

BDA Building Note 01

THE ISSUE

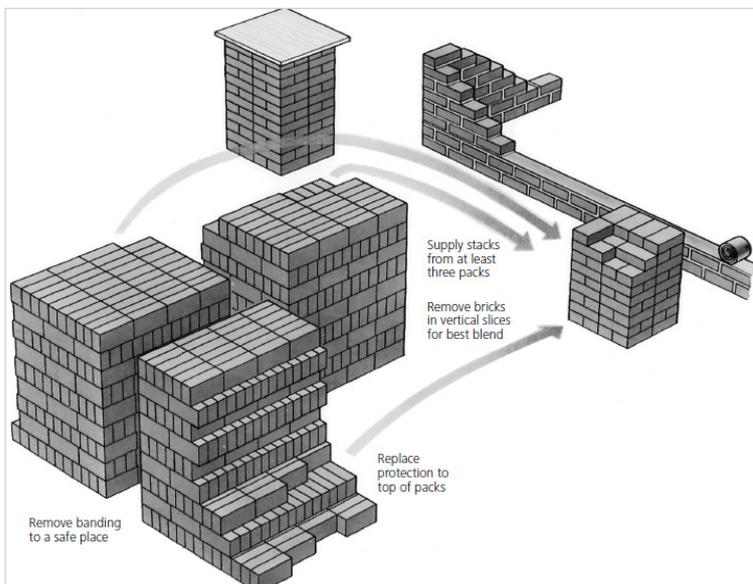
The nature of the brick-making process means that the final **colour and size** can fluctuate between different batches. Bricks are made from natural materials, which can have different physical qualities. Whilst manufacturing systems minimise variations as much as possible, slight variations will remain.

As variations may occur in clusters this can result in unacceptable patches, patterns or banding in completed brickwork unless good site practice is followed.

THE SOLUTION

Although some manufacturing plants can shuffle bricks as they are being packed, there is no substitute for blending on site which will disperse any irregularities and achieve an overall harmonious appearance. Larger sites should agree a reference panel with the brick manufacturer prior to supply. Bricks should be selected from a minimum of three packs and it is advisable to draw from the packs in a vertical/diagonal manner, rather than horizontal layers.

If a manufacturer issues specific blending instructions, these should take precedent.



FURTHER READING

More detailed information about blending and brick workmanship generally can be found in:

BS 8000-3

PD 6697

NHBC standards 6.1

LABC guidance

BDA Good site practice and workmanship

BDA TOP TIPS

>> For phased projects developers should consider batching their deliveries to limited plots or liaising with the manufacturer over the potential to batch supply.

>> Check loads when delivered to site, and when unpacking for loading-out, so that problems can be identified before the bricks are walled.

>> Blending of bricks will be to little avail if mortar colour is not consistent.

>> Blending multi-coloured bricks is just as important as blending bricks that are uniform in colour. To avoid one particular colour being grouped together.

>> Although some soft mud bricks appear to have two usable faces, check with the manufacturer if there is a preferred face.

>> For upper lifts, loading bays need to accommodate at least three packs, if blending cannot take place on the ground.