

Highside Timber Ltd

'WasWood' Wood fuel from joinery 'waste' adds value and could provide heat



Started 1994 Highside Timber Ltd specialise in processing locally sourced hardwoods to furniture quality timber, or manufacturing on site into architectural fitments, i.e. replica archtrives, skirting, doors etc.

They have created a new brand, 'WasWood', which is providing two different products to add value to its joinery business, improve regional timber quality and removing their burden of waste. The 'WasWood' subsidiary business creates a premium quality horse bedding (shavings) from plentiful, local, early coniferous thinings. It also uses it's joinery and timber processing residues to create 'WasWood Briquettes', a compress dust 'coal' sized nugget for use in domestic/light industrial solid fuel systems.

objectives

- To reduce waste generated by the joinery workshop, previously this had been burnt on site, causing neighbourhood complaints.
- To provide additional cash revenue-generating streams for the business, that required low input and could be supported by the immediate vicinity so as to limit transport costs.
- To eventually create a fuel product that could be used to heat the on site kiln.

actions

- They have fostered relationships with local woodland and veteran tree owners. This has enabled purchasing of local, quality timber, often as single specimen trees, predominately oak for the joinery business. This enterprise uses a local operator of a mobile Wood-Mizer saw bench, K N M Sawmilling.
- Installation of an Ecomec Briquetter, an Italian machine, supplied by Delapre, this was the first such plant in Yorkshire in 2006.
- Development of shavings business, utilising further the relationships forged sourcing joinery product. Often buying timber from and supplying shavings back to the same customer base. Highside Timber purchase poor quality, 2nd thinings, providing the horse fraternity with a valued product, improving the regional economics of 2nd thinings and improving local forest structure.

achievements

For Business:

- Reduction in the ½ a ton of joinery waste produced weekly, to virtually zero.
- Purchasing of 200t annually of Scots Pine chipwood for the 'WasWood' shavings business, with associated economic and woodland improvements that this brings.

For the Region:

- Creation of local sustainably sourced solid fuel replacement, at ¼ of the price of coal.
- Improved economic circumstances for local tree and woodland owners, with the creation of two local markets.
- Improvements to local biodiversity, as more woodlands are brought active management.
- Improvement in local economy as cash-flow is circulated within locality.

background

- Chipwood quality Scots Pine is purchase 'green', approximately 200t per annum, stacked, sorted in 2m split lengths and air dried for 4 months. This is then turned into 2 grades of bedding shavings using a Clean Flake machine, supplied by Tree Fix (£25,000). These are bailed on site and sold as cash sales excluding delivery at the mill gate.
- Additional fuel stock for the briquettes is collected *gratis* as part of the timber milling supply service. Highside Timber produces locally sourced furniture quality milled wood to an expanding order book of small scale cabinet makers and hobbyist woodworkers. As part of the supply network to these clients Highside Timber deliver new materials and remove 'waste' for processing into fuel briquettes, this services covers a rough 55 mile radius form the mill.
- The briquette machine is run automatically at the mills convenience, processing 1½ t per week of extracted and collected dust, this produces the equivalent of 75x20Kg bags of briquettes. Bulk sales, either retail or wholesale are undertaken on a small scale, with a total of 1,000 bags sold per annum (the mill owner also heats his property with the briquettes). No advertising or publicity work has been undertaken, and the combination of feedstock limits and covered storage are the two factors limiting this division of the business expanding further.
- The next evolution would be to reduce further the mill's dependency on oil and heat the 7m³ vented Kiln Service Junior kiln used on site. A new pellet mill within the vicinity is limiting the availability of feedstock, but higher oil prices has meant a wider collection area is now economically viable.

quotes

"It is a good feeling to link craftsmen with their raw materials, and working with Highside Timbers does this, local wood for local craftsmen".

Keith Mott, K N M Sawmilling, Mobile Sawbench Contractor

"We installed the Briquette in 2006, it's paid for it's self in five years and has aided in bring new business to the joinery and really helped our cash flow".

Nigel Bain , 'WasWood' Proprietor

partners

K N M Milling – Mobile Saw Bench
Delapre Machinery – Briquette Machinery
Yorwoods



lessons learnt

- It is not always necessary to purchase an entire system off the shelf, it is better to evaluate whether all apparatus is required. In the example of Highside Timber, local expertise was used to manufacture a bespoke bag filling system, saving £3,000 on the cost of this attachment being supplied by the machinery's dealer.
- Hardwood dust has better burn qualities, and a 80:20 ratio with softwoods gives an ideal briquette bind, longer burn and value for money for supplier and customer.