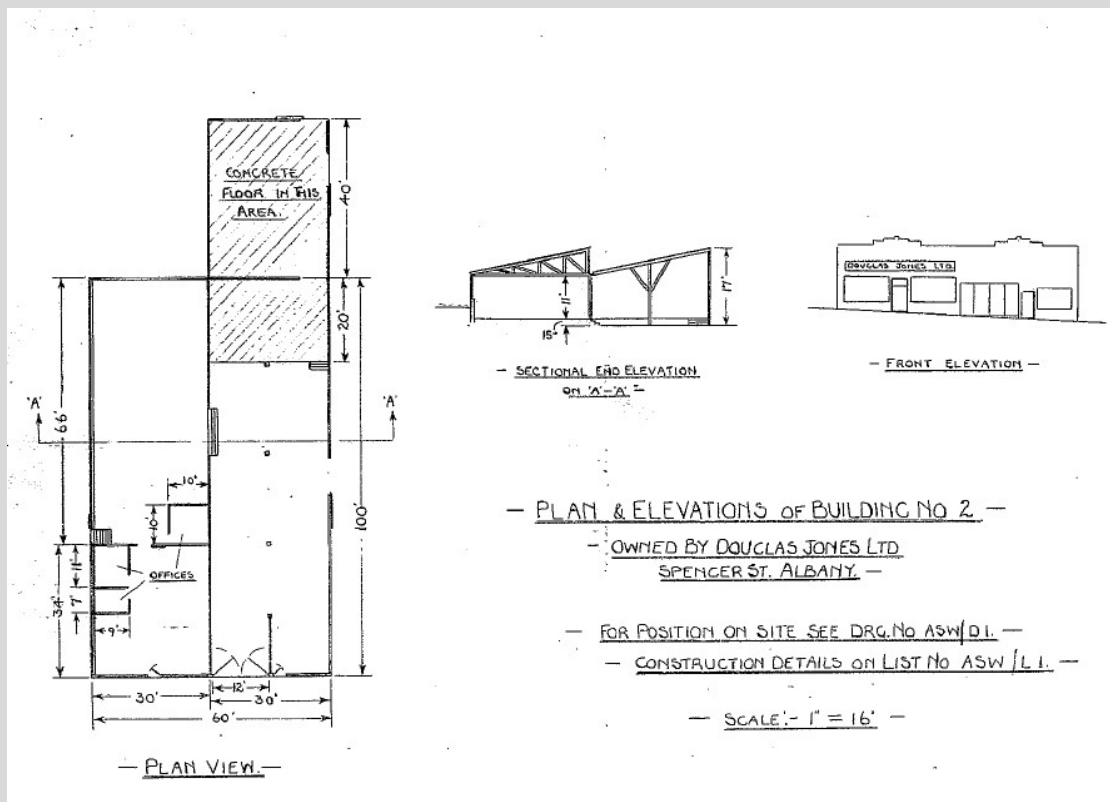
Photo 10. View of Spencer St form



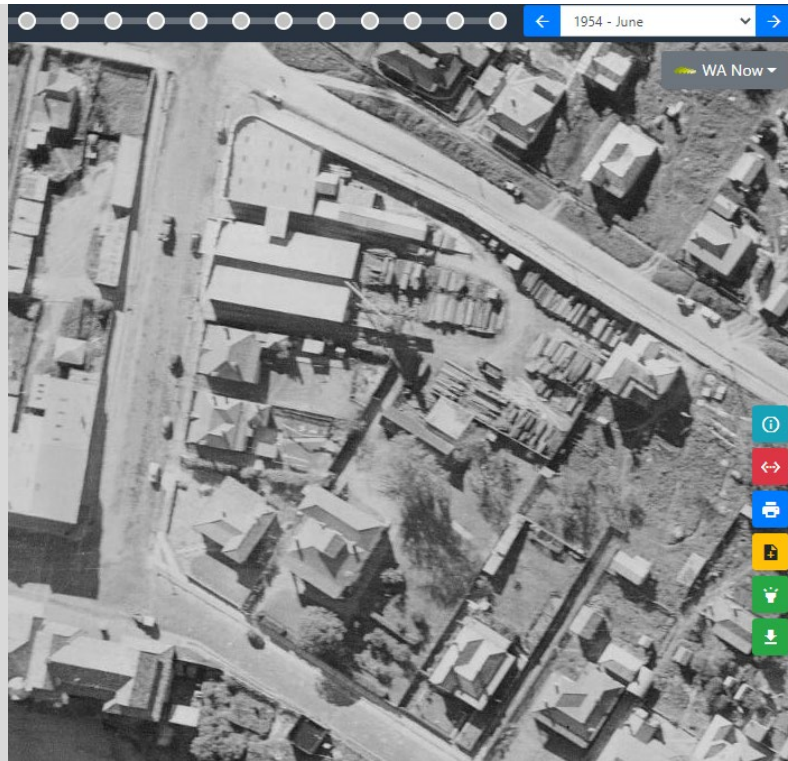
Photo 11. Undated archival photograph of Reeves Hardware building, sourced from Lost Albany facebook page, 2022, likely dates from early 1950s. Note the façade only comprised two bays, not four. On the basis of the adjoining residence (to the south), this would suggest that the building was later extended northward towards the corner building, most likely in the 1950s.



Photo 12. Detail view of archival photo from c1958 showing subject buildings highlighted. The single two-bay façade of the commercial building is evident, but not the subsequent extension, although there appears to be a covered drive-thru roof in this location. Note only two windows evident on the corner building.



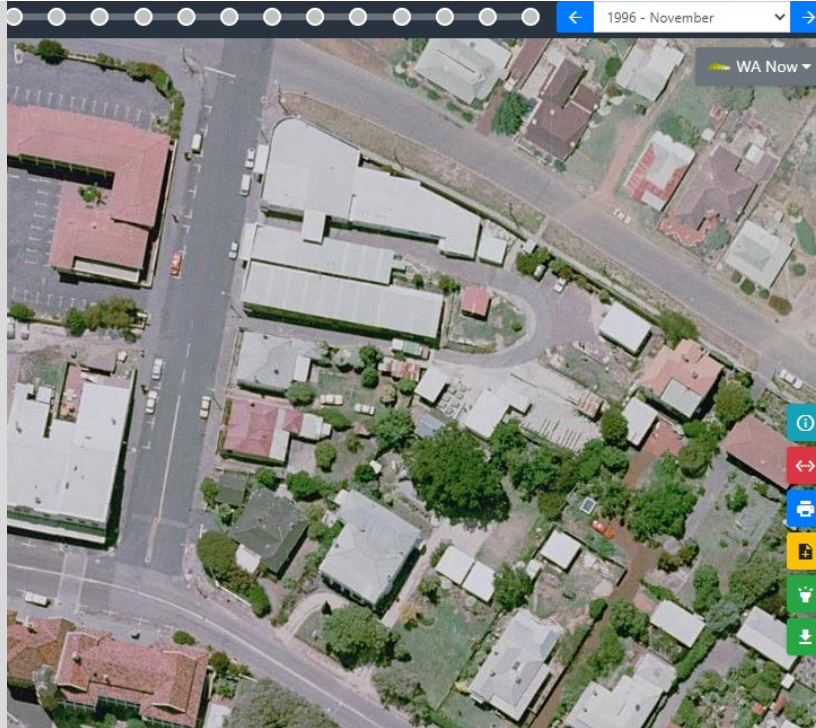
Archival Plan c. 1950s showing extended footprint of Commercial Building No. 2



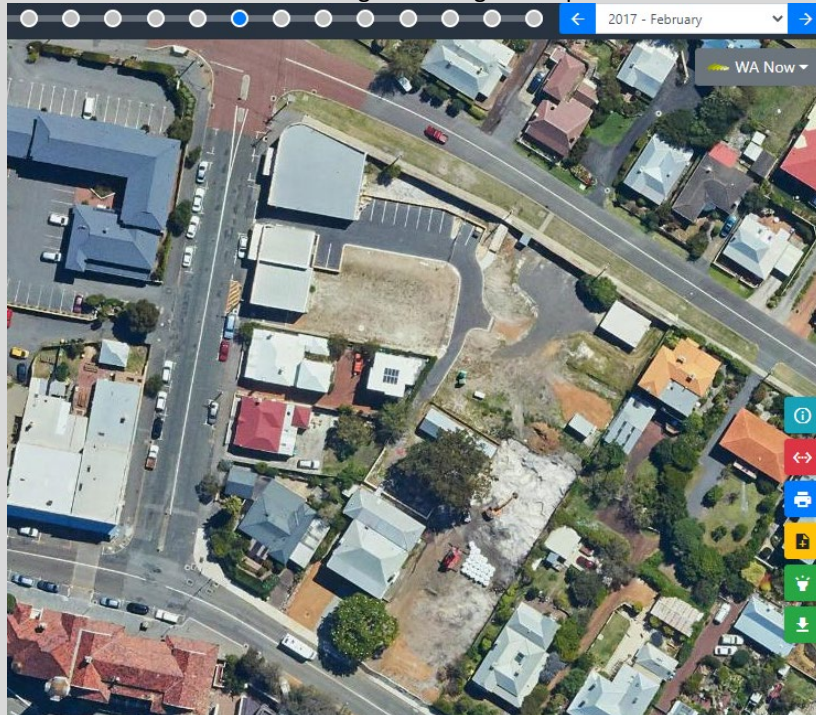
Archival Plan (courtesy Landgate), June 1954 showing the lumber yards to the rear of the commercial buildings. Note also that the duplication of the footprint of Commercial Building No. 2 is evident.



Archival plan dated February 1977 showing the substantial size of both commercial buildings.



Archival plan dated November 1996 showing the enlarged footprint of both commercial buildings.



Archival plan dated February 2017 showing the much condensed building footprints for both premises.

Internally, Commercial Building No.2 comprises two main volumes, with the northernmost portion accommodating the main retail space, and the southern portion used for storage and offices. The northern portion is characterized by raked ceilings to the saw-tooth roof with expressed timber trusses and clerestory windows at high level. The space has plastered walls, vinyl floors (laid over timber and concrete substrate) and a mixture of modern office partitions. The interior of the southern portion typically comprises modern suspended ceiling tiles, with plasterboard walls and carpet floors and is used for storage only. The two spaces are connected by openings in the central dividing wall, which appears to comprise the original masonry wall to the first phase of the building.



Photos 13 & 14 showing interior of retail space with exposed trusses and clerestory windows



Photo 15 Interior view of storage room



Photo 16. Interior view of shopfront

The following works are proposed to the place. Where aspects of the proposal could detrimentally impact on the heritage significance, the reasons are explained as well as the measures to be taken to minimize impacts:

The following outlines the proposed works in detail and their impact on the heritage values of the place:

Corner Building No. 1

It is proposed to retain the existing masonry façade to the Corner Building No.1 and demolish the existing rear structure to allow for construction of a new two-storey commercial premises behind. The façade will be modified, with the introduction of additional window openings (particularly along Frederick Street) and new shopfronts created facing Spencer Street. The existing bull-nosed verandah (intrusive, c1990) will be removed and replaced with an awning that is more sympathetic to the design characteristics of the Art Deco style. A new lift and stair will be introduced to allow access to the new upper floor.

- Condition - The existing Corner Building No. 1 is in fair condition with evidence of damp to the existing parapet wall (part of which retains the footpath height along Frederick St) and general wear and tear associated with its age and ongoing use as a rental tenancy. Accessibility and amenity is low and the building has a poor presentation. Significant structural intervention would be required to make the current building structure (particularly the roof) comply with current building code standards. A preliminary structural assessment undertaken in 2022 identified major challenges with retaining the entire existing structure whilst accommodating new standards expected for commercial premises.
- Integrity/Use – Corner Building No. 1 is believed to have been constructed as a hardware warehouse and was used for this purpose from approx. 1948 through to 1973 when it was purchased by the Slow Learning Children’s Group of Western Australia (now Activ Industries) and converted for use as a training workshop and later a Thrift Shop. The place is currently used as a Surf Museum.
- Authenticity –Corner Building No. 1 has moderate degree of authenticity. The front façade is mostly intact, although the fenestrations appear to have changed over the last few decades and the interior finishes have been modified. The roof structure appears to be intact, although the suspended ceilings are intrusive and the current roof cladding is a more recent replacement. The overall building footprint has been reduced substantially from the early/original with the removal of a number of ancillary buildings and substantial extensions from the rear of the lot (demolished between 1996 and 2017, refer to archival aerial plans)
- Building Compliance - The existing Corner Building No. 1 has inherent construction compliance issues including lack of accessibility, low standard amenities and insufficient structural performance to meet current codes. Any modifications to the building will require the compliance issues to be addressed, so it is proposed to replace the majority of the fabric to achieve two stories and three separate commercial tenancies within the existing footprint.
- Aesthetic Values - Corner Building No. 1 has limited aesthetic value or design integrity, but has a distinctive skyline and curved corner form, both of which will be retained with the proposed modifications to the building. The existing fenestrations are poorly conceived in the overall façade design, and the new door and window openings are intended to better represent the characteristics of the Art Deco/Functionalist style this building aimed to imitate. The existing bull-nosed verandah is intrusive to the aesthetic values of the place and will be replaced with a new canopy that is more consistent with post-war buildings.
- Landmark values – Corner Building No. 1 is identified as being a landmark on the corner of Frederick Street and Spencer Street by virtue of its elevated setting and prominent site location. These landmark qualities will be retained and enhanced with the improved streetscape presentation.

- Rarity – Corner Building No. 1 is noted in the Statement of Significance as having some rarity in being an uncommon industrial/commercial building located in the historic town centre and for being a “relatively rare (albeit late) example of Inter-War Functionalist style in Albany”. Albany once featured a number of substantial industrial buildings within the town centre, particularly in this part of town which was dominated by warehouses associated with the port and railway activities, particularly shipping merchants, engineering companies, etc. Significant examples including the former vehicle workshops of Smith Motor Co (lower Stirling Terrace), Manley’s Motor & Engineering Works (Frederick Street), Dalgety & Co warehouses (Proudlove Parade), Cowen’s Buildings (Lower Stirling Terrace) etc. Further to the west, but still well within the town centre was the substantial Albany Woollen Mills complex of industrial buildings. It would perhaps be more accurate to describe the place as representative of a range of commercial and industrial buildings located in close proximity to the main port and rail activities of Albany, not a rare example. Similarly, the place was constructed too late to be considered Inter-war, and is better described as Post-War Functionalist. Other examples of this style in Albany include the Albany Fire Station & Fire Officer’s House and the Woollen Mills (and associated worker houses located in Mill Street).
- Historic value- Corner Building No. 1 has identified historic value for its association with the post-war building boom that came after the period of shortages during the Second World War, and also for its association with local builder and timber merchant, Neville Reeves. Neither of these values are necessarily evident in the fabric and further interpretation would assist in expressing these historic values. The buildings have already been significantly altered since Reeves sold the buildings in 1956 and no longer demonstrate their original use or historic associations.

Commercial Building No. 2

It is proposed to undertake minor modifications and upgrades to this Commercial Building to adapt it to modern standards for commercial premises. The building has been modified and extended multiple times over its lifespan, and it is proposed to demolish a small portion to the rear of the building, reducing its overall footprint.

- Aesthetic value - The Place Record Form makes no mention of any of the physical characteristics of this building other than noting that the vertical fins on the façade of the curved building are repeated on this one. It is not proposed to alter the fins or the external expression of the building, other than to remove the intrusive bull-nosed verandah and replace it with an awning that more closely interprets the Interwar Functionalist style. The distinctive façade and saw-tooth roof form will both be retained as key features of the place.
- Historic value – The Place Record Form notes that this building was likely the “main office and retail shop”. It is likely that the place will continue to operate with this function.
- Condition – This building is currently in fair/good condition having benefited from a roof replacement. The new works will likely improve the condition of the building, and will allow for intrusive accretions and elements of little significance to be removed.
- Integrity/Authenticity – the existing building has variable authenticity, having been constructed over multiple construction phases, with resultant changes in form and fabric. The major changes to the form pre-date the current proposed development and it is anticipated that the removal of fabric will not have a strong impact on reducing integrity or authenticity.

Conclusion:

Demolition and modification of portions of *Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware* will have some negative impacts on the authenticity of the place but will generally not negatively impact its identified heritage values and will greatly improve the amenity, aesthetic presentation and functionality of the building for its future.

If modification is considered acceptable, it is recommended that the following approach is considered to mitigate any negative heritage impacts:

- Preparation of an Archival Record of both buildings
- Consideration for salvage and re-use of early/original building fabric, particularly hardwood timber.

Overall, the adaptive re-use of *Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware* will include conservation works as well as new building works to allow the buildings to be used as commercial tenancies. The proposed modifications are considered to support the compatible use of the place and are in accordance with Burra Charter principles.

References:

Reeves Timber Yard & Hardware Place Record Form, City of Albany Survey of Heritage Places, supplied by City of Albany, dated 2020

Heritage Report prepared by Hocking Planning & Architecture, dated 7.10.2010, prepared on behalf of Activ Industries for Lot 14 Spencer Street, Albany

Archival aerial plans and photographs as sourced by H+H Architects

Archival photographs and illustrations as published in *Old Albany, photographs 1850-1950*, by John Dowson, published by ACCI 2008.