

# **Additional eligibility guidance for Green Star – Communities projects registering in New Zealand**

Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) and New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) have an agreement in place to allow Green Star projects in New Zealand to use the Green Star – Communities rating tool. The registration, assessment and certification process for those projects is managed by GBCA. NZGBC provides support in stakeholder engagement, general advice to projects and post certification promotion.

This guidance applies to the conditional requirement within Credit 28, and the current requirement around prime agricultural land. All other eligibility criteria for Green Star – Communities must be met. Project teams are responsible for ensuring eligibility of their project. If needed, an Eligibility Query can be lodged with GBCA to clarify eligibility of a project.

## Credit 28 conditional requirement

The current Credit 28.0 conditional requirement is replaced with the following NZ 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 purchaser 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
- 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:
  - 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
  - the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development
  - the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna
  - the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers
  - the relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga
  - the protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development
  - the protection of protected customary rights
  - 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.

### Prime Agricultural Land clarification

Both the Green Star – Design and As Built and Green Star – Communities tools have as a conditional requirement in New Zealand that the land to be built on is not Prime Agricultural Land. The New Zealand 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](#)).

In light of the recent NZGBC 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:**

- 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](#))
- 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.