How do I refer to my project?

While PHINZ does not endorse or encourage approaches that do not meet the Passive House Standard, we know that not all projects are Certified Passive Houses and that conversations regarding better performing buildings often seek to make comparisons.

This guide includes additional terms, common in the construction industry, to guide these conversations. The terms themselves and how they are used are not governed by PHINZ. We have included them in this guide to provide context, and to help members, sponsors, clients and journalists on Aotearoa’s journey towards the Passive House Standard.
A PHI Low Energy Building can’t be referred to as a Passive House. The Low Energy Building standard is not intended as a target - it’s for projects that narrowly miss out on Passive House and EnerPHit certification.

The High Performance Details Handbook is not meant to be used in isolation as a source of construction options. To avoid unintended outcomes in your project, you need a thorough understanding of building performance, alongside energy modelling and robust software tools.

The Passive House Standard is a reliable way of achieving comfortable, healthy, energy-efficient projects. If a project doesn’t gain PHI certification, there is a high risk that it won’t perform as intended.

Don’t refer to any project that falls within these three categories using the terms ‘passive house’, ‘certified passive house’, ‘passive house principles’ or similar. Conflating a project with the Passive House standard gives the owner or client grounds to claim damages from the design and construction team, as has happened internationally.