architectural handmade
bricks n pavers
A H
B P

No Acid Washing – Prioritize Clean Construction

The practice of acid-washing brickwork, though sometimes deemed necessary, can lead to various forms of damage. Therefore, care should be taken during bricklaying to ensure that acid washing becomes **unnecessary**.
Especially with handmade bricks, mortar residues often contribute to the character and authenticity of brickwork, gradually fading away over time. Many projects across Australia featuring our bricks have achieved completion without resorting to acid washing. Hence, mortar residues should be embraced as integral to the aesthetic appeal of brickwork.
The potential damages resulting from acid washing are manifold: acid washing can lead to unsightly greyish mortar bloom, degradation of joint surfaces, and alterations in brick and joint colours.

If Acid Washing Becomes Imperative

Should the need for acid washing arise, meticulous preparation and execution are paramount:

• Prior to acid washing, remove loose mortar residues with a scouring pad, and for stubborn residues, delicately chisel with a wooden stick.

• Ensure cleaning of horizontal surfaces to prevent smearing of mortar residues during acid washing.

• Dilute the acid appropriately to prevent damage to bricks or mortar.

• Pre-wet the brickwork surface before applying acid to saturate it to prevent the acid from being absorbed too quickly.

• Prevent acid drying on the brickwork to avoid unsightly stains or residues and ensure uniform cleaning.

• Utilize a finishing float with foam rubber backing or an acid-proof masonry broom for the washing process.

• Acid should be pre-mixed and supplied to the site.

• Optimal timing for acid washing varies based on mortar binder content, brick absorbency, and weather conditions, typically occurring 5-24 hours post bricklaying, but may vary due to site conditions

• Regular replacement of acid is necessary to prevent potential discoloration from used or contaminated acid.

• Rinse the brickwork thoroughly with clean water after acid washing to neutralize any remaining acid and remove loosened residues, debris, and excess acid solution from the surface.

• Acid washing should proceed from top to bottom and should be performed only once.

Additional Considerations:

• Testing on a Small Area: Before applying acid washing to the entire brickwork, conduct a test on a small, inconspicuous area to ensure compatibility and assess the effects of the cleaning process.

• Protective Gear and Precautions: Ensure workers handling acid washing wear appropriate PPE to prevent exposure to harmful fumes or skin contact.

• Surface Sealing: Apply a suitable sealant or protective coating to the cleaned brickwork to enhance longevity and resistance to future staining or weathering (if deemed necessary).

• Environmental Considerations: Dispose of used acid and cleaning solutions in accordance with local regulations to prevent environmental contamination.

• Damp Sponge Cleaning: Use a damp sponge to keep the bricks clean as the brickwork progresses, ensuring that minimal residue buildup occurs during the laying of the bricks.
By adhering to these guidelines, brickwork maintenance can be executed effectively while preserving the inherent beauty and integrity of the structure.