# Design Access & Heritage Statement

## 3rd Floor Philips Building, Library Level A Alterations for SOAS, University of London

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Job No. 190887

## Document Control Record

| Version | Date | Prepared by | Checked by |
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Kendall Kingscott

## Contents




*Fig. 01 - Philips Building, Eastern Elevation*

## 1.00 Introduction

This Design Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a listed building consent application submitted by Kendall Kingscott Limited on behalf of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. This statement relates to the Philips Building which is also known as the SOAS Library, located on Thornhaugh Street, London WC1H 0XG.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, hereafter referred to as 'the Act' and uses Historic England (formerly English Heritage) Guidance 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008) to assess the significance of the SOAS Philips Building.

The purpose of this statement is to provide sufficient information and reasoned justification for the submitted information to be assessed and verified by London Borough of Camden Planners and Conservation Officers, Historic England and any other amenity societies or advisory bodies consulted in relation the application and proposed works.


*Fig. 02 - Philips Building, Northern and Western Elevations*

### 1.01 Background

The building is currently providing library facilities and office accommodation for the students and staff of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Alterations to the layout of two open plan library spaces on the third floor are proposed, with the installation of glazed partition systems complete with single leaf glazed doors to create 8No. Multi-functional rooms, the installation of 6No. new acoustic studwork partition walls, and the upgrade of existing mechanical and electrical provisions to serve the new spaces including individual access controls to each room. These alterations will free up office space which can be released back to teaching staff to better accommodate the current and future needs of the School. The proposed spaces are flexible in nature to futureproof the needs of the School, they may be used for staff offices, teaching spaces or student study areas.

## 2.00 Site Description

The Philips Building (the Property) is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and situated within the London Borough of Camden. The site is flanked to the South by the SOAS Holden Building, connected to the Philips Building via a link bridge. To the West lies Torrington Square; to the North there are Woburn Square Garden and buildings including the Thomas Coram Research Institute. To the East lies Thornhaugh Street, with the UCL Institute of Education opposite. Fig. 03 & 04 show the location of the Property.


*Fig. 03 - Location Map*

*Fig. 04 - Aerial photograph of the Philips Building*

### 2.01 Building Overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Building Elements: | In-situ concrete frame with pre-cast concrete panels, 8 storeys |
| Ownership: | SOAS, University of London |
| Architect: | Denys Lasdun (c.1970-3) |
| Designation: | Grade II* |
| Date of listing: | 20th May 2011 |
| Use: | SOAS Library, academic offices and teaching facilities |

## 3.00 Philips Building

### 3.01 Building Description

Externals: The building is formed of a reinforced frame of in-situ cast concrete service towers, supported by interlocking structural pre-cast concrete panels and other pre-cast elements. The concrete composition is Ballidon limestone aggregate mixed with white cement, which has been grit- blasted to a smooth finish.

The detached building conjures military allusions with its dry service moat and lack of obvious ground- level entrances, access primarily being gained via a brick link bridge to the Holden Building (an earlier SOAS University building), which can be found to the south-east of the Philips Building. The exterior style embodies many classic elements of Lasdun's work, incorporating 'strong horizontals...lack of emphasis given to the entrance and the skilled use of concrete' (Historic England 2018). However, the stark and foreboding exterior serves to offset the enlightened, almost sacred interior found within.

The building plan is a square with the top corner oriented North, and the link bridge to the Holden Building extending from the east side of the building, but adjacent to the southern corner. The building has eight storeys including a basement, lower ground, ground, first, second, third, fourth, and fifth. There are additional plant rooms situated in the basement and above the fifth floor. The main views of the building's elevations are from Torrington Square to the West and Thornhaugh Street to the East.

Each of the building facades is composed of nine bays separated by concrete mullions where the internal pre-cast panels protrude from the building framework. There are set-back corners on the four lower storeys and uncovered concrete projecting balconies on the south and west elevations. The roof is flat, finished with asphalt, 'with a series of diagonally-arranged north-facing roof lights' (Historic England 2018) invisible from the ground level. A concealed rainwater-goods system transports water from roof to ground level. The majority of the windows are horizontal sliding sash-style single glazed units set back from the pre-cast concrete panels, frames composed of an anodised aluminium and bronze finish.

Internals: The building design cleverly blends modern materials and external detailing with a classical internal structure, the atrium library allowing light to penetrate down through the levels via a concrete coffered diagrid ceiling. Three levels of concrete-fronted balconies terrace down to a central study area and reading space, these 'trays' being a common feature of Lasdun's work, as seen at the National Theatre. These features, combined with high-quality finishes, mean the building is a 'dramatic and memorable learning environment' (Historic England 2018). The external theme of security is mirrored internally, with the internal architecture of the space accentuating the impression of the library as a vault, safeguarding rare books and precious manuscripts.

The centre of the atrium is now a computer space, and rooms lead off from the library levels to provide tutorial and study spaces. Concrete partitions and fins delineate sub-spaces within the library levels, framing openings and providing work spaces. The original book counters were cast in concrete, and two remain, one still utilised as the book issue counter. The library stairs feature a concrete parapet and metal tubular handrail. The higher floors above the library feature separate offices and classrooms surrounding the main atrium core.

Doors are primarily of timber-groove construction with timber architraves. Internal concrete finishes vary by location, comprising a mixture of styles including fair-faced, close-boarded with wood patterning visible, and rough concrete with aggregates. The floor construction throughout comprises of a solid concrete slab upon which are carpet tiles within Level A. Ceilings are formed with a mixture of powder coated metal, skimmed plasterboard, and square fibre suspended ceiling tiles. Walls, where not pre- cast concrete, are normally stud partitions finished with gypsum plaster or blockwork finished with skimmed plaster.

### 3.02 Function / Significance

The Philips building was designed by Denys Lasdun (1914-2002) and is now seen as an important example of post-War Brutalism. Lasdun was 'perhaps Britain's most important architect of 1950-1980 and his works are only now becoming more widely appreciated, with 29 listed buildings to his name' (Historic England 2014) including this SOAS library pavilion. Commissioned in 1960 as a library to house SOAS's then 500,000 strong collection of books, construction started in 1970 and it was completed in May 1973. One of Lasdun's less well-known commissions, the SOAS library never-the- less embodies many of the principles found in his more iconic commissions such as the National Theatre on the South Bank (1976), and the Royal College of Physicians (1964). The building is named after Sir Cyril Philips, Director of SOAS from 1957-1976, whose idea it was.

The Philips Building, adjoining and associated buildings remain in use as designed and built for the university community. The Philips Building is an essential component of SOAS's service provision to students and staff, the 'pavilion' library forming the heart of the SOAS campus and perfectly complementing the UCL Institute of Education opposite. It continues to serve as a central repository of learning and knowledge, now housing over 1.3 million books alongside specialist reading and map rooms, whilst also designated as one of only five National Research Libraries. The upper floors - with some 220 language labs, offices and teaching rooms - provide essential space for the university's academics and students to study, research and collaborate.

## 4.00 The Building Heritage / Listing

The School of African and Oriental Studies, also known as SOAS, received its' London University Charter in 1913. Its original mission was to train people working in Africa and Asia, whilst it later aimed to advance British scholarship in science and commerce relating to these regions.

Architect Charles Holden designed SOAS's first purpose-built headquarters (completed 1940) and was later commissioned to design and build a series of new University buildings in order to accommodate an ever-growing population of students. Whilst the University's original plan 'marched a linear spine of buildings north through Bloomsbury' (Historic England 2018), after the Second World War a struggle for funds meant that Holden's original master architectural plan gave way to a reduced version, also known as 'the balanced plan' (Thompson 1990, 37). This was a piecemeal programme of separate buildings with steel and brick structures, loosely following a configuration of a Georgian street pattern. Lasdun was later commissioned to further develop this vision, implementing the 'London University spinal development plan of 1959, devised by the renowned LCC architects Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt (Historic England 2018). Lasdun's SOAS library, alongside its companion UCL Institute of Education building, created an 'architectural set

piece out of what was a truncated scheme' (Historic England 2018), forming a new pedestrianised square to mirror those remaining from Georgian times and preserving more of the surrounding fabric of the Georgian terraces.

The Philips Building was first granted Grade II* Listed status in May 2011 under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 due to its special architectural interest and group value. Whilst not part of an official Asset Grouping by Historic England, they still recognise the important role the Philips Building plays in the wider architectural ensemble of the Bloomsbury area. Historic England are of the opinion that 'the library groups well with the Grade II Holden building it was built to serve, the Grade II late-C18 terraces of Woburn square (glimpses of which are caught from the impressive windows of the library); and Lasdun's own Grade II* Institute of Education, the striking massing and materials of which it emulates'.

Full records can be found under List Entry Number 1401342.

## 5.00 Bloomsbury Conservation Area

The Philips Building does not feature on English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register. However, advice noted within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011 has been taken into consideration in the design solution for this project.

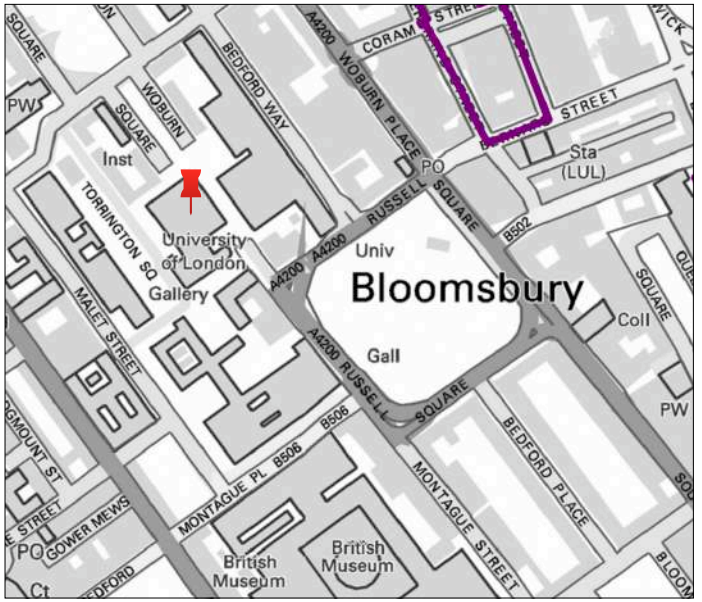


*Fig. 05 - Property location within Bloomsbury Conservation Area*

The Bloomsbury conservation area appraisal and management strategy defines and analyses what makes the Bloomsbury conservation area 'special' and was officially adopted in 2011. The document provides important information to local residents, community groups, businesses, property owners, architects and developers about the types of alterations and development that are likely to be acceptable or unacceptable within the conservation area.

In relation to the maintenance and repair of listed buildings section of the strategy report, it is considered that the the refurbishment works proposed will appropriately improve the property to meet the School's needs, whilst preserving the important historic nature of the Property and the architectural

features contained within. No external works are proposed and therefore they will not cause harm to the setting of the listed building or cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## 6.0 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment was published in March 2010 by the Department for Communities and Local Government. The document sets out the Government's over arching objective that "the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of the life they bring to this and future generations" (DCLG, 2010).

The document further encourages delivery of '..sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions concerning the historic environment recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term..'.

As part of formulating this Heritage statement, guidance has been obtained from PPS 5 and PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide as produced by English Heritage et al.

The advice contained within these key documents has also been taken into consideration in the development of a design solution for this project which seeks to upgrade existing conditions within the building, particularly the flexibility of the spaces, whilst preserving features considered to be architecturally significant and historically important.

## 7.0 Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025

In addition to the Planning Policy Statement 9PPS) 5, 'Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage' of the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 has also been consulted. One specific reference within the aforementioned strategy, considered key to the approach which has been taken towards the design of the proposed works is:

'Policy CS14 plays a key part in achieving this by setting out our approach to conserving and, where possible, enhancing our heritage and valued places, and to ensuring that development is of the highest standard…'

SOAS, University of London, are committed to enhancing their existing property portfolio, to create high end flexible spaces which may be used by either students or staff in the future, as the requirements of the School evolves, with a growing number of students.

## 8.0 Design Principles & Concepts

SOAS, University of London have employed the services of two design consultants to design and manage the works. Kendall Kingscott Limited have been appointed to deliver Architectural Design Services and Project Management of the works. Hitek have been appointed to deliver Mechanical & Electrical Design Services with ongoing site visits and consultation throughout the works.

The original brief to these consultants was to develop a scheme to conduct basic refurbishment to the two spaces at Third Floor within the Library (Level A), to provide multiple flexible spaces to allow for office spaces to be released

back to the School to provide in demand teaching spaces; to also improve the ventilation and introduce comfort cooling to reduce the high temperatures within Level A which are experienced during summer months, an ever-present issue amongst students.

The key principles behind the design were to retain as much of the building fabric as possible whilst reconfiguring the layout to create more self-contained flexible spaces which will be flexible in use, thus future-proofing against the need for continual refurbishment of Level A as the needs of the School evolves.

Another key principle emphasised by SOAS, University of London, relates to the sustainability of any future works in consideration that the university have pledged to become a carbon neutral entity by 2030. To this regard, in accordance with Camden's approach towards sustainable development within the borough (set out within Policies CS13 and DP22 in Camden Development Policies) the proposed works 'include measures to minimise the effects of, and adapt to, climate change' through mechanical and electrical design.

The design solution has been developed in consultation with the client and has included a series of surveys cataloguing existing features and services, team and client meetings to discuss design options, feasibility report production and review and ultimately the production of a developed design package approved by SOAS, University of London.

**Architectural Design - Key Features**

Remodelling works comprise the construction of 6No. non-load bearing stud partitions and installation of 8No. Glazed partition systems (safety glass) complete with individual glazed doors. No structural works are incorporated within the minor building works. The only demolition works comprise the removal of 3No. internal partitions which currently form a store room adjacent to a Riser and an electrical cupboard.

Accompanying technical drawings to this Statement identify the locations of the proposed works.

The 6No. Partitions (composition of which is detailed within Appendix A) are to be restrained at the head of the partition to the slab, to which there is a plastered soffit in the existing scenario, and abut each column, supported by a steel post and brackets connected to the fixings for the glazed partitions.

The 8No. Glazed partition systems and doors are to be secured with aluminium channels fixed with a maximum of 6No. Fixings to the concrete beams and 6No. Fixings to the concrete slab, per glazed partition. The doors are to have their own frame, incorporated within the aforementioned fixing system. Further details of the proposed gazing system may be located within Appendix B.

To adequately restrain the glazed partitions, each will be secured by a clamping system which clamps the glass around each concrete column, thereby eliminating the requirement to install any fixings directly to the columns themselves. A silicone bead will be located at the junction of the column and glazing frame.

In addition to the above, it is proposed to form 3No. studwork framed cupboards to provide secure access to existing wall mounted electrical equipment. The timber frames of the cupboards will be fixed at the junction of the concrete slab above and to the perimeter walls. Locations of these cupboards have been identified within the drawings.

New paint finishes throughout will be from the Dulux trade range with colours chosen to be neutral and non-offensive to the existing architecture of the building within Level A. Floor coverings will be replaced with neutral finishes. Timber-groove doors and timber architraves within the works areas will be retained and revarnished.

Remodelling works proposed are minimal and are considered not to impact the 'original' features of the building. These works are minimal in nature and seek to improve existing modern facilities and create a more useful and adaptable spaces.

**Mechanical & Electrical Design - Key Features**

Existing pipework runs will be made use of within the work shaft in one of the adjacent corridors where possible to minimise disruption.

New mechanical and electrical services to the existing two spaces within Level A are to replace the existing exposed services to the soffit of slab. Due to the minimal depth of the floor screed, and so as to cause minimal disruption to the slab, the new stud work partition voids will house power and data outlets, additionally, existing perimeter walls will accommodate dado trunking to provide data and power to the rear walls.

To combat the effects of the building's heat gains during the summer months, comfort cooling via an air conditioning cassette is proposed to be installed centrally within each room with ventilation ductwork extending through to the adjacent 2No. WCs, accompanied by wall-mounted controllers.

Existing lighting arrangements to be replaced with new LED lighting, fixtures for which will be as per the existing, to the plasterboard soffits. Due to the existing lighting arrangements to the Third Floor of the Library, it is proposed to replace the existing light fitting and introduce new LED lighting to the circulation spaces outside of the newly formed rooms. It is envisaged that these fittings will be mechanically fixed to the suspended ceiling as per the existing scenario with the existing fitting. Condensate drains, as identified within the accompanying drawings, will run into the adjacent WCs and into existing SVPs within each riser.

To adequately exhaust air from each individual room into the library atrium, 8No. cross-talk attenuators are proposed to be fixed to the plasterboard ceiling soffit. Associated lagged ductwork will extend through to a side panel adjacent to each of the glazed doors. Additionally, a fresh air boost fan will be required to be installed within the ceiling void of 1No. WC, which will connect to existing duct routes.

New chilled water flow and return pipework, fixed to the plasterboard ceiling soffits to the rear of each room, will run into adjacent corridors (within the suspended ceiling void) and into an external riser which will require locally removing and reinstating existing ceiling tiles.

It is envisaged that the new access controls to the new 8No. rooms will be surface-mounted to the new frames of the glazed doors, rather than the columns.

## 9.00 Proposed Works

Architectural, mechanical and electrical drawings and plans for the proposed works can be found via the link below -

https://www.cloud.kendallkingscott.com/index.php/s/I9lLmUAi35IS81q

## 10.00 Works Impact & Justification for the Proposal

The Philips Building will be in occupation throughout the duration of the works, however access will be restricted to the Third Floor Library Level A.

Due to the design of the Library and the presence and central location of the large atrium, it is envisaged that the glazed partition systems will be installed in the first instance to reduce the impact, particularly noise disruption, to the remainder of the library. This will enable uninterrupted access to the contractor in order to facilitate as short a programme duration as possible to complete the remainder of the works.

Works are anticipated to start on site April 2020. The programme is anticipated to be 10 weeks.

## 11.00 Access

There are 8No. single access layout alterations proposed within the works, with the installation of the new glazed partitions and studwork partitions forming each of the 8No. New rooms. There are no proposed alterations to the existing access or existing designated fire exits within the Property.

Accessibility to the Property will remain unchanged throughout the duration of the works and post completion of the refurbishment.

Parking conditions and vehicle access will not alter throughout the duration of the works. Parking permits will be sought from the London Borough of Camden.

Throughout the duration of the works, a temporary welfare unit, site office and skip, proposed to be situated at the following approximate location, will be installed within a secure enclosure to restrict access.


*Fig. 06 - Approximate location of welfare, site office and skip throughout works*

## 12.00 Summary & Conclusion

Throughout the design process every effort has been made to reach developed proposals which not only meet the client's usage requirements but also respect the original features of the Philips Building. The works are minor in nature and are not considered to have a detrimental effect upon the Property.

It is hoped this design approach, the information contained within this statement coupled with the supporting documentation will serve to uphold the validity of our application for Listed Building Consent.

Should any further information be required or a site visit become necessary please do not hesitate to contact us.

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# APPENDIX A: ACOUSTIC STUD PARTITION SYSTEM

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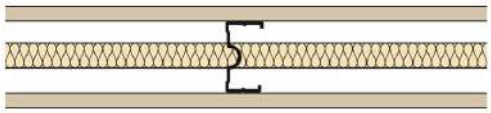
# ACOUSTIC STUD SYSTEMS ADP 003



1x 15mm GTEC LaDura Board, Single GTEC AS70Rx Acoustic C Studs at 600mm centres, 25mm 16kg/$m^3$ glass mineral wool

# APPLICATION

GTEC Acoustic Stud is an internal partition system for commercial and domestic applications requiring high acoustic performance levels.

# BENEFITS

- Improved acoustics from one change in component in a specification or on site
- Compatibility with standard U tracks means partition types can be mixed on site
- Unique design can eliminate insulation or board layers usually required for acoustics

# SYSTEM DETAILS

| Maximum height | Nominal thickness | Fire Performance To BS476-22 | Fire Performance To EN1364-1 | Strength Duty Rating To BS5234 | Sound Insulation | Insulation thickness | Insulation type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.8 m | 100 mm | 60 min | 60 min | Severe | 51 dB | 25 mm | Glass Mineral Wool |

# APPENDIX B: OPTIMA DOUBLE GLAZED SYSTEM

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# Revolution 54

Product summary


Optima

ClearThinking

# Revolution 54

Product summary

## Product facts

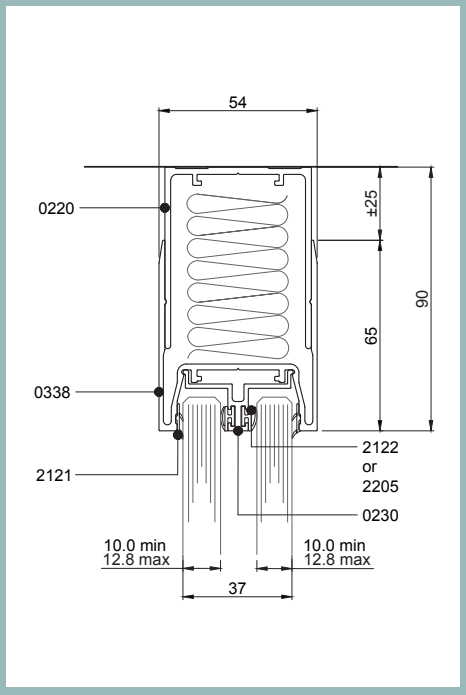
- Slimline mullion-free double glazed system
- Dry jointed and fully demountable
- Aluminium framework
- Fully integrates with Revolution 54 single glazing and Optima 117 plus single glazing
- Numerous door options
- Manufactured at Optima's UK factory in Bath

## Acoustics

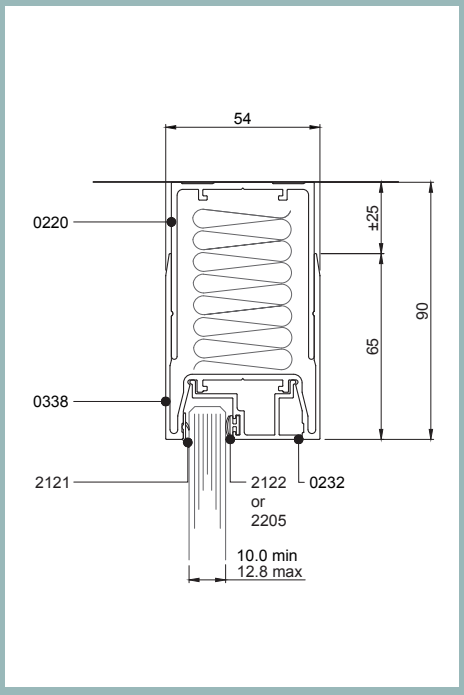
- Maximum tested acoustic rating of Rw45dB using 2 layers of 12.8mm acoustic laminated glass in multi-module screen

## Deflection

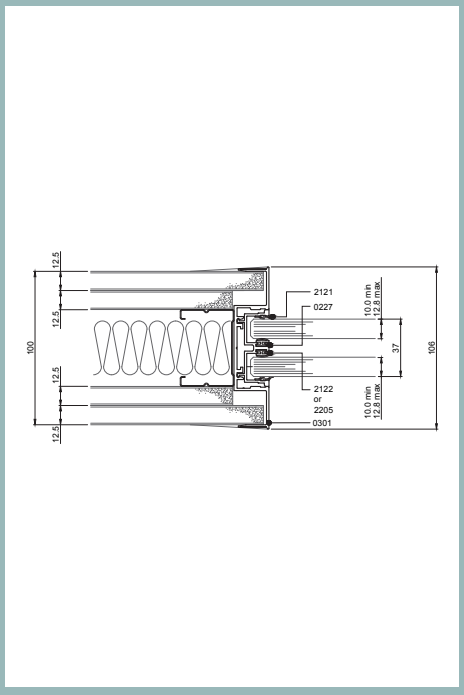
- Can accommodate up to ±40mm deflection



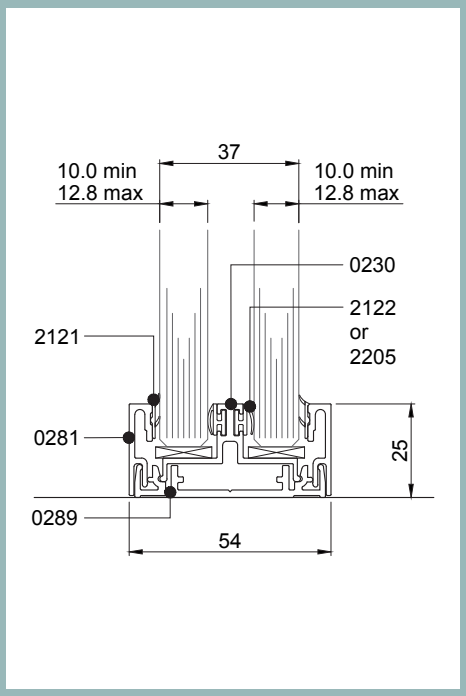

Double glazed head track with inner upper channel ±25 deflection



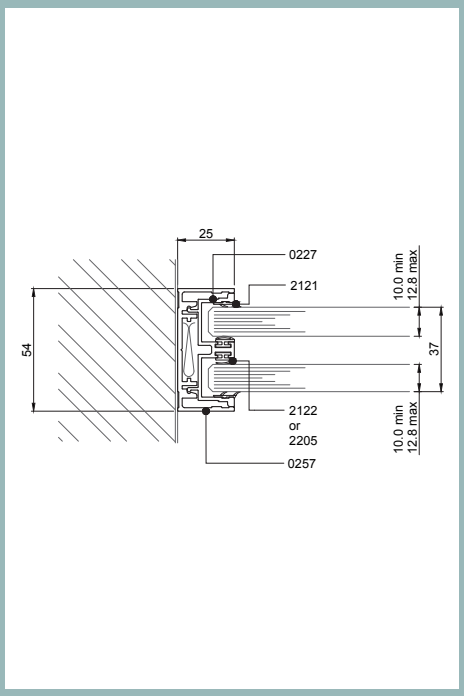

Single glazed head track with inner upper channel ±25 deflection



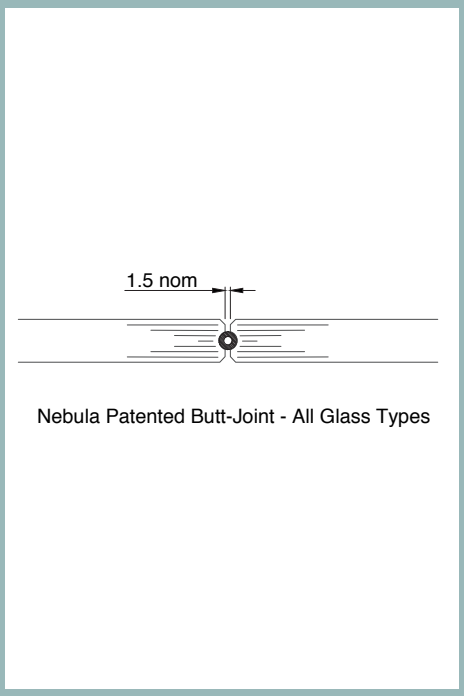

Tapeable glazing bar double glazed, double boarded




Double glazed floor track 25mm flush clip




Double glazed 25mm wall abutment




Glass to glass Nebula™ patented joint dry joint

## Product overview

| | |
|---|---|
| **System type** | Single glazed (offset or centrally glazed) or double glazed |
| **Head detail** | Standard aluminium head channels 54mm x 25mm or 54mm x 50mm |
| **Base detail** | Standard aluminium base channels 54mm x 25mm flush clip or 54mm x 50mm flush clip |
| **Deflection head options** | 2-part internal deflection head:<br>±25mm – 90mm deep aluminium channel<br>±40mm – 135mm deep aluminium channel<br>2-part external deflection heads:<br>±25mm – 94mm deep aluminium channel<br>±40mm – 140mm deep aluminium channel |
| **Door head detail** | Head clip available for deflection and non-deflection glazing channel to accept door leaf |
| **Door options** | Compatible with Axile Clarity, Edge Symmetry, Edge Affinity, Edge Flush Bond, 44mm/ 54mm timber door |
| **Glass thickness** | Single and double glazed:<br>Minimum thickness 10mm toughened glass, maximum thickness 12.8mm acoustic laminated glass. Thickness subject to panel width, height and acoustic rating |
| **Maximum screen height** | Maximum ceiling height 3000mm subject to build configuration and access into building |
| **Glass to glass joint options** | Nebula,™ aluminium, ghost and taped dry joints available |
| **Acoustic rating** | Single glazed:<br>Rw33dB – 12mm toughened glass<br>Rw38dB – 12.8mm acoustic laminated glass<br>Double glazed:<br>Rw41dB – 12mm toughened glass + 12.8mm acoustic laminated glass<br>Rw45dB – 12.8mm acoustic laminated glass + 12.8mm acoustic laminated glass in multi-module screen<br>Further test certificates available upon request |

Optima

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