

10 January 2025

Hon Dale Last MP  
Chair of Resources Cabinet Committee  
Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for  
Regional and Rural Development  
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### **Resources Cabinet Committee - Streamlining Development Approvals for Quarries**

Dear Minister Last

Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia (CCAA) welcomes the new Resources Cabinet Committee's focus on solutions that will streamline development approvals for the resources sector, and requests the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the issues outlined below.

As the voice of the heavy construction materials industry in Australia, CCAA calls for the Resources Cabinet Committee to consider issues associated with the quarry approvals process, as stone, sand and gravel are essential materials in the broader resources sector. These materials can be considered as 'minerals for cities'.

CCAA members operate cement manufacturing and distribution facilities, concrete batching plants, hard rock quarries and sand and gravel extraction operations throughout the nation. CCAA members produce the majority of Australia's cement, concrete & aggregates, through companies ranging in size from large global entities to SMEs and family operated businesses.

Heavy construction materials are vital to delivering the transport, energy, water, housing, defence, and social infrastructure required to support Australia's built economy, generating over \$15 Billion in annual revenue and employing 30,000 Australians directly and a further 80,000 indirectly.

CCAA wishes to emphasise the critical need for reforming the development approval processes for quarries in Queensland and to advocate for the development of a comprehensive **Heavy Construction Materials Plan (HCMP)**. These measures are vital for ensuring the sustainable and affordable supply of essential construction materials required to support Queensland's growth and the successful delivery of the Brisbane 2032 Olympics.

As Queensland prepares for an unprecedented number of infrastructure projects, including those related to the Brisbane 2032 Olympics, the heavy construction materials industry will play a critical role in ensuring the sustainable and cost-effective delivery of these projects.

[Oxford Economics](#) forecasts that direct investment for the Brisbane Olympics alone will exceed \$10 billion, with intense competition for resources expected. Oxford Economics has warned that this could lead to resource reallocation, impacting supply capacity and potentially driving cost escalation.

As highlighted in CCAA's [2024 Queensland Election Policy Priorities – Delivering the Sustainable Supply of Heavy Construction Materials](#), the unprecedented pipeline of infrastructure projects, including Olympic venues, transport networks, housing developments, and renewable energy projects, will drive unprecedented demand for heavy construction materials such as sand, hard rock, and cement.

The recent work by the Department of Natural Resources & Mines in quantifying the [demand:supply risks](#) indicates a significant increase in demand for heavy construction materials across all sectors in all regions across Queensland.

Addressing supply chain challenges now will mitigate affordability risks and ensure project deliverability into the future.

### **The Role of Heavy Construction Materials**

Heavy construction materials are fundamental to infrastructure development, accounting for approximately **30% of total project costs**. For example:

- **Highways** require 14,000 tonnes of stone and sand per kilometre.
- **High-rise buildings** consume up to 1,000 tonnes of aggregates per floor.
- **The average home** utilises 110 tonnes of stone and sand, over 50m<sup>3</sup> of concrete and over 10 tonnes of cementitious product (cement, fly ash and slag).
- **Wind turbine towers** each require up to 1000 m<sup>3</sup> of concrete and 350kg of cementitious product.

The scale of demand in the lead-up to the Olympics and beyond underscores the urgency of streamlining approvals and protecting resources to secure a stable, cost-effective supply chain.

### **Challenges in the Current System**

Despite the strategic importance of quarry operations, Queensland's approval processes remain cumbersome and fragmented. Companies often face excessive delays, typically no less than 3 years for simple changes to operating conditions and up to 10 years for access to new rock reserves. These delays are due to overlapping regulations and inconsistent local government policies, leading to abandoned investments and constrained material supply.

There are many recent examples and CCAA would be happy to provide further detail if required.

These barriers were identified in Infrastructure Australia's [2023 Market Capacity Report](#), which warned that supply shortages threaten the affordability and deliverability of major public infrastructure projects, especially in South East Queensland. Additionally, transporting materials over long distances to compensate for local supply gaps increases costs and emissions, further undermining project sustainability.

Likewise the IA [2024 Market Capacity Report](#) highlights that the Queensland infrastructure pipeline will grow by \$16bn, which could intensify local supply constraints around heavy construction materials, and which may pose substantial challenges for project delivery and meeting infrastructure goals.

## Proposed Solutions

CCAA strongly recommends the Queensland Government **develop a Heavy Construction Materials Plan** for Queensland. Building on the priorities outlined in CCAA's *2024 Queensland Election Policy Priorities*, a HCMP would ensure a coordinated and sustainable approach to material supply. This plan should include:

- **Detailed Supply and Demand Analysis:** Quantifying current reserves and projecting future needs to guide resource planning and identifying barriers that restrict an increase in supply.
- **Strengthened Protections for Key Resource Areas (KRAs):** Safeguarding resources from urban encroachment to ensure long-term accessibility.
- **Streamline Approval Processes:** Simplify and harmonise regulatory frameworks across federal, state and local governments to reduce delays and bring new resources to market efficiently.
- **Introduce a Quarry Approvals Coordinator Function:** Following the success of similar models in [Victoria](#), establish a dedicated senior role within Government to act as a single point of contact for quarry approvals, ensuring timely and coordinated decision-making.
- **Support for Sustainable Practices:** Encouraging the use of lower-carbon materials (Fly ash, Slag, Limestone and the like) and circular economy principles in construction projects.

## Aligning with Queensland's Sustainability Goals

In addition to meeting supply needs, these measures align with the Queensland Government's commitment to sustainability and net zero emissions by 2050. A HCMP would support the delivery of lower-carbon solutions by enabling increased use of low carbon concretes, together with growing the supply of local materials, reducing emissions from transportation, and fostering innovation in sustainable construction practices.

CCAA's [Heavy Construction Industry's Climate Ambition Statement](#) and the [Industry Decarbonisation Pathways Report](#) released in 2021, outline the industry's commitment to work towards decarbonisation throughout the value chain, and emphasises that achieving these significant decarbonisation objectives can only be achieved through collaboration.

In late 2024, the [Cement & Concrete Industry Decarbonisation Facilitation Plan](#) was also released. This provides more detail on the pathway strategies needed to decarbonise Australia's built environment.

Establishing public procurement practices that reflect government policies on reducing emissions through the use of low carbon embodied materials and encouraging the circular economy is a critical enabler to achieve our collective net zero goal.

## Conclusion

Developing a Heavy Construction Materials Plan for Queensland and streamlining quarry approval processes are essential steps to securing the State's infrastructure future. These initiatives will ensure the efficient and affordable delivery of projects, including the Brisbane 2032 Olympics, while supporting Queensland's economic growth and sustainability goals.

CCAA stands ready to assist the Queensland Government in addressing these challenges and developing practical solutions. We would be happy to meet with you and the Resources Cabinet Committee to discuss these matters.

Should you wish to discuss these issues further, please contact Roger Buckley at  
E:[roger.buckley@ccaa.com.au](mailto:roger.buckley@ccaa.com.au).

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely

MICHAEL KILGARIFF  
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