

Checklist for Landscape Product Sample Approval

We set out below the essential steps to be followed by the landscape architect or client officer, when approving product samples being submitted by the contractor :-

- Obtain a clearly labelled, typical product sample, together with a technical data sheet, of the product being offered for approval.
- Do not consider samples that do not have a quantifiable specification, as you would be unable to check the product specification on site.
- If you have specified a product, i.e. Melcourt Bark Nuggets[®], ensure that you obtain a typical product sample and technical data sheet direct from the manufacturer, as well as from the contractor.
- Unfortunately, if these are obtained only from the contractor, the sample from another supplier could be 'doctored', to enhance the chance of the 'or other approved' product being accepted.
- If you have elected to 'nominate' a manufacturer's product, let the supplier know, so that they can ensure that the product is available when required.
- Carefully compare the product specification within the contract documents with the product sample technical data sheet.
- Carefully check that the product sample meets your environmental and sustainability policy
- Carefully check that the product sample fulfils your 'Best Value' criteria

The most likely reason that the contractor is offering you an alternative to the specified product is because:-

- it provides the contractor with an immediate cost saving, not you or your client.
- the product specified is not available. Please check with the specified product supplier, to ascertain whether this is the case.
- the contractor doesn't have a credit facility with the specified supplier. However, they could pay for the material on a pro-forma basis, during the product supply period.

Having approved a product for use by the contractor:-

- Retain the sample of the 'approved' product, for the duration of the contract, so that you can make regular checks of the product quality actually being used.
- If there is any apparent change to the quality of the material supplied during the contract, contact both the contractor and the supplier immediately, to take the required steps to rectify the problem.

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