

Manufacturers of high quality building components in sustainable timber

Sweet Chestnut Rain Screen Cladding - Natural untreated hardwood cladding boards specially produced from coppiced grown sweet chestnut. This home produced timber is entirely sustainable as it is sawn from logs selected from woodland in southern England from existing coppices which are cut on a 25 – 30 year cycle. This historic form of silvicultural management allows the woods to re-grow from the coppiced stool or rootstocks without killing the tree to form a new crop and to maintain an excellent diverse woodland habitat. The total forest resource of Sweet Chestnut in Southern England amounts to over 21,000 ha.

Sweet Chestnut is classified by the Building Research Establishment as naturally durable and contains tannins, which help protect the timber from decay and insect attack.

In Wood Developments have pioneered a new process, utilising small diameter logs, which historically have been used for other external uses such as hop poles and fencing. IWD sources the logs directly from the forest and saws the small diameter logs to produce straight-grained timber. Initially the sawn boards are air dried to reduce the moisture content and all timber is then visually graded and cross-cut to remove defects such as large knots. The clean lengths of defected timber are then finger-jointed together into 6m lengths and dried. Finally the timber is machined finished with a weathering profile. This produces long lengths of clean timber, which are very stable with low potential for movement in service.

The finger-jointing process using special moisture curing PU glue has been tested at BRE using the advanced ASTM D weathering tests which show suitability for external applications. IWD has a modern finger-joint production facility at Whitesmith in East Sussex.



Sweet chestnut rain screen cladding at the Woodland Enterprise Centre, Flimwell



Weathered chestnut rain screen cladding boards after exposure to direct sunlight for 2 years

Weathering is dependant on levels of exposure, fully exposed on the south & west elevations in full sun and driving rain will accelerate the weathering expected from partially protected situations.

As with other hardwoods containing natural tannins initially, in wet weather conditions, there will be some tannin leaching. This can result in some water staining on the boards to a slightly darker colour and also produce some tannin run-out below the cladding. Eventually this leaching reduces and the boards gradually weather to a silver-grey colour. Sweet Chestnut reacts with ferrous metals and care should be taken to avoid direct contact. We recommend fixing the boards with a good quality stainless steel screw or nail system.

Board sizes 22mm thick, 85mm width (with 5mm weathering) in 6m lengths, machined finished.

Sweet Chestnut rain screen cladding is a beautiful natural timber, which left untreated will create a facade which weathers with time to form a complimentary addition to a modern or traditional building. Used with a breathing wall system the boarding forms an effective cladding system that requires minimum maintenance.

October 2005

In Wood Developments Ltd.
Woodland Centre, Whitesmith
Nr. Lewes, East Sussex BN8 6JB
Tel: 01825 872550
Email: info@in-wood.co.uk
Website: www.in-wood.co.uk