

ACCESSING SUSTAINABLY GROWN SCOTTISH SOFTWOOD TIMBER AND TIMBER PRODUCTS

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Background

The aim of this paper is to provide information on sources of sustainably grown Scottish softwood timber and timber products. The accompanying list is not exhaustive, though considerable effort was put into contacting as many sawmills and timber merchants in Scotland as possible by phone. It has been prepared from the answers given over the phone and no attempt has been made to physically verify the information provided. Please therefore ask the supplier to confirm that they are able to provide you with certified and/or sustainable Scottish grown timber and timber products.

Points of information

The building contractor should be clear about the following before purchasing:

Scottish v imported

The range of types and sizes of suppliers is great – from small family run businesses to large multi-branch companies. With both timber merchants and sawmillers it is therefore important to be specific when requesting Scottish wood products. With some large timber and builders merchants, all outlets may supply the same product types but each outlet may have its own source – Scottish grown and/or imported.

If asked, many will differentiate between Scottish grown and imported timber and timber products in stock, and other suppliers have stated that they be **willing to source** local timber or timber products even if they do not normally carry the product.

Value added options

These options eg. preservative treatment, kiln drying, machining and strength grading) tend to be done at the sawmill, though many smaller sawmills contract them out. In general Scottish softwood timber tends to be strength graded at C16. Higher strength classes are generally supplied from imported timber, though small quantities may be available from Scottish sources.

Certification

The certification process is designed to prove that forests are being managed with a long-term vision for the future. Certification gives buyers an assurance that wood products come from forests that are sustainably managed. Key requirements are a certification standard, laying down precise requirements for sustainable management, a system for inspecting forests and a mechanism for demonstrating a 'chain of custody' to show that the wood products on sale are indeed derived from certified forests. (A chain of custody needs to record accurately a piece of wood's movements through a chain of 'custodians' that may include a forest owner, a harvesting contractor, a sawmill, and a timber merchant before the final buyer.)

The UK has developed its own certification standard – *the UK Woodland Assurance Standard* (UKWAS). This reflects the requirements of both the Government's *UK Forestry Standard* and the national Standard developed by the independent, international Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Accredited certification bodies carry out inspections (audits) and issue forest management and chain-of-custody certificates. Certificate holders who have been inspected to the UKWAS standard by auditing organisations accredited by the FSC may use the FSC trademark.

Another scheme, PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes), operates in a range of countries throughout the world, but as yet no UK produced timber carries the PEFC label.

All of the forests managed by the Forestry Commission are certified by FSC, as well as an increasing area of privately owned forest. Together, this means that over 60% of the timber produced in Scotland carries the FSC label.

In addition, **all** tree felling in Great Britain is regulated by the Forestry Commission. In Scotland this is carried out through the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (SFGS) and, with few exceptions, all woodlands felled will be replanted. To obtain approval for felling, planting and re-planting and the management of existing woodlands through the SFGS all work must adhere to the UK Forestry Standard.

It is important to ask the sawmill or timber merchant to confirm that it has chain of custody certification and if the product you are purchasing is certified. It is worth noting that as products may come from a variety of sources the certification options may vary.

Where **local sourcing** is also important, the client should ask the supplier to provide confirmation of the source of the timber (e.g. the SFGS approval number).

Lead times

There should be no problems in the supply of standard products eg carcassing or sarking boards of Scottish grown spruce (imported term: whitewood) or Scots pine (imported term: redwood) from the main sawmills and timber merchants. With smaller companies, for larger dimension or special products there is likely to be a longer lead time to source these from sustainable Scottish timber. It is best to check in advance.

External timber cladding/Durability

Timber species from a wide spectrum of durability classes can be used quite satisfactorily for external cladding in a Hazard Class 3 situation [*above ground, not covered, subject to periods of wetting*], relying on either natural durability, timber treatment or good detailing. Three broad approaches to consider are given in Davies et al (2002) [1]:

- Using natural durability: providing the sapwood is removed, the heartwood of timbers classed as moderately durable or above can be used without preservative treatment (generally only European oak and European larch);
- Using treated timber: where the heartwood is designated as less than moderately durable (Norway spruce, but also potentially hybrid and Japanese larch, Douglas fir and Scots pine), or where the material includes sapwood, they should receive preservative treatment by impregnation to the specifications in the relevant European Standards ie the draft DD 239:1998.
- Use careful detailing combined with measures that reduce moisture uptake: an alternative, but more controversial, approach is to use timber of a low natural durability (but with relatively impermeable sapwood e.g. spruce) with an opaque water-repellent but moisture vapour permeable coatings, which is regularly reapplied, in conjunction with careful detailing. This approach is regularly used in Scandinavia, including the western coastal zone [1], though using this low durability timber option requires that the owner of the structure is aware of and accepts the possibility of greater ongoing maintenance, and it also requires that the cladding is designed so that the most vulnerable components are readily replaceable should the need arise.

Where “larch” is sought, the normal product to be requested would be “heartwood of European larch”, though heartwood of *slow grown* Japanese and potentially hybrid larch may also be suitable. It should be kiln dried to a moisture content of 19% before use, or if used green the detailing should allow for subsequent shrinkage.

I – Joists

The trade name for the version of this product manufactured in Forres by James Jones and Sons Ltd with Scottish OSB is the “JJ I-Joist”.

Wood based sheet materials

The trade names for the relevant board products, from the companies product range, manufactured from Scottish timber by Norbord Ltd (from 1 July '04, previously known as Nexfor) and Egger UK are:

<u>Company</u>	<u>Generic product name</u>	<u>Trade name</u>
Norbord:	Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF)	= Caberwood
Norbord:	Oriented Strand Board (OSB)	= Sterlingboard, Roofdek
Norbord:	Chipboard flooring	= Caberfloor, Caberdek
Norbord:	Melamine faced MDF	= Caberdecor
Egger UK	Particleboard flooring	= Weyroc Flooring

Other products

Scottish grown timber can also be used for a wide range of other products.

For information on *fencing, decking materials* or log cabins from Scottish grown timber please contact the UK Forest Products Association (UKFPA) – see www.ukfpa.co.uk.

For information on Scottish grown hardwood timber check with both the Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmillers (ASHS) – see www.ashs.co.uk and the UKFPA. In general, little Scottish grown softwood timber is used for joinery purposes.

Other sources of information on accessing Scottish timber and timber products

If you are still experiencing difficulties in accessing the products you require, please try:

- UKFPA (UK Forest Products Association) – see www.ukfpa.co.uk. This website contains a buyers guide for UK grown timber and timber products. The membership of the Association is drawn from companies throughout the UK whose activities encompass the harvesting, sawmilling, processing, merchandising and distribution of such products;
- WPIF (Wood Panel Industries Federation) – see www.wpif.org.uk. This website contains a list of members. The WPIF is a representative organisation for the industrial manufacturers of wood chipboard, OSB and MDF in UK and Ireland, focusing on supporting members processing activities and their products in the market;
- ASHS (Association of Scottish Hardwood Sawmillers) – see www.ashs.co.uk (0870 241 2350). ASHS is an independent association of small companies supplying Scottish hardwood timber and timber products.

NB: this list has been compiled from information supplied by the companies themselves. Forestry Commission Scotland has not checked, and does not accept any responsibility for, the accuracy of the information provided. The compilation and updating of this listing is an ongoing process – please ask the supplier to confirm that they are able to provide you with certified and/or sustainable Scottish grown timber and timber products.

Building work involving the use of timber cladding in Scotland must comply with the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulation 1990 as amended. The information contained in this guide does not infer compliance with the regulations and where a building warrant is required appropriate advice can be obtained from the relevant Building Control Office.

Reference

[1] Davies, I., Walker, B., Pendlebury, J., 2002. Timber Cladding in Scotland.

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