

THE SPECIFIER'S GUIDE

flooring

An SP101 Flooring Plywood® excerpt





▲ A beautiful finish depends on a reliable subfloor installation

Absolute assurance of quality and performance

Plywood subfloors

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THE quality of general commercial hardwood plywood has steadily declined as the availability of legal and sustainable high-quality hardwood logs has become more of an issue. This decline in quality became a growing concern for the flooring industry as more and more installation failures were being reported.

The flooring industry invests very heavily and uses the latest technology to produce some highly sophisticated premium quality products, ranging from adhesives and screeds to the actual decorative floorcovering itself. As an integral component of the subfloor, plywood really needs to be able to perform reliably alongside some very high value products.

Leading up to 2012 the Contract Flooring Association (CFA) was increasingly being made aware of the problems being experienced by its members with regard to plywood. Costly failures directly attributable to the use of poor quality plywood were now becoming common place. Since there was no recognised or agreed plywood specification various poor quality products were being used.

The association recognised the need for the flooring industry to be able to work to reliable standards, and after following a process of diligent professional consultation, the CFA issued a Plywood Guidance Note in 2013 which at last, provided a reliable documented reference to work with.

This was a significant step forward in providing the flooring industry with a much clearer understanding of plywood technicalities and performance as part of the subfloor preparation process.

Having looked at the work undertaken by the CFA, and considering the technical requirements of a plywood product that would reliably meet the specific requirements of the flooring industry, SP101 Flooring Plywood was developed and presented to industry in 2013.

SP101 is a tailored specification which is produced under very strict control and testing at the factory, but also undergoes further third party testing to give absolute assurance of quality and performance.

Key features

Key features that are addressed in manufacture and ensure panels are guaranteed fit for purpose include:

- thicker outer veneers
- reliable gluing
- strict thickness/dimensional tolerances
- controlled moisture content
- high-quality core

The industry now fully recognises the importance of fit for purpose plywood and manufacturers of floorcoverings and adhesives are always keen to test SP101 alongside their own products to ensure all materials would work in harmony.

Extensive performance testing has taken place since 2013, and SP101 is now widely recognised as being a fully compliant and reliable component in subfloor preparation.

BS 8203: 2017 Code of practice for installation of resilient floorcoverings

Annex A: Guidance on the selection and specification of suitable plywood for fabricated underlays.

The CFA Guidance Note was immediately recognised as a valued reference document and was widely adopted throughout the industry. In view of this, further work was undertaken by the CFA, its manufacturing committee and BSi representatives, to introduce the guidance into British Standards. The normative Annex A has now been included in BS 8203 providing a performance specification for plywood.

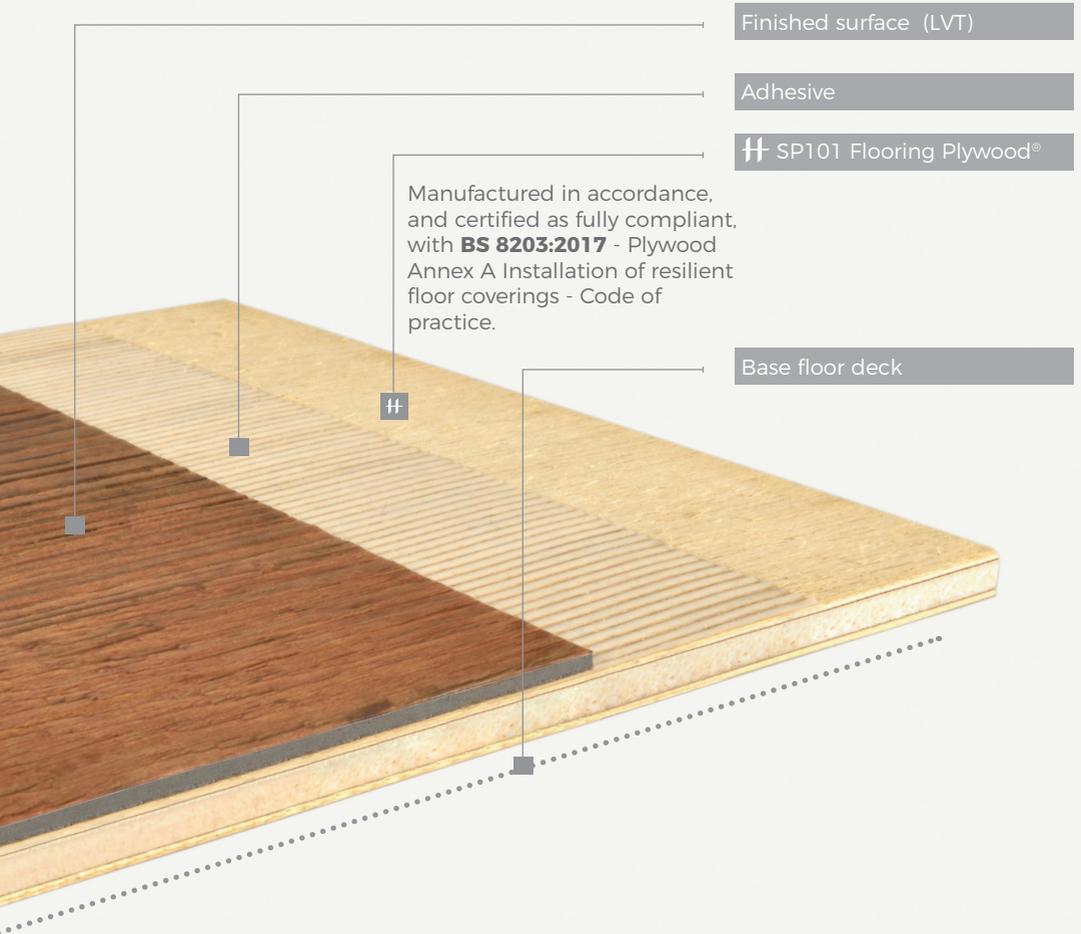


SP101 subfloor
for LVT

Plywood compliant
with BS8203:2017



-  Accurate dimensions
-  Flatness and stability
-  No core overlap
-  Ease of use
-  TFT Woodexperts Diamond Mark Certified



www.sp101.co.uk

NB A normative annex defines guidance that should be followed

This is a significant development for the industry, as it now gives manufacturers and installers a clear reference on the specification of plywood that should be used for a successful and reliable installation.

Trained fitters that are working to BS 8203 now need to ensure they are using the correct specification of plywood.

Notable manufacturers of LVT, adhesives and all other allied products have acknowledged and welcomed this addition to BS 8203 standard. Plywood which is BS 8203 compliant is naturally used at all floor-fitting training schools throughout the UK.

Training to fit SP101 Flooring Plywood.





▲ Above left: Seedling development
Above right: Sapling cultivation

Environment and sustainability

The UK timber industry has comprehensive systems in place to ensure legality and sustainability of timber products. Products have to be technically sound and fit-for-purpose and have to comply with all relevant environmental criteria.

The timber in SP101 Flooring Plywood is sourced from Indonesia; a country comprised of well over 13,000 islands with over 91 million hectares of forest cover. In the past, the country's forest resources have suffered at the hands of deforestation, however recent changes in forest legislation and governance have begun to tackle one of the main causes of deforestation; illegal logging.

Indonesia is the first country in the world to complete the process of a voluntary partnership agreement (VPA) with the European Union (EU), legally obligating the country to implement a licensing scheme to regulate trade in timber and timber products.

Currently, this means all timber exported from Indonesia has to be fully traceable and certified under Indonesias' countrywide timber legality assurance scheme, SVLK.

SVLK (Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu) was developed through multi-stakeholder consultations and, by process of further modification, became a nation-wide scheme which now offers market incentives for legal compliance (timber cannot be exported without supplying evidence that it complies with SVLK).

Alongside this, the Indonesian Ministry of Environment & Forestry developed an online system (SIPUHH Online) which tracks logs all the way back to the concession using a QR barcode-scanning system.

SVLK is now the first timber legality assurance scheme to be recognised by the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) as a framework that assures the legality of timber sourced in Indonesia.

All timber products certified under SVLK and exported from Indonesia are now FLEGT licenced as of November 2016. A FLEGT licence is currently the only licence that ensures full, verifiable compliance with the EU Timber Regulation.

SP101 Flooring Plywood was the first flooring plywood to be imported into the UK with a FLEGT licence.

Summary

BS 8203 Annex A now provides the flooring industry with a clear specification for the plywood which should be used to comply with the standard. This makes life much simpler for designers and specifiers to work with fully compliant and reliable plywood products.



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