

USE OF CEMENT HOLLOW BLOCKS AS AN
ALTERNATIVE TO CLAY BRICKS

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Common clay bricks are produced on a very small scale in country kilns using traditional technology. Little or no quality control is applied resulting in bricks which are often underburnt, low in strength, poor in durability and smaller in size. Application of such bricks for structural purposes is therefore limited.

Cement hollow blocks are manufactured in large and small scale industries. Good quality blocks could be produced relatively easily.

The cost of manufacture of cement hollow blocks is more than that of an equal volume of clay bricks. Overall cost of construction will depend on the design of the structure and the situation in which the masonry units are used. Moreover, the performance characteristics of the two materials differ. The choice of the use of bricks or blocks for a particular application has to be made on considering factors such as load bearing requirements, provision of service facilities, jointing systems used, finish required, and above all the overall construction cost.

Like any other material, clay bricks will have its own life cycle. Cement hollow blocks could thus be a viable alternative.