

## Green Star Communities- Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for assessment under the Green Star – Communities rating tool, projects must meet all four of the eligibility criteria detailed below:

- 1- Space Use;
- 2- Spatial Differentiation;
- 3- Conditional Requirement; and
- 4- Timing of Certification.

It is the responsibility of each applicant to check the eligibility criteria on the GBCA website, which are current at the time of project registration, to ensure that their project is eligible. If unsure, any applicant can request an eligibility ruling from the GBCA, via the eligibility form on the GBCA website.

Registration of a project does not guarantee assessment. If a project has not received an eligibility ruling, a project can be deemed ineligible at any point, prior to or during the assessment, where it is found to not meet the eligibility criteria current at the time of registration. In addition, the GBCA reserves the right to deny eligibility to any project that is considered to compromise the Green Star brand.

### Space Use:

To meet the Space Use eligibility criterion, a project's plan for development must include the development of any size and mixture of Class 1-9 structures (except Class 4), as classified under the National Construction Code (NCC).

There are no size requirements imposed for Green Star – Communities project eligibility. Instead the rating tool is designed to be used by projects where the majority of the following points would apply:

- The development will result in significant extra burdens on public transport systems or highways requiring extra capacity or new transport infrastructure (cycle/pedestrian routes, roads, parking, etc.);
- The development includes or makes use of adjacent areas of public realm for occupants and visitors;
- The development will lead to the enhancement, diversification or addition of local employment, social mix, or ecological value;
- The development includes dwellings that will require the provision of new, or additional capacity in existing, medical centres, schools, retail centres, places of religious worship, and other similar facilities and services;
- The scale of the development could create opportunities for community-level provision of utilities including energy, water and waste services or

where there would be potential for linking the project to other new or existing developments in the area to make such options viable;

- The development is likely to have a significant impact on existing communities.

A project should be able to apply the majority of these statements to their development. It is not an exhaustive list, but a guideline as to the attributes of the types of developments that will benefit from the application of the Green Star – Communities rating tool.

## **Spatial Differentiation**

To meet the Spatial Differentiation eligibility criterion, a project must be clearly distinct. The project must have a clear site boundary or study area that is subject to a 'plan of development'. The development and its implementation must be managed by a government, private sector, or community-owned development entity. A Green Star – Communities rating must provide a meaningful result, and send a clear message to the marketplace, about a distinct project.

## **Timing of Submission for Certification**

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

To meet the Timing of Certification eligibility criterion, projects must meet the following timing requirements:

- Initial project certification must be achieved within three years of registration; and
- Recertification must be achieved within five years of the initial certification and every five years thereafter until the project is fully built-out.

Where a registered project does not seek initial certification within three years of the initial registration date, a maximum of one extension of time may be requested. The maximum extension period allowed is 12 months (see 'Certifying your Project').

## Conditional Requirements

To receive a certified rating, a project must:

- Be able to achieve at least a 4 Green Star rating (see 'Green Star Ratings'); and
- Receive approval, in cases where the project is subject to approval under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act as a controlled action (note that approval is not required prior to registration, see credit number 28 Sustainable Sites).

**Note:** Please see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for New Zealand specific Sustainable Site requirements.

## 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.

## **Appendix 1: New Zealand additions to Credit 28, Sustainable Sites for Green Star Communities**

The current conditional requirement for credit 28 is replaced with the following New Zealand criteria and documentation requirements.

### **Conditional Requirement:**

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:

- Include land containing significant native plants or old growth forest that cannot be practically retained within the proposed development
- Include prime agricultural land;
- Include or be located within 100m of a wetland of ‘High National Importance’;
- Include land containing threatened plant communities or organisms; and
- Include land defined as a conservation area under the Conservation Act 1987
- Impact on Matters of National Importance as defined in the Resource Management Act, 1991, Section 6 which covers:
  - 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:
  - b) the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:
  - c) the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna:
  - d) the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers:
  - e) the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga:
  - f) the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development: g) the protection of protected customary rights:
  - h) the management of significant risks from natural hazards. If the site is part of a greenfield development, NZGBC recommend use of local authority GIS mapping to determine compliance.

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. If the development does not require a Resource Consent then it is deemed to be compliant with this Conditional Requirement. NZGBC may request that full documentation be submitted prior to registration to determine project eligibility.

**Documentation Requirements:**

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.

## **Appendix 2: Prime Agriculture Land Clarification**

Green Star NZ - Design and As Built tool have as a conditional requirement that the land to be built on is not Prime Agricultural Land. The Government is proposing a National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land (NPS-HPL) to improve the way highly productive land is managed under the Resource Management Act 1991, more information here <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/consultations/proposed-national-policy-statement-for-highly-productive-land/>

In light of our recent survey and developments in central government around this issue NZGBC has decided the forthcoming Highly Productive Land guidance is very likely to be used in Green Star. From this point forward any mention of “Prime Agricultural Land” will be replaced with “Highly Productive Land.” Once the final NPS-HPL Statement is issued, if any significant modifications to this TQ is necessary, an updated TQ will be issued.

The criteria for Highly Productive Land will be:

- 1.** The capability and versatility of the land to support primary production based on the LUC classification system (currently this will be LUC1-3 land using this website <https://iris.scinfo.org.nz/layer/48076-nzlri-land-use-capability/>)
- 2.** Highly Productive Land excludes all urban zoned areas and all future urban zoned areas in district plans.

Project teams are highly encouraged to ensure their site fulfil the minimal requirements in the Sustainable Sites credit prior to expending time on a project. If there are any questions about this credit the project team is highly encouraged to contact NZGBC for clarification.

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. If the development does not require a Resource Consent, then it is deemed to be compliant with this Conditional Requirement.