



# Affordable & Sustainable Infrastructure for NSW

**15th Annual NSW Major Projects Conference | ICC Sydney | 3–4 Sept 2025**  
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Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia



# About CCAA

**Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia is the voice of the heavy construction materials industry in Australia.**

CCAA membership supply around 90% Australia's cement, concrete & aggregates used to build infrastructure.

The industry generates approximately \$15 Billion in annual revenues and employs approximately 30,000 Australians directly and a further 80,000 indirectly.



# Foundation Members





# Members





# Associate Members



# Summary



## The Australian Cement and Concrete Sector – Key Facts

**5** Integrated cement plants in Australia which produce clinker and cement as a continuous process.

**60%** of the cement manufactured in Australia is produced in integrated manufacturing plants

**40%** of cement involves the use of clinker which is imported and manufactured into cement at grinding facilities located around Australia's coastline

**30 million m<sup>3</sup>** ready-mixed concrete produced annually in more than 1,500 batching plants across Australia

**40%** of all concrete is used for infrastructure projects

**30%** of all concrete is used for commercial and non-residential buildings

**30%** of all concrete is used for housing

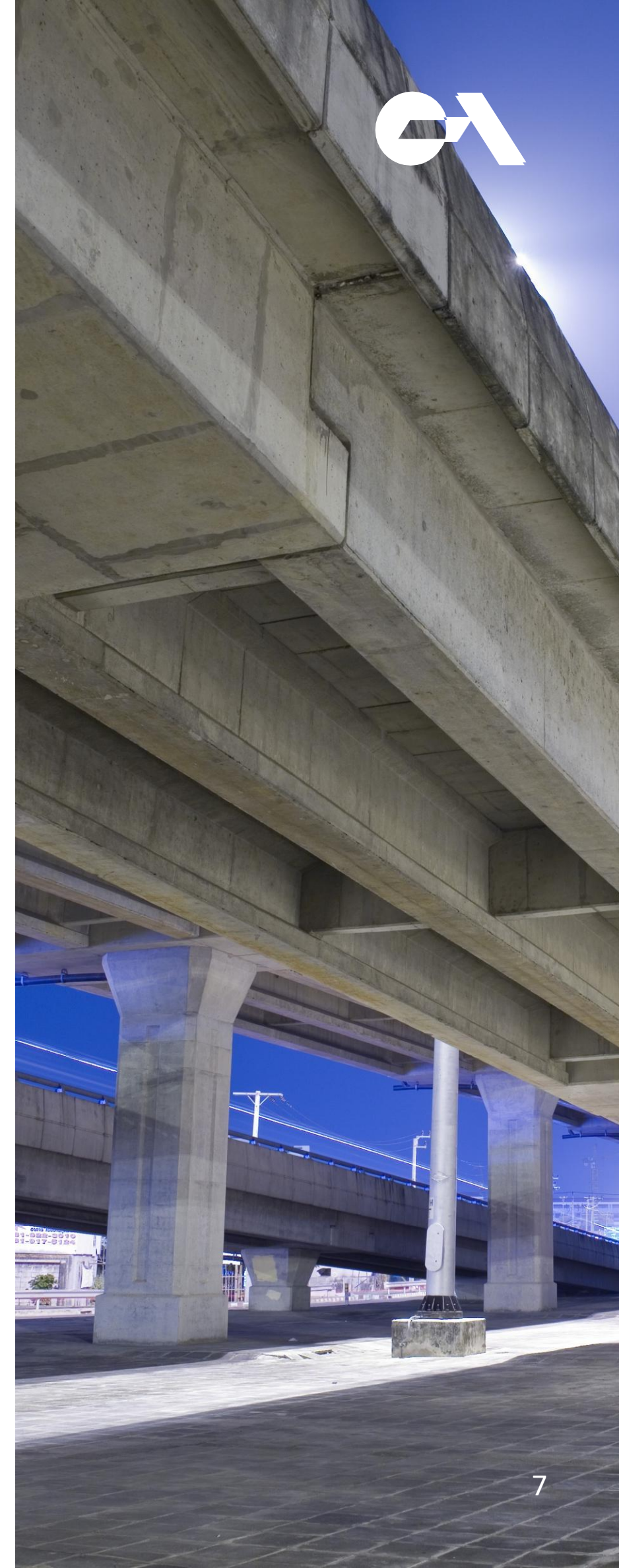
**80,000** people are indirectly employed in the whole cement, concrete and aggregate sector, compared to 30,000 who are directly employed

**A\$15 billion** revenue is generated by the cement and concrete sector



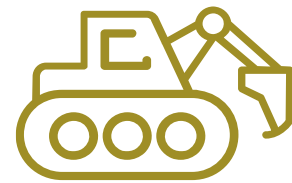
# Infrastructure Australia Market Capacity Report

- “demand for building materials, skills, and labour is at a historic high”
- “increasingly difficult to source key building materials and workers”
- “limited access to local steel and cement, as well as localised shortages of quarry products is contributing to price uncertainty in the supply chain, leading to delays and cost overruns”
- “acute quarry shortages loom in Melbourne, NSW’s Mid North Coast and South East Queensland”





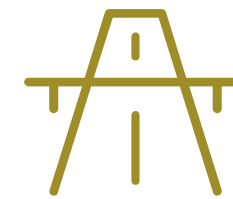
# Extractives are critical to affordability...



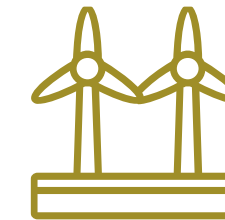
**EVERY AUSTRALIAN** needs **8 TONNES** per year of stone, sand, gravel and cement to build the roads, houses and other infrastructure



**HIGH RISE BUILDINGS** use up to **1,000 TONNES** of aggregate per floor



**HIGHWAYS** use **14,000 TONNES** of aggregate per km



**WIND FARMS** use up to **1000m<sup>3</sup>** of concrete per tower



**AVERAGE NEW HOME** uses **110 TONNES** of aggregate and over **50m<sup>3</sup>** of concrete.



**CAPABLE LOCAL SUPPLY CHAIN**  
Local industry, supporting local jobs on local projects in their local communities.

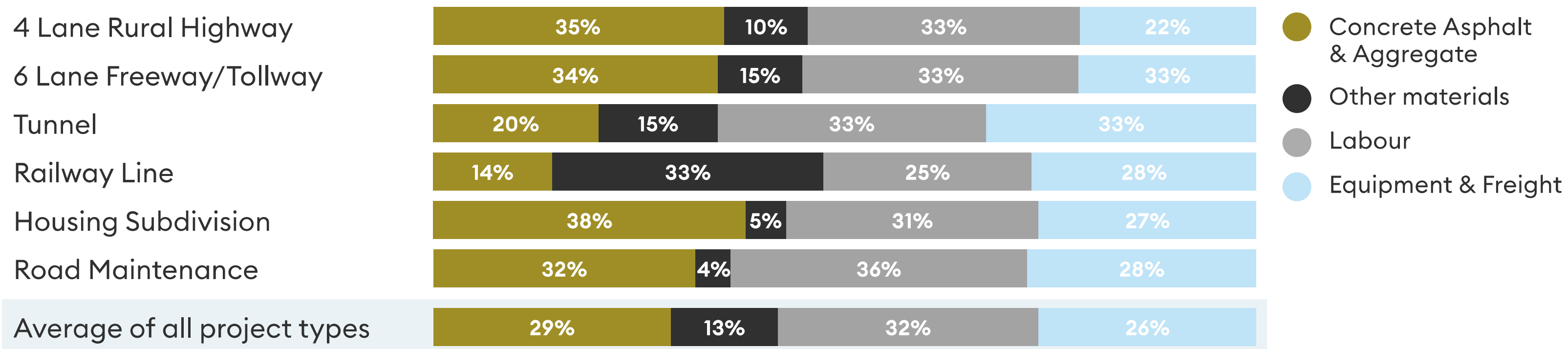


**HEAVY CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS** average **29% OF PROJECT COST**



# Extractives are critical to affordability...

## ESTIMATED PROPORTIONS OF TOTAL PROJECT COSTS BY TYPE OF PROJECT

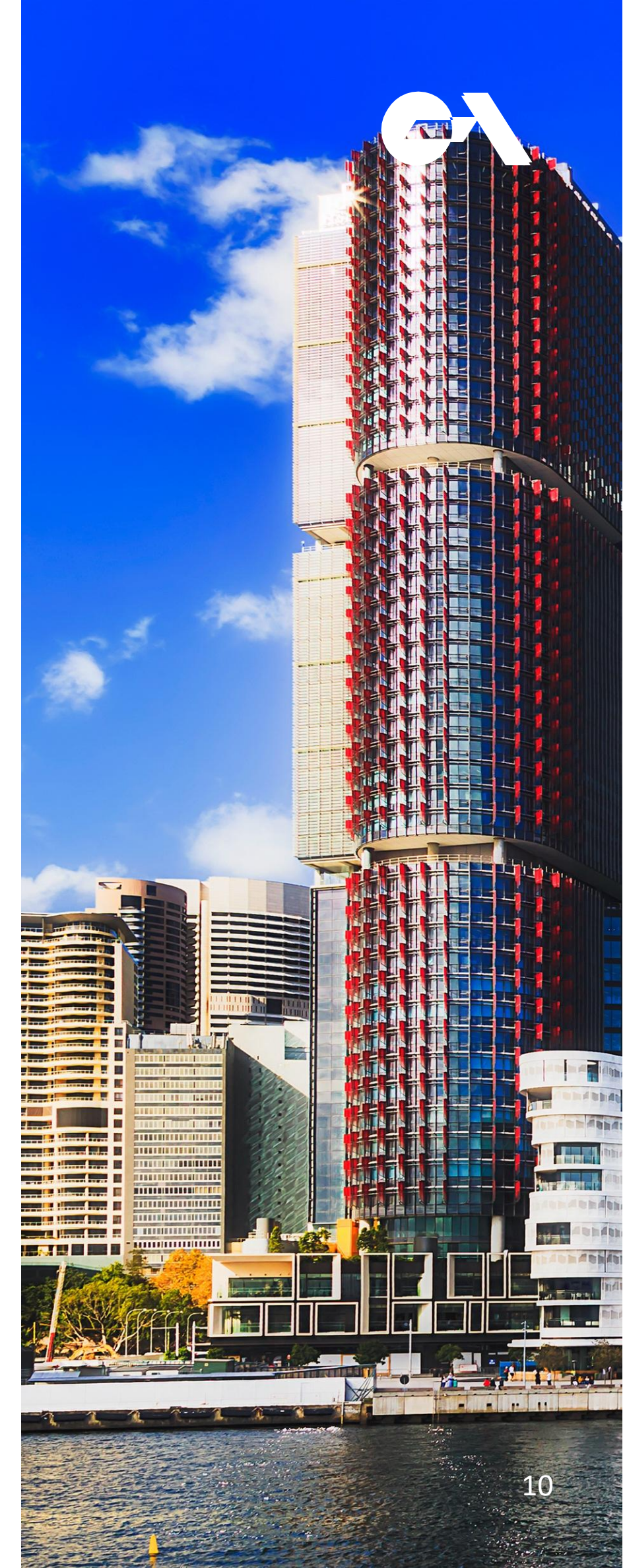


Source: Macromonitors (2022)

Percentage of total costs

# NSW Infrastructure Outlook

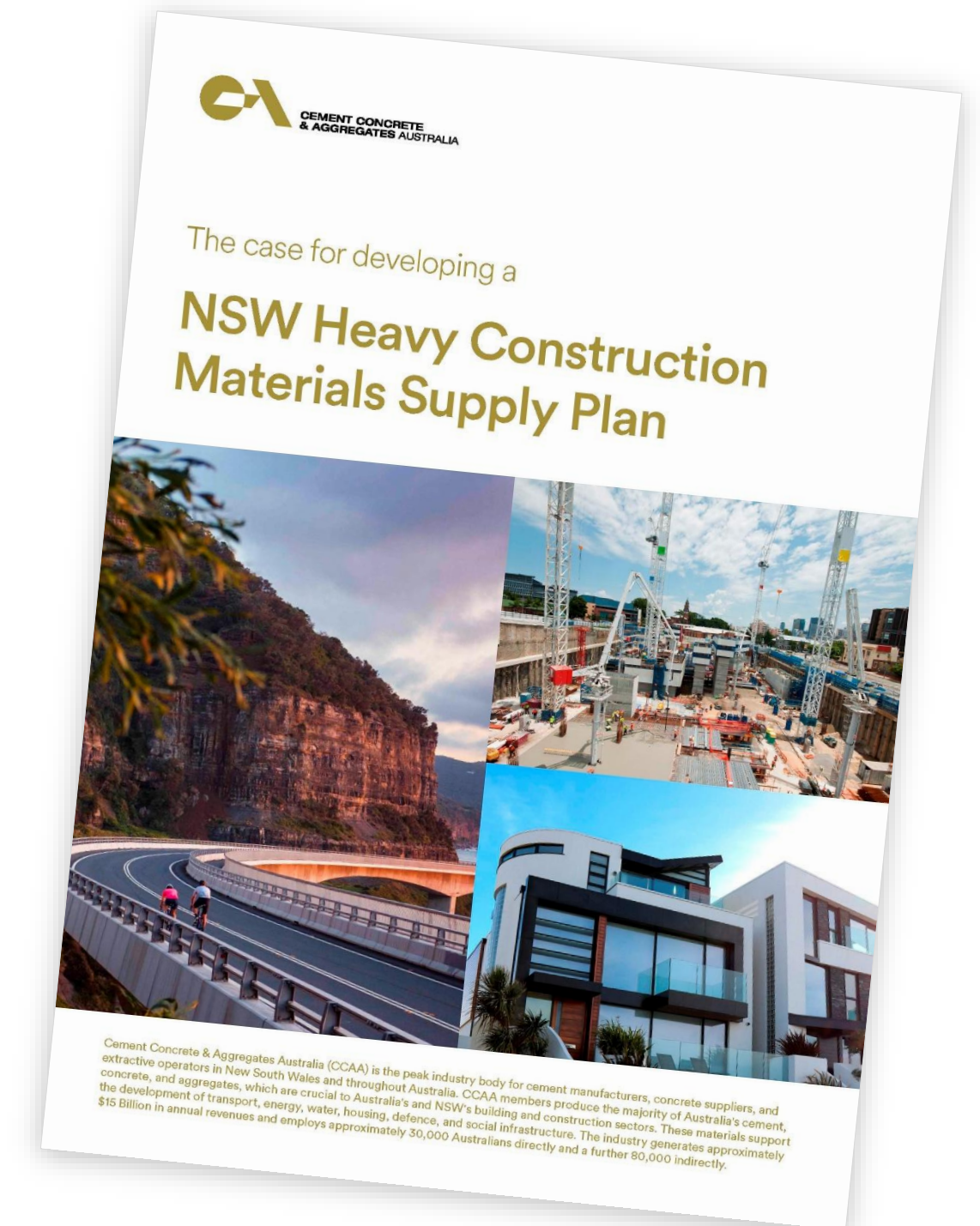
- \$119.4 billion infrastructure commitment by NSW Government
- Major pipeline: housing, health, transport, energy, urban renewal
- Rising demand for building materials, skills, and labour
- Shortages emerging in key inputs – cement, quarry products, sand



# NSW needs a Heavy Construction Materials Plan

## Why?

- A plan for infrastructure, housing, energy, transport, etc....but no plan for the building blocks needed to deliver these essential projects that drive our economy
- Natural sand reserves set to run out around 2030
- Travel distances growing.... Increasing costs, embedded carbon & requiring more trucks and drivers
- Shortages of quarry products in NSW mid north coast
- Housing development around quarries and transport corridors restricts approvals





# What Should a Heavy Construction Materials Plan Include?

- Protect extractive resources from urban encroachment
- Map and safeguard key freight routes for materials
- Review quarry licensing and approvals for efficiency
- Provide industrial land for concrete batch plants
- Facilitate circular economy – End of Waste Codes for concrete
- Commit to deliver plan by end of 2025



# NSW Biodiversity Regulation & Federal Nature Positive Reforms



# NSW Biodiversity Regulation: Context

- NSW reviewing Biodiversity Conservation Regulation 2017
- Aim: strengthen 'avoid, minimise, offset' framework
- Considers *Serious and Irreversible Impacts (SAIL)*
- Quarry approvals hampered by offset costs & regulatory complexity

# Key Issues for Extractive Industries

- Rehabilitation often not recognised as offsets → industry 'pays twice'
- Limited offset credit availability makes new quarries unviable
- CCAA members face critical sand shortages in Greater Sydney (reserves depleted ~2030)
- Offset land costs (\$1–2m/ha) make Sydney Basin projects prohibitive
- Risk: insufficient supply for housing, transport & energy infrastructure



# CCAA Recommendations for NSW

- Recognise quarry rehabilitation as valid offsets
- Apply flexible offset rules in strategic growth corridors
- Enable equivalence & broaden offset trading groups
- Support precinct-based offsets for clustered quarries
- Allow unrestricted use of Biodiversity Conservation Fund



# Serious and Irreversible Impacts Reform

- NSW committed to 377,000 new homes by 2029
  - Material supply at risk without regulatory reform
- SAI Draft Guidance issues:
  - Inconsistent application across agencies
- CCAA calls for:
  - Clearer definitions of SAI
  - Alignment with Biodiversity Conservation Regulation
  - Balanced approach to protect biodiversity & enable housing delivery



# Federal 'Nature Positive' Reforms

- EPBC Act reforms underway under Nature Positive agenda
- Introduction of National Environmental Standards for biodiversity & offsets
- CCAA warns of regulatory duplication with state schemes
- Risks: longer approvals, uncertainty, higher costs



# CCAA's Approach to Federal EPBC

1. Deliver reforms as a complete package (protection + faster approvals)
2. Keep approvals with elected Ministers; EPA focuses on compliance/enforcement
3. No new 'Nature Positive' trigger duplicating state schemes
4. Open consultation on National Environmental Standards (objective, measurable)
5. Single-desk state accreditation – one coordinated approval process
6. Grandfather current EPBC approvals for certainty
7. Recognise low-carbon/recycled materials and rehabilitation
8. Regional planning to secure access to essential quarry resources


# Integrating NSW & Federal Reform

- NSW Biodiversity Regulation + Federal Nature Positive must align
- Priorities:
  - Streamlined approvals
  - Recognition of rehabilitation
  - Clear offset pathways
  - Proximate supply of construction materials
- Goal: affordable infrastructure & housing + credible biodiversity gains



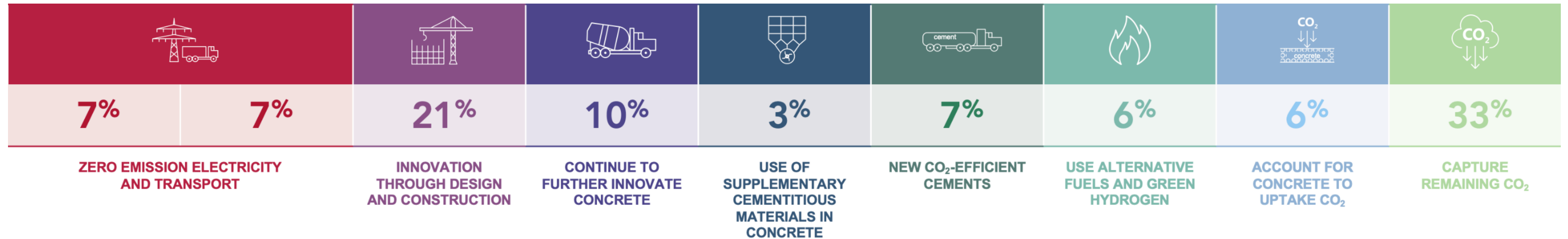
# Decarbonisation

## Key Ingredients:

- Cement & Concrete Industry Decarbonisation Plan 
- NSW Govt. Sustainable Procurement Policies 
- Changes to Australian Standards and agency specifications 

# Decarbonisation

## Cement & Concrete Industry Decarbonisation Pathways Report



This independent report was released in 2021, following the Australian cement and concrete industry declaring its ambition to deliver net zero carbon cement & concrete by 2050.

The new report enables a better understanding of the technologies and practices necessary to decarbonise Australian cement and concrete, and identifies eight decarbonisation pathways and key future research requirements.

# Decarbonisation

## INSW & TfNSW Sustainable Procurement Policies:



- Lifecycle carbon approach strongly supported
- Recognition of need to change specifications
- Metrics to recognise EPDs

# Decarbonisation

## Changing Australian Standards and TfNSW Concrete Specifications

- Time to change is years..... Must prioritise this work NOW!
- Many specs limit use of SCMs through testing regimes etc.
- Cement Standard AS3972, significantly limits lower carbon cement options for cement and cementitious materials.
- .... Opportunity for TfNSW to adopt international standards & lead other state and territory infrastructure agencies.



Turning policy into practice:  
Delivering sustainable infrastructure  
through low-carbon concrete.



# Australian Adaptation of GCCA Low Carbon Concrete Rating System

- Based on Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA) AA–G embodied carbon banding scale
- Calibrated for Australian standards, data & practice
- Transparent carbon rating (kg CO<sub>2</sub>-e/m<sup>3</sup>)
- Built on verified Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs)
- Recognises the Materials & Embodied Carbon Leaders' Alliance (MECLA) model as industry precursor



# Policy Alignment & Procurement Impact

- Supports:
  - National Sustainable Procurement in Infrastructure Guideline
  - Embodied Carbon Measurement for Infrastructure: Technical Guidance
- From Jan 2025: Major projects >\$100m must apply carbon valuation
- Aligns with ITMM & ITSOC decarbonisation agenda



# Key Messages

Collaboration is key to decarbonising the built environment and achieving our industry's climate ambition

- NSW must have a Heavy construction Materials Plan
- Sustainable Procurement Policies help industry
- Must always measure lifecycle carbon
- We must act now on Australian Standards & Specifications



Thank you!

Michael Kilgariff | CEO, CCAA

[ccaa.com.au](http://ccaa.com.au)