



Demolition and Recycling

The word 'demolition' brings to mind images of cranes with a large ball tearing through an old building, or a perfectly executed implosion resulting in a pile of rubble and massive dust cloud. But these days, the emphasis is not on how quickly a structure can be demolished but on resource recovery and demolition is more and more being replaced by 'deconstruction'.

Gone are the days when the only option was to 'crunch and dump' where a house, office block or warehouse was simply knocked over with heavy machinery and taken away to landfill. Sometimes this may still be the best option, however with a growing emphasis on resource recovery, recycling and re-use of materials, deconstruction enables a greater amount of material to be recovered in a manner which can then be re-used, either in a similar form or treated or re-manufactured into other usable products.

For an average brick veneer dwelling or "Queenslander" up to 90% of the total structure may be able to be recovered. Items recovered include bricks, concrete, timber and steel which are the most reusable products.

Fittings such as doors, windows, shelves, light fittings, plumbing, kitchens, gates, hot water systems, etc. can also be recovered. If you are planning a building or renovation project, why not check out your local demolition or second-hand yard or look for quality reusable products such as timber to create a striking feature in your home or office.

Of course, all deconstruction work should only be undertaken by a licensed professional. If you are planning a project, please ensure you engage a licensed demolition contractor and make sure you check their qualifications, experience and insurance.

If you are concerned about your project containing asbestos material, you should also check that your contractor is a licensed asbestos removalist or you may need to engage a specialist contractor to do this part of the job for you.

The Future

Hundreds of thousands of tonnes of construction and demolition resources are recovered from the waste stream every year in South East Queensland. Opportunities exist to recover, re-use and add value to these materials for incorporation into new structures or public works, or for re-manufacture into export products.

South East Queensland is recognised as the fastest growing region in Australia. The construction and deconstruction sectors are set to experience a massive growth phase, and a parallel opportunity exists to develop the already significant resource recovery sectors, the upstream industries and end-users of these quality materials, as well as provide opportunities for a range of service providers.

The SEQ Construction and Demolition Working Group (of which DRACAQ is a member) is working collaboratively to create incentives and opportunities to maximise resource recovery, to improve the quality and availability of materials which meet the needs of the design and construction sectors, and to support market development through innovative, positive initiatives.