



Heads-up for construction

WATCH OUT FOR BALTIC PINE AND SPRUCE

Over the past few years, there's been a growing prevalence of softwood (mainly Pine and Spruce) from Scandinavia, the Baltic States and Russia entering the Australian market as structural pine for floor, wall and roof framing. It's found in packs of sawn wood, in pre-fabricated wall frames, floor and roof trusses, and in engineered wood products - glue laminated lumber (LGL), laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and oriented strandboard (OSB).

Some of this softwood is being harvested at an alarming rate from Russia's boreal forests, resulting in serious environmental damage. Meanwhile, if only to mitigate runaway climate change, the preservation of these vast and slow growing northern forests is now understood to be as critical and urgent as the preservation of the tropical Amazon rainforest. Here's a link to a synopsis on this subject from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)...

http://assets.panda.org/downloads/russia_forest_cc_final_13nov07.pdf

Our research leaves us seriously questioning the environmental and social responsibility of forest management practices attached to the supply of this softwood originating from the other side of the planet, irrespective of certifications that may be in place. And because neither timber retailers, let alone builders, are provided good information as to the exact origin of this wood, our Design Guidelines require that **all new structural softwood for building work at Mullum Creek must be sourced from plantations in Australia or New Zealand**. Please stress this to your builder, timber supplier and truss/frame manufacturer, and in doing so also help protect Australian jobs.

Recently we've noticed Baltic Pine and Spruce slipping onto building sites at Mullum Creek. So how can you positively identify the origin of structural softwood that turns up on site, in case you need to send it back?

Sawn softwood, in loose lengths or pre-fabricated into trusses or wall frames, is almost sure to be Baltic Pine or Spruce if the distance between growth rings in the end grain of the wood averages less than 2mm (see overleaf). Conversely it is sure to be plantation Pine or Oregon if it's stamped with any of the following brand names:

AKD, Carter Holt Harvey, Dongwha, Hyne, LASERframe, OneFortyOne, RedStag, Timberlink, Wespine or WTS.

LVL is sure to be Pine of Australian or New Zealand origin if it's stamped with any of the following brand names:

Carter Holt Harvey, CHH, Hyne, hySPAN or Wesbeam.

Structural flooring or wall bracing (plywood or particleboard) is sure to be Pine of Australian or New Zealand origin if it's stamped with any of the following brand names:

Borg, Carter Holt Harvey, CHH, D&R Henderson, Ecoply, Plyfloor or Structaflor.

Currently there is no **OSB** manufactured from Australian or New Zealand plantation softwood, and as such it's not approved for use at Mullum Creek, whether as floor sheeting, wall bracing or webbing in engineered I-joists. There are equally performing and affordable plywoods, engineered and reconstituted wood products available for these applications, as listed in Mullum Creek's Approved Timber Products Guide.

<http://mullumcreek.com.au/app/uploads/Timber-Products-Guide.pdf>

If you're still unsure about the origin of structural wood delivered to your building site, please email to us at info@mullumcreek.com.au close-up photos of its end grain and any stamps on the side face, and we'll help you to confirm the source.



BALTIC PINE

- From northern hemisphere slow-growing cold-climate boreal forests.
- Not approved for use at Mullum Creek.



RADIATA PINE

- From fast-growing plantation in temperate climates of Australia or New Zealand.
- Approved for use at Mullum Creek.