



The Blend of Blavatnik Modern and Classic

CASE STUDY

Since its official opening in 2015, the Blavatnik School of Government building at the University of Oxford has been awarded a succession of distinguished 'New Building' architectural accolades, including the RIBA South Award and the Oxford Preservation Trust Award. ACO provided integral drainage systems to sympathetically complement its character.



The Blend of Blavatnik

ACO Water Management integrated drainage solutions into the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford

THE PROJECT

Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford.

THE BRIEF

Create a water management solution to integrate around a modern building encompassing the values of Oxford's local architectural heritage.

THE SOLUTION

ACO MultiDrain MD Brickslot installed around the building façade and its entrances and ACO Heelsafe Modular 125+ utilised on the site perimeter.

To create a modern building encompassing the values of Oxford's local architectural heritage, the design had to combine classic aesthetics with modern functionality. This ethos had to feature throughout all elements of the project, including the management of the water where ACO products were specified to provide a subtle complementing finish.

The building integrated sustainable systems throughout, including a partial green roof on two levels of the building. This 'living roof' was covered with vegetation to enhance biodiversity and attenuate storm water runoff. Around the building the water management network is completed by attenuation tanks and sleek ACO drainage channel solutions.

Open Integrating Precinct

Around the Blavatnik building an open paved space was created to reflect both the open ethos of the School, and the design brief to blend with the surrounding historic buildings. Materials that would be most suitable, given the colours and tones of the building, were selected to add fitting character to the project.

With that in mind, 1800m² of 'Royal Coffee' granite paving from Hardscape was installed around the Blavatnik building. This required a water management solution that could integrate into the paving configuration while clearing the large impermeable surface area.

Architects Herzog de Meuron were tasked with designing the building alongside the main contractors, Laing O' Rourke, on a project where digital expertise, researched environmental design and a feeling of openness were paramount.

The Blavatnik School of Government was built to equip students with the tools to tackle the world's most pressing policy challenges, through an ethos of open engagement with governments and practitioners.





Gary Morton, Head of Stakeholder Engagement at ACO explains, "Around the immediate façade of the Blavatnik building, a thin protective line of ACO MultiDrain MD Brickslot has been installed to collect water before it reaches the building and its entrances.

"Additionally, an extra level of care needed to be taken for the surrounding buildings and pedestrian areas given the water runoff from a building of this size. This is why further ACO drainage sits on the edge of the paving, where the building surround meets the street."

Taking these requirements into account, ACO Heelsafe Modular 125+ has been installed in a few areas around the edge of the Blavatnik site. These include around the inside of the stone wall, matched to the brick of the adjoining historic building, as well as next to the bike storage racks synonymous with the city of Oxford and its world-famous university. Manufactured from corrosion-resistant stainless steel, the modular design of the Modular 125+ allows for easy system design and assembly, providing a professional drainage perimeter to the Blavatnik building.

Joining the Oxford Skyline

The Blavatnik School building has been hailed as a stunning addition to Oxford's historic skyline. The Inamori Forum, situated at the heart of the building, reflects openness, collaboration and transparency and the building's circular shape is akin to government buildings around the world. Its design also echoes elements of Oxford's most iconic buildings, such as the Radcliffe Camera and the Sheldonian Theatre.

Gary Morton concludes, "It was an honour to be a part of the construction process of the Blavatnik School of Government in Oxford. Combining aesthetic water management solutions with our unique support is a key part of ACO's offering."

For more information on ACO MultiDrain Brickslot and Heelsafe Modular 125+, please visit: www.aco.co.uk



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