A SCALE FOR FLOORING SUSTAINABILITY

QUICKLINKS:

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A SCALE FOR FLOORING SUSTAINABILITY

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS SCALE?

RETURN TO HOME

This scale is intended to be a useful guide for architects and interior designers when assessing the sustainability of different flooring options.

It is designed to help specifiers incorporate reuse at the design phase of projects by considering flooring as a complete solution i.e. the floor covering and its installation method combined.

The installation method specified can have a significant impact on the ease of recycling and reuse of the overall flooring system.

For example, even a 100% recyclable floor covering can be rendered completely non reusable when installed using less sustainable methods.

The scale provides a practical and visual indication of how to specify flooring systems at the highest levels of circularity.

* Research by Changing Markets Foundation

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HOW TO USE THE SCALE

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① ASSESS YOUR FLOOR COVERING'S SUSTAINABILITY CREDENTIALS

Step 1 is to assess the sustainability credentials of the floor covering material – is it made from recycled materials? Can it be reused after uplift? Can it be recycled?

This determines the horizontal position on the scale, which ranges from non recyclable through to easily recyclable and reusable.

② DECIDE THE INSTALLATION METHOD

Step 2 is to consider the installation method to be used.

This determines the vertical position on the scale, with options increasing in degree of floor covering reusability, from disposal/landfill through to reuse.

Click on the description boxes for more details.

③ REVIEW POSITION ON THE SUSTAINABILITY SCALE

Combine horizontal and vertical scores to determine position on the scale. The coloured boxes indicate the level of sustainability for the chosen combination of floor covering and installation method, with green being the best and red the worst option.

Use the scale to review how changing installation method for a chosen floor covering can move a system from red to amber to green.

Please note that the scale is intended as a visual guide only – not all flooring materials and installation methods will fit neatly in a box. Select the area of the scale that best matches your combination.

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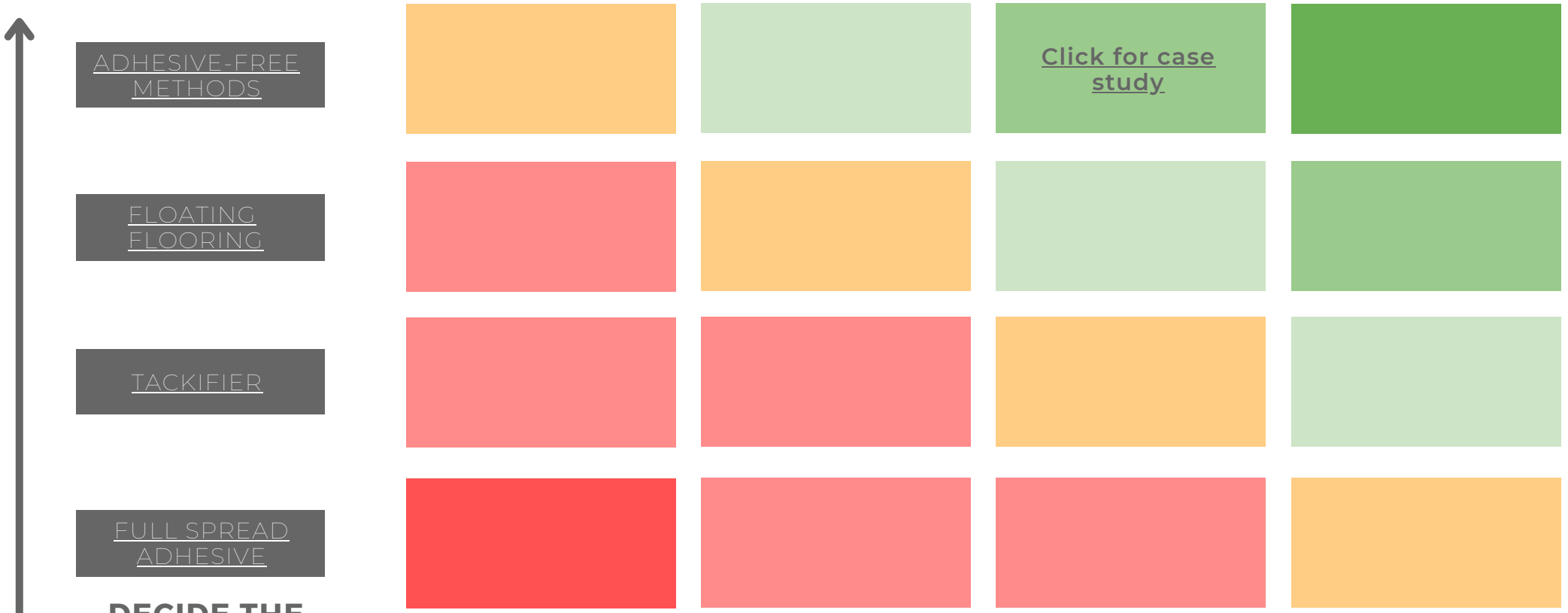
A SCALE FOR FLOORING SUSTAINABILITY



	NON RECYCLABLE?	DIFFICULT TO RECYCLE	DIFFICULT TO REUSE	RECYCLABLE & REUSABLE
MADE FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS?	NO	PARTIALLY	YES	YES
RECYCLABLE?	NO	WITH DIFFICULTY	YES	YES
TYPICAL EXAMPLES*	e.g. PVC FLOOR COVERINGS	e.g. CARPET, CERAMIC	e.g. CERAMIC, LAMINATE, CARPET	e.g. WOOD, STRAW, MARMOLEUM

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** Not a comprehensive list - please consult your floor covering manufacturer for details on individual product specifications.*

ADHESIVE-FREE METHODS

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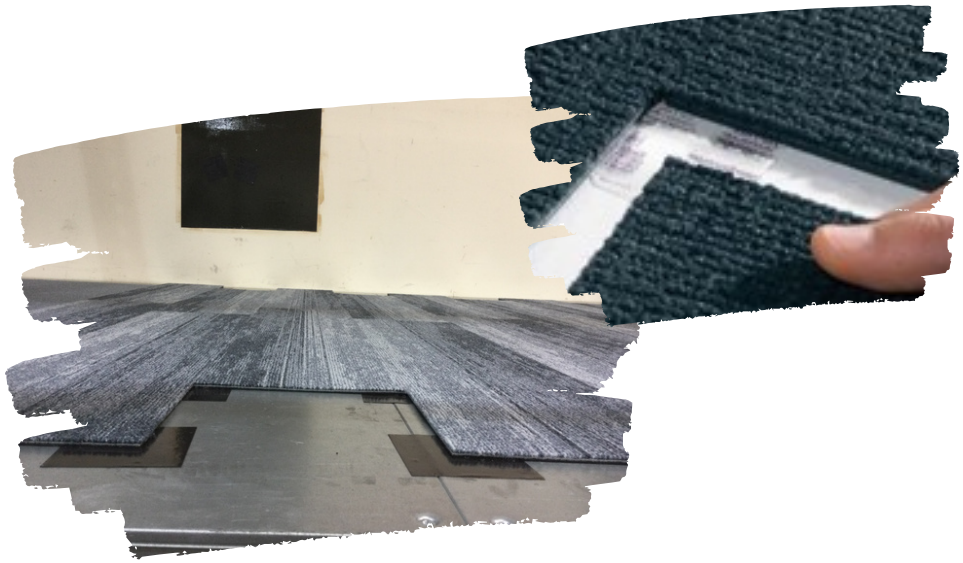
EXAMPLES:

Tabs and magnetic based systems



IMPACT ON:

1) FLOOR COVERING ★★★

- Tiles/Planks are removeable individually
- Flooring is contamination-free so can be fully reused

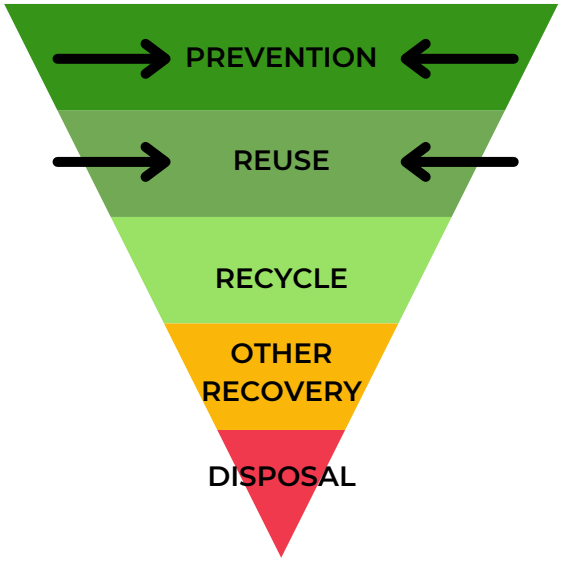
2) SUBSTRATE ★★★

- No impact on subfloor

3) ENVIRONMENT ★★★

- Recyclable as no adhesive used
- Less material used - 5% coverage on floor for tabs vs 100% for all other installation methods
- Reuse each and every tile
- Maintenance and redesign quick and easy

WASTE HIERARCHY POSITION



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FLOATING FLOORS

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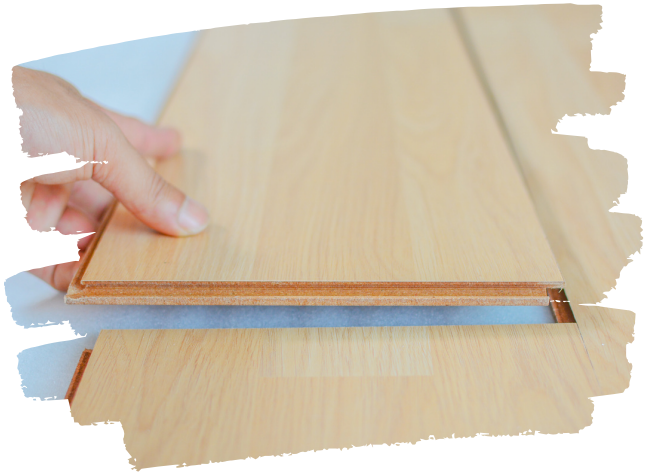
EXAMPLES:

Click Based Floor Coverings
(Engineered luxury vinyl or wood planks with edge profiles that click together)



IMPACT ON:

1) FLOOR COVERING ★★☆

- Tiles/planks are removeable but not individually
- Reuse may or may not be possible

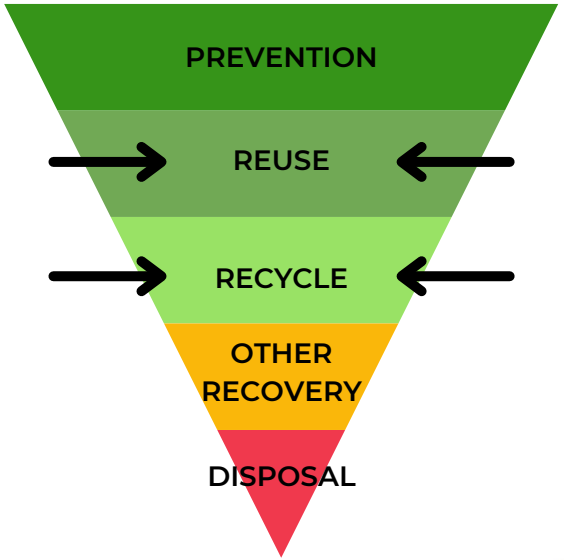
2) SUBSTRATE ★★★

- No impact on subfloor

3) ENVIRONMENT ★★★

- Recyclable as no adhesive used
- Re-use may be possible but click can have weakness at joints

WASTE HIERARCHY POSITION



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TACKIFIER

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EXAMPLES:

Adhesive-based tackifier typically used with carpets and Luxury Vinyl Tile

IMPACT ON:

1) FLOOR COVERING

- Adhesive contamination of floor covering renders material difficult to recycle

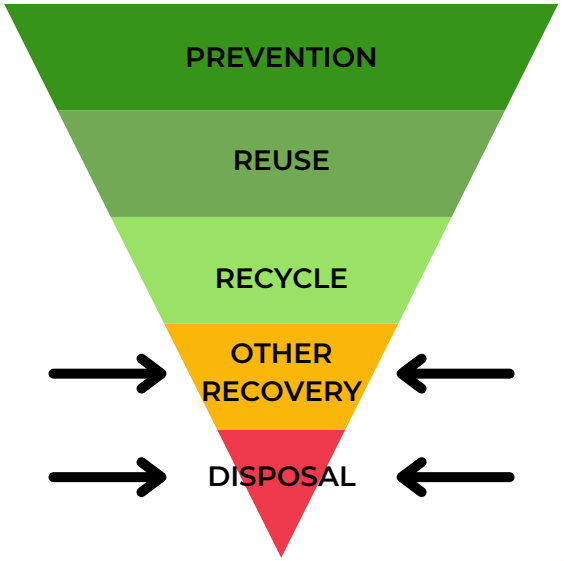
2) SUBSTRATE

- Adhesive attaches to subfloor and contaminates subfloor

3) ENVIRONMENT

- Floor covering not easily recyclable or reusable
- Substrate needs expensive remediation
- (eg. Metal raised access floors need cleaning at a cost of up to £10 per SQM)

WASTE HIERARCHY POSITION



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FULL SPREAD ADHESIVES

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EXAMPLES:

Pressure sensitive contact or spray adhesives

IMPACT ON:

1) FLOOR COVERING

- Adhesive contamination of floor covering renders material difficult to recycle

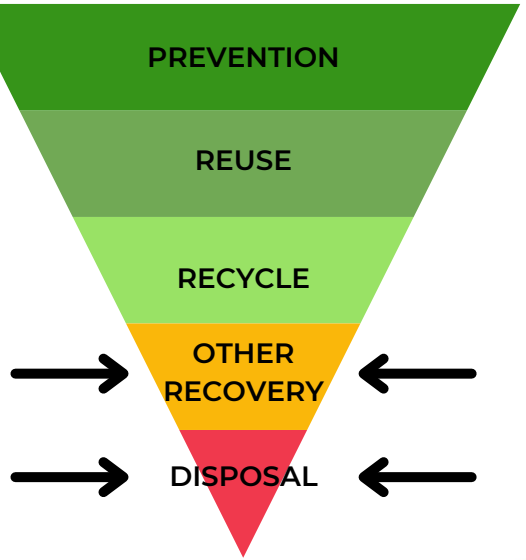
2) SUBSTRATE

- Adhesive attaches to subfloor and contaminates subfloor
- Some subfloors attach to the floor covering when removed and everything must go to landfill

3) ENVIRONMENT

- Floor covering not recyclable or reusable
- Substrate needs expensive remediation

WASTE HIERARCHY POSITION



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ADHESIVE-FREE CASE STUDY

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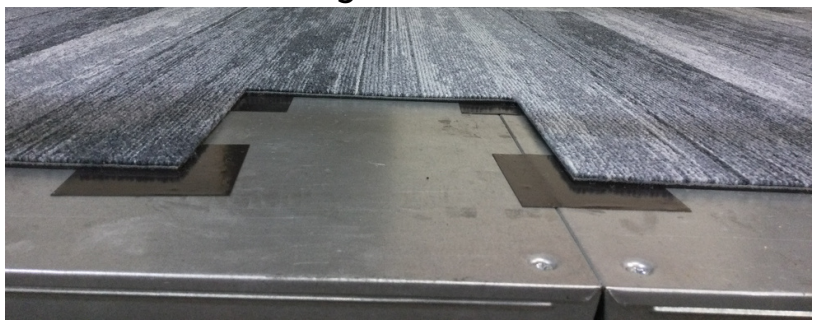
IOBAC adhesive-free MagTabs helped reach a RICS SKA silver sustainability rating for this stunning international Headquarters fit out in London Victoria's Nova North.

A trusted method for installing carpet, LVT and woven vinyl onto metal raised access flooring was needed for clean, contamination-free uplift.



Client: GKN Automotive
Landlord: Landsec
Design consultant: Thirdway
Flooring contractor: Delta Commercial Flooring
Flooring: Tarkett LVT, Bolon Woven vinyl, Desso carpet tiles

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It is designed to help specifiers incorporate reuse at the design phase of projects by considering flooring as a complete solution i.e. the floor covering and its installation method combined.

The installation method specified will have a profound impact on the sustainability of the overall flooring system.

For example, a 100% recyclable floor covering can be rendered completely non reusable when installed using less sustainable methods.

The scale provides a practical and visual indicator of how to specify the highest level of sustainable and circular flooring .

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