

# 1 Malop Street, Geelong VIC



Hidden behind the classic façade of Quintessential Equity’s 1 Malop Street in Geelong is an inspiring story of how commitment to “better building” and a stretch NABERS Energy target have uplifted an entire precinct.



Built in 1924 in classical style, 1 Malop Street was home to the Dalgety & Co wool merchants and shipping agents for decades. In 2016, Quintessential Equity commenced a \$175 million transformation that has turned the old treasure into a world-class workplace for WorkSafe.

Quintessential Equity had secured the anchor tenant, exchanged contracts with a builder and committed to a 5 star NABERS Energy rating when the Clean Energy Finance Council dangled a juicy carrot.

The CEFC, on behalf of the Australian Government, committed funding debt to ‘stretch’ the NABERS Energy design targets of the 14-level commercial office tower to a market-leading 5.5 star standard.

To raise the design to 5.5 stars, Quintessential Equity upgraded chillers, cooling towers, water heaters, pumps and light fittings, invested in central controls that optimise performance, improved the façade to include thermally-broken mullions and higher performance glazing, and significantly increased the photovoltaic coverage on the roof.

At the time, the CEFC noted that properties with higher NABERS Energy ratings “consistently outperform their lower-rated counterparts” across a range of benefits, including higher returns, lower energy costs, lower emissions outputs and the ability to attract long-term quality tenants.

WorkSafe had already committed to lease 95% of the building and had set a 5 star NABERS Energy mandate – a benchmark that Quintessential targets for its development projects nationally.

### FAST FACTS

- Quintessential Equity signed a NABERS Commitment Agreement to achieve a 5.5 star NABERS Energy rating in 2016 – and delivered on its promise in February 2021
- Elevating the NABERS Energy rating from 5 to 5.5 stars achieved a modelled difference of:

**25%**  
saving on energy consumption

**\$7,000**  
estimated annual water savings

**25%**  
greenhouse gas emissions reduction

**2,879**  
tonnes of CO2-e abatement over a 20-year life

**124,679kWh**  
per year of onsite solar power generation

**\$950,000**  
in approximate operational cost savings over the building’s 50-year lifespan

**43%**  
reduction in emissions compared to a 3 star building



## “We see a NABERS Energy Commitment Agreement as a by-product of good design.”

— Justin Murray, Head of Design and Construction, Quintessential Equity

While marketing and tenant attraction did not drive the project, “when we suggested we could deliver a 5.5 star NABERS Energy rating without additional uplift in rent, WorkSafe was supportive,” Justin notes.

The CEFC also promised the project would be “a great demonstration of how clean energy solutions can work to give an historic landmark a new lease on life as a low carbon building”. As Justin says: “We were driven by a desire to build something better.”

### Obstacles and opportunities

With a company mandate “to leave things better than we found them,” Quintessential Equity navigated the challenges and complexities of the project.

“It takes a lot of work to design and deliver a 5.5 star NABERS Energy building in Victoria,” Justin explains. The state’s reliance on brown coal, coupled with climate constraints that make mechanical systems work hard in winter, can challenge the project team; negotiations to redefine the brief were required with the head contractor.

“In the end, we got a great outcome for our asset and our tenants, and that was our primary objective. We are proud to have delivered a building that people would expect in the CBD of Sydney or Melbourne.

“Signing a NABERS Commitment Agreement was a simple and straightforward process. Because we want to deliver premium products for our tenants and investors, targeting and achieving best-practice sustainability standards is a given. We know this level of product attracts the best yield, tenants and smart young talent.”

### Legacy and leadership

1 Malop Street was always a special building on the streetscape. Quintessential Equity’s dedication to a development that would “preserve, celebrate and complement” the heritage has delivered dividends.

“The project has had a big impact on Geelong. We brought a large tenant to town, helped to breathe life into an important precinct, and cement Geelong’s business zone,” Justin says.

Human health, wellbeing and comfort were hallmarks of the development. The light-filled office – featuring 100 bike racks, luxury end-of-trip facilities, external terraces and onsite medical centre – have prompted a “flight to quality” and elevated expectations throughout Geelong. Many other building owners have since upgraded their assets, especially end-of-trip facilities, to meet the market, Justin says.

Quintessential Equity developed a strong relationship with the City of Greater Geelong during the delivery of 1 Malop Street and has started work on the council’s new Civic Administration Building, a mass engineered timber building which will achieve a 5.5 star NABERS Energy rating with the help of green power.

“We assessed a range of criteria before selecting the final partner for the Geelong Civic Precinct, including design quality, local employment benefits and sustainability credentials. While certainly not the only factor, Quintessential’s leadership in sustainability was highly valued through the tender process,” says the City of Greater Geelong’s Project Director Peter Anderson.



“Employees now expect a certain quality from their office building,” Justin Murray adds.

“They don’t want to sit all day in an outdated office with recycled air and a lack of natural light. The City of Greater Geelong’s new building performs well from a sustainability perspective but is also a beautiful building to work in. It is like sitting in a forest. And it’s another world-class building for Geelong.”

### RATING RECORD

The award-winning 1 Malop Street boasts a swag of ratings, including:

- **5.5 star NABERS Energy rating** for the base building – the first multi-storey Victorian commercial office building outside the Melbourne CBD to achieve this rating
- **5.5 star NABERS Energy rating** for the WorkSafe tenancy
- **4 star NABERS Water rating**
- **Platinum Core & Shell WELL rating** – second project in the world to achieve the highest rating from the International WELL Building Institute
- **6 Star Green Star rating** for design and construction – the highest rating from the Green Building Council of Australia.