



ORIGINALSTYLE

Tiles to Inspire

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Trade Remedies Authority
North Gate House
21-23 Valpy Street
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20/10/2023

Ref:TD0027 – Transition Review – Ceramic Tiles from the PRC

Dear Madam / Sir,

Following our various discussions over previous months on the above topic, please note below numerous points of reference regarding our position as a manufacturer of ceramic tiles based in the UK.

Original Style Ltd is currently in its 37th year having been founded in 1986 in Exeter, Devon. Since then the company has grown steadily, with a strong focus on financial stability, to its current turnover of around £23 million, employing around 230 people. The majority of these employees are based in and around Exeter and as such the company finds itself as one of the larger employers in the local area; directly impacting the local economy.

Our considered approach to growing the business has seen us expand through both our distribution network domestically and through export; but also through commercial projects and a chain of retail stores throughout the UK (currently 14 stores).

The business is now the second largest producer of ceramic tiles in the UK. We ensure specialist tile knowledge and skills regarding production, testing and maintenance are retained within the area and preserved. Our production facility remains truly unique, not just in the UK but also worldwide; utilising and developing modern production techniques to pioneer market leading material whilst retaining artisanal methods for traditional products.

The experience noted above allows our staff to promote, educate and market the benefits of UK manufactured material; this focus on quality and the versatility of our production facility allow us to provide (often bespoke) material best suited to the UK's distinctive architecture.

Goods produced in our Exeter factory range in format in surface area from 20mm x 20mm to 1000mm x 320mm categorised within the below commodity codes. Therefore the transition review is of notable interest to our business.

Relevant commodity codes include:

6907 2100 00 - Glazed and unglazed ceramic flags and paving, hearth or wall tiles, other than those of subheadings 690730 and 690740, of a water absorption coefficient by weight not exceeding 0.5%

6907 2200 00 - Glazed and unglazed ceramic flags and paving, hearth or wall tiles, other than those of subheadings 690730 and 690740, of a water absorption coefficient by weight exceeding 0.5% but not exceeding 10%

6907 2300 00 - Glazed and unglazed ceramic flags and paving, hearth or wall tiles, other than those of subheadings 690730 and 690740, of a water absorption coefficient by weight exceeding 10%

As with other UK producers of ceramic tiles, the majority of the Original Style production falls within 6907220000 and 6907 230000 noted above; and therefore risks being injured by a reduction or removal of the anti-dumping measures currently in place as dumping would likely recur.

It should also be noted that we decorate tiles that fall within 6907210000, generally known as porcelain, we do not have the ability to produce such tiles from raw material. We also believe this to be the case for our fellow UK producers. Therefore it would not be appropriate to maintain anti-dumping measures on material within this category.

We would also note that it would be possible to import items currently categorised within 6907220000 and 6907230000 that would be considered as raw material; such items would need to be factored again before being suitable for installation; therefore applying anti-dumping measures to these items would seem inappropriate. Further categorisation within these commodity codes may be required.

Well documented recent increases of all input costs have understandably put pressure on production models; many of these input costs are not felt as readily by Chinese exports creating further disparity, particularly in the case of energy.

It is our opinion that Original Style would sustain injury from a removal or reduction in anti-dumping measures, and whilst that would not be catastrophic for the overall business, it would put further, sustained pressure on our UK production facility. Whilst our primary motivation is to provide the market with trend led UK produced material; we are also motivated in the economical knowledge that production facilities such as ours are central to driving overall productivity in the UK. We have no doubt that our overall economic impact on both our local area and nationally is greatly enhanced by our ability to produce ceramic tiles in the UK. It is our belief that the TRA and Secretary of State for Business and Trade should seek to protect production facilities such as ours, and Original Style hope this is given due consideration.

Original Style Ltd.