

## December 2014 Newsletter

Written by Ted Stubbersfield

[Why Does No-one Listen about 150x150](#)

[150x150, An Exception](#)

[CPD Points](#)

[More on Plastic Bollards](#)

[Blog for Timber+DESIGN Web Magazine](#)

[Books by Ted](#)

[Bridge Quotes](#)

Dear Reader

### [Why does no-one listen about 150x150?](#)



Early this month I had a phone call from a sawmill that was in trouble over the supply of 150x150 posts. The client had ordered 150x150 F17 appearance grade and after reading somewhere on the web that 150x150 with heart in the centre was only fit for landscaping, he expected to receive heart free material. He then complained to the reseller when it arrived with heart in, the reseller complained to the mill who in turn came to me.

F17 just refers to the primary structural properties - i.e is it strong enough to do the job and AS2082 allows heart in the common species cut in Queensland. F17 does not say whether it is appropriate for the application. But this was supposed to be F17 **appearance grade**. But that does not help either. There is generally nothing subjective about this specification, you can put a tape measure on a natural feature in the timber and say - it passes or it fails, Heart

centre is not one of the exclusions for appearance grade. So the person received what he ordered.

Note that people are specifying ordering, cutting and selling this product without actually knowing what they are suppose to be supplied/supplying. Unfortunately the new definition of heart in AS2082-2007 is too subjective for me to understand.

AS2082 is clear when it says, in effect, that if you want heart free material you have to specify it that way.

Now OSA knows [how to process this material to tame the heart](#) (follow link) but people will not pay for it so what are your options

- Go to a laminated product which will not be made with a cyclic de-lamination resistant glue which I do not believe even exists on the market for this product,
- Use the 192x192 Pioneer Post from OSA [see this link for the reasons for this product](#) [See this link for a brochure](#)

As for 150x150 being only fit for landscaping, they were not reading what I wrote. I maintain it is not even fit for landscaping - at least quality public landscaping. The lead image is of a 150x150 where the designer had carefully specified heart free 150x150 (someone who did listen) but the contractor, presumably wanting to save \$20 per metre, ignored the specification and purchased and installed heart in material.

### 150x150 An Exception

A few months back i was in Forest Hill (between Gatton and Laidley) visiting my favorite watering hole, no, not the Lockyer Hotel but Sorella's cafe (just down the street and well worth a dive in from the highway). Unfortunately a truck had driven into two of the corner posts of this heritage listed hotel and done considerable damage to the whole verandah. Queensland Heritage Restorations were finishing a high quality repair and i had a good talk to Shane Earle, a director of the company. He said that the timber



had to be replaced like for like so the posts had to be in one piece. Now 100 years ago you could purchase a 150x150 heart free piece in a long length but not now. So in consultation with all parties the replacement pieces were cut from a recycled power poles with the heart in the centre. It was hoped that the smaller aged timber might have produced a more stable heart. Not ideal but the only thing that could be done. An informed compromise is not the same thing as ordering one thing and expecting another.

### Timber Induction Course Eligible for CPD Points

The guidelines for Engineers Australia and the Board of Architects Queensland allow me to award CPD points for the induction course or individual presentations. These are available to deliver at your office or university.

Timber Preservation.  
Hardwood Grading.  
Timber Decks – Designing for Durability,  
Utilising Small Diameter Hardwood.  
The Seven Deadly Sins of Timber Design. .

### [More on Plastic Bollards](#)



In my September newsletter I had a [discussion on plastic or hardwood bollards](#). I showed pictures of shiny new plastic bollards and 30 year old hardwood bollards opposite my house. I should have added this image of a bollard in the same park which was less than 10 years old. The star picket up the centre is there because soon after installation someone broke it off at ground line. The UV of course is getting to the plastic. And with a straight face people are telling me that plastic is better than hardwood!

If you are having trouble with your timber bollards you should be talking to me, It is very simple to get right and I can advise you. I have only ever had one batch of bollards that did not perform well, they were 150x150 with the heart in the centre supplied to a clients specification. I learnt a lesson that day.

### [Blog being written for Timber+DESIGN Magazine](#)

**My tenth blog written for Timber+DESIGN web magazine is on collapsing decks.** It is coming out after this newsletter unfortunately. Why not subscribe (it's free) - see the details below. Timber+DESIGN is a very useful magazine for those interested in timber that has been used imaginatively. .

[Click here for a link to the website of Timber+DESIGN magazine.](#)

[Blog on surface finish of decking](#)

[Blog on whether decking should be a product in its own right](#)

[Blog on whether plastic decking all its cracked up to be](#)

[Blog on H4 and H5 treatment](#)

[Blog on whether to use stainless or galvanised fasteners.](#)

[Blog on using the correct decking fastener.](#)

[Blog on timber finishes on external timber](#)

[Blog on whether to use 50 or 75 mm joist](#)

[Blog on whether to use lineal or set length decking](#)

To be on the mailing list, contact Kay Phillips [through this link](#).

## Bridge Quote Requests

If there is any doubt that OSA make the best kit bridges in the country look at the [Berrinba Wetlands Project](#) . Not all bridges are equal. After encountering three bridges in one month that did not meet the Bridge Code I wrote the [May 2012 newsletter](#). Refer to it when assessing the suitability of quotes.

[Steel bridge Quotation Request Form](#)

[Timber Bridge Quotation Request Form](#)

### More information:

If you have timber road/rail/heritage bridge issues,

we suggest you talk to:

Mr. Dan Tingley

Senior Engineer

Wood Research and Development

1760 SW 3rd Street,

Corvallis OR 97333

Office 0011 1 541 752 0188

Fax: 0011 1 541 752 0195

Cell: 04 5957 6314 Or 04 28983328

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