

# Technical Clarification, CIR Rulings and Additional Guidance

## Green Star Communities

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***November 2019***

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**Technical Clarifications** are an extension to the guidance provided in the Technical Manual. They clarify, rather than amend, the Credit Criteria or Compliance Requirements. Technical Clarifications often represent the NZGBC's answers to technical queries and NZGBC Assessors will use these as precedent when assessing submissions.

**Credit Interpretation Requests (CIR)** relate to situations where it is believed there are alternative yet equivalent ways to comply with the aim of the Credit. Projects are invited to submit CIRs for their project and provide sufficient evidence to allow a ruling to be made. CIR rulings are then published to provide guidance to other projects; however, each project must submit its own CIR and provide evidence relating to its own building to support their request.

Please ensure you have downloaded the latest version of TCs and CIRs from the website at [www.nzgbc.org.nz](http://www.nzgbc.org.nz)

**New TCs this month: 5, 9.2, 18.2A, 33, 17.1, 33E**

**New CIRs this month:**

CIR/TC	Date Released	Criteria No.	Credit Name	Amendment/Approved Ruling
TC	11/2018	25A	Greenhouse Gas Strategy – Performance Pathway	<p>The GBCA confirms that the outlined calculation <a href="#">methodology</a> proposed by the NZBGC to determine the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the proposed and reference models is approved for projects to use in the Greenhouse Gas Strategy – Performance pathway (25A) for Green Star - Communities projects in New Zealand.</p> <p>This approval may be applied to the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing;</li> <li>• Buildings other than housing;</li> <li>• Infrastructure Lighting;</li> <li>• On-site Renewable Energy;</li> <li>• Shared Services; and</li> <li>• Existing Buildings.</li> </ul> <p>The GBCA notes the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the Masterplanning phase, only energy and greenhouse gas emission savings attributed to building elements that are committed to may be included in energy calculations</li> <li>• The reference building requirements are outlined in Table 1 attached.</li> <li>• For all building typologies, the minimum requirement is the minimum legislated requirement under the New Zealand Building Code</li> <li>• Where project teams deviate from the approved methodology, a Credit Interpretation Request must be lodged with the NZGBC.</li> </ul> <p>The GBCA also approves the proposed Greenhouse Gas Emission factors listed in Table 2 attached.</p> <p>The calculation of points and the documentation Requirements remain unchanged.</p>
TC	04/2019	28	Sustainable Sites	<p>The current Credit 28.0 conditional requirement is replaced with the following NZ criteria and documentation requirements.</p> <p><u>Conditional requirement</u></p> <p>To achieve a certified rating under the Green Star – Communities rating tool the project must not be located on a site of high ecological value. This requirement is met where, at the date of site purchase or option contract, the project site did not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include land containing significant native plants or old growth forest that cannot be practically retained within the proposed development</li> <li>• Include prime agricultural land;</li> <li>• Include or be located within 100m of a wetland of ‘High National Importance’ ;</li> <li>• Include land containing threatened plant communities or organisms; and</li> <li>• Include land defined as a conservation area under the Conservation Act 1987</li> <li>• Impact on Matters of National Importance as defined in the Resource Management Act, 1991, Section 6 which covers:</li> </ul>

CIR/TC	Date Released	Criteria No.	Credit Name	Amendment/Approved Ruling
				<p>a) the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:</p> <p>b) the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:</p> <p>c) the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna:</p> <p>d) the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers:</p> <p>e) the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga:</p> <p>f) the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:</p> <p>g) the protection of protected customary rights:</p> <p>h) the management of significant risks from natural hazards.</p> <p>If the site is part of a greenfield development, NZGBC recommend use of local authority GIS mapping to determine compliance.</p> <p>Please contact NZGBC for further guidance. Where any of the above listed conditions is present on a project site, the project team should notify and discuss with NZGBC to determine whether this affects the project's eligibility.</p> <p>If the development does not require a Resource Consent then it is deemed to be compliant with this Conditional Requirement.</p> <p>NZGBC may request that full documentation be submitted prior to registration to determine project eligibility.</p> <p><u>Documentation Requirements</u></p> <p>Initial Certification and re-certification requirements: Screenshots or copies of Local Council maps with relevant overlays applied, demonstrating that the development avoids environmentally sensitive sites (as provided for under section 6 of the Resource Management Act) If any sensitive sites are affected, the project must provide evidence which sets out how any impacts will be avoided, remedied or mitigated, having regard to section 6 and the provisions of the relevant territorial authority Plan.</p>
TC	10/2019	5	Corporate Responsibility	<p>It is acceptable for projects to demonstrate compliance with the Corporate Responsibility criterion through a combination of policies.</p> <p>Each nominated policy must be publicly available and be adopted at an executive or board level.</p> <p>In order to demonstrate that a set of nominated policies are collectively equivalent to a Corporate Responsibility Policy, project applicants need to provide extracts from the nominated documents to demonstrate how the seven core subjects, detailed in ISO 26000, are addressed. These core subjects are outlined on page 90 of the Green Star - Communities v1.1 Submission Guidelines.</p>
TC	10/2019	9.2	Recreational Facilities	<p>The project team still can target Recreational Facilities if the site cannot meet the 2.83 ha of open space per 1,000 people standard, but a technical question to demonstrate your approach should be submitted to the GBCA for review and approval.</p> <p>As stated in the Green Star - Communities v1.0 Submission Guidelines, the aim of the Healthy and Active Living credit criterion Recreational Facilities is to ensure 'habitable buildings have easy access to both a local park and at least one publicly accessible sports facility'.</p>

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				The GBCA acknowledges that best practice standards can be defined in a number of qualitative and quantitative ways, not simply as a minimum per capita provision, and therefore the limitations of a site should not prohibit the project team from targeting the credit. As such, the 2.83 ha of open space per 1,000 people should not be a minimum requirement.
TC	10/2019	18.2A	Diverse Local Employment – Performance Pathway	Jobs from each Type B industry sector need to be 50% or less of all local jobs available, as industry sectors in the Type B category are considered separately. I.e. In order to demonstrate compliance with Credit 18.2A 'Diverse Local Employment', no more than 50% of all jobs in the local area can be from a single Type B industry sector. See submission guidelines for industry sector classifications.
TC	10/2019	33	Innovation	Innovation points awarded at the Initial Certification period are not automatically awarded at the Recertification stage. Project teams are required to demonstrate that Innovation claims have been put in action and are still considered to be innovative at the time of Recertification.
TC	10/2019	17.1	Residential Affordability Strategies	<p>Can retail projects take an alternate pathway targeting 17.1- Performance Pathway from Green Star Design &amp; As Built?</p> <p>Yes. Walk score is determined on two factors: walking distance, and pedestrian friendliness. GBCA accepts the following alternative approach for determining the walking distance on the condition the project team also meets requirements for pedestrian friendliness outlined below.</p> <p>Determine the walking distance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calculate the residential units/houses that can be covered within a 400m radius (50 Ha) from the main entrance of the retail centre.</li> </ul> <p>Residential units/houses shall be determined based on the local council residential zoning available at the time of submission. Residential zones are here defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R1 - General Residential</li> <li>R2 - Low Density Residential</li> <li>R3 - Medium Density Residential</li> <li>R4 - High Density Residential</li> </ul> <p>Determine the pedestrian friendliness: The project team are to demonstrate the following are satisfied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated pathways and cycle lanes must be safe and accessible and provided for both pedestrians and cyclists; and,</li> </ul>

CIR/TC	Date Released	Criteria No.	Credit Name	Amendment/Approved Ruling								
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foot and cycle paths on site must be connected to foot and cycle paths off the site providing access to the compliant residential development(s) with dedicated crossings where these paths cross vehicular routes (e.g. pathway, corridor, overpass, underpass); and,</li> <li>Adequate lighting to foot and cycle.</li> </ul> <p>Points Allocation All areas must meet the pedestrian friendliness requirements outlined above in order to claim points. Points shall be determined based on the following table:</p> <table> <thead> <tr> <th>Residential dwellings within the 400m radius</th> <th>Points available</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>10-24 dwellings/hectare</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-40 dwellings/hectare</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40+ dwellings/hectare</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Documentation requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local council zoning plans used to determine the zoning area for the residential areas within the 400m from the projects entrance.</li> <li>Detailing how the dedicated pathways and cycle lanes have been designed.</li> <li>Detailing the lighting provision to foot and cycle paths.</li> </ul> <p>Other project types such as education (e.g. university) or public buildings (e.g. stadium) wanting to pursue this pathway should contact the GBCA.</p>	Residential dwellings within the 400m radius	Points available	10-24 dwellings/hectare	1	25-40 dwellings/hectare	2	40+ dwellings/hectare	3
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TC	10/2019	33E	Innovation - Global Sustainability	<p>Yes. Projects registered under a Green Star - Communities rating tool may target the 'High Quality Staff Support' criterion of the Green Star - Design &amp; As Built v1.2 rating tool.</p> <p>The claim is to be submitted as follows: - For Green Star - Communities v1.1, submit under the 'Global Sustainability' innovation category;</p> <p>The project may target a maximum of one (1) point for this innovation claim. This FAQ expires when a new version of criterion 7.2 is released.</p> <p>Compliance requirements: Compliance requirements are as per criterion 7.3 of Green Star - Design &amp; As Built v1.2, outlined below for ease of reference. Please note that there are two requirements in the criterion. In order to achieve the innovation point, both requirements need to be demonstrated.</p>								

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				<p><b>7.3 HIGH QUALITY STAFF SUPPORT</b></p> <p>One (1) point is available where high quality staff support practices are in place that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promote positive mental and physical health outcomes of site activities and culture of site workers, through programs and solutions on site in accordance with 7.3.1; and,</li> <li>- Enhance site workers’ knowledge on sustainable practices through on-site, off-site, or online education programs in accordance with 7.3.2.</li> </ul> <p><b>7.3.1 Health Impacts of Site Activities</b></p> <p>To comply with this requirement, programs and policies in place must go beyond legal requirements for occupational health and safety (OHS) and extend into wellbeing promotion. The responsible party must implement policies and programs to promote health and wellbeing on-site. The programs must target both physical and mental health outcomes.</p> <p>At least three distinct issues, with one of those specifically addressing mental health impacts, must be addressed. Issues that may be considered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- healthier eating and active living</li> <li>- reduced harmful alcohol and drug and tobacco-free living</li> <li>- increase social cohesion, community, and cultural participation</li> <li>- understanding depression</li> <li>- preventing violence and injury</li> <li>- suicide prevention</li> <li>- decrease psychological distress</li> </ul> <p>The responsible party should carry a needs analysis of site workers and contractors to determine appropriate actions. The policies and programs must be relevant to all construction workers on site for the whole duration of construction. A mix of programs is acceptable throughout the duration of construction. A list of suggested programs or policies which could be implemented on the project can be found in the guidance section.</p> <p>Refer FAQ F-00057 for further guidance on these requirements.</p> <p><b>7.3.2 Knowledge of Sustainable Practices</b></p> <p>The responsible party must provide training to site workers on project specific sustainable practices and initiatives. The training must include information on any sustainable building certification(s) sought; explain the value of certification; and the role site workers play in delivering a sustainable certified building.</p> <p>The training must be provided to all contractors and subcontractors that were present for at least three days on site. Training can be provided through one, or a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On-site training, such as by including the items above as part of site induction practices.</li> </ul>

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Off-site training, such as by providing sustainability training to site workers via a TAFE or similar program within the last 3 years.</li> <li>- Online training, such as by a third-party service that can provide training on sustainability topics and track personnel who have taken the relevant materials within the last three years.</li> </ul> <p>Documentation requirements. Please provide the following with your submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Global Sustainability Submission Template.</li> <li>- Extracts of evidence detailing the programs and policies implemented to promote health and wellbeing on site.</li> <li>- Evidence detailing the process to manage training, and track workers trained. Examples of evidence include extracts from the training policy, a report from a third-party provider, or similar.</li> <li>- Extracts of training such as screenshots, presentation, or similar, showing the information provided as part of training.</li> <li>- Copy of this FAQ.</li> </ul>