BUILD RIGHT

H3.1 cavity battens

AS WITH ALL TIMBER USES, IT'S IMPORTANT TO SELECT THE RIGHT TREATMENT FOR CAVITY BATTENS.

BY ALIDE ELKINK,
FREELANCE TECHNICAL WRITER, WELLINGTON

NEW ZEALAND BUILDING CODE Acceptable Solution E2/AS1 paragraph 9.1.8.4(d) says that timber cavity battens shall comply with the durability requirements of Acceptable Solution B2/AS1.

NZS 3602:2003 *Timber and wood-based products for use in building* Part 1, as modified by B2/AS1 paragraph 3.2.2, is an Acceptable Solution for meeting the durability requirements of timber and wood-based building elements.

H3.1 cavity battens

Radiata pine battens treated to H3.1 in accordance with NZS 3640:2003 *Chemical preservation of round and sawn timber* are deemed to meet a 50-year minimum durability performance (B2/AS1 Table 1A).

Treatment to a higher level, i.e. H3.2, is therefore not required. However, the basis of E2/AS1 is that the cavity should remain dry.

A few things to remember

Cavity battens must not be ripped down from larger timber members, as this is likely to expose untreated timber. NZS 3602:2003 paragraph 109.3 says that treatment of timber battens must be carried out in their final shape.

If the treatment is copper-based (for example CCA, copper azole or ACQ), the battens must not be in direct contact with metal wall cladding. This may cause corrosion of the cladding. A suitable separation layer must be used, such as an additional layer of paper-based underlay over the cavity battens or strips of paper-based underlay on the face of the cavity battens.

Although E2/AS1 doesn't require a separation layer when timber has been treated with the less corrosive CuN treatment, it is prudent to still use a separation layer.

For more The grading and fixing of structural timber cavity battens is a separate topic and will be discussed in a future issue of *Build*.