




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 24 February 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Housing

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.44 am): Queensland's housing market is demonstrating that it is one of the leading lights in terms of our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The housing market is bouncing back, with a 2.4 per cent rebound in dwelling investment in the September 2020 quarter. Renovation activity also surged in the September quarter, surging 7.3 per cent, as Queenslanders took the opportunity to upgrade their existing homes.

Yesterday the Premier highlighted the magnetic appeal Queensland holds, drawing the vast majority of net interstate migration from across Australia. Combined with the Palaszczuk government's administration of the HomeBuilder program, our \$15,000 First Home Owners' Grant and our \$5,000 regional building boost, we have created an environment that boosts the outlook for dwelling investment, particularly for detached houses.

The fact that Queensland is outperforming New South Wales on HomeBuilder grants is testament to that confidence. According to the latest ABS data, dwelling approvals in Queensland rose 24 per cent in one month alone—December 2020—to be 83.3 per cent higher over the year. New house approvals are now more than 70 per cent higher than their pre-pandemic level in March. This rebound in approvals has been seen in regional Queensland, with Central Queensland, Townsville, Cairns and Toowoomba all experiencing strong growth in the value of building approvals.

In addition, the value of loan commitments for dwellings in Queensland rose 6.3 per cent in December 2020, to be 44.6 per cent higher over the year. Both owner-occupier finance and investor finance commitments have rebounded strongly from the downturn. The value of new loan commitments to owner-occupiers has risen 51.6 per cent above their pre-pandemic level of March 2020, to be at their highest level on record. This strength has been distributed across first home buyers and non-first home buyers.

Most importantly, the strength in these indicators has started to flow through to construction activity—and that means more jobs. The value of residential construction work in the pipeline in Queensland rose by almost a quarter of a billion dollars—\$227 million—to \$6.6 billion in the September 2020 quarter, to be 1.6 per cent higher than a year earlier. All these signs point to renewed activity in Queensland's housing market, and that means more jobs for Queenslanders. This activity has also flowed through to renewed buyer confidence. The median house price in Brisbane is 4.9 per cent higher over the year, while in regional Queensland the median house price has surged by 8.2 per cent over the year.

The COVID-19 pandemic presents one of the biggest challenges we will ever face as a state. The Queensland government has been committed to keeping Queenslanders safe and making sure our economy recovers quickly and strongly. Together, our strong employment growth and the rebound in our housing market highlight the strength of the state's economic recovery. The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to delivering our economic recovery plan to drive Queensland's economic recovery, to rebuild confidence and to create more Queensland jobs.