



# Green Star Buildings

Fact sheet for government

FEBRUARY 2026





Since launching in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2007, Green Star has been used to certify more buildings than any other rating tool – across commercial, industrial, healthcare, education, social infrastructure and communities.

Founded by the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) in 2003, Green Star is an internationally recognised rating system setting the standard for healthy, resilient, positive buildings and places.



Reducing the impact of climate change



Enhancing the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders



Restoring and protecting our planet's biodiversity and ecosystems



Driving efficiency and resilience in buildings, fitouts and communities



Helping the industry build better and deliver operating efficiencies – creating lasting value for people, projects and the economy

**Providing  
economic  
benefit**

Rewarding  
local impact



New Dunedin Hospital – Outpatients Building  
Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand  
5 Star Green Star Design & As Built NZ v1.0 Design rating

# A rapidly changing world requires better buildings

**Our world is being shaped by key megatrends - climate action, resource efficiency, circularity and health & wellbeing – changing our built environment more than ever before.**

There is a unique opportunity to build better, healthier, more resilient buildings, with benefits for government and communities including;

- Health and wellbeing
- Resilience and efficiency
- Ongoing cost savings

There is an increasing need for the built environment to undertake rapid and urgent transformation to lower carbon design and construction, fit for a better New Zealand. Now more than ever, governments must continue to lead and ensure new community buildings and social infrastructure are future-ready and efficient.

Green Star Buildings has been developed after more than two years of consultation with the property and construction sector. It's built to tackle key issues so that governments can ensure they're ready for challenges to come – with better, healthier and more resilient buildings – made in New Zealand.



**In today's changing world, property leaders must build better buildings or risk falling behind the demands of the market and our communities**

**Built to tackle the key issues of this decade, Green Star Buildings extends beyond the environment to address health, resilience, people and places – helping you build better building for today and tomorrow.**

# A pathway to better, healthier and more resilient social infrastructure



City of Port Adelaide Enfield with Ashley Halliday Architects, Wax Design and the Yitpi Yartapuultiku Custodian Working Group  
Yitpi Yartapuultiku, SA. City of Port Adelaide Enfield. Targeting a 5 Star Green Star – Buildings v1 rating

# A future-ready community building

## Green Star Buildings - the categories

Green Star Buildings is a holistic tool that has been building to address the key issues of the next decade for the built environment. The rating tool features 8 key categories enable you to integrate economic, social and environmental outcomes – helping you meet government procurement requirements, future proof our building and minimise the risk of costly retrofits.



### Responsible

Recognises activities that ensure the building is designed, procured, built, and handed over in a responsible manner.



### Healthy

Promotes actions and solutions that improve the physical and mental health of occupants.



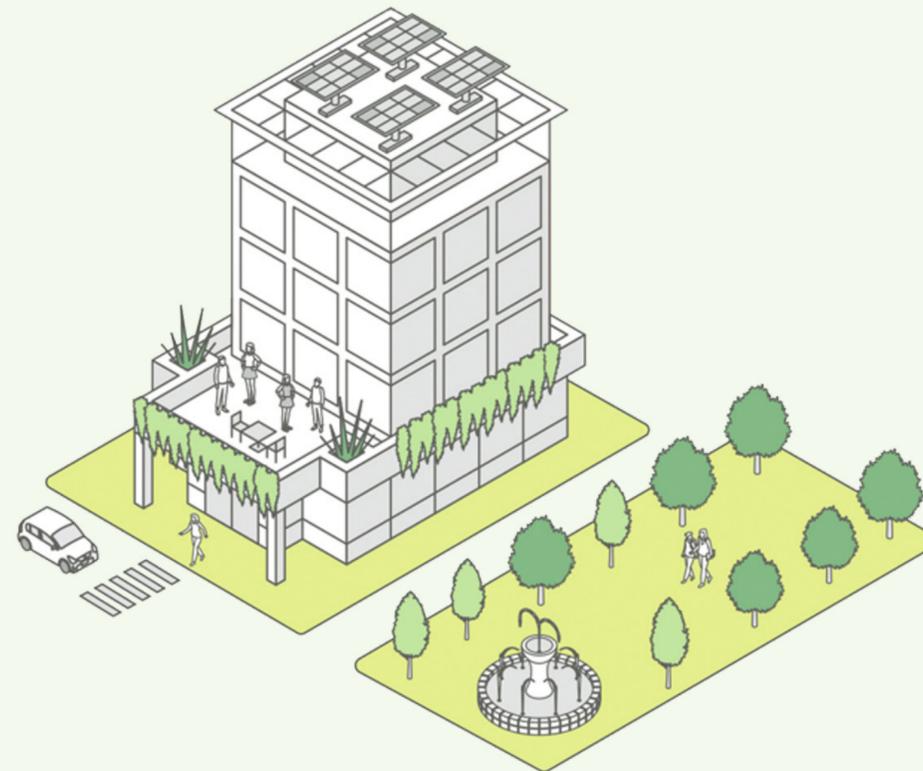
### Resilient

Encourages solutions that address the capacity of the building to bounce back from short-term shocks and long-term stresses.



### Positive

Encourages a positive contribution to key environmental issues of carbon, water, and the impact of materials.



### Places

Supports the creation of safe, enjoyable, integrated and comfortable places.



### People

Encourages solutions that address the social health of the community.



### Nature

Encourages active connections between people and nature and rewards creating biodiverse green spaces in cities.



### Leadership

Recognises projects that set a strategic direction, build a vision for industry, or enhance the industry's capacity to innovate.



### Built with lower upfront emissions

Uses lower carbon products and incentivises change in the supply chain.



### Fossil fuel free

The building does not use fossil fuels for heating, cooling, cooking or power, de-risking buildings from the gas crisis.



### Highly efficient

Reduced energy use means lower costs for landlords and tenants meaning less costs for taxpayers.



### Offset with nature

After reducing all greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible, the building procures credible nature-based offsets.

## A clear path to reach your decarbonisation goals

**New Zealand's second Emissions Reduction Plan aims for 51-55% reduction in green house gas emissions from 2005 levels by the end of 2035.**

**Decarbonisation is essential to ensure the longevity of assets.**

Green Star Buildings includes the Net Zero Ready Pathway – a clear set of targets aligned with the IPCC recommendations, helping you deliver a Net Zero building that's fossil fuel free, powered by renewables, highly efficient, built with lower carbon materials and offset with nature.

\* Projects registering from May 2026 and targeting 5 or 6 Star must meet the Net Zero Pathway. Please see the submissions guidelines for full requirements.

## Healthier buildings with better social connection

It's clear that the design and construction of our buildings must go beyond efficiency. Buildings – particularly social infrastructure, have a crucial role to play in providing healthier spaces that enhance social connectedness. With Green Star Buildings you have access to an internationally recognised set of best practice benchmarks in the areas of health, people and places. These enable you to deliver a healthier, more responsible and socially connected building that will benefit the community today, and tomorrow.

# How Green Star Buildings delivers healthier buildings that are better for people



### Healthy

The healthy category features 6 credits that sets better standards for cleaner air, more natural light, better connection to nature, healthier materials and enhanced facilities.

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### People

The people category has 4 credits that help you ensure a better, more inclusive construction site, incorporate Indigenous design, engage a more diverse workforce and ensure an inclusive building.

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### Places

The places category has 4 credits that will help you support healthy and active living, create an asset that inspires community connection and supports low carbon travel.

# Greater resilience, for today and tomorrow

**The need to improve the resilience of social infrastructure has never been more urgent as New Zealand faces greater uncertainty from the effects of a growing list of shocks and stressors.**

New Zealanders deserve to be confident that social infrastructure and other government-funded projects have been thoroughly risk-assessed and that appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures have been applied.

While publicly available guidance on how to manage, build and plan for greater resilience can be difficult to find, with Green Star Buildings you have access to an internationally-recognised set of benchmarks in resilience, and receive independent verification your asset meets this criteria.

## How Green Star Buildings drives better, more resilient buildings – fit for New Zealand.



### Climate change resilience

Enables you to plan and prepare for potential climate risks.



### Operations resilience

Helps you understand how the building will withstand shocks and stresses such as pandemic and infrastructure failure.



### Community resilience

Builds the resilience of the community that interacts with the building.



### Heat resilience

Reduces the building's contributions to the heat island effect.



### Grid resilience

Allows you to build a smart building that supports the functioning of the grid as it transitions to renewables.

# Rigour you can rely on

**Verifying sustainability achievements through an independent certification process is essential. Here are three ways Green Star certification delivers assurance for governments.**

## Share sustainability claims with confidence

With the Commerce Commission of New Zealand increasingly focused on green claims, certifying your asset through a robust, internationally-recognised and trusted certification such as Green Star, will enable you to share your sustainability outcomes with confidence, knowing that your project has passed the rigour of an independent assessment.

## Ensure you achieve the outcomes you're looking for

The rigour of an independent process ensures that sustainability features committed to at the outset of a project are less likely to be 'managed out' as the project progresses. Cost-cutting and substitutions can erode the quality of the final outcome, but a commitment to achieving Green Star certification minimises this risk.

## A more efficient process, supporting better collaboration

Through Green Star, project teams have access to industry-agreed, best practice benchmarks that provide a common language for sustainability. This promotes an integrated team approach to design that can lead to early adoption of sustainability features, early identification of project interdependencies, greater efficiencies, and fewer design conflicts.

# Built to align with government procurement requirements

How Green Star supports reporting on, and achieving, New Zealand government procurement guidelines.

New Zealand Government Procurement Guidelines	Procurement Considerations	Green Star
Whole-of-Life: Construction procurement guidelines 2019 <sup>34</sup>	Through-life cost	Green Star has credits focused on energy, water, materials and maintainability that help a project consider, plan and maximise efficiency and value throughout the life of a building.
	Environment	Green Star requires projects to provide evidence of how they will deliver energy, water and emissions performance that is demonstrably better than minimum standards required by the building code.
Sustainable Construction: Construction procurement guidelines 2019 <sup>35</sup>	Utilising low-impact, sustainable construction materials	Green Star material credits encourage and reward materials that are re-used, recycled, sourced locally, sourced sustainably, have low emissions, and do not include harmful chemicals. Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) requirements can improve transparency and assist life cycle analyses.
	Minimising construction waste and re-using existing built assets	There is a Green Star Materials credit that rewards retaining or reusing existing structures and materials. There is also a credit that rewards minimising and recycling construction and demolition waste.
	Minimising energy and water consumption	The Green Star Energy category is focused on reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions. The Water category encourages reduced consumption of potable water.
Strengthened procurement rules, September 2020 <sup>36</sup>	Assess the GHG emissions resulting from the materials and construction processes used	Green Star encourages projects to consider the lifecycle impacts of materials such as concrete and steel. These materials have high embodied energy, and Green Star encourages projects to consider how to reduce volumes, substitute for lower-carbon alternatives such as timber, or consider reusing rather than demolishing existing structures.

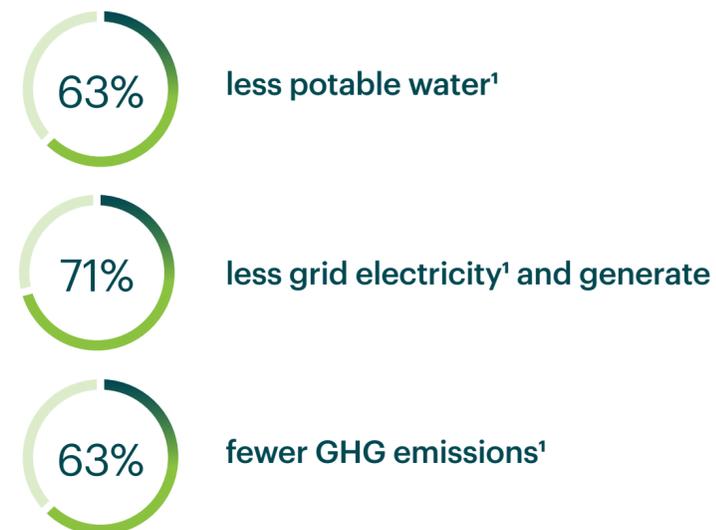
# Better buildings for better outcomes

Green Star Buildings' holistic approach will help you embed economic, social and environmentally sustainable outcomes into your building – with benefits for both government and the community.

## For your building

World Green Building Council (WorldGBC) research has shown that 20% of total construction costs is saved over a green building's lifetime from energy efficiency alone.<sup>1</sup>

Analysis has shown that Green Star-certified buildings cost significantly less to run and use:



1. WorldGBC. 2013. The business case for green building; 2. Green Building of Australia data. November 2023.



## Help reduce maintenance and retrofit costs

Building to best practice benchmarks can help reduce maintenance costs and the need for retrofits.

## For New Zealand



## A responsible investment

Building a more resilient, healthier and decarbonised building will help future-proof your asset, meaning a more responsible investment of public funds. Investors in nominal sovereign bond products are interested in climate and environmental actions governments are taking. Green building certifications increase the amount of debt classified as green in the New Zealand Sovereign Green Bond increasing its attractiveness to investors.



## Local economic opportunities

Green Star incentivises local procurement and supply chains, helping you stimulate economic opportunity, employment and skills development in your region.



## Diverting waste from landfill

Construction and demolition waste must be diverted from landfill from every Green Star Building.

# Social infrastructure certified by Green Star

## Community buildings

Libraries, museums,  
town halls and offices



**Te Hono Avondale Community Centre and library**  
Auckland Council  
5 Star Green Star Design & As Built NZ v1.0 Design rating

## Transport

Bus, train stations,  
and airports



**AIAL Transport Hub 1 Operational Offices**  
Auckland Airport  
6 Star Green Star Design & As Built NZ v1.0

## Government offices



**Te Rua Archives**  
Department of Internal Affairs  
5 Star Green Star Design & As Built NZ v1.0

## Healthcare

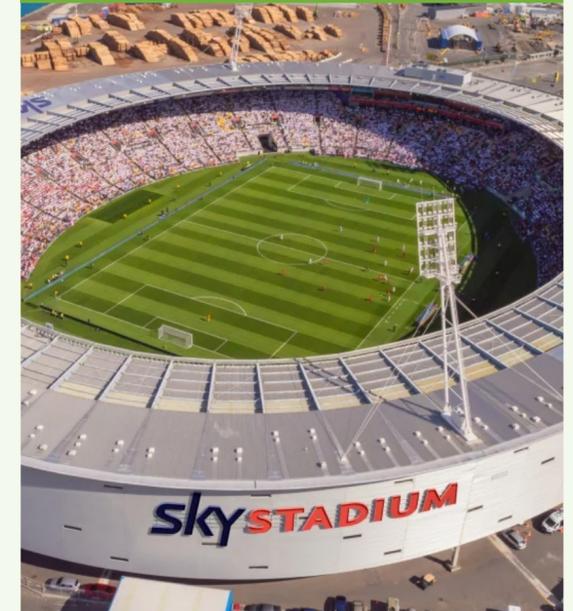
Hospitals and  
community health centres



**New Dunedin Hospital - Outpatients Building**  
Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand  
5 Star Green Star Design & As Built NZ v1.0 Design rating

## Sports facilities

Aquatic centres, stadiums and  
leisure centres



**Wellington Regional Stadium - Sky Stadium**  
Wellington Regional Stadium Trust  
3 Star Green Star Performance NZ v1.2

# A tool in your procurement and planning toolkits

**In addition to helping you deliver better community and government assets, you can use Green Star as an invaluable tool to help you accelerate the transition to a more sustainable supply chain, boost industry capacity and improve ESD outcomes for the whole community.**

## Green Star Buildings in planning policy

- Providing incentives for projects that commit to achieving Green Star certification in the planning stage (e.g. reduced development application fees, infrastructure charges rebates, deferral of fees, height and density bonuses, green door policies).
- Developing sustainable development policy that aligns with and encourages the use of Green Star rating tools.
- Incorporating Green Star requirements for new developments where appropriate. For example, where government-owned or controlled land is divested, leased or offered for development as a joint venture.

## Green Star Buildings in procurement

Procurement is a powerful lever for governments to enable and accelerate change in industry and the supply chain.

When governments set clear targets and minimum requirements for sustainability outcomes within procurement policy, such as requiring Green Star Buildings certification for their own projects, it sends a clear message to industry and the supply chain. Certainty and consistency in government procurement requirements allow industry and supply chain stakeholders to invest in innovation, sourcing and developing low-carbon products, materials and technologies, and developing sustainability skills and capacity.

*If your council or department is considering how to include Green Star in planning or procurement policy, we would love to discuss it with you.*

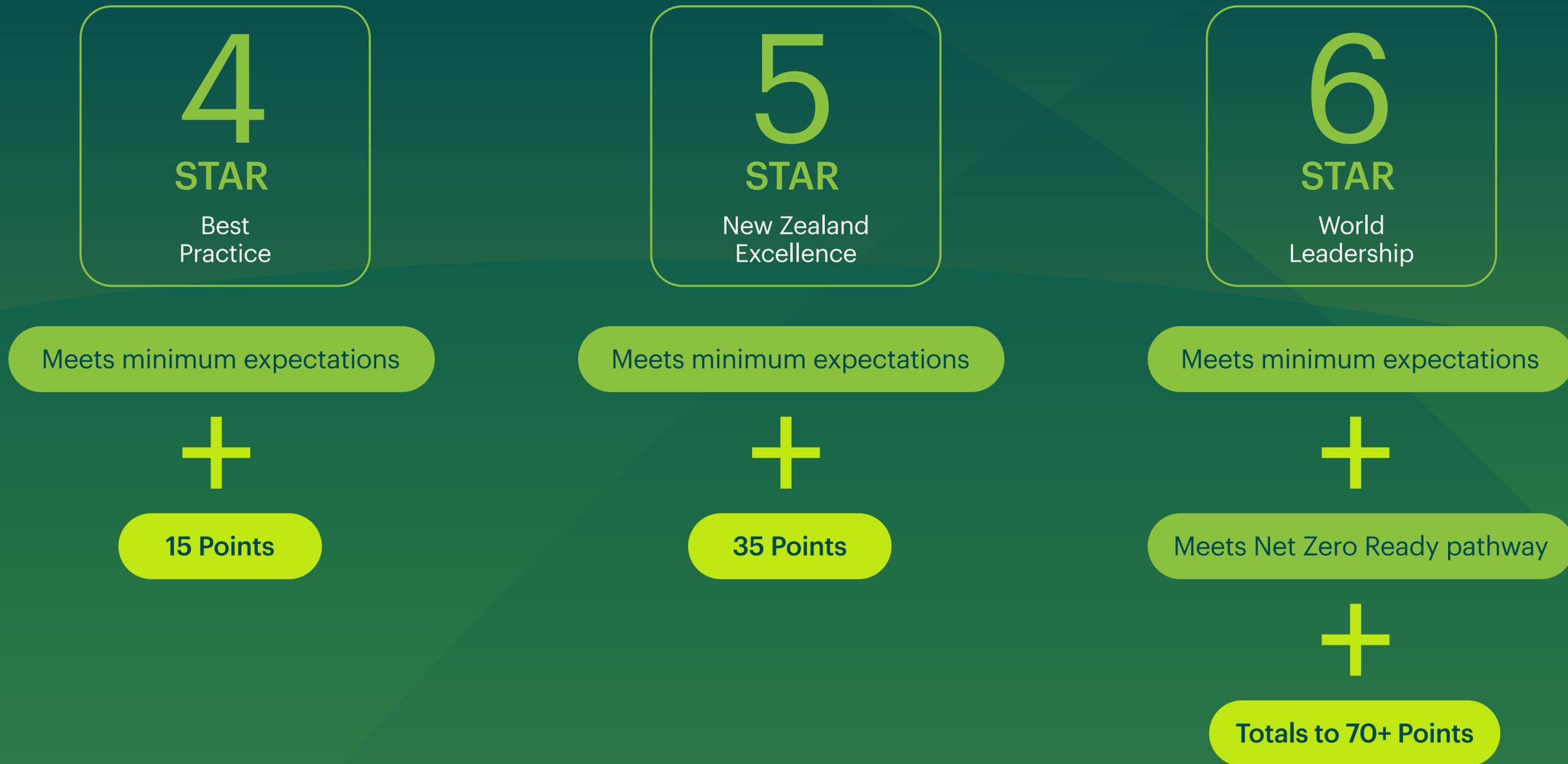
*Please contact [greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz](mailto:greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz)*

# Green Star Buildings put you ahead in a changing world



Fishermans Bend Campus  
University of Melbourne  
Targeting a 6 Star Green Star Buildings rating

# A more accessible pathway to best practice



# The Powerhouse Parramatta

**Taking shape as the first NSW state cultural institution to be based in Western Sydney, the Powerhouse Parramatta project team turned to Green Star Buildings to deliver a better, sustainable, future ready community asset.**

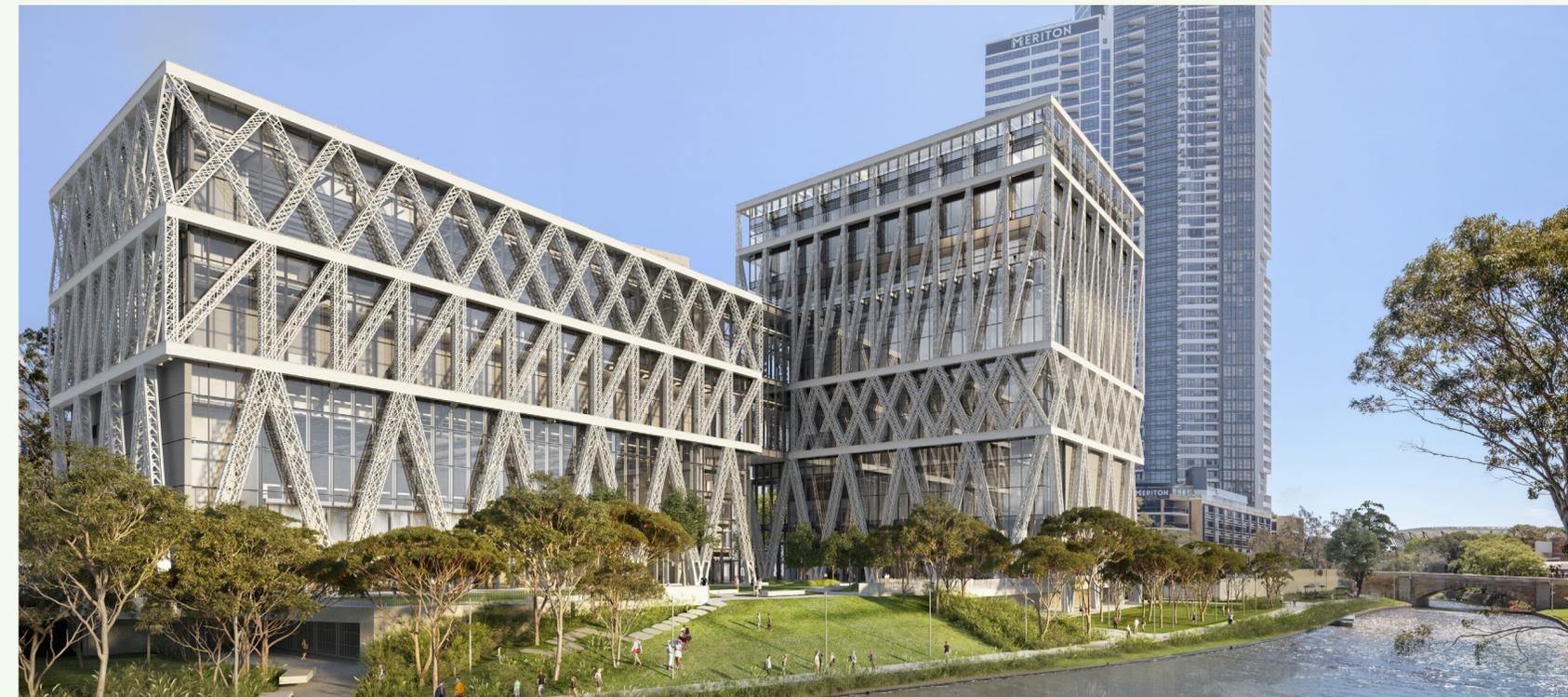
“As the largest cultural infrastructure project in Australia since the Sydney Opera House, it was only fitting that the Powerhouse Parramatta project should use the latest Green Star Buildings rating tool and target a 6 Star outcome,” said Powerhouse Climate and Sustainability Manager, Carmel Reyes.

Sustainable and climate resilient design is completely integrated into the Powerhouse Parramatta project, which will be fossil fuel free with net zero emissions from day one of operations.

In addition, the positive community and social impacts will be widespread. The inclusion of the Lang Walker Family Academy will give access to students from Greater Sydney and regional NSW, to participate in world class STEM education and overnight stays, while a public productive rooftop garden and fossil fuel free demonstration kitchen will engage communities with the histories, stories and futures of agriculture, manufacturing, changing land use, food production and cultural diversity.

## Fast facts

- Operating with net zero carbon emissions using 100% renewable electricity from opening
- Australia’s first use of renewable diesel on a construction site
- 40% reduction in upfront carbon emissions



“The Green Star Buildings rating tool gives recognition to social sustainability initiatives and creates an avenue for Powerhouse to collaborate with GreenBuilding Council of Australia to lift the standard of what public buildings have to offer the community.”

— **Carmel Reyes**, Sustainability Director at Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences

# The process

Green Star certification is a simple but robust online process managed by the New Zealand Green Building Council.



1

## Register your project

Register your project directly using our online platform. Please check that your project meets the eligibility criteria.

**If you have any questions, contact us at [meteam@gbca.org.au](mailto:meteam@gbca.org.au)**



2

## Submit your documentation

Get familiar with our submission guidelines and the documents needed to show your project meets our benchmarks, then submit them to us.



3

## Get your project assessed

A selected assessor from our independent panel of sustainability experts will assess your submission, give feedback and/or confirm certification.



4

## Promote your achievement

Once you're certified you're ready to share your achievement with the world!

# Powerful alone, better together

**A Green Star Buildings rating works hand in hand with a Green Star Performance rating to ensure that your building is sustainable from its inception through to its operation.**

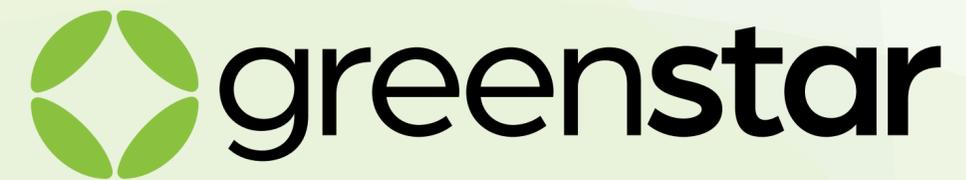
Over 250 buildings are certifying annually with Green Star Performance or NABERSNZ which evaluates the performance of buildings in the operational phase.

Undertaking a Green Star Buildings rating ensures that your building is designed and constructed to the best practice sustainability standards. This sets you up with features required to operate efficiently, be better for people and contribute positively to the community. And, enables you to pursue higher Green Star Performance ratings as the building moves through its operating lifecycle.

- Optimise resources towards best possible outcomes
- Ensure your building is performing to its full potential
- Maintain a high value asset as part of your portfolio

Demonstrate exceptional leadership and enjoy the financial and operational benefits of a building that is truly sustainable in all aspects.





# Start the journey towards better

If you're ready to start the journey towards a better built future, [greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz](mailto:greenstarnz@nzgbc.org.nz) for more information or request briefing.

