

## TALKING TIMBER



## PLYWOOD REVISITED

*Plywood should be fit for purpose and its credentials should be indelibly marked and legible, but as **John Park** points out, this is not always the case*



**One good test for** determination of an appropriate glue bond in plywood is to install it as site fencing and let it get wet. That's not a test prescribed in EN 314-1 but it is effective!

Based on the image below left, this plywood didn't quite pass. What was it sold/bought as? The plywood just installed on the same site, see image below right, does at least have some, albeit incomplete, means of identification. It is traceable

to source and, if the appropriate paperwork has been provided, which it should have been to be in compliance with the Construction Products Regulation (CPR), also to the importer and the distributor.

For those construction companies keen to espouse corporate environmental responsibility, most clearly in evidence on the newly installed plywood is that it is FSC and 100% wood from well-managed forests.

For the purpose of the CPR (and we have a UK version now), marking should be indelible and legible; in this case it may indeed be indelible but it is almost entirely illegible – except FSC, which is proudly emblazoned in a font that must be at least five times larger than the essential detail. (Note the distinct difference there between 'essential' and 'important'!)

Conspicuous by its absence is the stylised 'CE'. Of the rest that can be read, the inaccuracy that is CE2+ is still 'clearly' hanging on. EN is also quite clear, on one panel at least, followed in all cases by ●●●●● which merge into a single splodge, followed by ●, which might possibly be 'S'. I think it must be intended to be 'S' because there appear to be letters vaguely resembling 'DOP' although sadly the number is indecipherable. One stamp is accompanied by another splodge, glue, which if one is to go by its colour might suggest exterior glue bond – time will tell.

With regard to the CPR, the DOP is required to contain "the list of essential characteristics, as determined in the harmonised technical specification for the declared intended use or uses". Now, about that traceability ...

The clarity provided by government – and to make sense of it all you will need two wide-screen monitors and Adobe Acrobat – with regard to the CPR in the form of Statutory Instrument 2020 No. 1359 *The Construction Products (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020* has, with regard to the earlier Statutory Instrument 2019 No. 465 *The Construction Products (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*, changed little other than to indicate that Northern Ireland is no longer covered by the earlier document, which becomes the CPR for Great Britain ("England and Wales, and Scotland").

It also contains a new Schedule 3, Regulation 5 'Construction

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products enforcement rules – Northern Ireland' which is now the 'counterpart' to the revised Statutory Instrument 2013 No. 1387 *The Construction Products Regulations 2013* which, in a nutshell, now covers 'Offences in relation to the 2011 Regulation' (ie the original EU CPR) with respect to Great Britain.

From Part 2, Chapter 1, Paragraph 4:

(1) "A person who supplies a construction product that is covered by a harmonised standard or conforms to a European Technical Assessment that has been issued for it shall be guilty of an offence unless—  
(a) there is supplied with the product in accordance with Article 7 of the 2011 Regulation a declaration of performance for the product drawn up in accordance with Articles 4 and 6 of the 2011 Regulation; and (b) the product has affixed to it the CE marking in accordance with Article 8(2) of the 2011 Regulation.

(3) A person who supplies a construction product to which the CE marking has been affixed in breach of any provision of Article 8 or 9 of the 2011 Regulation shall be guilty of an offence.

(4) A person guilty of an offence under this regulation shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale or to both."

And then there are CPR Articles 13 and 14! ■

*Below left:  
This site hoarding plywood has not stood the test of time*

*Below right:  
The replacement plywood is lacking some details*



**The Wood Technology Society**

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