



Realisations soft; stock lacks strong triggers

- Volume-led topline growth truncated by muted realisations (+1% YoY) in Q4, an indication of market share pressure
- Cost inflation softened QoQ on the back of easing fuel cost, but EBITDA margin under pressure at sub-10% due to limited price headroom
- We revise FY24/FY25 EPS by +12%/-4% post accounting year change, yielding a new TP of Rs 1,964 (vs. Rs 2,090); retain HOLD

Volume-led growth; realisations remain weak: ACC reported a 11% YoY (+6% QoQ) increase in Q4FY23 revenue to Rs 47.9bn led by volume growth of 8% YoY (+10% QoQ) to ~8.5mn tonnes. Volumes remained healthy despite a strike at the HP unit, as it was supported by an increase in blended cement, efficient route planning and operational synergies with ACEM. However, realisations grew only 1% YoY and declined 4% QoQ to Rs 5,269/t due to the volume push.

Cost inflation softens QoQ: Operating cost was up 6% YoY (but dipped 6% QoQ) to Rs 5,088/t, pushed up by energy cost/t (adj. for raw material cost) that rose 21% YoY (-6% QoQ) as the clinker factor declined 130bps QoQ. Energy cost/t fell 16% YoY (-24% QoQ) to Rs 1,108/t as fuel cost moved from Rs 2.6/kcal to Rs 2.4/kcal with a change in coal basket, group procurement synergies and higher alternates

Raw material cost/t increased 9% YoY (+19% QoQ) owing to higher purchase of clinker. Logistics cost/t declined 9% YoY (-7% QoQ) to Rs 1,219/t as the lead distance reduced by 165km to 161km (despite clinker sourced from other plants due to the HP strike) and direct dispatches improved (45% to 46%). Other expenditure declined 8% YoY (+5% QoQ) to Rs 5.6bn despite the strong volume push

Margins under pressure: EBITDA at Rs 4.7bn reduced 26% YoY due to higher fuel cost, EBITDA margin slipped 460bps YoY (-140bps QoQ) to 9.7%, and EBITDA/t shrank 32% YoY (+12% QoQ) to Rs 549/t. PAT at Rs 2.4bn contracted 40% YoY (+114% QoQ) due to restructuring cost of Rs 0.6bn incurred in Q4. Adjusted for this one-off, PAT declined 23% YoY (+60% QoQ) to Rs 3bn.

Maintain HOLD: ACC's accounting year-end change (Dec to Mar) has led to a realignment of +9%/-3% in our EBITDA and +12%/-4% in our earnings estimates for FY24/FY25. We see limited earnings levers for the company owing to the lower efficiencies at old plants and its presence in regions crowded with more economical peers. We thus retain HOLD and continue to value ACC at 10x FY25E EV/EBITDA, implying a replacement cost of Rs 7.8bn/mt (12% premium to the industry average). Post estimate revision, we have a new TP of Rs 1,964 (vs. Rs 2,090). Retain HOLD.

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Cement

Milind Raginwar | Yash Thakur research@bobcaps.in

Key changes

	Target	Rating
	•	
Ticke	er/Price	ACC IN/Rs 1,744
Mark	et cap	US\$ 4.0bn
Free	float	43%
3M A	DV	US\$ 16.6mn
52wk high/low		Rs 2,785/Rs 1,592
Prom	noter/FPI/DII	57%/12%/19%

Source: NSE | Price as of 3 May 2023

Key financials

Y/E 31 Mar	FY23P	FY24E	FY25E
Total revenue (Rs mn)	2,19,192	1,96,593	2,18,812
EBITDA (Rs mn)	19,400	20,823	28,754
Adj. net profit (Rs mn)	10,926	11,482	16,747
Adj. EPS (Rs)	46.5	61.1	89.1
Consensus EPS (Rs)	46.5	64.8	101.3
Adj. ROAE (%)	7.9	7.9	11.2
Adj. P/E (x)	37.5	28.5	19.6
EV/EBITDA (x)	16.4	12.2	8.1
Adj. EPS growth (%)	(54.3)	31.4	45.9

Source: Company, Bloomberg, BOBCAPS Research \mid P – Provisional \mid FY23 is for 15 months due to a change in year-end from December to March

Stock performance



Source: NSE





Fig 1 – Key quarterly metrics

(Rs)	Q4FY23	Q4FY22	YoY (%)	Q3FY23	QoQ (%)
Volumes (mn mt)	8.5	7.9	7.6	7.7	10.4
Cement realisations (Rs/mt)	5,269	5,193	1.5	5,497	(4.1)
Operating costs (Rs/mt)	5,088	4,801	6.0	5,401	(5.8)
EBITDA/t (Rs/mt)	549	802	(31.6)	491	11.7

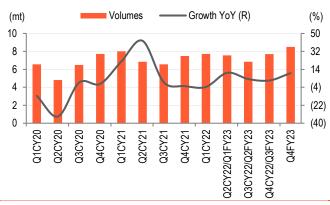
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 2 – Quarterly performance

(Rs mn)	Q4FY23	Q4FY22	YoY (%)	Q3FY23	QoQ (%)
Net Sales	47,908	43,219	10.8	45,370	5.6
Expenditure					
Change in stock	1,568	(573)	(373.9)	1,186	32.3
Raw material	7,292	6,808	7.1	6,087	19.8
Purchased products	6,918	2,776	149.2	5,608	23.3
Power & fuel	9,420	10,395	(9.4)	11,292	(16.6)
Freight	10,363	10,539	(1.7)	10,073	2.9
Employee costs	2,121	1,925	10.2	2,048	3.5
Other expenditure	5,564	6,059	(8.2)	5,293	5.1
Total Operating Expenses	43,245	37,928	14.0	41,587	4.0
EBITDA	4,663	6,337	(26.4)	3,783	23.3
EBITDA margin (%)	9.7	14.3	(458bps)	8.3	139bps
Other Income	1,173	576	103.7	407	188.2
Interest	152	106	44.3	188	(19.1)
Depreciation	1,741	1,531	13.8	1,716	1.5
PBT	3,942	5,276	(25.3)	2,286	72.4
Non-recurring items	(664)	0	-	(791)	0
PBT (after non-recurring items)	3,278	5,276	(37.9)	1,495	119.3
Тах	912	1,358	(32.8)	390	133.6
Reported PAT	2,366	3,918	(39.6)	1,104	114.2
Adjusted PAT	3,030	3,918	(22.7)	1,895	59.8
NPM (%)	6.3	9.1	(274bps)	4.2	215bps
Adjusted EPS (Rs)	16.1	20.8	(22.7)	10.1	59.8

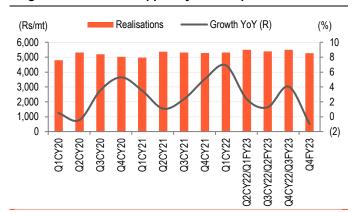
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 3 – Volume-led growth in Q4FY23



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research | Note: ACC has changed its accounting Y/E from Dec to Mar; thus FY23 consists of 5 quarters

Fig 4 – Realisations capped by volume push



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

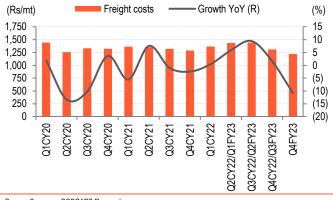


EBITDA/mt (Rs/mt) 1,350 1,200 1,050 900 750 600 450 300 Q1CY22 Q1CY20 Q2CY20 Q3CY20 Q4FY23 Q4CY20 Q1CY21 Q2CY21 Q3CY21 Q4CY21 Q2CY22/Q1FY23 Q3CY22/Q2FY23 Q4CY22/Q3FY23

Fig 5 – EBTIDA/t remains among the lowest in the industry

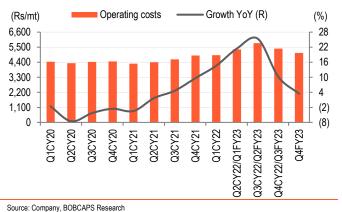
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 7 – Freight cost well-managed despite challenges



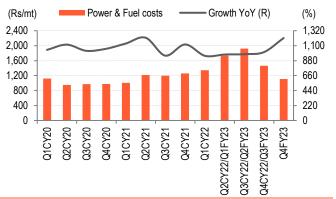
Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 6 – Operating cost softening



Source. Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 8 – Fuel cost likely to soften further



Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research



Valuation methodology

ACC's growth is restricted to the extent of capacities available and carries little upside despite capacity expansion in Central India in FY24, in our view. We see limited earnings levers for the company owing to the lower operating efficiencies at old plants and its presence in price-accretive regions that are crowded with more efficient players. This, in turn, will impact return ratios (ROE currently ~11%). However, given a strong cash position, brand loyalty in the northern and eastern regions, and support from ACEM (part-owner), we see limited downside risk either.

ACC's accounting year-end change (Dec to Mar) has led to a realignment of +9%/-3% in our EBITDA and +12%/-4% in our earnings estimates for FY24/FY25. We now model for a revenue CAGR of 12% for ACC over FY22-FY25, however given the cost pressure the EBITDA/PAT are marginally factored to be lower over the same period.

Due to the lack of stock triggers, we retain HOLD and continue to value ACC at 10x FY25E EV/EBITDA, implying a replacement cost of Rs 7.8bn/mt (12% premium to the industry average). Post estimate revision, we have a new TP of Rs 1,964 (vs. Rs 2,090). In our view, any rerating will only come from firm initiatives by the company to expand its capacities in the more remunerative geographies of Central and West India.

Fig 9 – Revised estimates

(Rs mn)	New	v	Old	I	Change	(%)
	FY24E	FY25E	FY24E	FY25E	FY24E	FY25E
Revenue	196,593	218,812	194,907	219,781	0.9	(0.4)
EBITDA	20,823	28,754	19,138	29,724	8.8	(3.3)
Adj PAT	11,482	16,747	10,226	17,469	12.3	(4.1)
Adj EPS (Rs)	61.1	89.1	54.4	92.9	12.3	(4.1)

Source: BOBCAPS Research

Fig 10 – Key assumptions

Parameter	CY21	FY23	FY24E	FY25E
Volumes (mt)	28.9	38.5	32.6	35.9
Realisations (Rs/mt)	5,118	5,365	5,350	5,430
Operating costs (Rs/mt)	4,551	5,269	5,489	5,388
EBITDA/mt (Rs)	1,038	498	680	772

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Fig 11 – Valuation summary

Business (Rs mn)	FY25E
Target EV/EBITDA (x)	10
EBITDA	28,754
Target EV	273,165
Total EV	273,165
Net debt	(96,067)
Target market capitalisation	369,233
Target price (Rs/sh)	1,964
Weighted average shares (mn)	188
Source: BOBCAPS Research	



Fig 12 – Peer comparison

Ticker	Doting	TP	E١	//EBITDA (x)	E٧	//tonne (US	\$)		ROE (%)			ROCE (%)	
TICKET	ker Rating (F	(Rs)	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY23	FY24E	FY25E
ACC IN	HOLD	1,964	16.6	12.4	8.2	115	92	84	7.9	7.9	11.2	7.9	10.8	14.5
ACEM IN	HOLD	387	11.5	10.5	8.2	249	239	227	6.0	7.4	8.0	13.1	12.8	14.6
UTCEM IN	BUY	8,678	20.9	16.8	13.5	208	209	210	9.7	12.0	14.5	12.8	15.8	18.3
SRCM IN	HOLD	24,656	27.9	19.4	15.1	205	203.8	199	6.4	10.8	13.6	9.2	14.6	18.0

Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research

Key risks

- Better-than-expected realisation gains and above-expected synergies with ACEM would represent upside risks to our earnings estimates.
- Capacity addition faster than current estimates would be another upside risk.
- Cost structure inflation can keep earnings suppressed for longer than expected a key downside risk.

Sector recommendation snapshot

Company	Ticker	Market Cap (US\$ bn)	Price (Rs)	Target (Rs)	Rating
ACC	ACC IN	4.0	1,744	1,964	HOLD
Ambuja Cements	ACEM IN	9.3	384	387	HOLD
Dalmia Bharat	DALBHARA IN	4.5	2,001	1,917	HOLD
JK Cement	JKCE IN	2.8	2,990	3,371	BUY
JK Lakshmi Cement	JKLC IN	1.1	777	551	SELL
Orient Cement	ORCMNT IN	0.3	125	140	HOLD
Shree Cement	SRCM IN	10.7	24,259	24,656	HOLD
Star Cement	STRCEM IN	0.6	126	138	BUY
The Ramco Cements	TRCL IN	2.2	748	534	SELL
Ultratech Cement	UTCEM IN	26.5	7,507	8,678	BUY

Source: BOBCAPS Research, NSE | Price as of 3 May 2023



Financials

Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25E
Total revenue	1,34,868	1,58,144	2,19,192	1,96,593	2,18,812
EBITDA	24,811	30,004	19,400	20,823	28,754
Depreciation	(6,353)	(5,973)	(8,351)	(7,365)	(8,550)
EBIT	20,498	26,078	14,421	15,967	22,964
Net interest inc./(exp.)	(570)	(546)	(772)	(555)	(485)
Other inc./(exp.)	2,040	2,048	3,372	2,509	2,759
Exceptional items	(3,049)	(548)	(1,618)	0	0
EBT	16,878	24,984	12,031	15,412	22,479
Income taxes	(5,422)	(6,401)	(2,723)	(3,930)	(5,732)
Extraordinary items	2,694	0	0	0	0
Min. int./Inc. from assoc.	0	0	0	0	0
Reported net profit	14,149	18,583	9,309	11,482	16,747
Adjustments	355	548	1,618	0	0
Adjusted net profit	14,505	19,131	10,926	11,482	16,747
Balance Sheet					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25E
Accounts payables	33,640	40,320	58,320	64,318	70,549
Other current liabilities	14,949	20,458	7,292	22,836	24,300
Provisions	2,294	2,300	(6,337)	1,494	1,505
Debt funds	0	0	0	0	0
Other liabilities	3,762	3,827	4,331	4,331	4,331
Equity conital	1 000	1 000	4 000	4 000	4 000

Total assets	1,81,259	2,09,190	2,04,036	2,40,497	2,60,335
Other assets	0	0	0	0	0
Deferred tax assets, net	0	0	0	0	0
Intangible assets	644	736	163	263	363
CWIP	7,011	12,408	8,934	7,900	8,000
Net fixed assets	64,384	66,492	82,596	89,874	83,892
Investments	2,206	1,927	1,927	1,927	1,927
Other current assets	34,583	35,961	75,753	37,716	36,964
Inventories	9,005	12,733	16,235	18,740	21,008
Accounts receivables	4,515	4,892	8,747	10,345	12,114
Cash and cash eq.	58,911	74,042	9,680	73,732	96,067
Total liab. and equities	1,81,259	2,09,190	2,04,036	2,40,497	2,60,335
Shareholders' fund	1,26,614	1,42,284	1,40,430	1,47,517	1,59,650
Reserves & surplus	1,24,735	1,40,404	1,38,550	1,45,638	1,57,770
Equity capital	1,880	1,880	1,880	1,880	1,880
Other liabilities	3,762	3,827	4,331	4,331	4,331
Debt funds	0	0	0	0	0

Cash Flows

Casil i lows					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs mn)	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25E
Cash flow from operations	18,709	31,107	(36,363)	82,572	29,060
Capital expenditures	(5,220)	(13,342)	(18,374)	(14,126)	(2,110)
Change in investments	13,884	2,349	(3,360)	(2,500)	(2,500)
Other investing cash flows	0	0	0	0	0
Cash flow from investing	8,663	(10,994)	(21,734)	(16,626)	(4,610)
Equities issued/Others	0	0	0	0	0
Debt raised/repaid	0	0	0	0	0
Interest expenses	0	0	0	0	0
Dividends paid	(2,629)	(2,629)	(2,637)	(4,395)	(4,614)
Other financing cash flows	2,670	(5)	(6,988)	0	0
Cash flow from financing	41	(2,634)	(9,625)	(4,395)	(4,614)
Chg in cash & cash eq.	27,413	17,480	(67,722)	61,552	19,836
Closing cash & cash eq.	58,911	74,042	9,680	73,732	96,067

Per Share					
Y/E 31 Mar (Rs)	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25
Reported EPS	75.3	98.9	39.6	61.1	89.
Adjusted EPS	77.2	101.8	46.5	61.1	89.
Dividend per share	14.0	14.0	15.2	20.0	21.
Book value per share	673.5	756.9	747.0	784.7	849.
Valuations Ratios					
Y/E 31 Mar (x)	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25
EV/Sales	2.0	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.
EV/EBITDA	10.8	8.5	16.4	12.2	8.
Adjusted P/E	22.6	17.1	37.5	28.5	19.
P/BV	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.2	2.
DuPont Analysis					
Y/E 31 Mar (%)	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25
Tax burden (Net profit/PBT)	67.9	74.4	77.4	74.5	74.
Interest burden (PBT/EBIT)	97.2	97.9	94.6	96.5	97.
EBIT margin (EBIT/Revenue)	15.2	16.5	6.6	8.1	10.
Asset turnover (Rev./Avg TA)	79.0	83.2	113.8	87.4	94.
Leverage (Avg TA/Avg Equity)	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.
Adjusted ROAE	11.7	14.8	7.9	7.9	11.
	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25
Y/E 31 Mar	CY20A	CY21A	FY23P	FY24E	FY25
Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%)					
Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue	(12.1)	17.3	10.9	12.1	11.
Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA	(12.1) 3.0	17.3 20.9	10.9 (48.3)	12.1 34.2	11. 38.
Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA Adjusted EPS	(12.1)	17.3	10.9	12.1	11. 38.
Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA Adjusted EPS Profitability & Return ratios (%)	(12.1) 3.0 18.8	17.3 20.9 31.9	10.9 (48.3) (54.3)	12.1 34.2 31.4	11. 38. 45.
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Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA Adjusted EPS Profitability & Return ratios (%) EBITDA margin EBIT margin Adjusted profit margin Adjusted ROAE ROCE Working capital days (days)	(12.1) 3.0 18.8 18.0 14.9 10.8 11.7 16.3	17.3 20.9 31.9 18.6 16.1 12.1 14.8 18.9	10.9 (48.3) (54.3) 8.7 6.5 5.0 7.9 7.9	12.1 34.2 31.4 10.4 8.0 5.8 7.9 10.8	11. 38. 45. 12. 10. 7. 11. 14.
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Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA Adjusted EPS Profitability & Return ratios (%) EBITDA margin EBIT margin Adjusted profit margin Adjusted ROAE ROCE Working capital days (days) Receivables Inventory Payables Ratios (x)	(12.1) 3.0 18.8 18.0 14.9 10.8 11.7 16.3 12 24 109	17.3 20.9 31.9 18.6 16.1 12.1 14.8 18.9 11 29 112	10.9 (48.3) (54.3) 8.7 6.5 5.0 7.9 7.9 7.9 18 34 131	12.1 34.2 31.4 10.4 8.0 5.8 7.9 10.8 19 35 131	11. 38. 45. 10. 7. 11. 14. 2 3 3 13
Ratio Analysis Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA Adjusted EPS Profitability & Return ratios (%) EBITDA margin EBIT margin Adjusted profit margin Adjusted ROAE ROCE Working capital days (days) Receivables Inventory Payables Ratios (x) Gross asset turnover Current ratio	(12.1) 3.0 18.8 18.0 14.9 10.8 11.7 16.3 12 24 109 1.4	17.3 20.9 31.9 18.6 16.1 12.1 14.8 18.9 11 29 112 1.5	10.9 (48.3) (54.3) 8.7 6.5 5.0 7.9 7.9 7.9 18 34 131	12.1 34.2 31.4 10.4 8.0 5.8 7.9 10.8 19 35 131	FY25I 11. 38. 45. 12. 10. 7. 11. 14. 2 3 3 13 13 1. 1.
Y/E 31 Mar YoY growth (%) Revenue EBITDA Adjusted EPS Profitability & Return ratios (%) EBITDA margin EBIT margin Adjusted profit margin Adjusted ROAE ROCE Working capital days (days) Receivables Inventory Payables Ratios (x)	(12.1) 3.0 18.8 18.0 14.9 10.8 11.7 16.3 12 24 109	17.3 20.9 31.9 18.6 16.1 12.1 14.8 18.9 11 29 112	10.9 (48.3) (54.3) 8.7 6.5 5.0 7.9 7.9 7.9 18 34 131	12.1 34.2 31.4 10.4 8.0 5.8 7.9 10.8 19 35 131	11. 38. 45. 10. 7. 11. 14. 2 3 3 13

Adjusted debt/equity 0.0 0.0 0.0 Source: Company, BOBCAPS Research | Note: TA = Total Assets | FY23 is for 15 months due to a change in accounting year-end from December to March





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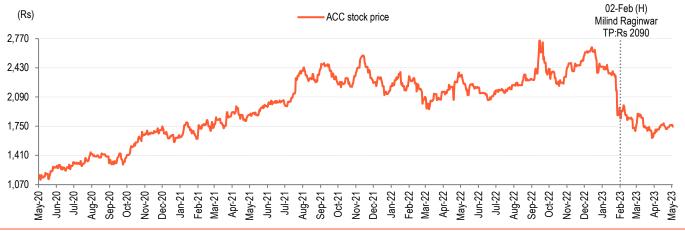
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