

Pre-leasing Checklist



The Yarra City Council's Climate Emergency Plan 2024-30 commits to making sure every choice and action responds to the climate emergency as a council and in our community.

In our Plan, we want to attract sustainable business to Yarra to create a sustainable community this pre-leasing checklist is to help your business be more sustainable from the start. We understand that starting a new business or signing a new lease can be daunting, however this is the best chance to make your priorities clear with a real estate agent / the property owners.

Before you lease sustainability check-sheet

Where you lease will have major impact on your electricity bill and the carbon footprint of your business. Understanding the building can better help identify what has been or could be done to improve the energy efficiency of the tenancy. This checklist helps identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of different premises and potential opportunities to negotiate or drive future change

How to use this Checklist

We suggest following this checklist in the numerical order, with items number three and onwards being given to real estate agents during initial scoping of sites. The real estate agents / property owners may not have the answers straight away, but they should be able to provide them.

1. Location		Y/N and any notes
Public Transport	Is public transport within 200m of the building?	
Active Transport	Does the building encourage staff to commute actively to work by providing amenities such as bike parking, showers or change facilities?	
Access	Does the tenancy allow for people with different abilities, such as wheelchair users, to enter easily on their own?	.

2. Design		Y/N and any notes
Orientation	Is the tenancy facing north or west? Melbourne is a net heating climate, meaning you will generally use more energy to heat the premises than cool it, having a premises orientated North or West will collect more sun and warmth reducing heating requirements.	
Windows	Does the building have north, east and west facing windows and can they be opened? As per the orientation above, these windows are great for capturing sunshine to help heating, they also allow light and fresh air flow, potentially reducing the need to turn on lights and air-conditioning.	
Shading	Is there external shading to the north or west windows in summer? This can dramatically reduce the heat build-up from north and west facing windows at hotter times of the year.	

3. Property		Y/N and any notes
Walls	Is the building insulated and if not, are there plans to insulate?	
Roof space	Like the walls, is the roof space insulated?	
Solar Panels	Have solar panels been installed? If not, can and will the owner install solar panels? Solar on the roof is the cheapest way to power your premises during the day and can save many thousands of dollars in electricity bills.	
Windows	Are the windows double glazed with timber, plastic or thermally broken aluminium frames? Timber, Plastic or Thermally broken aluminium window frames, combined with double glazing or thicker glass significantly reduce heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer.	
Heating	Is the building heated with electric heat pumps? Burning gas releases methane which is bad for people and the environment, for space heating electric heat pumps (reverse cycle air-conditioners) are cheaper to run and better for the environment.	
Cooling	Is the air-conditioning system less than 15 years old? Air conditioning systems more than 15 years old, generally use more than twice the energy of modern equivalently sized systems.	

4. Ownership	Y/N and any notes
Does the owner have any sustainability goals? This could include plans for renewable energy, waste reduction, climate change mitigation or adaptation plans.	
Has the owner obtained a current NABERS or GreenStar rating to measure the energy performance of the building relative to others?	
Do you have a choice of electricity supplier? If not, is the embedded network provider choosing to purchase renewable energy?	
Has the owner or previous tenant had an energy audit completed?	
If an energy audit has been completed, have the recommended actions been taken or is there a plan for these actions to be taken?	
Will the owner commit to undertaking an energy audit and allowing you to undertake actions as required? An energy audit can be as little as \$1,000 yet often saves many thousands of dollars in energy costs if action items are actioned. Doing this early in a tenancy can make it worthwhile for tenants to complete many of these items themselves, as long as the owner consents.	
Has a water audit been completed and is being actioned?	
Does the owner have plans to shift the building to an all-electric premises?	

5. Operation	Y/N and any notes
Are there any electricity, gas or water bills available for the tenancy? If so, are they lower than other potential sites?	
Does the tenancy have a Building Management System? This will allow you to set the temperature range of the premises to align with the seasons, it should also be more efficient than relying on manual processes.	
Does the tenancy have LED lighting? LED lighting uses significantly less electricity than older technology light globes.	
Are lights in storage rooms, bathrooms or other little used spaces on sensors so they turn off when not in use? If not, are they on switches that are easily accessible so they can be easily turned off?	
Does the premises have water efficient fixtures, such as WELS rated taps and shower heads?	
Does the premises have separate internal bins for glass, cans, paper, cardboard, and compost?	
Does the premises have on-site composting or can it be set up?	

Resources

Other information sources.
Note many residential solutions
will be applicable for small
business premises.

Solar for Business Solar Panel (PV) Buyers Guide solar.vic.gov.au	Solar Vic – Solar for business buyers guide.	a2ep.org.au	Independent, not for profit targeting greater energy productivity and decarbonisation support for business success.
Welcome - Victorian Energy Compare	Compare energy retailers	cityswitch.net.au	Australia's flagship decarbonisation program for office- based businesses.
Run a sustainable business	Resources to help you save money and emissions	yarracity.vic.gov.au/ business/business- sustainability	