



TOWNSVILLE  
NORTH QUEENSLAND

# **2022/23 Q3 DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**



PREPARED BY:  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

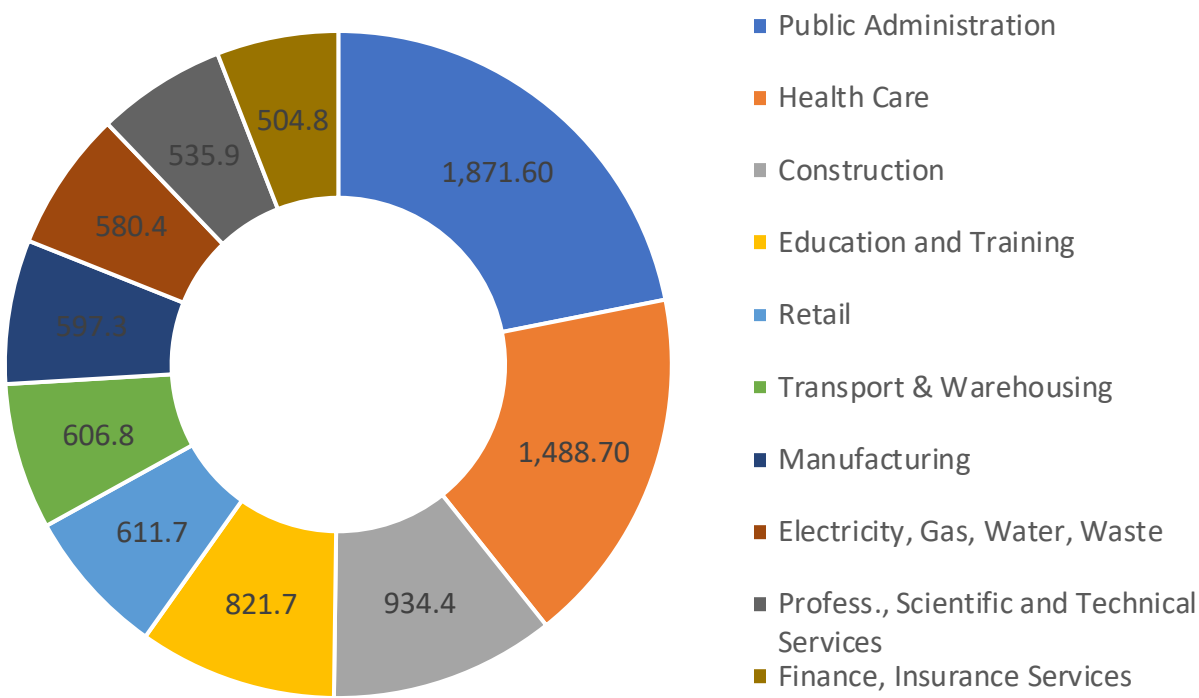


# TOWNSVILLE SNAPSHOT



## 2022/23 Q3 DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

Top 10 Industry \$m



**11,959**

LOCAL  
BUSINESSES



### VALUE OF BUILDING APPROVALS

RESIDENTIAL

**\$55M**

COMMERCIAL

**\$30M**

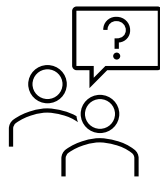


DEVELOPMENT  
APPLICATIONS  
RECEIVED

**63**

COUNCILLOR  
REQUESTS

**59**



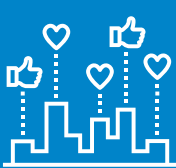
CUSTOMER  
REQUESTS

**370**

### WE ARE FOCUSING ON THREE PILLARS OF CUSTOMER SERVICE



**LISTEN &  
HEAR**  
Community  
views



**PARTNER**  
With  
Development  
Industry &  
Local Business



**IMPROVE**  
the  
**CUSTOMER**  
experience

This Development Activity Report comprises of comparative development activity data from the 2019/2020 financial year up to and including quarter 3 of the 2022/2023 financial year.

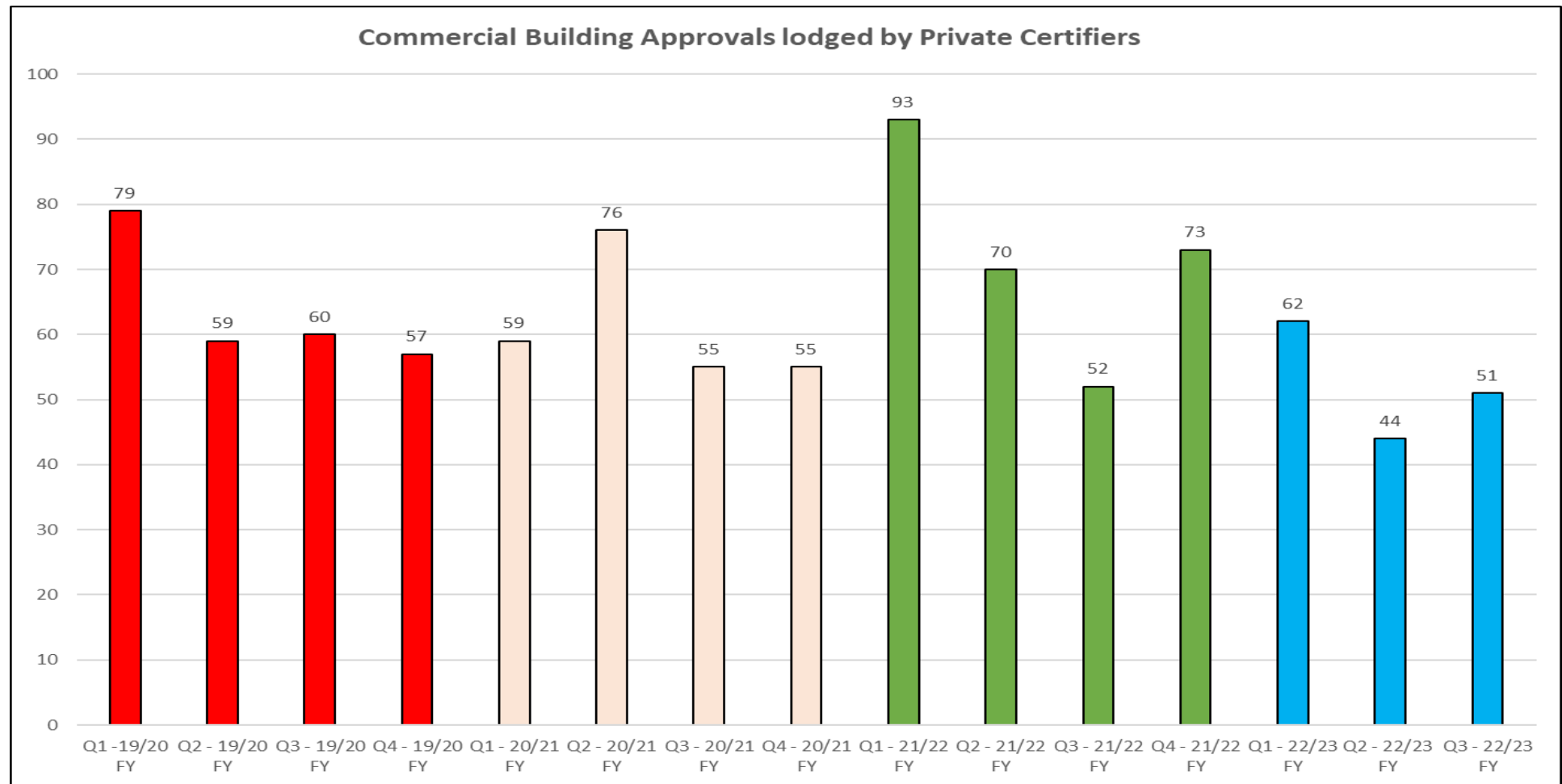
Collectively the data shows a meaningful insight into the trends and external factors that have influenced the development/construction industry throughout the period presented and how Planning and Development has responded to these challenges.

The landmark announcements from the State Government this month, will generate generational economic and social benefits for Townsville and the region.

Significant milestones:

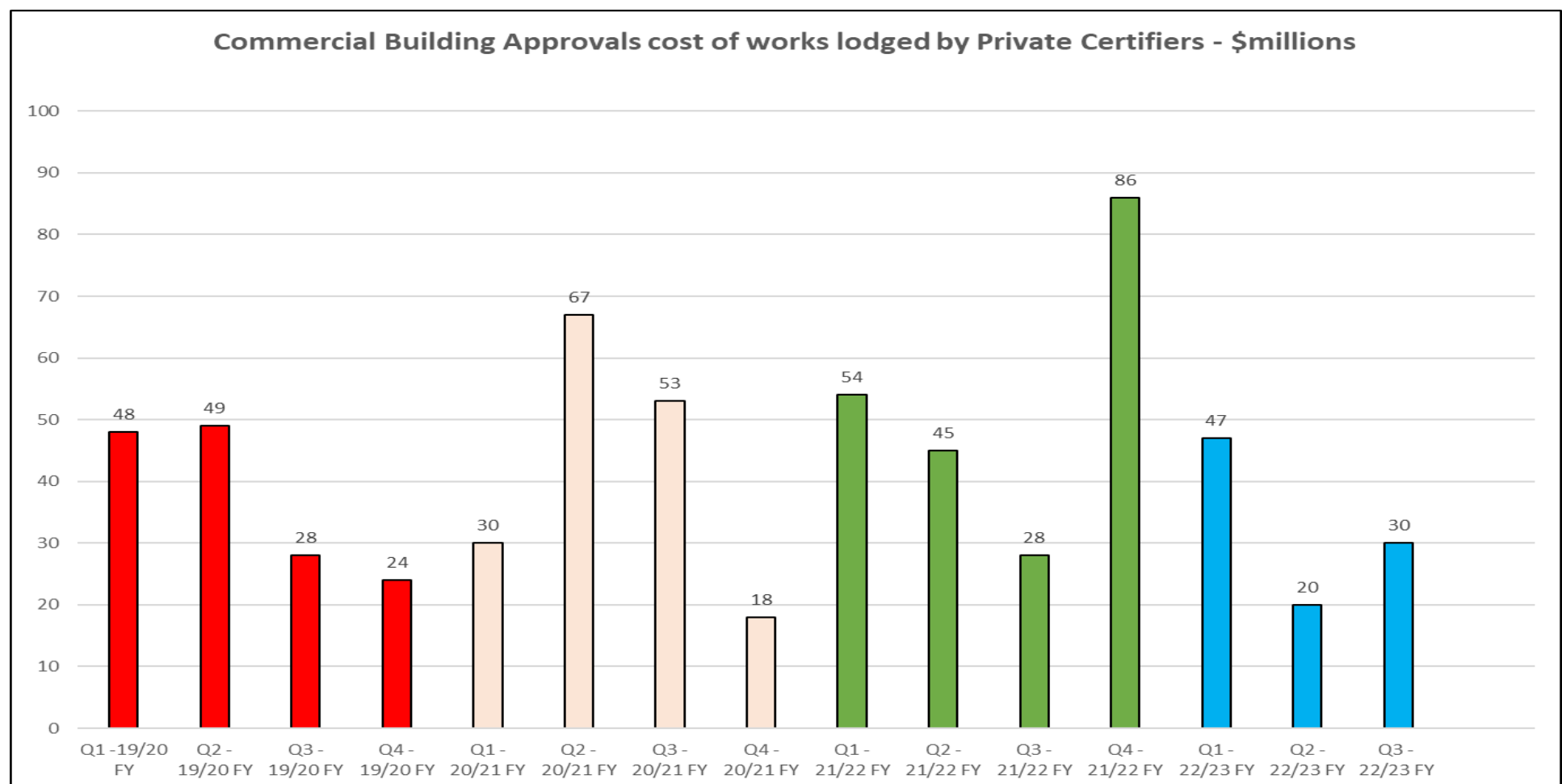
- Townsville's Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct has been declared a prescribed project to fast-track approvals;
- Queensland Pacific Metals have received Significant Investment Project status for their Townsville Energy Chemicals Hub at Lansdown;
- Construction has started on a major expansion of two new facilities at the Bohle TAFE Campus. A new \$12.5 million Renewable Energy Training Facility and a \$4.7 million Advanced Manufacturing Skills Lab;
- Queensland government commits \$5 billion to take control of and build the CopperString electricity transmission project that will expand the National Electricity Market from Townsville to Mount Isa. CopperString will sustain 20,000 existing jobs and unlock \$740 billion worth of untapped known minerals in the region. It will also unleash 33GW of green energy potential along this corridor;
- Qld Government announced a \$75m critical minerals demonstration facility at the Cleveland Bay Industrial Park;
- Vecco announced a \$26 million vanadium electrolyte manufacturing facility in Townsville. The facility will employ 21 people and produce enough electrolytes for 175 megawatt hours growing to 350 megawatt hours of storage annually;
- Townsville welcomed new airline Bonza and direct connections between Townsville Airport, the Sunshine Coast and Rockhampton;

# 1. COMMERCIAL



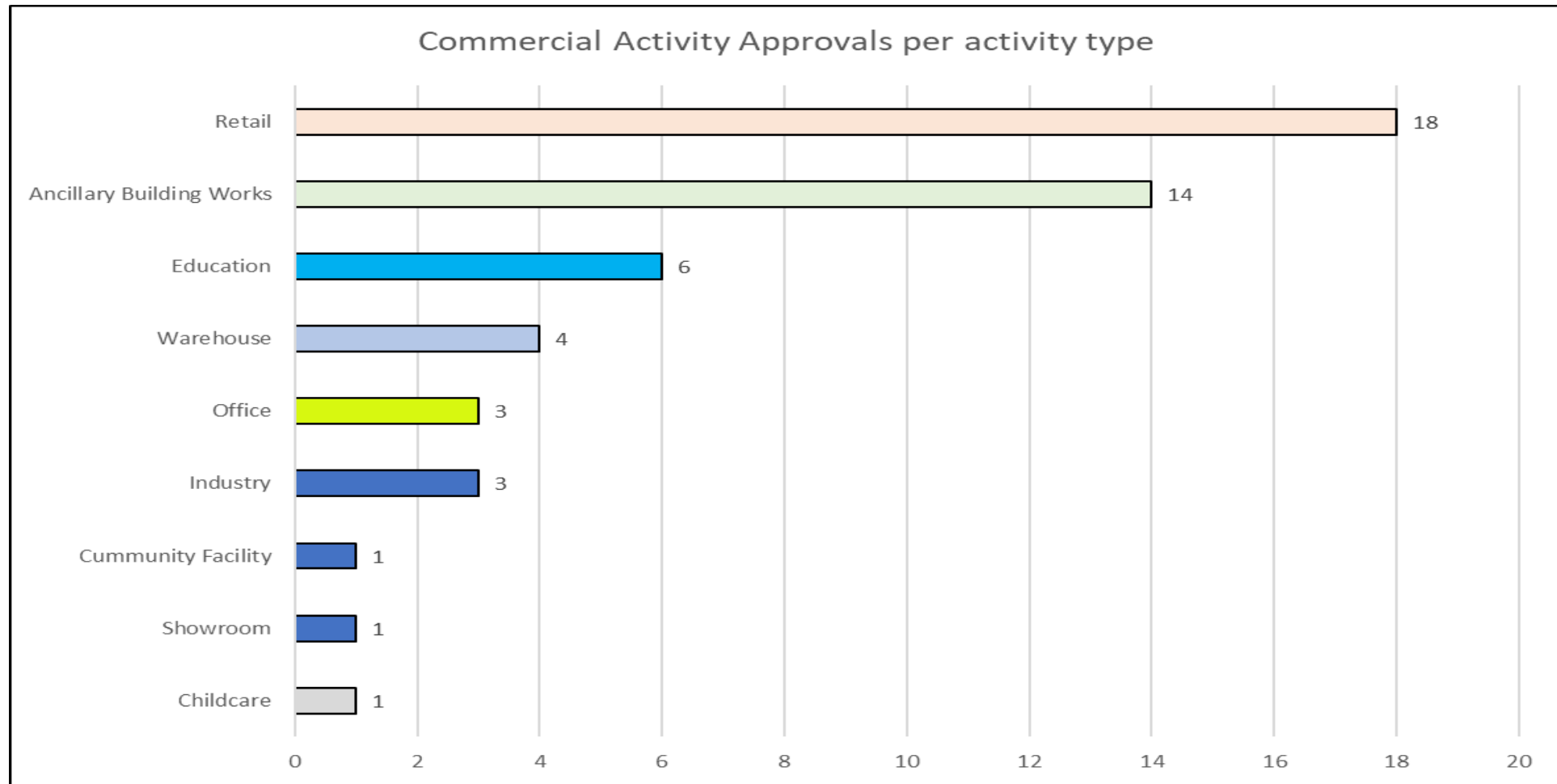
## 1.1 - Commercial building approvals

Q3 results record 51 commercial building approvals. The rolling FY average remains strong with 52 approvals per quarter. This indicates a consistent confidence in the Townsville market.



## 1.2 - Commercial building investment

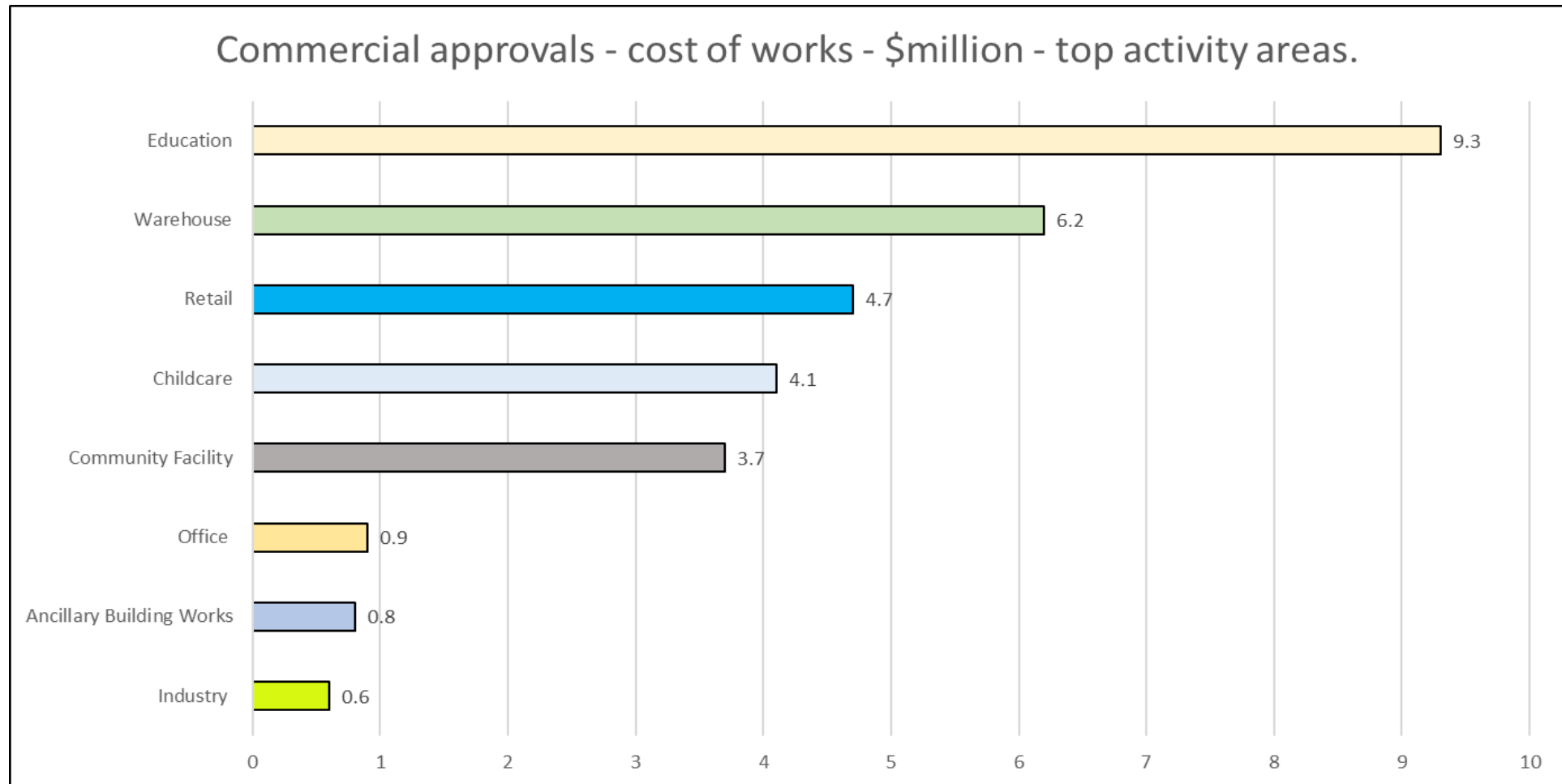
During the period, approvals show an investment into the commercial market of \$30 million and an average of \$32 million per quarter during the financial year to date.



## 1.3 - Commercial approvals per activity type

The data above represents the volume of approvals per commercial activity type. Retail and Education sectors continue to see a level of approvals which represents a significant investment in the liveability of the city.

Ancillary Building Works represents works that enhance and expand existing commercial developments.

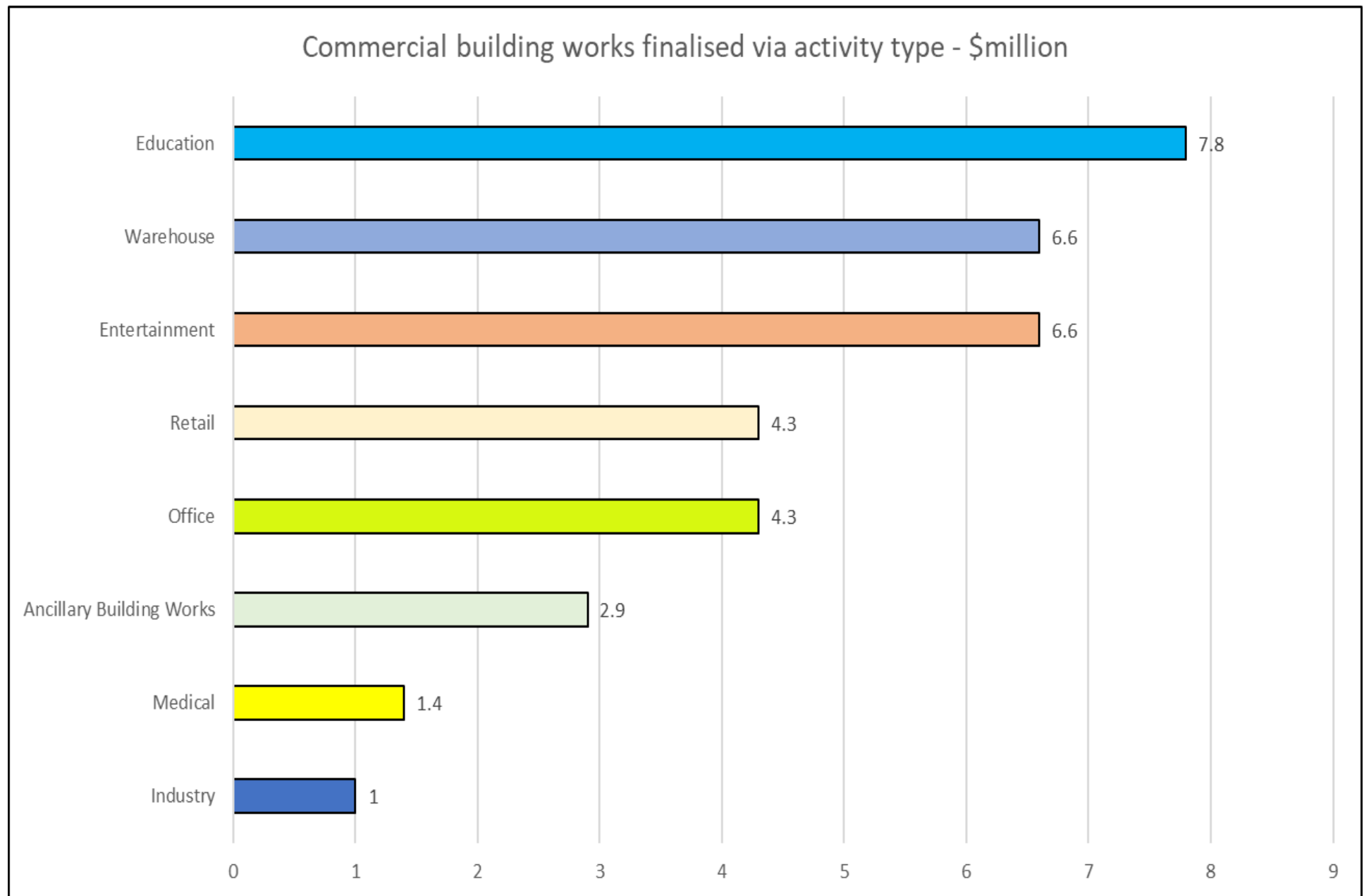


## 1.4 - Commercial approvals per activity type – cost of works

Education, warehouse development, and retail continues to attract higher investment which is an ongoing trend.

For this reporting period, the education investment has increased by some 61% in comparison to the previous quarter.

The ongoing investment in education, highlights Townsville as an established centre for education in regional Australia.



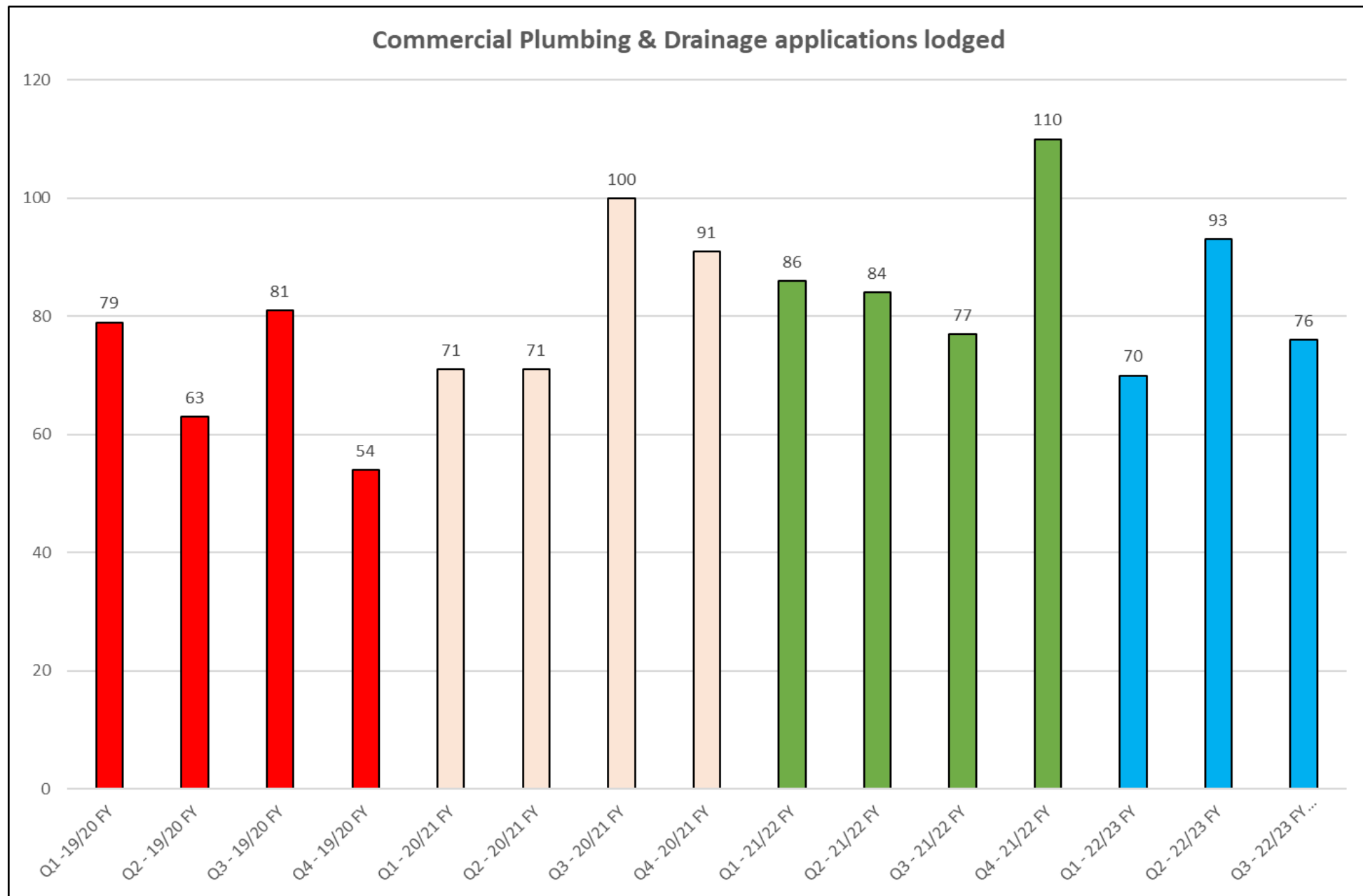
## 1.5 - Commercial building works finalised

The data shows the Commercial Building Activity Type developments that have been finalised during the reporting period.

Education and the construction of warehouses show a consistent investment to the city.

Entertainment facilities this quarter reveal the completion of a new hotel.

Ancillary Building Works represents works that enhance and expand existing commercial developments.



## 1.6 - Plumbing and Drainage applications lodged

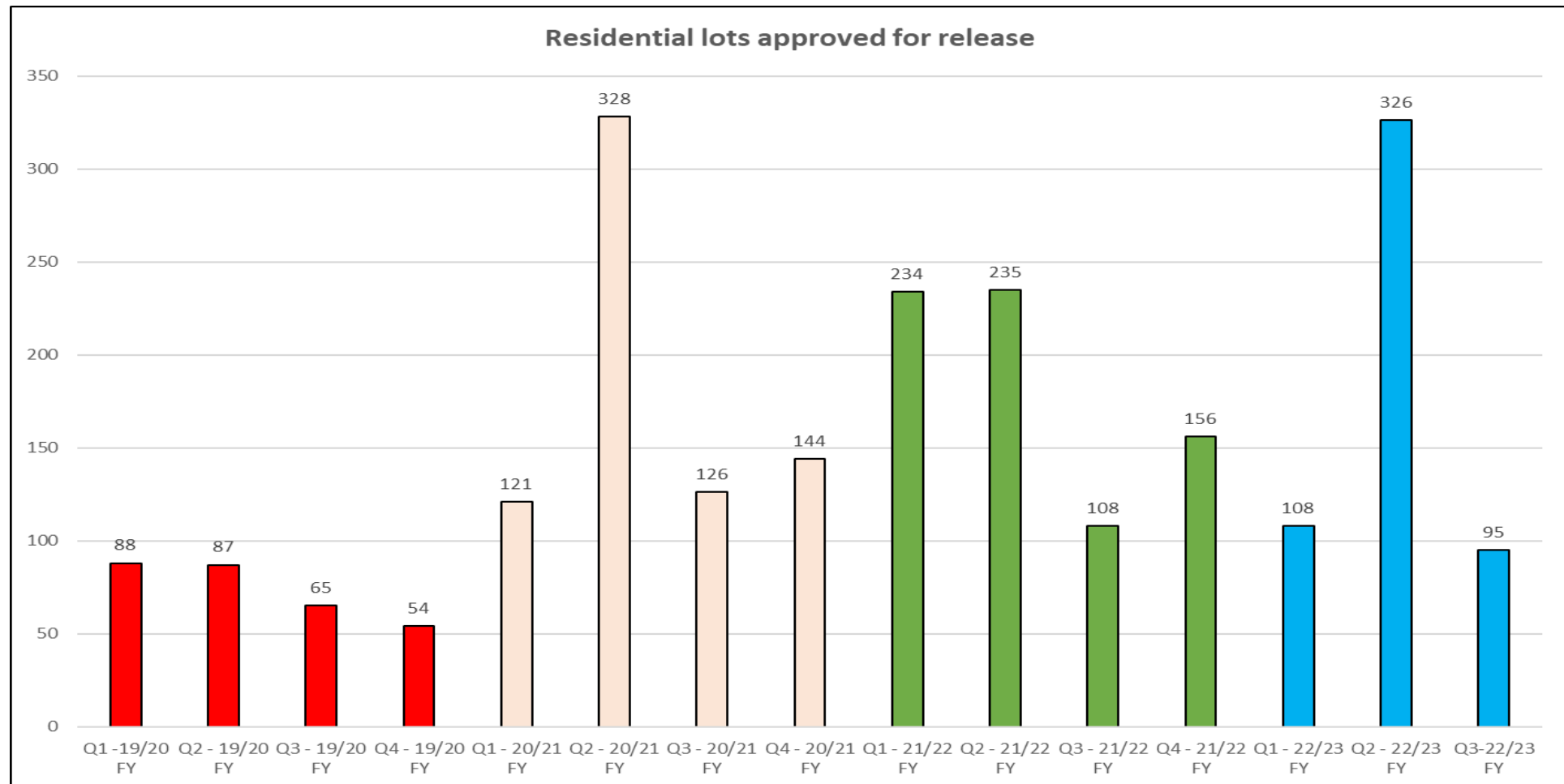
Volume of commercial plumbing and drainage applications received performed well.

This data is indicative of both new development and where existing development is being expanded and improved.

This again shows the fundamental strength of the commercial sector of the Townsville economy.



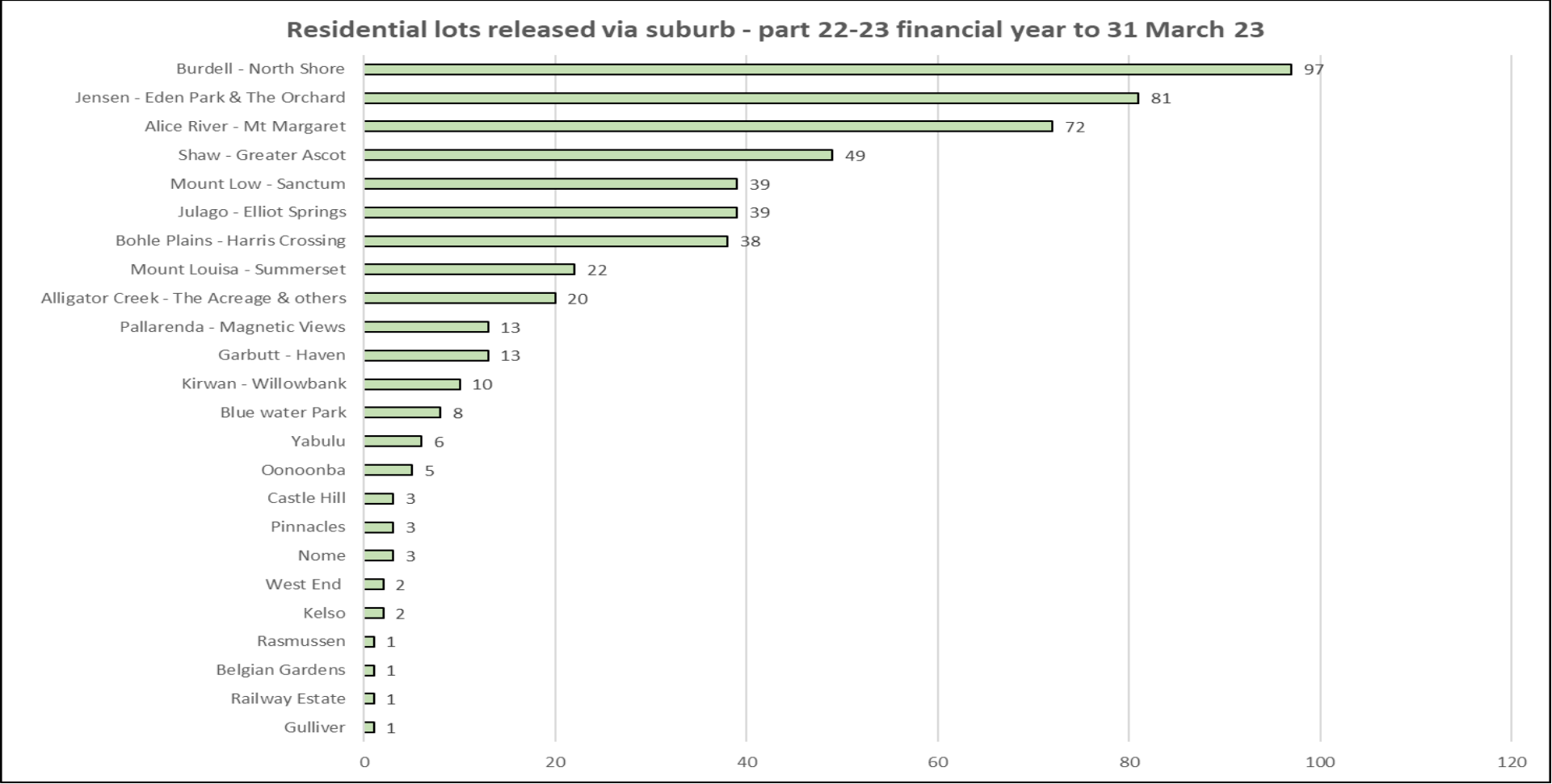
## 2. RESIDENTIAL LOTS



### 2.1 - Residential lots approved

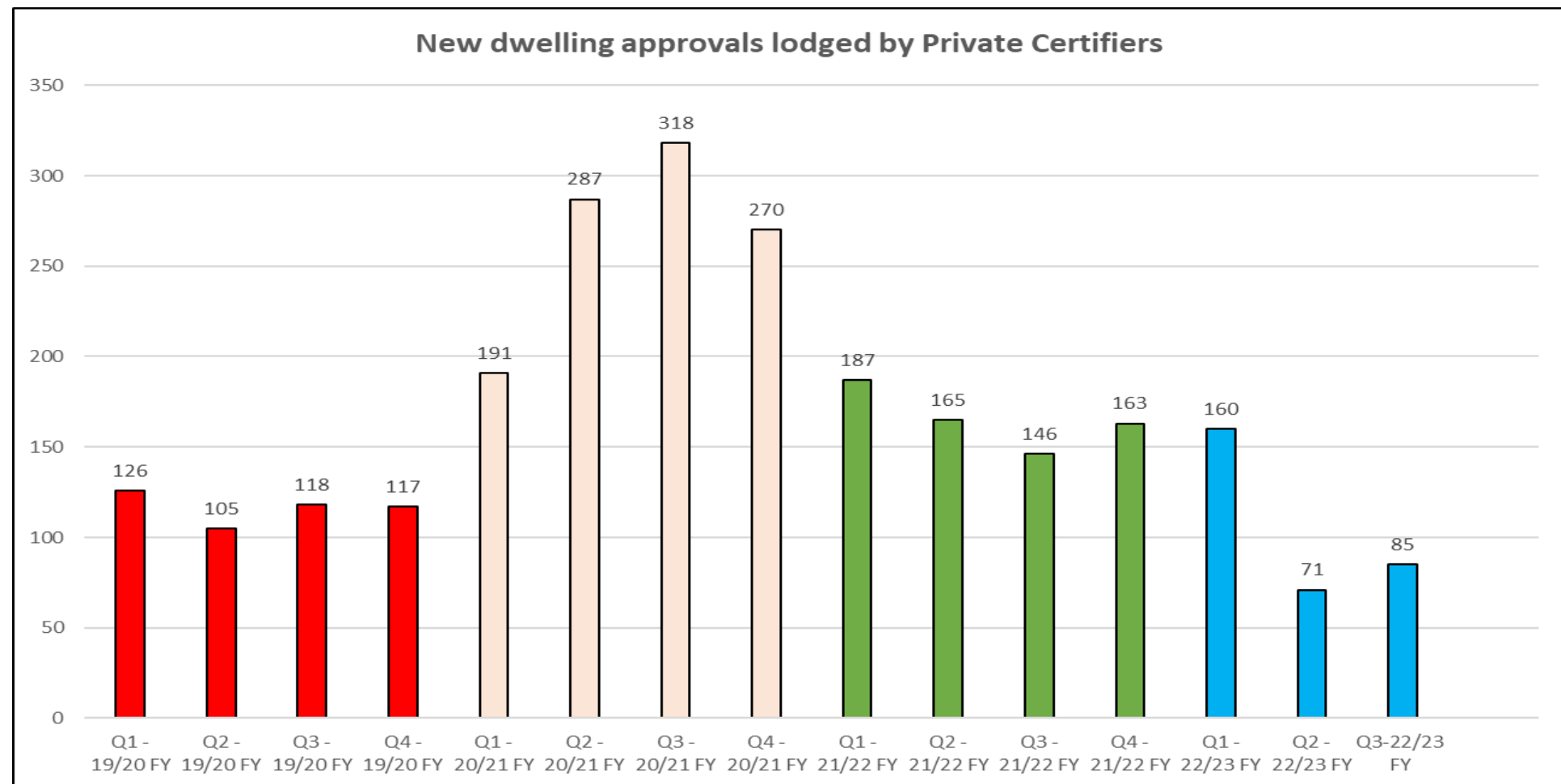
The data represents the volume of requests for council to approve residential lots.

Townsville has experienced a solid result during the 22-23 financial year. Given a similar trend leading up to the end of year result, the 22-23 financial year's approved residential lots will show a similar trend to the 20/21 & 21/22 financial years.



## 2.2 - Residential lots approved via suburb

The data shows the number of residential lots approved based on the suburb locality. Lots released show from major greenfield residential development fronts to infill developments.

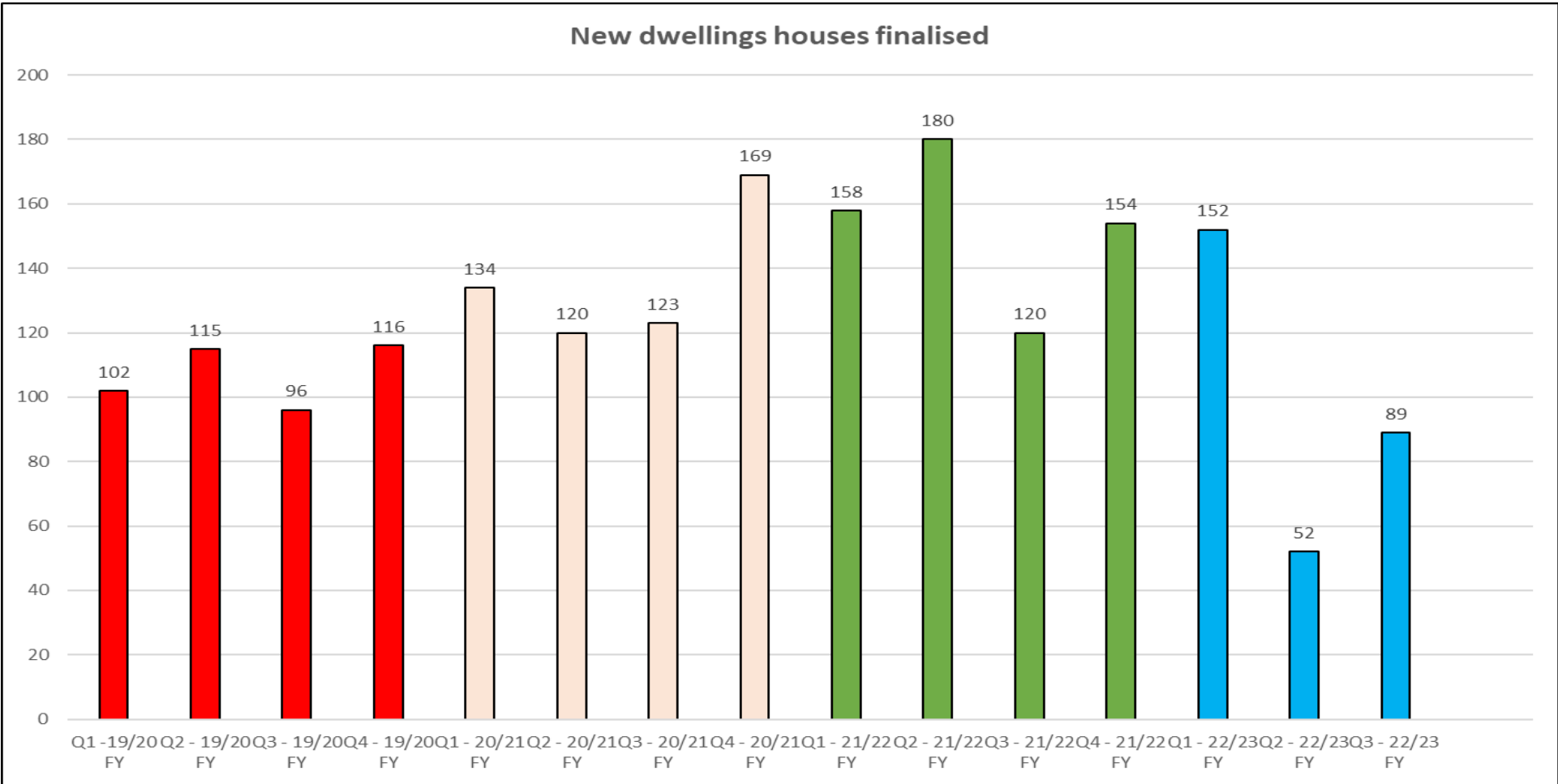


## 3.1 - New dwellings approval volumes

HIA media release of 16 March 2023 indicates the sales of new detached homes increased by some 14%, however remains exceptionally low historically.

Sales of new homes stalled late in 2022 as an adverse impact of the Reserve Banks rates increases which continue to erode market confidence.

The data above indicates approvals have marginally increased this quarter. However, commentary from the building industry indicates builders are still reluctant to contract new homes, particularly on a fixed price basis due to the volatility of the cost of materials and access to skilled trades.



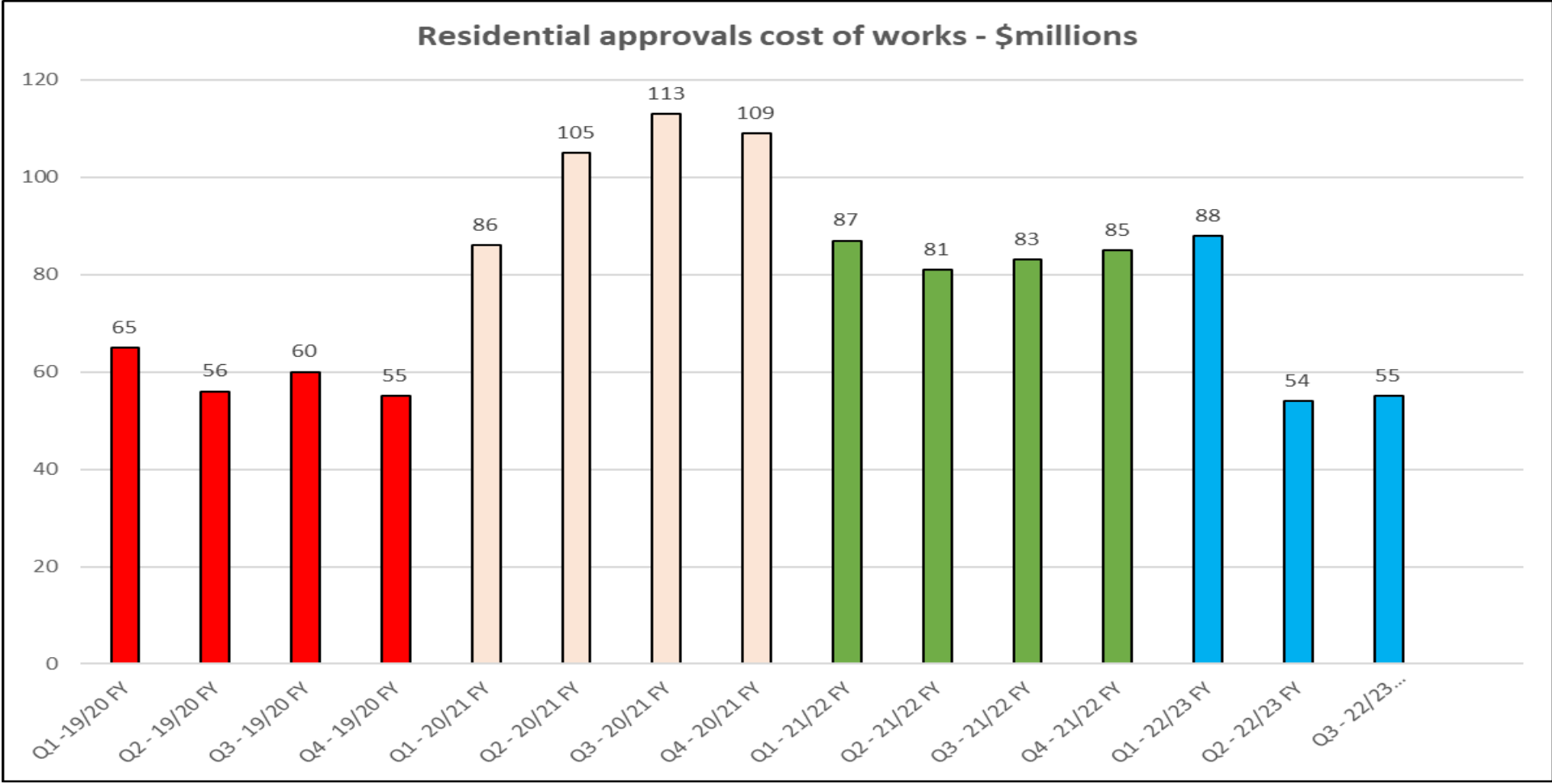
3.2 - New dwelling houses finalised

The volume of new dwelling houses finalised during the quarter has improved and whilst not at levels of previous quarters, the upward trend is encouraging.

HIA continues to indicate that supply constraints and more acutely, a shortage of skilled trades is impacting on the completion of new homes.

\*In a Federal Government Budget submission, HIA are urging the government to consult with industry to develop a visa that will enable the residential building industry to alleviate trade shortages through skilled migration.

\*HIA article of 31 March 2023



3.3 - Residential Investment

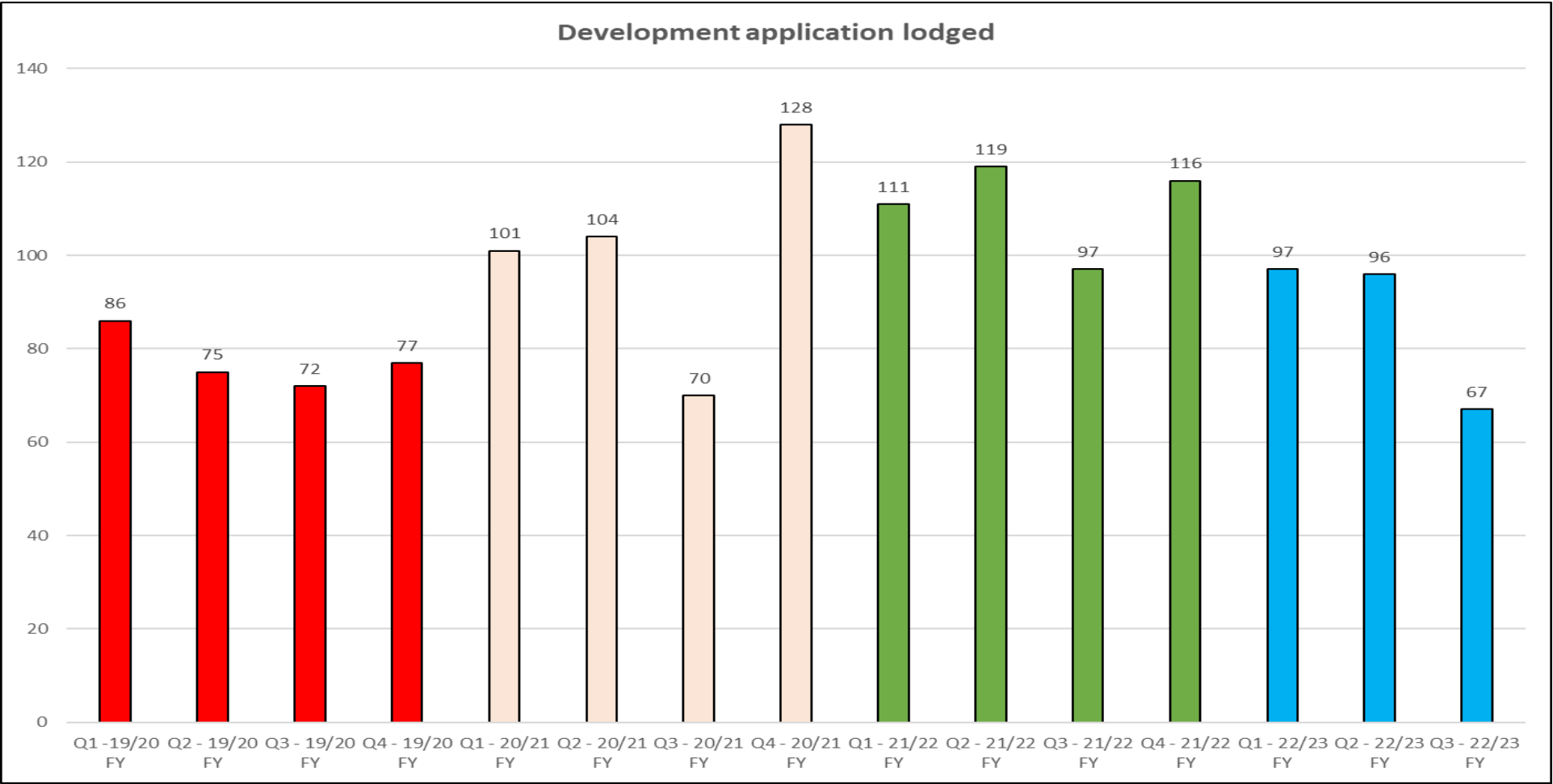
The 2022/2023 financial year maintains an average residential investment of \$66M per quarter.

When compared to the 2019/2020 financial year, the last full financial year prior to the period where the Federal Government stimulus packages was in force, the current financial year is tracking well in view of the national economic environment.

\*Data sourced from Private Certification finalisation information.



# 4. APPLICATIONS LODGED



## 4.1 - Development applications lodged

The development applications that are represented within the data above includes:

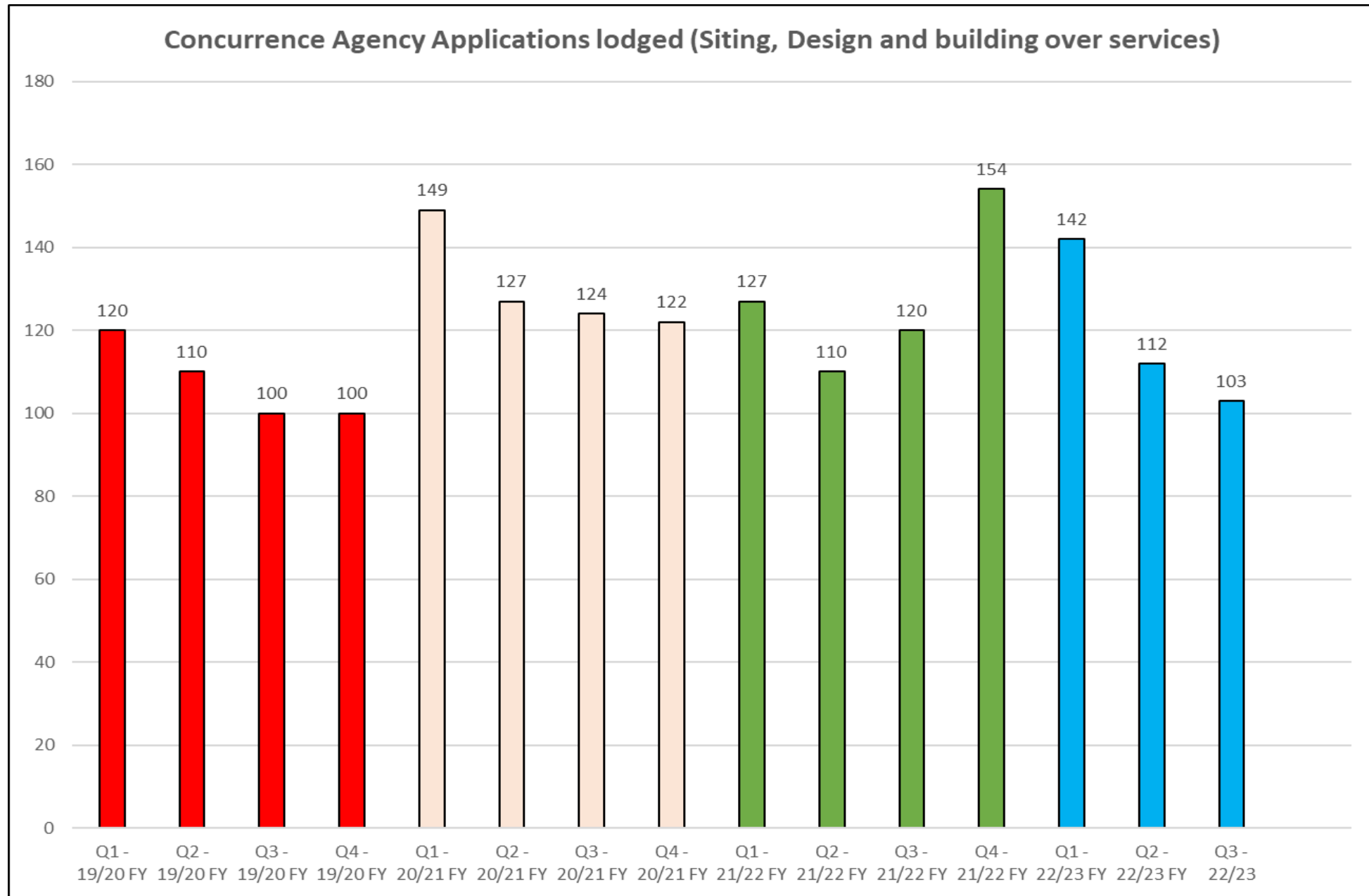
- Material Change of Use;
- Reconfiguration of a Lot;
- Operational Works; and
- Development Building Works.

It should be noted that the period following the conclusion of the Federal Government Home Builder grant, reveals the overall volume of applications are in excess of the 2019/2020 financial year which is the last full financial year, excluding the current financial year, not affected by the federal Government grant.

Analysis of the quarterly data shows, applications seeking a further 39 new residential lots, 13 applications for new commercial activity and a further 9 for residential developments.

Volume of development applications lodged continue to show fundamental strength and confidence in the local economy.

## 4. APPLICATIONS LODGED



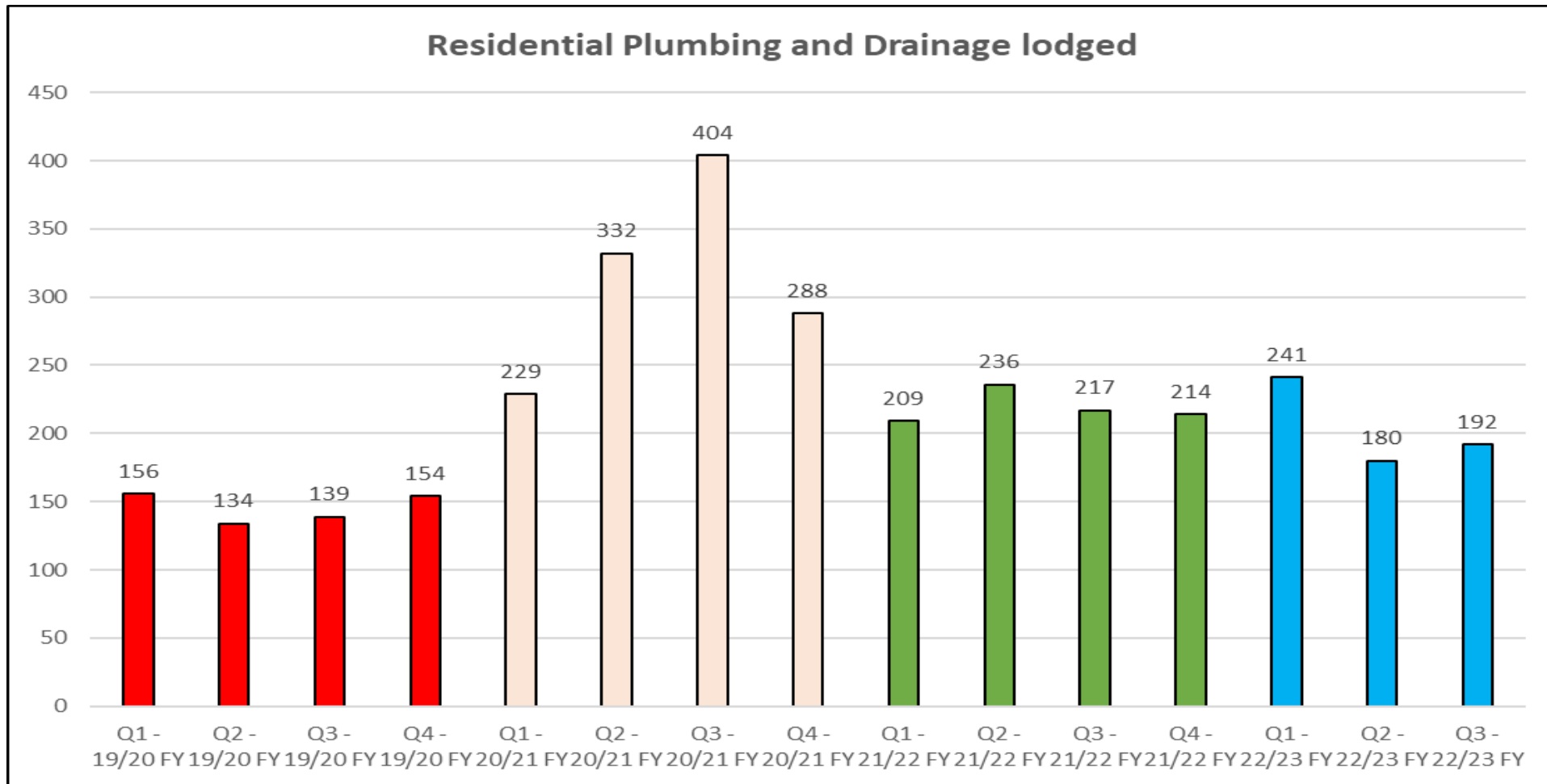
### 4.2 - Concurrence Approvals – Siting and Design

Requests for concurrence approvals have reduced marginally.

However, when compared to the 2019/2020 financial year, which is the last financial year, prior to the current, not affected by the Federal Government Home Builder grant, the results show an increased demand for such approvals.

This reflects continuing investment in residential home improvements.

## 4. APPLICATIONS LODGED



### 4.3 - Residential Plumbing and Drainage lodged

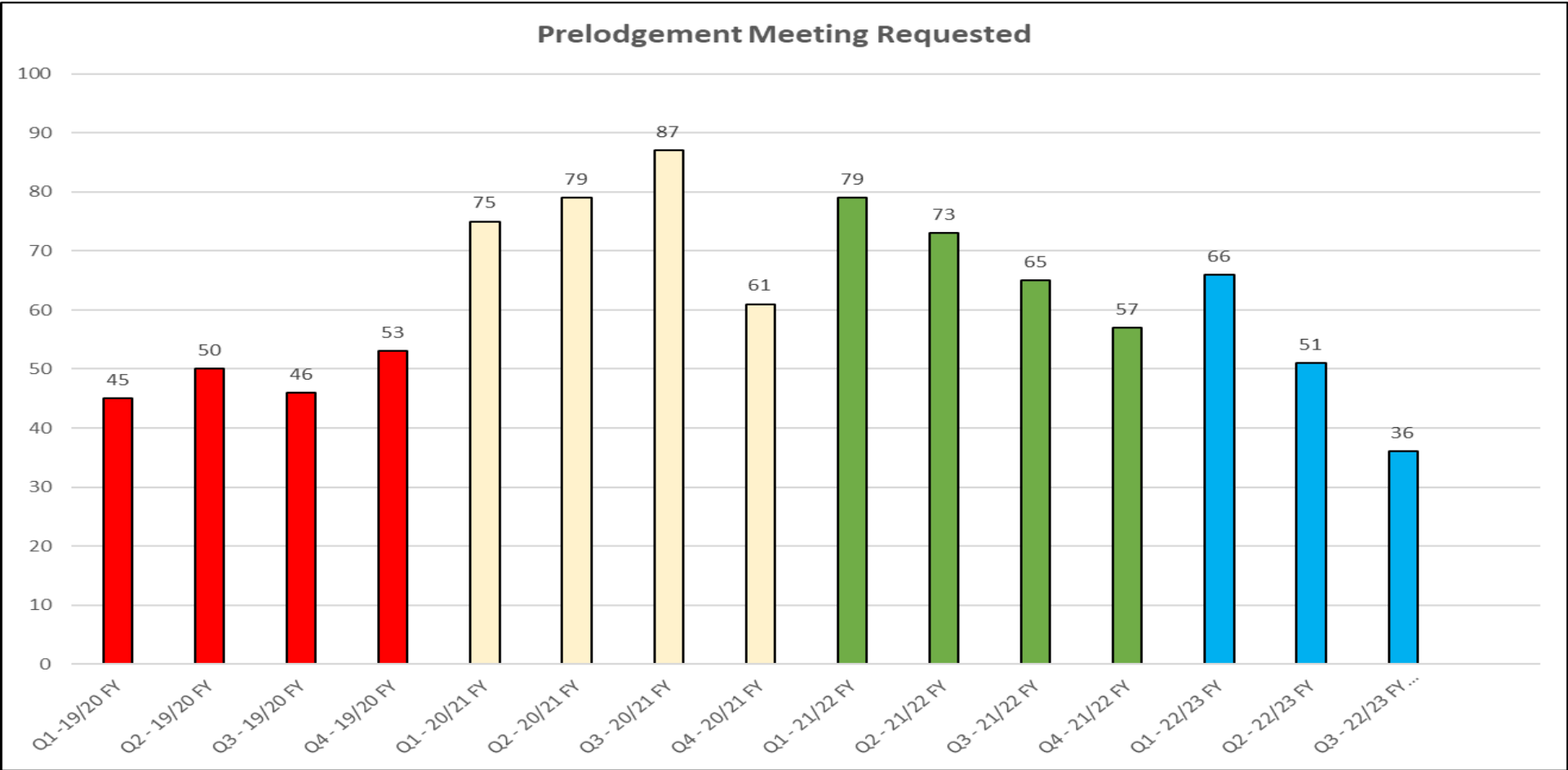
Residential plumbing and drainage approvals remain reasonably stable going into 2023 and continues to track higher when compared to the 2019/2020 financial year.

The subsequent two financial years of 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 were subject to the federal government Home Builder stimulus package with applications increasing to meet the new home demand.

Results for the current 2022/2023 financial year should be compared to results prior to this period.

Whilst new home approvals are feeling the effects of the pressure of the interest rate increases and have reduced into the 2022/2023 financial year, demand for residential works not attributed to new homes remains strong with percentage of overall applications lodged, increasing.

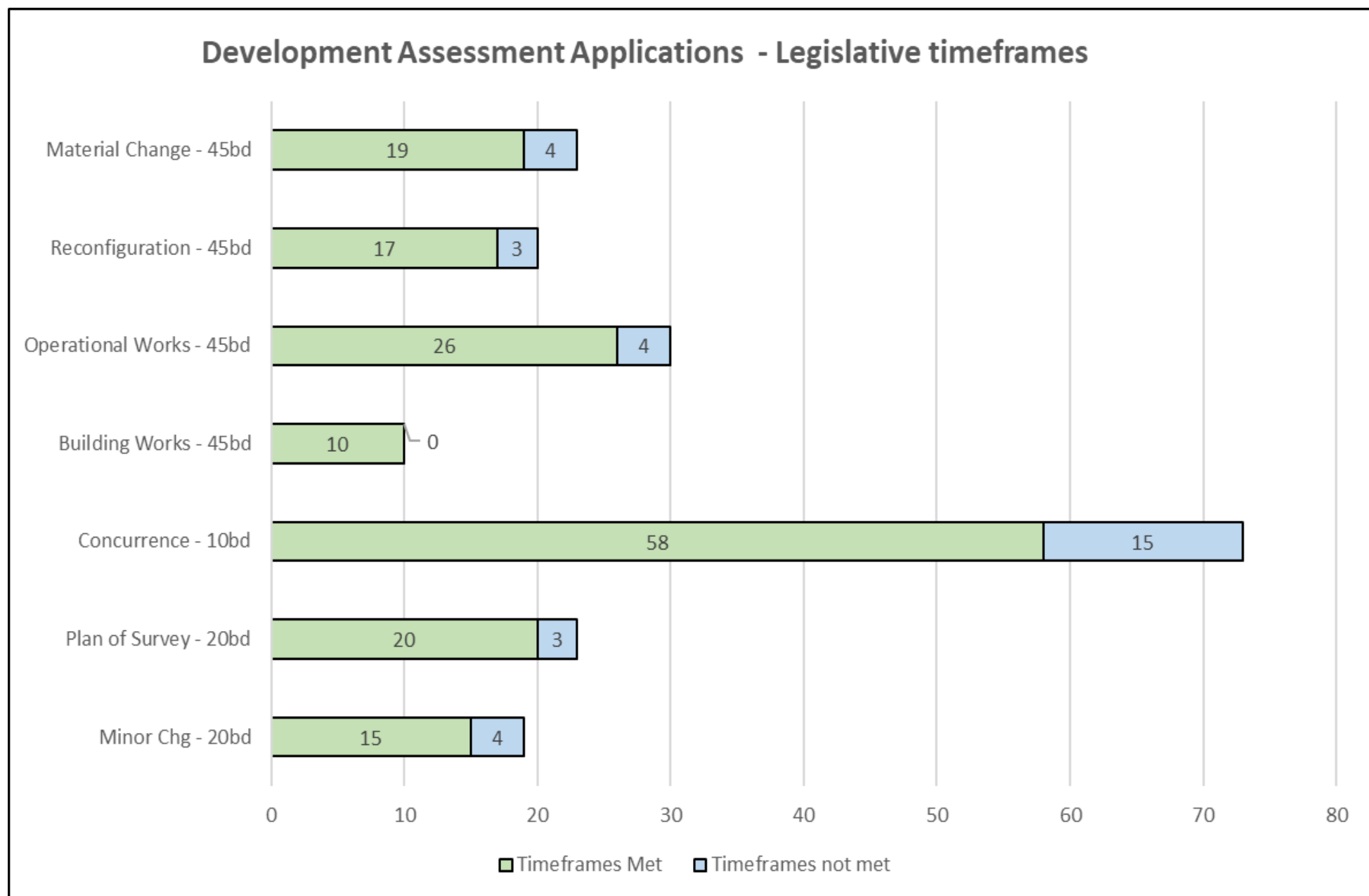
# 5. PRE-LODGEMENTS



## 5.1 - Pre-lodgements

Requests for pre-lodgement meetings during the financial year to date is averaging 51 per quarter. This reflects the decrease in the development applications being lodged. Planning and Development continue to recommend pre-lodgement meetings as part of the overall strategy to enhance developer/council relationships and reduce assessment timeframes.

## 6. ASSESSMENT TIMEFRAMES



### 6.1 Development application assessment timeframes overview

Planning and are inviting applicants to join us in the improvement of the assessment of applications. The goal is to improve the turnaround timeframes of the assessment process and improved outcomes. This can allow the applicant to commence works earlier and reduce any holding costs.

Our Planning Assessment officers are committed to providing excellent customer service, which provides ease of communication, clarity, consistency and certainty of information.

We seek our customers to take part in free pre-lodgement meetings. With the engagement of Planning and Development early in the process, a greater understanding can be acquired by both parties of the extent and requirements of the proposed development.

This can lead to reducing the need to issue requests for information and further advices, making the assessment process more streamlined and reduce overall assessment timeframes.

An objective overview at this early stage of the development process allows the applicant to make early changes if required.

It is Planning and Development's aim to have all applications assessed by or earlier than legislative timeframes.

The data above presents the number of applications that have either met or not met legislative timeframes. The assessment timeframes are calculated from the date the application is properly made to the date of decision less any periods waiting for responses to formal requests for information and period, periods of public notification, and waiting for state responses where applications require referral.

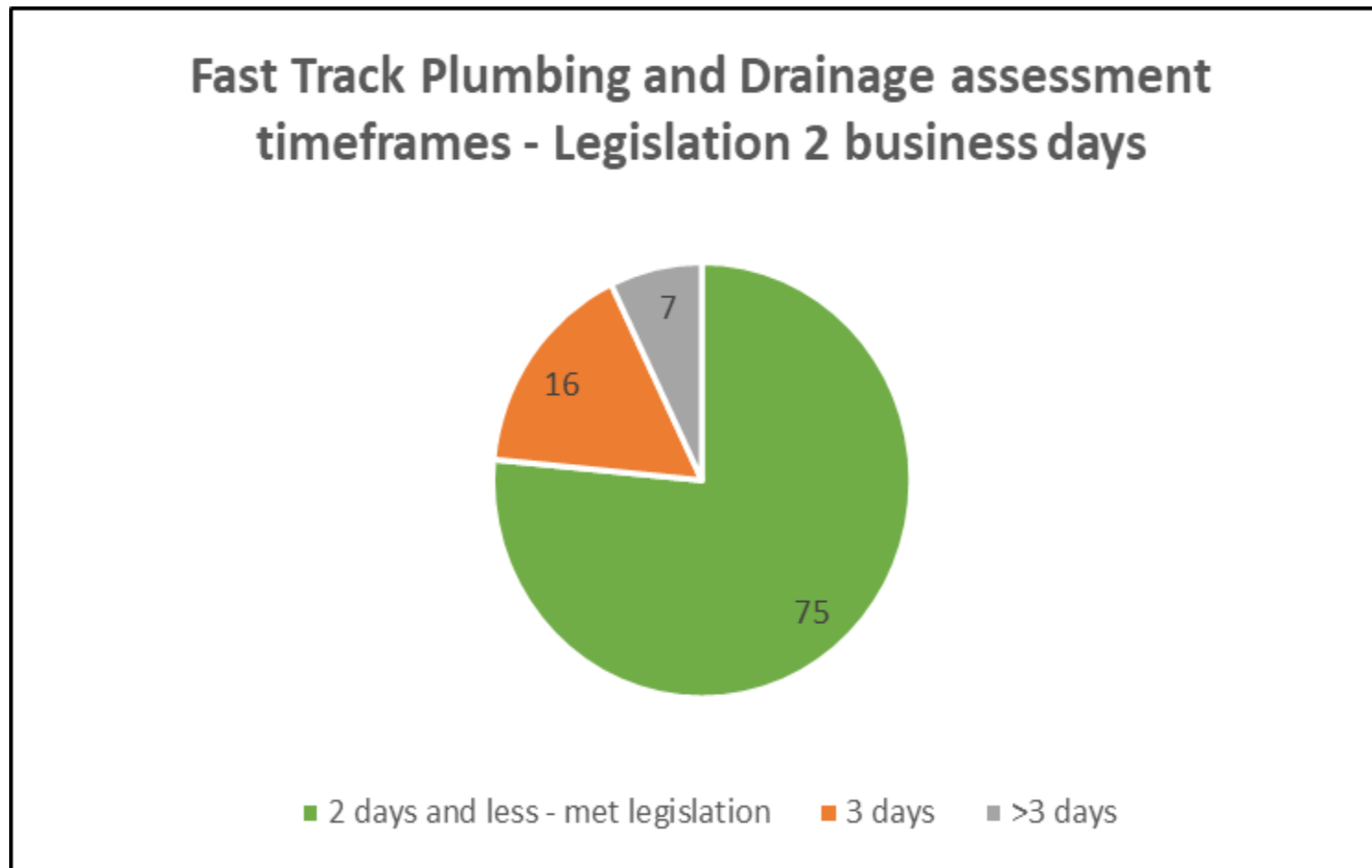
The calculation also considers agreed extensions to the assessment stages and where the applicant has requested the assessment clock be stopped.

Planning and Development has embarked on a complete business review in 2023 with the aim to improving our customer's experience throughout the assessment process. Not only are we aiming to make the experience one of collaboration and ease, our objective is also to have all applications decided in a timeframe less than legislation.

Initiatives to improve processing timeframes include:

- Plan Right expansion (more uses added);
- Same day approvals with Duty Officers allocated to assess;
- Self-assessment approvals for identified low risk developments; and
- Real time reporting ensuring the portfolio of applications under assessment affording a higher level of management and control.





### 6.3 Timeframes – Plumbing and Drainage – Residential Fast Track

Plumbing and Drainage Fast Track applications have legislative assessment timeframes of 2 business days.

The results are calculated from the day the application reaches properly made to the date of decision.

Properly made is reached when council receives all required information to allow assessment to commence.

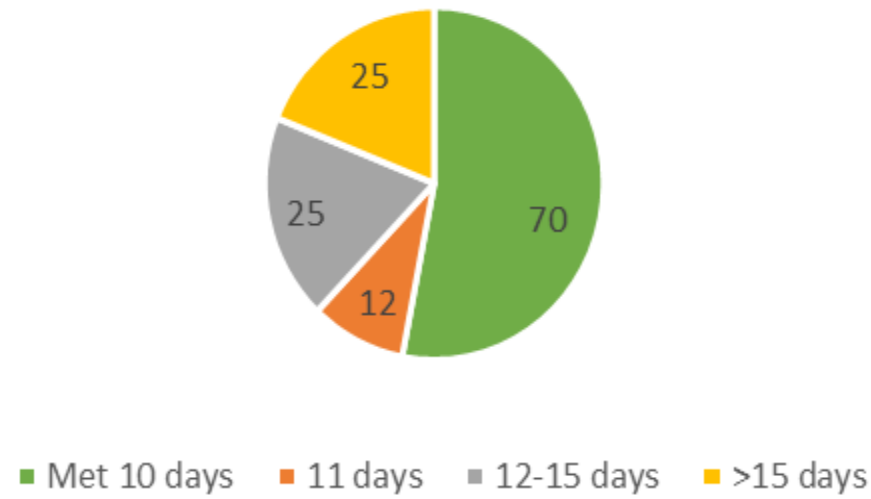
Assessed residential fast track plumbing and drainage applications decreased from 117 in quarter 2 to 98 in quarter 3. This is a normal trend for the first 3 months of a new year where activity is lower.

For quarter 3, 76.53% of applications were assessed within legislative timeframes, whilst 92.85% of applications were assessed within 3 business days.

Planning and Development has embarked on multiple projects within the Hydraulics area to enhance processes with the intent of not only reducing assessment timeframes but also to improve the customer journey of the Plumbing and Drainage industry.

One such identified project being investigated is the potential use of a private certification for Plumbing and Drainage low risk applications. This has the potential of not only reducing assessment timeframes but also freeing up council resources to allow focus on applications of a more complex and higher risk nature.

### Non-Fast Track Plumbing and Drainage assessment timeframes - Legislation 10 business days



#### 6.4 Timeframes – Plumbing and Drainage – Non – Fast Track residential and commercial

Assessed commercial and non-fast track plumbing and drainage applications decreased from 183 in quarter 2 to 132 in quarter 3.

Historically there is a decrease in the volume of applications being lodged and assessed during this period due to seasonally reduced activity in the industry.

Plumbing and Drainage commercial and other residential applications have a legislative timeframe of 10 business days.

The assessment timeframes are calculated from the day the application reaches properly made to the date of decision. Properly made is reached when council receives all required information to allow assessment to commence.

# GLOSSARY

## **BUILDING APPROVAL DATA**

State government development information is not required to be given to Council. Therefore, the building approval data only includes a small proportion of State government work, and this should be taken into consideration when analysing the information (i.e. the estimated value of works may not include developments such as works to schools, hospitals or defence).

The number of building works for the most recent two months also needs to be used with some caution. While private building certifiers are required to provide the information to Council within five business days of the decision notice being issued, this does not always occur. Data is regularly reviewed for accuracy; however, minor representation errors may still occur.

## **VALUE OF WORKS DATA**

The estimated value of works needs to be used with some caution. As this is provided at the planning stage of works, this may not accurately reflect the final cost of works.

## **ASSESSMENT TIMEFRAMES FOR PLAN OF SURVEY**

The assessment days for the release of Plans of Surveys are calculated from the date all required information is received by Council and all conditions of approval have been met.

## **CONCURRENCE AGENCY RESPONSE APPLICATIONS**

Concurrence Agency applications in the context of this report represent two areas of assessment. Firstly, where residential development does not comply with the assessment guidelines of the Queensland Development Code (QDC).

The QDC prescribes amenity and design guidelines. These guidelines as an example dictate the sighting and height of structures on the lot. The Local Government Authority has the delegated rights from the State to assess applications where the property owner wishes to gain a relaxation of the codes.

Secondly the QDC prescribes guidelines in relation to structures built over or within the influence of a Council asset such as sewer infrastructure. It allows the Local Government Authority to assess the structure if it risks the infrastructure.

*"We thank the community for the continued support in our efforts to provide you with clarity, consistency and certainty."*

### **OPW – Operational Work**

In the context of day-to-day business, operational works commonly includes infrastructure works associated with development, such as sewerage, water, roads, and stormwater. This may also include excavating or filling, clearing vegetation, road works, and Advertising Devices.

### **DBW – Development Building Work**

Assessment of the proposed building works on lots that are located in zones such as a Character Residential Zone.

### **RAL- Reconfiguring A Lot**

The subdivision, amalgamation, and realignment/rearrangement of lot boundaries, creating an easement and agreements for Community Titles Scheme (CMS).

### **MCU - Material Change of Use**

Required when commencing a new use on premises, re-establishing a use that has been abandoned or changing the intensity or scale of the use.

### **POS - Plan of Survey**

POS lodgements are associated with the approval of a Plan of Survey. This allows newly created lot/s to be registered and introduced to market for sale.

### **Properly Made**

An application must be properly made to allow assessment to proceed. Legislation prescribes the minimum requirements for an application to be properly made.

### **PlanRight Applications**

PlanRight applications are those identified application types that are assessed by approved external consultants. Once lodged, Council issues the decision notice via an accelerated process.