

Green Star Buildings NZ - Eligibility Criteria

All buildings aiming to achieve a Green Star Buildings NZ rating are subject to the following eligibility criteria:

Building Type

Green Star Buildings NZ is intended to rate new buildings and major refurbishments. The majority of building types are eligible to be rated, including mixed-use developments.

Note: any New Zealand based developments that have a residential component should consult with the NZGBC first. Homestar is the preferred rating tool available for use by new build residential developments with primarily sole-occupant dwellings (whether standalone, terrace housing or apartments). University dormitories are to be rated to Green Star since they will not be individually sold in the future. If clarification is needed on how a specific type of building can fit within this rating tool, please submit a Technical Question or contact the NZGBC.

Spatial Differentiation

To meet the Spatial Differentiation criterion, the project must be clearly distinct; project components are not eligible. An addition to a building that cannot be easily differentiated from the original, unaltered building does not fulfil this requirement. Shared building services (such as HVAC plant or water treatment) or amenities (such as waste rooms or bicycle facilities) do not affect the building's eligibility for Green Star assessment. Sub-tenancies are considered part of the fitout and cannot be excluded from the rating.

Timing of Submission for Certification

All projects registered for Green Star Building NZ must achieve an As Built certified rating. Registered projects have the option of achieving a Design Assessment as an interim step towards As Built certification.

Designed Assessment

Submissions for a Design Assessment can be lodged as soon as the required evidence is available, but prior to practical completion. The Designed Assessment is intended as an opportunity for a review at an early stage, to lend confidence where desired by project teams.

As Built Certified Rating

Submissions for an As Built certified rating can be lodged after practical completion.

Time Requirements:

Certain timeframes and thresholds must be adhered to for a project to achieve a certified rating. The following milestones are mandatory for all registered projects, and if any are not met, a project's certified rating will either expire or will be cancelled according to the Green Star Certification Agreement.

- As Built certified rating must be achieved within 24 months of practical completion.
- Either a Designed Assessment or an As Built certified rating must be achieved by the date occurring 3 years from the registration date.
- Either a Designed Assessment or an As Built certified rating must be achieved within 12 months following the receipt of Round 1 comments from the NZGBC.
- As Built certified rating does not expire.
- A Designed Assessment must be achieved prior to practical completion.
- A Designed Assessment will expire when either of the following occurs:
 - a) The project achieves an As Built certified rating; or
 - b) The project reaches 24 months post practical completion.
- A Designed Assessment will be cancelled at any time if there is no intent to achieve an As Built certified rating.

Minimum Expectations

There is a set of *Minimum Expectations* that must be achieved by all projects to achieve a Green Star rating. Projects must ensure they can fulfil all the *Minimum Expectations* before registering for Green Star. When a project team fills out their Green Star Expression Of Interest, they must agree that the project will meet the *Minimum Expectations*.

To achieve a certified rating under the Green Star Buildings NZ rating tool, the project must meet Minimum Expectations set in the following credits:

- [Credit 2 Responsible Construction](#)
- [Credit 3 Verification and Handover](#)
- [Credit 4 Responsible Resource Management](#)
- [Credit 10 Clean Air](#)
- [Credit 11 Light Quality](#)
- [Credit 12 Acoustic Comfort](#)
- [Credit 13 Exposure to Toxins](#)
- [Credit 14 Thermal Comfort and Amenity Spaces](#)
- [Credit 16 Climate Change Resilience](#)
- [Credit 21 Upfront Carbon Emissions](#)
- [Credit 22 Energy Use](#)
- [Credit 23 Energy Source](#)
- [Credit 25 Water Use](#)
- [Credit 27 Movement and Place](#)
- [Credit 31 Inclusive Construction Practices](#)
- [Credit 35 Impacts to Nature](#)

The NZGBC may request that full documentation be submitted prior to EOI to determine a project's eligibility (recommended supporting evidence is listed in the corresponding credits).

The NZGBC reserves the right to provide the final ruling on a project's compliance with the Minimum Expectations. Projects are required to contact the NZGBC if they are unsure if they comply or believe they should not be made subject to the Minimum Expectations.

Other Requirements

Further requirements are set out in the [Certification Agreement](#). It is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with all legal requirements in respect of their project.

Green Star Buildings NZ Appendix: Minimum Expectations

Credit 2 Responsible Construction

It is a Minimum Expectation that the builder or head contractor has an environmental management system in place and an environmental management plan to cover the scope of construction activities. The builder must divert at least 40% of construction and demolition waste from landfill, and the head contractor provides training on the sustainability targets of the building.

The project must comply with **all four** of the following criteria to achieve a Green Star rating:

- Environmental Management System
- Environmental Management Plan
- Construction and Demolition Waste

- Sustainability Training

Credit 3 Verification and Handover

It is a Minimum Expectation that the building is set up for optimum ongoing management due to its appropriate metering and monitoring systems, has set environmental performance targets, is designed and tested for airtightness, has been commissioned and will be tuned. The project team also creates and delivers operations and maintenance information to the facilities management team at the time of handover.

The project must comply with **all three** of the following criteria to achieve a Green Star rating:

- Metering and Monitoring
- Commissioning and Tuning
- Building Information

Credit 4 Responsible Resource Management

To achieve a certified rating, the project must demonstrate that operational waste and recovery streams can be separated and recovered in a safe and efficient manner.

The building must demonstrate compliance with the Minimum Expectations through one of the two available pathways:

1. Performance Pathway: Specialist Plan
A qualified waste auditor or waste specialist prepares and implements an Operational Waste Management Plan (OWMP) for the project in accordance with best practice approaches, and this is reflected in the building's design or;
2. Prescriptive Pathway: Facilities
 - Separation of waste and recovery streams
 - Dedicated waste storage area(s)
 - Access to waste storage area(s)
 - Final sign-off by waste specialist or waste contractor is required.

Credit 10 Clean Air

It is a Minimum Expectation that the project must demonstrate that pollutants entering the building are minimised, and a high level of outdoor air is provided to ensure levels of indoor pollutants are maintained at acceptable levels.

The project must comply with **all three** of the following criteria:

- Ventilation System Attributes
- Provision of Outdoor Air
- Exhaust or Elimination of Pollutants

Credit 11 Light Quality

It is a Minimum Expectation that the building provides daylight, and its lighting is of high quality. Lighting within the building must meet minimum comfort requirements, and there must be good lighting levels suitable for the typical tasks in each space, and the building must provide adequate levels of daylight.

The project must comply with **all three** of the following criteria:

- Lighting Comfort
- Glare from Light Sources
- Daylight

Glare from Light Sources must be limited within the regularly occupied areas. Three options are provided for demonstrating compliance with the Glare from Light Sources criteria: a performance method and two prescriptive methods. A combination of methods can be used to demonstrate compliance to suit different spaces.

Credit 12 Acoustic Comfort

It is a Minimum Expectation that an **Acoustic Report** is prepared to describe how the building and acoustic design aims to deliver acoustic comfort to the building occupants.

Credit 13 Exposure to Toxins

To meet the Minimum Expectation, the project must demonstrate that building occupants are not directly exposed to toxins in the space they spend time in. Compliance should be demonstrated for the following:

- The building's paints, adhesives, sealants, and carpets are low in TVOC or non-toxic, and,
- The building's engineered wood products are low in TVOC or non-toxic, and,
- Occupants are not exposed to banned or highly toxic materials in the building.

Credit 14 Thermal Comfort and Amenity Spaces

As a Minimum Expectation, the building provides a high level of thermal comfort to occupants in the space by ensuring the operative temperature is maintained within a set range.

For 95% of the regularly occupied areas and 98% of the year, a high degree of thermal comfort is provided. There are several options outlined in the submission guidelines for demonstrating compliance, depending on the type of space. A combination of methods is acceptable.

Credit 16 Climate Change Resilience

To qualify for points of this credit, it is a Minimum Expectation that the project team completes the climate change pre-screening checklist (refer to 3.1). The project team must communicate the building's exposure to climate change hazards and any identified risks to the client/building owner.

The checklist must be signed off by a member of the project team and the client/building owner and shared with key project stakeholders.

Credit 21 Upfront Carbon Emissions

As a Minimum Expectation, the building's upfront carbon emissions must be at least 10% less than those of a reference or benchmark building as per the table referenced on page 152 of the Green Star Buildings NZ Submission Guidelines. The buildings' upfront carbon emissions reduction must occur through good design and material selection.

Credit 22 Energy Use

As a Minimum Expectation, the project must demonstrate low energy consumption through one of the following pathways based on the building type:

- Reference building pathway or;
- Absolute Value Pathway (This will only be available once benchmark data is available)

The reference building pathway criteria require the project to demonstrate that the building's energy use is at least 10% less than a reference building.

Credit 23 Energy Source

As a Minimum Expectation, the project must provide a Zero Carbon Action Plan and demonstrate that 100% of the building's energy is supplied from electricity or other sources of renewable energy.

The project must comply with **both** of the following criteria:

- Zero Carbon Action Plan
- Exclusion of Fossil Fuels On-Site

The Zero Carbon Action Plan must be signed off by the building owner or developer and included in any operational documents for the buildings. The Plan must include a target date by which the building is expected to operate as fossil fuel free, and the plan must cover all energy consumption, procurement, and generation and cannot rely on procuring renewable fuels as its only solution. It must also include infrastructure provided for tenants or future occupants, such as emergency backup and process loads. Domestic hot water, space heating and cooking are required to be fossil fuel free in all buildings.

Exclusion of Fossil Fuels On-site – Fossil Fuels cannot be used on site for any domestic hot water, space heating or cooking under any circumstances, regardless of base build or tenant use.

Credit 25 Water Use

As a Minimum Expectation, in buildings where the sleeping area <50% of the GFA, efficient water fixtures should be installed, or the project must demonstrate that the building uses 15% less potable water compared to a reference building. Where the sleeping area is ≥50% of the GFA, efficient water fixtures should be installed, or the project must demonstrate that the building uses 10% less potable water compared to a reference building.

Credit 27 Movement and Place

It is a Minimum Expectation that the building includes showers and changing facilities for building occupants, and that those facilities are accessible, inclusive, and located in a safe and protected space.

Credit 31 Inclusive Construction Practices

As a Minimum Expectation during the building's construction, the head contractor provides inclusive facilities and protective equipment. The head contractor also installs policies on-site to increase awareness and reduce instances of discrimination, racism, and bullying.

Credit 35 Impacts to Nature

It is a Minimum Expectation that: the building is not built on, or has not significantly impacted, a site with a high ecological value; the building's light pollution is minimised; and there is ongoing monitoring, reporting, and management of sensitive ecosystems within the site.

The project must comply with **all three** of the following criteria:

- Site Ecological Value
- Managing Light Pollution Impacts
- Sensitive Ecosystem Management Plan

Green Star Fitouts - Eligibility Criteria

All projects aiming to achieve a Green Star Fitouts rating are subject to the following eligibility criteria:

Building Type

Green Star Fitouts is designed for interior fitouts in the majority of building types, including mixed-use developments. The tool is intended for fitouts of occupiable spaces and does not apply to single dwellings, standalone carparks, or uninhabited structures.

If clarification is needed on how a specific building or space type fits within the rating tool, please submit a Technical Question or contact the NZGBC.

Fitout Type

Green Star Fitouts is intended to rate new fitouts and fitouts undergoing major refurbishment.

- New fitouts include a fitout installed in a new building where there is no pre-existing fitout, or a whole new tenancy fitout delivered within an existing building.
- Major refurbishments include significant internal upgrades undertaken by an existing tenant, fitout owner, building owner, or manager. Minor refurbishments and cold shell projects are generally not eligible for certification.

Distinct Boundary

To meet the Distinct Boundary eligibility requirement, the project must be clearly distinct and separate. Project components are not eligible for assessment.

- The project boundary should reflect the contractor's full scope of works without exclusion of any areas
- Where the fitout extends across multiple floors, all floors within the fitout scope are to be included in the rating.
- Where a proposed rating comprises non-contiguous areas, the project team should contact the NZGBC or submit a Technical Question to confirm eligibility prior to registration.
- Shared building services, such as HVAC plant or water treatment, and shared amenities, such as waste rooms or bicycle facilities, do not affect eligibility for Green Star assessment.
- Subtenancies are considered part of the fitout and cannot be excluded from the rating.

Timing of Submission for Certification

All projects registered for Green Star Fitouts must achieve a Green Star Certified rating. Registered projects have the option of achieving a Green Star Designed Assessment as an interim step towards certification.

Designed Assessment

A Designed Assessment is optional and may be lodged once sufficient design evidence is available, but must occur prior to practical completion. It provides an early assessment of how the project is tracking towards the intended Certified rating. A Designed Assessment does not guarantee certification.

Certified Rating

A Certified rating verifies the completed fitout and is awarded after practical completion. The submission must demonstrate that the applicable requirements have been achieved as constructed.

Time Requirements

The following timing requirements apply to Green Star Fitouts projects:

- Projects can register for certification at any time prior to practical completion. Projects can register after practical completion, though applicants should note the deadline below.
A Certified rating must be achieved within 24 months of practical completion.
- A Designed Assessment must be undertaken prior to practical completion.
- A Designed Assessment will expire when either of the following occurs:

- a) The project achieves an As Built certified rating; or
 - b) The project reaches 24 months post practical completion.
- A Designed Assessment will be cancelled at any time if there is no intent to achieve an As Built certified rating.
 - A Certified rating does not expire.

Minimum Expectations

Minimum Expectations are mandatory performance levels that all projects must meet to achieve a Green Star Fitouts rating. They do not award points. Projects should ensure they can meet all applicable Minimum Expectations before registering.

The Minimum Expectations are set in the following credits:

- Credit 1 Maximising Reuse
- Credit 8 Responsible Material Management
- Credit 9 Responsible Handover
- Credit 15 Clean Air
- Credit 16 Light Quality
- Credit 17 Acoustic Comfort
- Credit 18 Low Toxin Materials
- Credit 21 Thermal Comfort
- Credit 23 Fully Electric
- Credit 25 Energy Efficient
- Credit 26 Water Efficient
- Credit 27 Upfront Carbon Reduction
- Credit 29 Construction Site Culture
- Credit 33 Design for Equity

Where a project cannot achieve a Minimum Expectation because of its typology or circumstances beyond its control, an exception or alternative approach may only be considered through a Technical Question. The project team must justify the circumstances and any proposed alternative and include the NZGBC response in the submission.

Net Zero Ready Pathway

The Net Zero Ready Pathway includes additional carbon-related requirements that increase in stringency according to the project's registration date and targeted star rating. Projects must meet the pathway requirements applicable to their registration date and rating target, in addition to the Minimum Expectations.

The pathway applies across the Fully Electric, Powered by Renewables, Energy Efficient, Upfront Carbon Reduction and Upfront Carbon Compensation credits. Refer to the Green Star Fitouts Submission Guidelines for the requirements applicable to the project.

4 Star Rating Requirement

A 4 Star Green Star Fitouts rating is achieved by meeting all Minimum Expectations, including the applicable Net Zero Ready Pathway requirements. Unlike 5 and 6 Star ratings, there is no separate minimum points threshold for a 4 Star rating.

Other Requirements

Further requirements are set out in the applicable Green Star Certification Agreement and Green Star Fitouts Submission Guidelines. It is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with all legal requirements relevant to the project.

Eligibility criteria may be updated over time. Project teams should refer to the NZGBC website and current Green Star Fitouts resources for the latest New Zealand requirements.

Green Star Fitouts Appendix: Minimum Expectations

Credit 1 Maximising Reuse

As a Minimum Expectation, a reuse assessment is conducted to identify opportunities to integrate reused elements into the fitout. The assessment considers existing on-site elements (excluding services) where applicable and opportunities to procure reused elements. Cold shell projects are exempt from auditing existing on-site fitout elements where none exist.

Credit 8 Responsible Material Management

As a Minimum Expectation, material outflows from the fitout are reported. The project records the timing, quantity and type of materials leaving the site during applicable deficit, strip-out and construction phases and identifies all destinations including relevant processing facilities, transfer stations and reuse destinations.

Credit 9 Responsible Handover

As a Minimum Expectation, the project must comply with both Commissioning and Operations and Maintenance Information criteria. The fitout equipment & appliances, fixtures and services are commissioned to ensure optimal functionality and efficiency, and the operations and maintenance information for all systems are provided to relevant people at handover.

Credit 15 Clean Air

As a Minimum Expectation, all HVAC systems exposed during deficit and construction are either protected from debris, or cleaned prior to handover. Pollutants are limited within 95% of regularly occupied areas through elimination, limiting to acceptable emissions levels, or appropriately exhausted.

Credit 16 Light Quality

As a Minimum Expectation, existing and newly installed lighting within the fitout meets minimum comfort requirements. Access to available daylight is unobstructed, subject to the exemptions and pathways set out in the Submission Guidelines.

Credit 17 Acoustic Comfort

As a Minimum Expectation, an Acoustic Comfort Strategy is prepared during design describing how the fitout will deliver acoustic comfort to occupants in regularly occupied areas. For projects with a contract value over \$2 million, additional requirements apply, including development by a qualified acoustic consultant.

Credit 18 Low Toxin Materials

As a Minimum Expectation, paints, adhesives, sealants, carpets and engineered wood products applied or included as part of the fitout works are low in toxins or non-toxic. Compliance is demonstrated through the elimination of relevant toxin sources, a recognised certification scheme, or laboratory analysis, in accordance with the credit requirements.

Credit 21 Thermal Comfort

As a Minimum Expectation, a Thermal Comfort Strategy is prepared during design describing how thermal comfort will be provided in all regularly occupied areas. The strategy addresses primary activities, provision of thermal comfort, occupant control, thermal stability requirements, thermal comfort influences, and information on the design solutions implemented.

Credit 23 Fully Electric

As a Minimum Expectation, all systems, equipment and appliances installed or used within the fitout scope are all-electric. Where non-electric base building systems serve the fitout, the project team must also engage with the building owner or facilities team regarding electrification plans and timelines.

Credit 25 Energy Efficient

As a Minimum Expectation, the fitout demonstrates energy efficiency through one of the available pathways: Energy Efficient Products, Energy Modelling demonstrating a 10% reduction in predicted energy consumption compared to a code-compliant reference fitout, or an applicable NABERS Energy Commitment Agreement for a minimum targeted 5 star rating. Requirements apply only to relevant items within the fitout or fitout owner's control.

Credit 26 Water Efficient

As a Minimum Expectation, relevant water fixtures and appliances within the fitout meet or exceed the nominated water-efficiency requirements. Requirements apply only to relevant items within the fitout or fitout owner's control.

Credit 27 Upfront Carbon Reduction

As a Minimum Expectation, the fitout's upfront carbon emissions are at least 10% lower than those of a reference fitout. Reductions are calculated using the Green Star Upfront Carbon and Circularity Calculator or a comparative Life Cycle Assessment in accordance with the Submission Guidelines.

Credit 29 Construction Site Culture

As a Minimum Expectation, the head contractor must provide inclusive site facilities and personal protective equipment that is fit-for-purpose. They must also implement on-site policies addressing respectful behaviour, discrimination, bullying, drug and alcohol awareness, and mental health and supportive site culture awareness.

Credit 33 Design for Equity

As a Minimum Expectation, an equitable design review is undertaken early as part of the fitout design process. The review considers the following principles as relevant to the project: accessibility, universal design, neurodiversity and sensory considerations, and wayfinding, signage and communication. The project must identify at least three implemented design features that respond to these principles and provides equitable outcomes beyond minimum statutory requirements.