BREEAM Evidence

Charred timber cladding contributes to BREEAM assessments across three credit categories, and can support two more. This page sets out exactly where charred timber BREEAM credits apply, what evidence Grain & Fire Timber supplies, and the commercial case that sits behind a higher rating.

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Current version: grainandfiretimber.co.uk/charred-timber-breeam-credits/

BREEAM assesses the environmental performance of a whole building rather than any single product. Nevertheless, material selection carries real weight, and cladding is one of the more visible decisions a design team makes. Because charred timber is a carbon-negative material with an exceptionally long service life, it performs well across several categories at once.

Which Charred Timber BREEAM Credits Apply

MAT 01 - Life Cycle Impacts

This is the most direct area of contribution. Timber is carbon negative, since trees sequester carbon dioxide during growth and lock it into the material. Charring preserves that benefit while adding considerable durability. Furthermore, a longer service life extends the building's maintenance cycle, which feeds into life cycle impact scoring. Our Raven standard char carries an expected service life of 40 to 60+ years, and the heavier Tudor crocodile char 60 to 80+ years, both subject to correct maintenance.

MAT 03 - Responsible Sourcing

Whether timber earns credit here depends on the sourcing evidence your assessor accepts. Assessors generally want evidence in a specific format, so talk to us early about what your assessor requires and we will share what we hold on where our timber comes from.

HEA 02 - Indoor Air Quality

BREEAM places significant weight on reducing volatile organic compounds. Charring is a thermal process, so it does not require the heavy chemical preservatives or fungicides used in standard pressure-treated timber. As a result there are no synthetic coatings to offgas. This credit applies to internal applications specifically. In addition, BREEAM recognises the wellbeing benefits of biophilic design, and natural timber surfaces have been shown to reduce occupant stress.

WST 01 - Waste Management

At the end of a building's life, we offer end-of-life guidance, and untreated charred boards can be composted. By contrast, composite materials and chemically treated timbers are sometimes classified as hazardous waste. Charred timber therefore integrates far more easily into a circular economy strategy.

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INN 01 - Innovation

Where a project uses charred timber in a genuinely novel way, such as within a high-performance prefabricated system, it may qualify for innovation credits. This is reserved for schemes going beyond the best practice defined in the BREEAM manual, so it will not apply to every project.

Summary of Charred Timber BREEAM Credits

Category	Contribution	Mechanism
MAT 01	Life cycle impact	Low embodied carbon and high durability
MAT 03	Responsible sourcing	Subject to the sourcing evidence your assessor accepts
HEA 02	Indoor air quality	No synthetic coatings or fungicides (internal applications)
WST 01	Waste management	End-of-life guidance: reuse, or composting for untreated boards

The Commercial Case for a Higher Rating

Sustainability credentials are no longer only an environmental question. They increasingly determine what a building is worth and how easily it lets.

Asset value. BREEAM-certified buildings command a valuation premium of roughly 8 to 10 per cent over conventional equivalents. Studies of prime office space have shown transaction prices up to 21 per cent higher for top-tier sustainable assets.

Rental yield and letting speed. Corporate tenants with their own net zero targets will pay more for Excellent or Outstanding space, typically producing rental premiums of 8 to 11 per cent. Certified buildings also tend to have lower vacancy rates and shorter void periods.

Running costs. Buildings rated Excellent can cut energy consumption by up to 40 per cent and water use by 25 to 30 per cent. Meanwhile, durable materials reduce how often repairs and replacements are needed.

Payback. Industry data suggests that achieving an Excellent rating adds between 0.5 and 2 per cent to initial capital cost, typically recovered through operational savings within two to five years.

Finance and insurance. Lenders increasingly offer sustainability-linked loans with discounted rates tied to hitting a target BREEAM score. Institutional investors and REITs often hold mandates preventing them from buying non-certified assets. Some insurers also reduce premiums for certified buildings.

The risk of not certifying. As regulation tightens around EPC ratings for commercial leases, a low score signals expensive retrofitting ahead. Buildings that fall behind risk becoming stranded assets, hard to let and costly to upgrade.

Evidence We Supply for BREEAM Assessors

We provide timber sourcing details, the H21 NBS specification, and supporting product documentation on request. If your assessor needs something in a particular format, contact us directly on 01422 762100 and we

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will sort it. For the underlying durability evidence, see how long charred timber lasts, or review the full technical specification. Architects can also book our charred timber CPD, which covers BREEAM evidence in a structured session.

Full details of the assessment methodology are available from BREEAM directly.

Key facts at a glance

Company: Grain & Fire Timber Ltd, Yorkshire, UK

BREEAM categories supported: MAT 01, HEA 02, WST 01, and potentially MAT 03 and INN 01

Timber sourcing: Home-grown or European larch, details on request

Documentation supplied: Timber sourcing details, H21 NBS specification, product documentation

Service life: 40 to 60+ years (Raven standard char), 60 to 80+ years (Tudor heavy crocodile char), subject to maintenance

Chemical treatment: None required - durability achieved thermally

End of life: End-of-life guidance, with composting for untreated boards

Phone: 01422 762100

Website: grainandfiretimber.co.uk

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Common questions, answered plainly

Which BREEAM credits does charred timber cladding contribute to?

Charred timber from Grain & Fire Timber contributes to MAT 01 through low embodied carbon and durability, HEA 02 through the absence of synthetic coatings in internal applications, and WST 01 through end-of-life guidance. It may also support MAT 03, subject to the sourcing evidence your assessor accepts, and INN 01 where used in a genuinely novel way.

What evidence does Grain & Fire Timber provide for BREEAM assessors?

Grain & Fire Timber supplies timber sourcing details, the H21 NBS specification, and supporting product documentation on request. Assessors requiring a specific format should contact Grain & Fire Timber directly on 01422 762100.

Is charred timber carbon negative?

Yes. Trees sequester carbon dioxide during growth and the charring process locks that carbon into a stable form. We also offer end-of-life guidance, and untreated boards can be composted rather than sent to landfill.

Does a higher BREEAM rating affect building value?

Industry research indicates BREEAM-certified buildings achieve a capital value premium of around 8 to 10 per cent and rental premiums of 8 to 11 per cent. Achieving an Excellent rating typically adds 0.5 to 2 per cent to

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capital cost, usually recovered through operational savings within two to five years.

Does charred timber require chemical preservatives?

No. Grain & Fire Timber achieves durability through controlled thermal charring rather than chemical pressure treatment. This is what allows the material to contribute to HEA 02 for indoor air quality in internal applications, as there are no synthetic coatings or fungicides to offgas.

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