

Forging the Future of Facades:

Key Insights from ZAK World of Facades



Introduction

The façade of a building is no longer just a static envelope; it is the dynamic interface between a building, its occupants, and the environment. This was the central theme at the recent ZAK World of Facades event in London, which I had the privilege of chairing.

For AESG, a leader in specialist consultancy for the built environment, participating in such forums is a direct expression of our vision to pioneer a sustainable future. It was a critical opportunity to engage with the industry and reinforce our mission to deliver world-class, integrated engineering solutions. A key discovery was the significant opportunity to raise awareness of our multi-disciplinary façade engineering, fire safety, and sustainability services right here in London, demonstrating our commitment to the UK market.

The discussions were rich and forward-thinking, but three core themes emerged that are central to the future of building design and perfectly align with the integrated services we offer at AESG.



The Rise of the "Façade-Driven," Human-Centric Ecosystem

The concept of a "façade-driven" development is gaining significant traction. This approach positions the building façade as the primary driver of sustainability and well-being initiatives, moving it from an afterthought to the key for creating long-term value.

The conversation has evolved to view buildings not as inert structures, but as active ecosystems. The critical question is no longer just what a building is, but how it interacts with its users and evolves over time. This requires a fundamental shift towards future flexibility—a principle core to AESG's vision.

How AESG Helps Your Business: This philosophy is at the heart of our façade engineering services. By designing buildings as adaptable ecosystems, we help developers and architects create assets that are more resilient, attractive to tenants, and future-minded towards changing demands, ultimately enhancing your property's market value and investment return.



Navigating Regulatory Challenges with an Integrated Design Process

A significant challenge identified was the persistence of siloed, "archaic ways" of working, which lead to inefficiencies and suboptimal outcomes. This is exacerbated by the major upheaval in UK building safety regulations post-Grenfell.

While the industry fully supports enhanced safety, the current approval process has become a bottleneck. What should be a 12-week process can now take six months or more, creating immense investment uncertainty and project delays.

The solution is clear: an integrated design process. By bringing all specialists—façade engineering, fire safety, and sustainability—to the table from the outset, projects can be proactively designed to meet these complex challenges head-on.

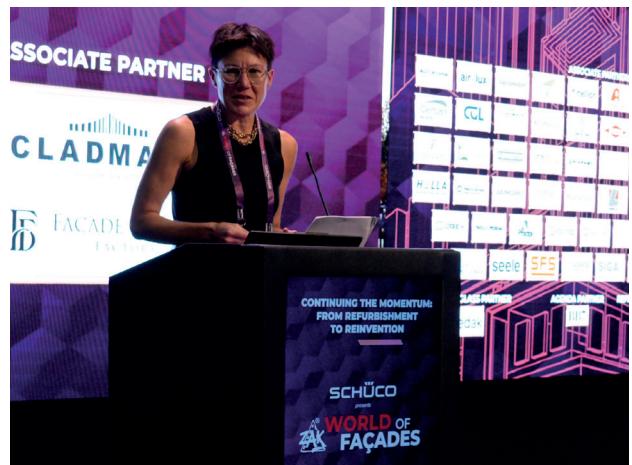
How AESG Helps Your Business: Our integrated model is designed for this new reality. We embed building safety and performance into the design from day one, helping to de-risk your project, avoid costly redesigns, and streamline approvals. This proactive approach protects your investment and keeps your project on schedule, providing the certainty needed in the current UK market.

Unlocking Elegant Solutions with Holistic Consulting

The event reinforced that AESG is uniquely positioned in the UK. While many consultancies offer specialist services in silos, our holistic model integrates façade engineering, fire safety, and sustainability from the outset.

We don't see these disciplines in isolation. A high-performance façade must be both sustainable and safe. Our approach ensures these principles are woven into a single, elegant, and effective strategy, delivering on our mission to provide innovative engineering solutions.

How AESG Helps Your Business: This holistic positioning delivers a direct competitive advantage. You benefit from a cohesive strategy that eliminates conflicts between disciplines, optimizes overall building performance, and delivers a more cost-effective solution. We act as your single point of accountability for the building's envelope, safety, and environmental goals.



How AESG can help

A Message to Developers and Architects: Future-Proof Your UK Projects

For those embarking on new projects in the UK, my advice is simple: future-proof by integrating.

Focus on the entire lifetime of the building. By engaging a specialist consultant like AESG early, future-proofing strategies can be "baked" into the design, resulting in a building that is not only compliant and safe but also more valuable, sustainable, and human-centric.

The Business Case is Clear: Early engagement with our integrated team is an investment that mitigates risk, enhances asset value, and ensures long-term viability.

Events like the ZAK World of Facades are crucial for fostering the collaboration needed to drive our industry forward. At AESG, we are proud to be at the forefront, delivering on our mission to help our clients pioneer a sustainable future.

To learn more about how our integrated façade engineering, building safety, and sustainability services can de-risk your next UK project and enhance its value, please get in touch with our London team today.

How AESG can help



Amy Koerbel

Director of Facades, AESG

With over two decades of expertise in architectural design, strategic leadership, and agile project management, Amy Koerbel joins AESG as Director of Facades for the UK. Throughout her career, Amy has demonstrated a remarkable ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams in the design and delivery of complex, high-profile projects across various sectors and scales—many of which have earned industry recognition and awards.

Amy's leadership extends beyond project delivery into business strategy, cultural transformation, and team development. Most recently, she served as Practice Director at AECOM's UK+I Architecture + Design (A+D) business, where she played a pivotal role in overseeing a 400-strong team across 10 offices. As Deputy Head of the business, she was instrumental in strategic decision-making, shaping initiatives that aligned with the A+D strategy across disciplines such as architecture, interior design, workplace strategy, and urban advisory. Amy also chaired the A+D Cabinet, a leadership forum of discipline and sector specialists.

Earlier in her career at AECOM, Amy held the position of Head of Facades for the UK+I/EMEA region, where she led a team of technical specialists in facade design consulting, construction monitoring, and technical advisory services across key sectors like commercial, residential, healthcare, education, and government. She was responsible for strengthening the commercial and technical operations of the practice, optimising performance, and securing major projects, particularly in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia.

Amy's extensive experience in both business leadership and technical façade design will be invaluable as she helps guide AESG's portfolio of high-end, complex façade engineering projects. Her forward-thinking approach and dedication to sustainable, innovative solutions will continue to drive AESG's growth and enhance our value proposition across the UK and beyond.

For further information relating to specialist consultancy engineering services, feel free to contact us directly via info@aesg.com

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