



# VPS Property Solutions Landmark Office refurbishment

VPS Property Solutions helped breathe new life into a 1970's office block in Kensington. The office refurbishment is a prime example of not only how technical glazing challenges can be met and overcome in spectacular fashion, but how also glass can play a key role to a building's architectural merit.

## THE BACKGROUND

This remarkable office make-over in Kensington, London, underwent extensive refurbishment for a new occupant. As the site is in a dense urban location and the existing structure had to be retained, the architects created unusual and innovative designs to increase daylight throughout the building. These placed significant demands and challenges for our glazing team, and included a highly unusual 'origami' roof, and automated skylights. The result has been shortlisted for architectural prizes, including RIBA, and The Architects Journal, and was shortlisted for the G-17 Glass awards.

## SOLUTION

The main challenges of the existing building included the limited floor-to-ceiling heights, with small, residential-type windows. The new facades incorporated more commercial, much larger-scale windows, which mitigate the lack of natural light, as the designers wanted to reintroduce the principles established by the late 19th Century buildings that once occupied the site. At ground-level, large, distinctive warehouse window openings were introduced. The façade on the upper levels has new double-glazed window units with solar control glass and improved air tightness. In total 44 new windows were installed into the main facades.

## OVERVIEW

<b>SECTOR</b>	Construction
<b>SITE</b>	Ansdell Street, London W8 5BN
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	Multi-faceted project, broadly comprising three areas: external glazing, specialised roof top openings and skylights, and internal glazing, including a spectacular glass balustrade.
<b>SOLUTION</b>	Many competitors may specialise in one of these areas, and would outsource the others, but VPS' team have the in-house expertise, passion and commitment to tackle all three.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**





## ROOF TOP GLAZING

On the roof, the existing building and its location presented a series of challenges, where daylight and sunlight legislation imposed limitations to any increase to bulk or mass. Using an origami geometrical idea, the architects designed a modern mansard-style roof that pitches back from the street front to achieve the desired ceiling height, whilst avoiding an imposing bulk when seen from the street. Due to the pitched nature of the origami structure, inwardly facing triangular full-height glazed openings had to be installed, creating a light and open environment from the interior of the building.

Because of their size and weight, these glazed openings had to be craned onto the roof, requiring VPS to arrange for and manage the licences to the close the road.

An automatic roof light controller and five hydraulic roof motors allow the skylight lanterns to be opened for fresh air.

## INTERNAL GLAZING REQUIREMENTS

Internally, a spectacular feature staircase was built over three floors, comprising 37 glass balustrade panels, and glass walled offices including two automatic glass doors.

The structural glass balustrade required extensive research to find the right balance between safety and aesthetics, and to source fixings that could carry the weight without looking 'industrial'. Frameless with handrails, VPS worked closely with the floor contractor on the site so that many of the fixings could be hidden.

## SUMMARY

This was a multi-faceted project, broadly comprising three areas: external glazing, specialised roof top openings and skylights, and internal glazing, including a spectacular glass balustrade.

Many competitors may specialise in one of these areas, and would outsource the others, but VPS' team had the in-house expertise, passion and commitment to tackle all three.

The project manager and the engineers went to great lengths to meet the design requirements. This attention to detail was apparent when automatic glass doors for the office had already been specified and sourced for this project. The building occupant then saw a similar but alternative product installed elsewhere, and insisted this product was installed at their office. VPS went to inspect the product, in another city, and identified and sourced the specific manufacturer, so the customers wishes could be met.



Free site surveys  
Call 0800 590 925  
[glazing.shopcare@vps.evander.com](mailto:glazing.shopcare@vps.evander.com)  
[www.vpsgroup.com](http://www.vpsgroup.com)



VPS  
0330 005 5300  
[uk@vpsgroup.com](mailto:uk@vpsgroup.com)

[www.vpsgroup.com](http://www.vpsgroup.com)

© Copyright VPS Ltd 2018. All technical specification are subject to change.  
The VPS hexagonal logo is a registered trademark of VPS Holdings Limited.