

NEWS & INSIGHTS

A Tenant's Guide to Green Buildings



By Saatyesh Bhana, Head of Sustainability.

In recent years, the concept of sustainability has become increasingly relevant in many aspects of our lives, including where we live and work. As more people grasp the importance of reducing their environmental footprint, the demand for green buildings has grown. Whether you're searching for a new office or industrial space for your business, choosing a green building can offer a range of benefits. However, for many tenants navigating the world of green buildings can be challenging. In this article we use our market-leading skills and

experience in green building to address the most common question we hear.

What is a green building?

Green buildings, also known as sustainable buildings, are designed, certified and operated with a focus on environmental sustainability and energy efficiency. These structures are built to minimise their impact on the environment throughout their lifecycle, from construction (how and what they're made of) to operation (energy efficiency etc.) and eventual demolition. They incorporate various features and technologies to achieve sustainability goals and will generally include energy-efficient appliances (HVAC), renewable energy sources (solar), water conservation systems (rainwater harvesting), and environmentally friendly materials.

What's the benefit of a green building?

Choosing a green building for the next stage of your business growth can offer many benefits, from reducing your environmental footprint, reducing your operating costs (and improving your bottom line) to improving your efficiency. There is also international evidence that green spaces offer better working conditions leading to greater worker wellbeing, productivity and reduced absenteeism – all positive outcomes for business owners.

And of course, operating out of a green building helps a business achieve its sustainability goals and to attract a new generation of employees who are more conscious of their environmental impact.

What do the rating certifications mean?

Independent certifications such as Green Star (Built) and NABERSNZ (a system for rating the energy efficiency of office buildings backed by the NZ Government) provide assurance to tenants that a building meets specific sustainability standards. These certifications evaluate various aspects of a building's design, construction, and operation, helping tenants identify truly green buildings.

While these independent ratings are currently voluntary, our Head of Sustainability, Saatyesh Bhana, believes they should, and will, become mandatory over time to avoid false claims and 'green washing'.

What are the key factors I should consider in choosing a green building?

Energy Efficiency

One of the primary considerations when evaluating a green building is its energy efficiency. Energy-efficient features, such as air conditioning systems, intelligent LED lighting, high-performance windows, and insulation, can significantly reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Additionally, buildings that utilise renewable energy sources like solar panels or rain water further reduce their impact on the environment, making them more environmentally friendly and sustainable longer term.

Our Head of Development, Marilyn Storey, emphasises the importance of energy-efficient design in green buildings. "We aim to incorporate the latest energy-saving technologies into our developments. By reducing energy consumption, we not only contribute to environmental conservation but also provide long-term cost savings for our tenants."

Water Conservation

Features such as low-flow fixtures and rainwater harvesting systems can significantly reduce water usage. By conserving water resources, green buildings contribute to sustainability efforts and help mitigate the impact of water scarcity.

Indoor Air Quality

Green buildings often feature advanced ventilation systems and low-emission materials, which help maintain clean and healthy indoor environments. Improved air quality can lead to better occupier health and productivity, making it a significant benefit for tenants and their staff.

Head of Sustainability, Saatyesh Bhana, highlights the significance of indoor air quality. "We prioritise selecting materials and systems that promote indoor air quality to create healthy spaces. Our goal is to ensure our tenants and their staff feel comfortable while minimising the building's environmental impact."

End-of-journey facilities

Another key feature of a green building is the way it can support its occupants to reduce their carbon foot print. Facilities like showers, lockers and bike storage make it easier for employees to choose lower emission modes of transport like walking or running to work, cycling or catching public transport.

Why go green?

With an increasing emphasis on sustainability, green buildings are expected to play a big part in lowering New Zealand's carbon emissions. Selecting these environmentally friendly spaces, is not only good for the planet but also good for achieving tangible business outcomes.

In the words of our CEO, Peter Mence, "Green buildings represent the future of property development, where environmental responsibility and tenant well-being are paramount. We're focused on building a better future and are proud to lead the way in green building development. We continue to encourage tenants to focus on sustainable property options when considering their long term space requirements."