

RoofTX[®]

Frequently Asked Questions

This document contains a number of frequently asked questions and is additional to that contained :

- in relevant Agrèment certification, available at www.donlow.com or www.bbacerts.co.uk
- in installation guidance available on the roll insert
- in technical bulletins, available at www.donlow.com

Question	Answer
Is RoofTX [®] a roofing underlay as defined by BS 5534?	RoofTX [®] is a low vapour resistance underlay (type LR) as defined by BS 5534:2003 and BS 5250:2002.
Can RoofTX [®] be used directly over timber sarking boarding, typically used in Scotland?	Yes. The membrane can be draped over rafters or laid directly onto timber boarding. Ventilation is not typically required below softwood timber boarding but will be required below plywood, OSB or other manufactured boarding.
What precautions should be taken when chemically treating roof timbers?	Certain timber preservatives can adversely affect some underlays. If treated timber or preservatives are used, they should be allowed to dry out and fully cure prior to the membrane being applied. Timber treatments should not be applied to timber once the membrane is installed.
Can RoofTX [®] be draped directly into gutters?	Where the gutter is exposed to direct sunlight, a UV stable liner will be needed to carry any moisture into the gutter. The underlay can be dressed over this liner below the tiling/ slates.
Should a conventional, cold pitched roof overlaid with RoofTX [®] be ventilated?	When fitted in accordance with the BBA certificate Agreement ventilation of the enclosed loft space is not required with RoofTX [®] as water vapour will safely diffuse through the membrane. When used in NHBC installations ridge vents are required. Ventilation may be required, above the underlay, with some tightly fitting tiling systems to improve the air exchange with the outside air. Guidance is given within the appropriate Agrèment Certificate, BS 5250:2002 & NHBC regulations (where appropriate).
Should a conventional, warm pitched roof overlaid with RoofTX [®] be ventilated?	Ventilation is not usually required below a vapour permeable underlay within a warm roof construction. However, ventilation may be required above the underlay, i.e. within the batten space. Guidance is given within the appropriate Agrèment Certificate and within BS 5250:2002.

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Should a vapour control layer be used at ceiling level?	An effective vapour control layer reduces the amount of water vapour diffusing through the ceiling structure and possibly condensing on cold elements within the roof structure.
What constitutes an effective vapour control layer?	An impermeable or high vapour resistance membrane, e.g. polyethylene, aluminium foil or an impermeable layer, e.g. steel sheet, which is effectively lapped and/ or sealed at joints. Any penetrations, e.g. hatches, service pipes, light fittings etc. must be fully sealed to the vapour control layer to ensure there is no localised leakage.
Why do small droplets of water form on the underside of the underlay on a recently completed roof?	New buildings, particularly where there has been extensive application of wet trades, e.g. plastering to walls and screeds to floors, can incorporate vast quantities of absorbed water. As the building is occupied and heated this moisture evaporates and there is a risk of condensation forming on cold surfaces. During these early, high moisture risk periods, moisture droplets may be observed on the inside of double glazing and on wall and ceiling finishes. Moisture may also condense on the underside of underlays within cold roofs, particularly during extremely cold periods, i.e. below 0°C. During this early period, particular attention should be paid to reducing the risk from this moisture by ventilation of the occupied space (by opening windows) or deploying de-humidifiers. The integrity of the ceiling vapour control layer should also be checked, in particular around service penetrations and light fittings.
What precautions should be taken when drying out a newly completed property?	To enable effective drying, especially in the winter, the building should be heated and ventilated for at least a week prior to occupancy. Steps should always be taken to ensure that the ceiling is as airtight as possible during this drying phase. In particular the loft hatch should be kept tightly shut. Ventilating a house via the roof during drying is likely to cause more problems than it solves. Secure ventilation direct to the outside air should be provided at all times.
Should overlaps in the underlay be taped?	The taping of laps is entirely up to the designer/ specifier. Taping does not affect the membrane's vapour permeability properties. In some roof constructions it may be necessary to reduce air leakage, draughts and taping can improve air tightness. However, guidance on the correct tape should be sought from Don & Low.

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Should extra precautions be taken when installing RoofTX [®] in severe and wintry weather?	In severe weather, such as persistent heavy rainfall or severe freeze/thaw conditions, the exposure period should be reduced. Guidance is given on the roll insert.
During construction, why did water apparently penetrate the unprotected membrane when exposed to high winds and heavy rain?	<p>Plastic underlays are considerably lighter than their bitumen based counterparts and, during windy conditions, unprotected membranes can lift at overlaps. When these high winds are accompanied by heavy rain, moisture can be driven below the unprotected membrane resulting in water dripping onto the roof structure. There is therefore a potential risk of water penetrating unprotected membranes at fixing points. This risk can be reduced by using large head 'clout' nails.</p> <p>In general, as with all roofing works, where there is a risk of wet and windy weather during roof construction and where there are sensitive finishes or materials below, additional weather protection should be provided.</p>
What type of nails and fixings should be used when installing RoofTX [®] ?	It is good practice to use clout nails to avoid water tracking through nail holes.
Can RoofTX [®] be used over insulation on an inverted roof?	Where ballast is placed on top of inverted roof insulation, a membrane is required to allow water to drain freely to roof outlets and to prevent particles from passing through and blocking this drainage. Vapour permeable underlays are not suitable in this role. Guidance on drainage fleeces should be sought from Don & Low.
Will the local Building Control Department accept the concept of unventilated roof spaces?	The principal of unventilated roof spaces has been around for some time, and is clearly specified within documents supporting the Building Regulations, e.g. BS 5250, BRE Report 262 (Thermal insulation: avoiding risks). However, individual authorities may have their own requirements which should be confirmed at the design stage.

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