

Te Kāhui Whaihanga
**New Zealand Institute
of Architects**

Kaitiakitanga 2030

**A strategy for a regenerative built
environment: an introduction**

September 2026
Member Preview



Rukutia

Rukutia ngā pou tāhutahu o te whare nei

Rukutia ngā poupou o te whare nei

Rukutia ngā tukutuku o te whare nei

Rukutia rukutia

Kia ū, kia mau

Kia kohakoha ai

Ngā tāngata mō roto i a Tāne e tū nei

Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e!

Bind fast

Bind fast the ridgepole supports of this house

Bind fast the carved slabs of this house

Bind fast the woven panels of this house

Bind fast all parts of this house

That all may be firm and strong

May all be warm, may all be safe

Dwelling in Tāne standing here

Join together, so all may form an everlasting bond

Eruera Stirling

Foreword

Aotearoa's built environment is being shaped by decisions our profession makes every day. Those decisions carry responsibility for planetary health, the climate and the living systems we depend on, and for the generations who will inherit what we build.

Kaitiakitanga 2030 sets out how Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects and our members can meet that responsibility. It is grounded in Te Kawenata o Rāta and our obligations as kaitiaki, and it asks the profession to lead: to act now and build the capability the coming decade demands.

This document is a preview. The strategy is still being developed, and we are sharing it at this stage because we want members to help shape it.

Over the coming months, we will be listening. We encourage you to engage with the strategy, discuss it with us and tell us what you think. We cannot wait for the strategy to be finished to begin the work.

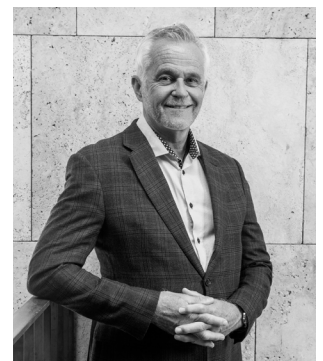
The path to 2030, and to 2050, starts with the work we do today.

We are proud to invite you to be part of it.



James Blackburne, President
Mark Abbot, Chief Executive

Te Kāhui Whaihanga
New Zealand Institute of Architects



Kaitiakitanga 2030 In Brief

Kaitiakitanga 2030 is Te Kāhui Whaihanga New Zealand Institute of Architects' strategy supporting architects to act now and lead Aotearoa's transition to a low-carbon, resilient and regenerative built environment.

It responds to the scale and pace of climate change and biodiversity loss, and to the impacts already being felt by communities across Aotearoa. The strategy equips the whole profession to make this shift through design, with approaches that strengthen the health of ecosystems and people, for current and future generations.

This conference handout is part of a member preview of the strategy. Over the coming months, the Institute will run a period of engagement to discuss the strategy, gather feedback and refine it ahead of its full launch. The strategy is still being developed, but the need to act is now: members and practices can begin measuring, reporting and setting building performance targets now.

The Institute defines sustainability as development that meets present needs without compromising future generations, while transitioning the built environment towards low-carbon, resilient, regenerative and socially equitable outcomes.

Our vision

By 2030, New Zealand architects are leading the built environment's response to the climate and biodiversity crisis. By 2050, architectural practice in Aotearoa is regenerative, restoring ecosystems, strengthening communities and honouring our obligations as kaitiaki of the land, water and sky.

What this means for members

Kaitiakitanga 2030 is a framework of design principles, outcomes and actions, built on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (the SDGs) and international institute frameworks, and adapted for Aotearoa practice.

It has two connected strands: an outward strand that supports members and practices to lead through design, advocacy and performance, and an inward strand that holds the Institute to account for its own operations, governance, awards and influence.

The 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment and building performance targets are a practical first step within that wider strategy, giving members a way to act now and build the capability the next decade demands. This is a chance to lead: to show what architecture in Aotearoa can achieve when the whole profession moves together, before the window closes.

The 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment asks practices to begin measuring and reporting now and set targets across the five areas of building performance:

- Operational energy
- 100% electric – no fossil fuels
- Embodied carbon
- Potable water use
- Overheating

It is voluntary, trust-based and designed to help practices of all sizes start where they are, build capability and contribute to shared progress across the profession.

Visit the Kaitiakitanga 2030 stand to learn more, discuss the draft strategy and share your feedback.

Failing to significantly change building design practice by 2030 will jeopardise our ability to meet the critical 1.5°C global warming limit. A low-emissions pathway with rapid reductions has the potential to hold warming to 1.5–2°C, while a high-emissions pathway is projected to reach 4°C or more. Holding to 1.5°C requires global emissions to fall by around 42% by 2030 from 2019 levels (UN, 2024).



Martins Farmhouse, Energy Architecture
Photo Credit: Andy Spain

1. Introduction

Every project begins with choices: where to build, what to keep, what to make, what to specify, how to use energy and water, and how a place supports people and the living systems around it. Those choices shape environmental performance for decades, and projects completing in 2030 are already being briefed, designed or procured now.

The built environment is responsible for a significant share of global and national emissions, energy use, resource use and waste. Architects cannot solve this alone, but we are involved early enough to influence the decisions that matter most, and delay now risks locking in avoidable and irreversible impacts for decades.

Kaitiakitanga 2030 gives the profession a shared roadmap, based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, aligned with international institute frameworks, and grounded in Te Kawenata o Rāta and the realities of practice in Aotearoa. It works across two connected strands: an outward strand for the profession and an inward strand that applies the same principles to the Institute's own operations, governance, awards, advocacy and accountability.

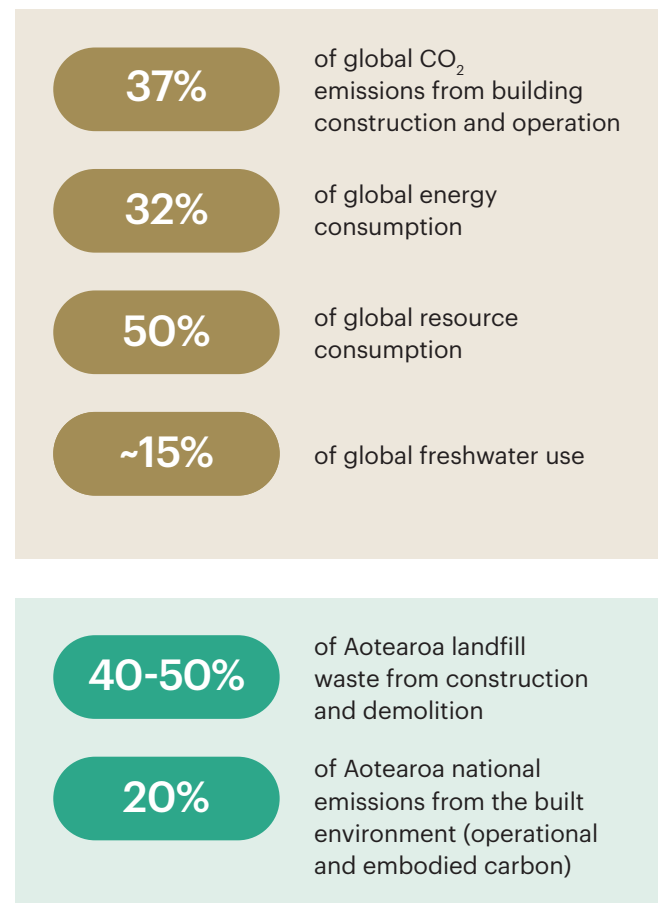
At its core is the 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment: a practical first step that members and practices can take now, ahead of its full launch in 2027. Waiting until launch would put the profession behind the pace of change. The sections that follow set out the context, the strategy and the commitment in more detail.



Pā Reo, Tennent Brown Architects
Photo Credit: Andy Spain

2. The Context: Why the Profession Must Lead

The built environment is interconnected with natural systems and planetary health. Buildings draw on living systems for their materials, energy and water, and return their impacts, both positive and negative, to those same systems across their full lifecycle. Globally and locally, the scale of that impact is significant:



Architects sit at the centre of this relationship, as decisions made at the design stage shape the trajectory of those impacts for decades. The profession's responsibility therefore extends beyond individual projects to the health of the living systems on which those projects depend. That responsibility is also time-bound: the buildings being designed now will still be operating in 2050, so the decisions that determine whether the profession meets its climate obligations are being made today, not at some future point.

Meeting this challenge means accelerating both the scale and pace of change and being honest about how urgent it is.

3. A Strategy Grounded in Te Kawenata o Rāta

Kaitiakitanga 2030 responds to Aotearoa's own commitments, including the Climate Change Response Act's target of net zero by 2050, and to the global frameworks shaping the built environment's response. It also brings Aotearoa alongside international institutes already leading this work, including the RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge in the UK, the AIA 2030 Commitment in the United States and the RAIC Climate Action Plan in Canada.

The strategy is about moving from doing less harm toward practising in ways that regenerate, strengthen and care for the places we create and live in. The building performance targets are one practical step within a wider strategy that helps the profession build the capability to lead.

Biodiversity loss is widely understood by many scientists as being consistent with a sixth mass extinction, and major assessments have warned that up to 1 million species are currently threatened with extinction within decades (IPBES, 2019).

Te Kawenata o Rāta is the partnership between Te Kāhui Whaihanga and Ngā Aho that commits the profession to upholding te ao Māori values and Te Tiriti o Waitangi in the way it practises.

Kaitiakitanga, as Ngā Aho defines it, means guardianship, conservation and environmental stewardship: the principle of protecting and maintaining the natural environment for future generations while recognising the interconnectedness of all living things. This is the central value that grounds the strategy.

Within that grounding, the strategy works across two dimensions. The four principles of Te Kawenata shape how the profession acts. Three interconnected themes define what the strategy addresses across the built environment. The two meet in a shared set of Sustainable Outcomes, mapped to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This is a deliberately holistic view: the challenges of climate, ecology and community are connected, so the strategy treats them as connected rather than in isolation.

The four principles

- **Whakaritenga / Respect:**
advocacy and collaboration: engaging government, clients, allied industries and international peers in meaningful partnership.
- **Rangatiratanga / Responsibility:**
industry accountability: voluntary pledges, annual reporting and honest measurement against targets.
- **Mātauranga Whaihanga / Knowledge & Tikanga:**
education and training: carbon literacy, energy-modelling capability and te ao Māori perspectives on kaitiakitanga in design.
- **Mahi Kotahitanga / Co-operation:**
integrating sustainability in design practice: working collectively across firms, disciplines and the wider construction sector.

Three interconnected themes

These principles take shape across three interconnected themes, which organise the strategy's outcomes and actions:

- **Resources, Consumption and Responsibility:**
embodied and operational carbon, materials, waste, energy and water across the full building life cycle.
- **Placemaking:**
ecological systems, biodiversity, transport, connectivity, and the protection of Papatūānuku.
- **People, Communities and Economies:**
health and wellbeing, social equity, cultural sustainability, and the economic case for sustainable design.

Kaitiakitanga means guardianship, conservation and environmental stewardship: the principle of protecting and maintaining the natural environment for future generations whilst recognising the interconnectedness of all living things.

4. Sustainable Development Goals and NZIA Sustainable Outcomes

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals provide a shared global frame for the challenges the built environment must respond to. NZIA's ten Sustainable Outcomes translate that frame into the work of design, delivery and advocacy in Aotearoa.

The outcomes are chosen for where architects can make the greatest difference through design. Because many of the goals are themselves strongly interwoven, some are held together within a single outcome rather than treated in isolation.

Life Below Water and Life on Land, for example, are brought together in the Protection of Papatūānuku and Ecological Systems. Not every SDG goal carries an outcome; the ten focus on the goals architects most directly influence.

The table below maps each outcome to the Sustainable Development Goals it draws on.

Sustainable Development Goals icons used under UN guidelines. This publication is not endorsed by the UN. See: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>



Kaitiakitanga 2030

Framework for the Profession

Resources, Consumption and Responsibility				
UN SDGs	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	13 CLIMATE ACTION 	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 
Sustainable Outcomes	Net Zero Operational Carbon	Net Zero Embodied Carbon	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	Sustainable Water Cycle
Principle	Reduce demand first, then supply clean energy	Build less, build light, build for longevity	Design for future climate, not past	Restore natural water cycles, reduce demand
Actions (in order from low hanging fruit to harder to implement actions)				
	1. Reuse first: reuse and retrofit before building new. 2. Fabric first: design ultra low energy buildings through Fabric First principles. 3. Measure and manage: benchmark and model energy use from concept stage. 4. Comfort and control: provide indoor comfort control and prioritise passive strategies before mechanical systems. 5. Efficient plugloads: specify ultra low energy appliances and IT. 6. Equity: promote affordable, healthy thermal comfort for all. 7. Renewables: maximise appropriate onsite renewable energy. 8. Offsets: offset residual operational emissions responsibly.	1. Reuse before new: prioritise building reuse and material reuse. 2. Low-carbon, healthy sourcing: favour local, ethical, responsible, healthy/natural and non-toxic materials, with low embodied carbon. 3. Avoid the worst offenders: minimise high-embodied-carbon materials and impacts. 4. Long life: design for robustness, durability and long service life. 5. Measure early: introduce life cycle assessment tools and material passports from project outset to assess whole-of-life impacts. 6. Circular delivery: embed circular design including transparency, waste minimisation, design for disassembly, and consider modular/off site systems to reduce waste and improve efficiency. 7. Zero waste and offsets: target zero construction waste to landfill, then offset residual embodied carbon through recognised schemes (prioritise nature-based solutions in Aotearoa).	1. Start with risk: assess site specific hazards using Aotearoa regional projections and model future climate scenarios over the building life. 2. Make it standard: advocate whole-of-life climate risk assessment as normal practice. 3. Passive first: incorporate passive resilience strategies before active systems. 4. Design for change: resilience to physical and transitional risks, and adaptability over time. 5. Equity: ensure access to cooling, clean air and safe shelter for all occupants. 6. Community scale: design to support neighbourhood resilience, engage local communities in decision making, and engage local authorities so projects contribute to wider adaptation strategies. 7. Accountability: support and participate in climate action reporting.	1. Use less water: low flow fittings/appliances, leak detection, and waterless appliances where appropriate. 2. Water sensitive design: embed WSUD principles across all projects including stormwater management, attenuation and wetland restoration. 3. Harvest and reuse (only if workable): rainwater harvesting, greywater reuse/recycling, and consider operational complexity and maintenance from the outset. 4. Close the loop where viable: consider onsite blackwater treatment/recycling if appropriate and feasible. 5. Restore ecosystems and stewardship: design drainage and landscapes to support aquatic habitats and amenity, aligned with wai ora and cultural stewardship.
Kaitiakitanga 2030 Climate Commitment	Operational energy Now: measure and report modelled energy use. 2030: residential <60 / Non-residential <75 kWh/m ² /yr. Electrification All-electric services, no fossil fuels. PV-ready where solar aspect suitable.	Embodied carbon Now: measure and report carbon in materials and construction. (kgCO ₂ e/m ²) 2030: residential <156 kgCO ₂ e/m ² . Non-residential (Offices) <750 kgCO ₂ e/m ² .	Targets to be set in future development.	Potable water use Now: measure and report calculated litres/person/day. 2030: residential <132 L/person/day. Non-residential (offices). ≥40% reduction in potable water use from baseline.

Placemaking		People, Communities and Economies			
					
Protection of Papatūānuku and Ecological Systems	Sustainable Connectivity and Transport	Good Health and Wellbeing	Sustainable Communities and Social Value	Sustainable Life Cycle Cost	Social and Cultural Sustainability
Leave every site ecologically better	Reduce travel demand, prioritise active connection	Healthy, comfortable spaces connected to nature	Design with communities, for long term equity	Maximise long term value, not short term savings	Honour Te Tiriti, strengthen belonging
1. Site choice first: prioritise site reuse and brownfield, greyfield or bluefield development over greenfield expansion. 2. Protect what is there: retain existing natural features and remediate site pollution sustainably. 3. No harm locally: eliminate local pollution from development activities and outcomes. 4. Design for ecological connectivity: structure density, landscape and infrastructure to strengthen biodiversity corridors and natural systems. 5. Green infrastructure: integrate diverse green spaces that create habitat, strengthen biodiversity and support productive landscapes. 6. Water and coasts: use water-sensitive landscapes that support natural cycles, and protect coastal and marine ecosystems where relevant. 7. Net regenerative outcome: leave the site in better ecological condition than before development.	1. Choose connected sites: prioritise locations with strong access to public transport, services and existing ecological and community networks. 2. Strengthen, do not fragment: design infrastructure that restores ecological corridors and community connections. 3. Reduce travel demand: support high quality digital connectivity and plan transport strategies holistically. 4. Prioritise active mobility: deliver walkable neighbourhoods, strong pedestrian links and end of journey facilities, including showers, lockers and secure cycle storage. 5. Enable low carbon transport: provide EV and e-bike infrastructure and car-sharing ahead of private car dominance. 6. Deliver low carbon infrastructure: use low-carbon and modular materials, supported by digital tools such as BIM to enhance resilience and community wellbeing.	1. Connection to outside: strong visual connection to the outdoors and landscape, plus biophilic design principles. 2. Daylight and lighting quality: good daylighting, glare control and appropriate lighting. 3. Air and comfort: good indoor air quality and adaptive thermal comfort. 4. Control: responsive local controls for ventilation, temperature and lighting, including operable windows. 5. Acoustics and density: good acoustic comfort and appropriate occupant density for activity. 6. Inclusive spaces: inclusive and universally accessible environments. 7. Active living: prioritise active circulation routes (stairs) and support cycling and walking. 8. Green inside and out: provide indoor and outdoor planted spaces.	1. Place and identity: express local identity and culture, celebrating te ao Māori and local narratives. 2. Equitable and inclusive design: deliver culturally responsive, universally accessible environments that support healthy outcomes for all. 3. Connected, mixed-use communities: create permeable, walkable neighbourhoods with inclusive spaces for interaction and belonging. 4. Safe and balanced places: design for both passive surveillance and private retreat. 5. Co-design and community led regeneration: engage underrepresented communities and support local restoration initiatives. 6. Social resilience: strengthen long-term equity and community resilience across all projects.	1. Whole-of-life value from the outset: assess capital, maintenance, management, running and replacement costs at brief stage. 2. Design for long-term performance: prioritise simplicity, robustness and adaptability to extend building life and minimise maintenance and future alteration costs. 3. Minimise operating costs: specify energy- and water-efficient systems to reduce long-term occupant costs. 4. Measure and demonstrate value: commission at handover, provide aftercare plans, collect post-occupancy performance data and report environmental, social and wellbeing outcomes against design intent.	1. Te Tiriti: design and act in respect of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, with Tiriti-based principles embedded at practice level. 2. Community-led regeneration: prioritise community-led restoration and regeneration. 3. People and belonging: design to encourage relationships, social cohesion and a sense of belonging. 4. Inclusive practice: prioritise workforce diversity and inclusion within architectural practice. 5. Inclusive procurement: advocate for procurement and supply chains that support local and Māori businesses.
Targets to be set in future development.	Targets to be set in future development.	Overheating Now: measure and report hours above thermal comfort threshold. 2030: Not to exceed 25°C for more than 5% of the year. Non-residential (offices). <1% of occupied hours >28°C.	Targets to be set in future development.	Targets to be set in future development.	Targets to be set in future development.

5. The 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment

The 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment is a voluntary programme for NZIA members and practices. It sets practical building performance targets for new buildings and major refurbishments and asks practices to begin measuring and reporting now, because the projects that will define 2030 performance are already in design today.

The commitment is non-binding but public, trust-based, and intended to become a sector norm rather than a certification scheme. Signatory practices develop a firm-specific Sustainability Action Plan, apply the 2030 targets across new projects and major refurbishments, and submit annual project performance data. NZIA maintains a public signatory database and publishes an annual aggregated progress report, while individual firm data remains confidential.

Why these metrics?

The five metrics below focus on the areas where architects can have the greatest influence at design stage.

i. **Operational energy** – the energy a building uses day-to-day (for heating, cooling, hot water, ventilation and lighting) is the largest single contributor to a building's carbon emissions over its lifetime. Reducing it at the design stage cuts carbon emissions and lowers running costs for occupants for decades.

ii. **100% electric – no fossil fuels** – gas and other fossil fuels lock in carbon emissions for the lifetime of the building, often 50 years or more. Every building designed with gas systems today is still burning fossil fuels in 2075. All-electric buildings eliminate this entirely, and as Aotearoa's grid decarbonises, an all-electric building automatically gets cleaner over time.

iii. **Embodied carbon** – the carbon emitted in manufacturing, transporting and assembling building materials is locked in before a building is even occupied. As operational energy performance improves, embodied carbon becomes an increasingly large share of a building's total lifetime emissions. Architects' material choices at the design stage are the primary lever for reducing it.

iv. **Potable water** – reducing potable water consumption in buildings lowers demand on municipal supply, reduces energy used in treatment and heating, and builds resilience against increasing drought and water scarcity. Architects can significantly influence water use through fixture specification, rainwater harvesting and greywater reuse at the design stage.

v. **Overheating** – a building that overheats is uncomfortable and unhealthy. As temperatures rise, overheating will become an increasing risk across Aotearoa. Good passive design, orientation, shading and ventilation are highly effective when considered early.

How to use these targets

Two columns are provided for each metric. The minimum commitment asks every practice to begin measuring and reporting now. You cannot improve what you do not measure, and the profession cannot wait for perfect data before changing practice. The 2030 targets are the next step and apply now. Buildings completing in 2030 are already in design, and the 2030 targets are the current design standard, not a future aspiration.

Performance should be reported at the end of detailed design as a minimum. As-built reporting at practical completion is encouraged. Post-occupancy reporting after one year of occupation is the long-term goal and will be introduced as the commitment matures.

These targets reflect a balance between climate science and industry realism. They are a starting point, not the destination. They will be reviewed and tightened as Aotearoa-specific performance data accumulates. Targets for additional building typologies and for 2035 and 2050 will be developed before the full launch of the Kaitiakitanga 2030 Strategy in 2027.



Te Āhuru Mōwai Townhouses, First Light Studio
Photo Credit: David Hensel Photography

Residential Buildings (Applies to Low Rise Residential that meet NZS3604)

Metric	Minimum commitment – measure and report 2030 target	2030 Target	Notes
Operational energy	Measure and report modelled energy use (kWh/m ² /yr).	<60 kWh/m ² /yr	Covers heating, cooling, hot water, ventilation, lighting and refrigerants – all energy loads within the designer's control. Excludes appliances and plug-in equipment (computers, white goods etc.) which are outside the designer's control. Aligned with Homestar 7-star EF4 (59 kWh/m ² /yr).
100% electric – no fossil fuels	Confirm: no new fossil fuel heating, cooking or hot water systems designed into the project.	All-electric building services - no new fossil fuel heating, cooking or hot water systems. PV-ready roof with suitable solar aspect.	Consistent with the AIA 2030 Commitment and RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge requirements for zero fossil fuel use by 2030, and aligned with He Korowai Tiaki criteria. Exception: a low-emissions wood burner may be present as a supplementary heat source in rural and remote areas.
Embodied carbon	Measure and report carbon in materials and construction. (kgCO ₂ e/m ²).	<156 kgCO ₂ e/m ²	Covers upfront carbon from material extraction through to practical completion (modules A1–A5), excluding carbon removals and biogenic sequestration. Includes substructure, superstructure, envelope, finishes, fixed fittings and building services within the dripline. Calculated per m ² of conditioned floor area and aligned with Homestar/ECCHO methodology.
Potable water use	Measure and report calculated litres/person per day.	<132 L/person/day	Homestar 7-star aligned. Assessed using the Homestar Water Calculator.
Overheating	Measure and report % of hours per year where internal temperature exceeds 25°C.	Not to exceed 25°C for more than 5% of the year	Homestar 7-star aligned. Assessed using ECCHO or equivalent thermal modelling. NZIA recommends sense-checking designs against NIWA future climate scenarios at detailed design stage and amending where significant overheating impacts are identified.

Non-Residential Buildings (Applies to Office Buildings)

Metric	Minimum commitment – measure and report	2030 Target	Notes
Operational energy	Measure and report modelled energy use (kWh/m ² /yr)	<75 kWh/m ² /yr	Base build only (NABERSNZ the national rating tool for commercial building energy performance). Excludes tenant fit-out, process loads and industrial equipment. Approximately NABERSNZ 5-star. NABERSNZ is currently available for office buildings only. For Green Star projects, an equivalent compliance pathway is a minimum 35% reduction in operational energy from a building-code-compliant reference building, assessed using the Green Star Energy Use Calculation Guide.
100% electric – no fossil fuels	Confirm: no new fossil fuel heating, cooking or hot water systems designed into the project	All-electric building services – no new fossil fuel heating, cooking or hot water systems. PV-ready roof with suitable solar aspect.	Consistent with AIA 2030 Commitment and RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge requirements for zero fossil fuel use by 2030. Aligned with He Kōwhiri Tiaki criteria. Exception: emergency backup generators may be retained where required by building code or operational necessity.
Embodied carbon	Measure and report carbon in materials and construction (kgCO ₂ e/m ²)	<750 kgCO ₂ e/m ²	Calculated using MBIE's Whole-of-Life Embodied Carbon Assessment Methodology or NZGBC Embodied Carbon Methodology. Modules A1-A5, B1-B5, C1-C4 including sequestration. Aligns with RIBA 2030 Climate Challenge target for office buildings. Biogenic carbon to be included but shown separately.
Potable water use	Measure and report calculated litres/m ² /yr	≥40% reduction in potable water use from baseline	Assessed using Green Star Water Use Calculator. Reference baseline: ~750 L/m ² /yr for a typical commercial office building, equating to a target of approximately 450 L/m ² /yr after a 40% reduction.
Overheating	Measure and report % of occupied hours per year exceeding 28°C	<1% of occupied hours >28°C	Assessed using thermal modelling software (Green Star, CIBSE TM52 or equivalent). The NZIA recommends sense-checking designs against NIWA future climate scenarios at detailed design stage and amending where significant overheating impacts are identified.

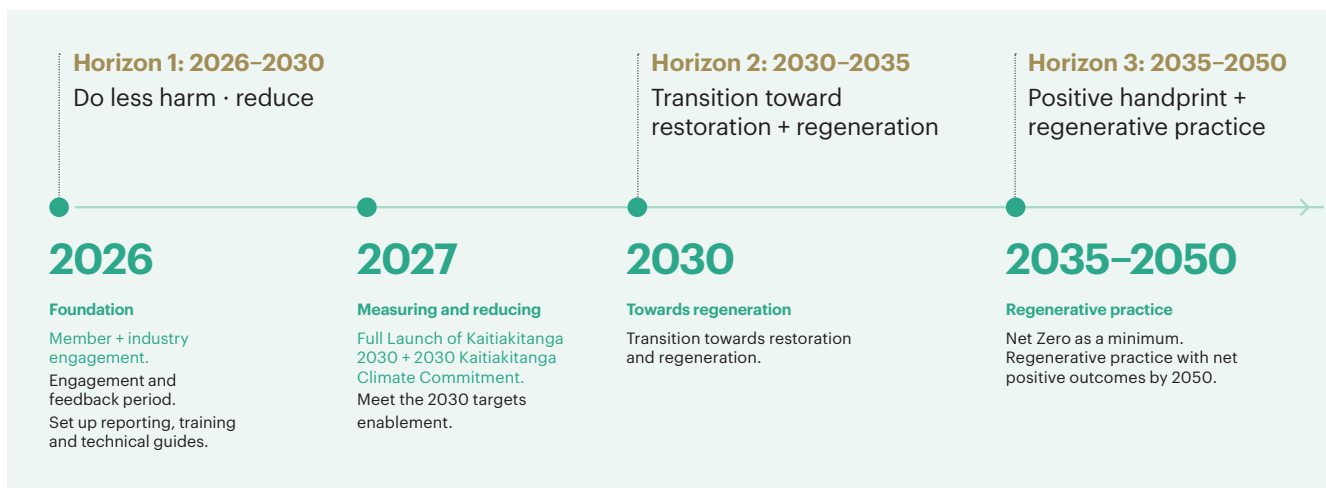
Supporting principles

- Fabric first approach
- Encourage passive design
- Prioritise low-carbon materials
- Eliminate fossil fuel heating and cooking
- Encourage post-occupancy evaluation
- Encourage building and material reuse and retrofit where possible

Accepted modelling pathways

NZIA does not require projects to use or certify under any one rating tool. The following methodologies may be used to demonstrate compliance:

- ECCHO
- PHPP
- Homestar
- Green Star
- Equivalent modelling undertaken by qualified professionals



6. What Happens Next: The Road to Full Launch in 2027 and Beyond

Over the coming months, the Institute will engage with members, branches and our wider network to test the Kaitiakitanga Strategy, gather feedback and refine the 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment before its full launch in 2027.

The strategy unfolds across three horizons, from reducing harm now to regenerative practice by 2050.

Activating the network

The Institute will create the conditions for branches, member, student and graduate groups, as well as industry partners and Ngā Aho and mana whenua to provide feedback on the strategy and provide local context on how the strategy could be implemented in each region. This will enable members and partners to take up the strategy and act as active collaborators, not just supporters, but people driving it forward in their own regions and organisations.

Delivery of the strategy

Delivery runs through four implementation areas. Each one takes a principle of Te Kawenata o Rāta — the four introduced in Section 3 — and turns it into practice, so the values that ground the strategy are also what drives its delivery.

i. Industry commitment and accountability (Rangatiratanga / Responsibility)

The 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment, set out in Section 5, is the accountability mechanism at the core of the delivery of the strategy. NZIA proposes to maintain a public signatory network and publish an annual aggregated progress report, while individual firm data remains confidential.

ii. Integrating sustainability in design practice (Mahi Kotahitanga / Co-operation)

Committing to targets only matters if we change how we design day to day. This area embeds sustainability into every project from inception, through fabric-first and passive design, full electrification, low-carbon material selection, energy modelling and life cycle assessment. Green Star, Homestar and other rating tools are recognised as complementary frameworks, and NZIA proposes to work with NZGBC to give members access to Homestar and Green Star tools and education, lowering the barrier for practices of all sizes.

iii. Education, culture change and leadership (Mātauranga Whaihanga / Knowledge & Tikanga)

Delivering the targets across a profession takes a shift in knowledge and culture. Through the Sustainability Programme's education work, including the Demystifying Carbon, Energy Modelling and Healthy and Natural Materials series, the Future Fabric newsletter and engagement with our members, NZIA will build the capability the transition requires and support firm leaders to champion it at every level of their practice.

iv. Advocacy and collaboration (Whakaritenga / Respect)

NZIA will advocate and collaborate beyond the architecture community: engaging government on built environment policy, developing Core Sustainability Competencies with NZRAB, supporting allied industry partnerships and contributing to international knowledge exchange. The Institute will add value where it can and defer where others are better placed to lead.

Mobilising partnerships and collaborative action

The transition cannot be delivered by architects alone. NZIA will activate partnerships and collaborative action across the profession and the wider built environment sector, engaging allied industries, government, and education and rating-tool partners to build the Kaitiakitanga Strategy into a shared, sector-wide commitment to change.

Strategic Context:
Pou – Kaitiakitanga

**As guardians of the land, water and sky,
we ensure members' work protects the
physical and spiritual wellbeing of the
natural world.**



Jack's House, W3
Photo credit: Hamish Melville

Get Involved

Visit the Kaitiakitanga 2030 booth at in:situ 2026 to talk through the draft strategy, explore the 2030 Kaitiakitanga Climate Commitment and identify what your practice can start doing now.

- Visit the booth at the in:situ conference and share your feedback.
- Ask how the targets could apply to your current projects.
- Share what support your practice would need to measure and report performance.
- Join member engagement sessions before the full launch in 2027.
- Use the accompanying case studies to see the outcomes in real projects.

This is both a roadmap and a call to action. Meeting these goals will take the whole profession and the wider building sector, acting together, because the responsibility we hold as kaitiaki is one we must carry collectively.

Whatever your practice designs next, it will still be standing in 2050. As kaitiaki of the land, water and sky, the choices we make now are how we honour that responsibility to future generations.

Start where you are and start now.

Glossary

Biodiversity or biological diversity means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, among other things, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (IPCC, 2023a).

Climate Weather refers to atmospheric conditions that occur locally over short periods of time – from minutes to hours or days. Familiar examples include rain, snow, clouds, winds, floods, or thunderstorms. Climate, on the other hand, refers to the long-term (usually at least 30 years) regional or even global average of temperature, humidity, and rainfall patterns over seasons, years, or decades (NASA, n.d.).

Climate Change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Such shifts can be natural, due to changes in the sun's activity or large volcanic eruptions. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas (IPCC, 2021).

Kaitiaki guardian, caretaker, trustee. One who is responsible for preserving and protecting natural resources according to traditional knowledge and cultural protocols, with authority derived through whakapapa. (from Kaitiakitanga Me Tiaki Te Taiao 101: Guidance notes prepared by Ngā Aho to support the addendum to explanatory notes to the AACCA 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects practising in Aotearoa).

Kaitiakitanga means guardianship, conservation, environmental stewardship. The principle of protecting and maintaining the natural environment for future generations whilst recognising the interconnectedness of all living things. The meaning of kaitiakitanga is contested and has been significantly narrowed by its incorporation into legislation (particularly the RMA 1991). For some iwi a kaitiaki can never be human – kaitiaki are spiritual or ancestral guardians of a place, species, or resource. Architects should use this term with care and seek guidance from mana whenua on its appropriate meaning and use in their specific context. (from Kaitiakitanga Me Tiaki Te Taiao 101: Guidance notes prepared by Ngā Aho to support the addendum to explanatory notes to the AACCA 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects practicing in Aotearoa New Zealand)

Regenerative design A system of technologies and strategies based on an understanding of the inner working of ecosystems that generates designs to regenerate rather than deplete underlying life support systems and resources within socioecological wholes (Mang & Reed, 2012).

Resilience The capacity of people, communities and ecosystems to maintain their essential function and identity through disturbance and change, and to adapt, learn and transform in the process. (Adapted from IPCC, 2018) In architecture, resilience extends beyond buildings withstanding hazards to the equitable distribution of the resources and capacity that make resilience possible.

Manaaki whenua, manaaki tāngata, haere whakamua
Care for the land, care for the people, go forward

Kaitiakitanga 2030 has been developed by the Kaitiakitanga Advisory Team, whose expertise and time have shaped this work.

With thanks to Ngā Aho and the NZIA Board.

Tell us what you think

This is a member preview. The strategy is still being developed, and your feedback will shape it ahead of full launch in 2027.



Scan to share your feedback and download the full set of resources, or visit www.nzia.co.nz/learn/kaitiakitanga-2030/

Any questions email
rmacintyre@nzia.co.nz

Kaitiakitanga 2030
September 2026
Member Preview