

# NHG & LDCWOOD® ANNOUNCE EXCLUSIVE UK & IRELAND PARTNERSHIP

*Ben Goodwin explains why NHG Timber Ltd has added LDCwood® thermally modified wood products to its range*



*Above: Thermal modification kilns (Jartek)*



**THERE HAS BEEN A RECENT DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR TIMBER AND WOOD PRODUCT RANGE, LDCWOOD THERMALLY MODIFIED TIMBER. WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS DECISION AND WHY DID YOU CHOOSE LDCWOOD®?**

NHG Timber has worked extremely closely with the Lemahieu Group for many years now as a major supplier of sawn hardwoods from West Africa, predominantly Afrormosia, Padouk and Okan. More recently, we have added LDCwood® Ayous and Fraké in response to the increasing demand for durable thermally modified wood. LDCwood® is part of Lemahieu Group and a member of the International ThermoWood® Association.

After my first visit to Belgium post-pandemic in November 2021, I was given a sample of LDCwood® Ayous. The product is beautiful, and it just instantly made sense for us to start to market it here in the UK, which we did during 2022. After some initial success we have decided to make our partnership official and look to gain further traction during the course of 2023.

**IS THERMALLY MODIFIED WOOD ALREADY KNOWN IN THE UK? IN WHICH APPLICATIONS?**

Yes, without question, thermally modified timber has been entering the UK market for a long time now, but as always the UK market has taken time to embrace change and a new product. However, with the recent difficulties in supply of competing items such as Western Red Cedar and Siberian Larch for cladding, interest has markedly increased, in particular in thermally modified Ayous, which has the right properties to make a very effective cladding product. It has Durability Class 1.



*Top (from left): Stuart McBride, Guy Goodwin (both NHG Timber), Mike Lemahieu (LDCwood®), Ben Goodwin and Ben Jenn (both NHG Timber)*

*Above: Residence Oasis, Jokkebrok, Wenduine - Belgium LDCwood® ThermoWood® Ayous, treated with fire retardant, Burnblock®*



*Top: Hockey Gantoise, sports club, Ghent - Belgium - LDCwood® ThermoWood® Pine, treated with fire retardant, Burnblock®*

*Above: Interior residential house, Ghent - Belgium - LDCwood® ThermoWood® Fraké*

This means it lasts for more than 25 years. Limitations in supply of modified joinery timbers have opened the door to thermally modified Fraké.

Thermally modified African hardwoods are only a part of the production at LDCwood®, we are also able to offer thermally modified Ash, Poplar, Spruce and Pine for exterior and interior application as well. The range of species will increase in the coming months and years as LDCwood® strives to increase its product portfolio.

With multiple planing machines, various profiles for cladding and decking are available as well as custom-made profiles. Thanks to the close collaboration between LDCwood® and Lemahieu Group, LDCwood® ThermoWood® can be treated with fire retardant, Burnblock®, under vacuum pressure up to reaction to fire class B-s1,d0. Other possible finishes are: pre-greying, brushing and varnishing.

**CAN THERMALLY MODIFIED TIMBER BE PART OF A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TIMBER SOURCING?**

It is clear that timber derived from sustainably managed forests will be increasingly sought after. The thermal modification process transforms species that may be abundant into products that offer Class 1 durability and stability that can compete with and substitute for rarer or harder to find species. For example, Ayous and Fraké are non durable in their natural state, but after modification can be used for a much wider set of applications. All LDCwood® species are available certified, with a clear chain of custody and negligible risk under UKTR. Widening the scope for use of timber species can only be good for sustainability goals.

**WHAT IS YOUR STRATEGY TO BRING LDCWOOD® TO THE UK MARKET?**

Our strategy is simple, it will be done on the same basis as how NHG Timber Ltd has developed and prospered since its inception in 1981. We will look to find partners within our industry, importers who can then feed the end users and project developers. We have always worked closely with our client base, searching for long-term business is always our focus. It won't be long before UK importers keep a good stockholding of LDCwood® thermally modified products.

We are fortunate to have such a strong supplier and partner in LDCwood® supporting us and putting its faith in us, to bring it a strong presence in the UK and Irish markets.

One of the products' USPs is LDCwood®'s membership of the International ThermoWood® Association, giving assurances on the modification process and therefore the very best final product possible. ■



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