

Dr. Heida Donegan

Partner



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Overview

Heida is a partner in our Corporate and Commercial Team in Auckland who heads our Asia Business Team. She has over 25 years' experience in advising clients on cross-border investments. Prior to joining Dentons Kensington Swan, Heida was a partner in a global law firm practising from Hong Kong and China. For many years Heida led the firm's corporate practice specialising in in-bound investment work for multi-national companies investing in China and other parts of Asia. In Hong Kong, Heida was ranked a leading lawyer by *Chambers and Partners Asia Pacific* and *Legal 500 Asia Pacific* for Corporate and M&A.

Heida assists clients to acquire, establish and sell businesses and assets, form joint ventures with domestic businesses and operations, and raise capital in New Zealand. She regularly advises clients on project development transactions covering a diverse range of sectors. Heida oversees all stages of these transactions, from advice on optimising corporate structures and mitigating risks, due diligence, through to documentation preparation, negotiation, and advice on applying for, and obtaining, consents under overseas investment, competition and natural resources laws.

Heida's clients include state-owned enterprises, listed and private conglomerates, multi-national corporations as well as banks and financial institutions from the PRC and other parts of Asia. She works closely with clients' chief executives, managing directors and in-house legal teams. Whatever the size of the client's project, Heida's objective is to provide an unbeatable client experience and add value to clients' investment and commercial endeavours through engagement of her legal expertise and business acumen.

Heida's experience in terms of formation and materialisation of China-or-Asian-related cross-border transactions, project developments and market entry / regulatory matters has been recognised by her clients and peers as skill-sets that few others in this market could properly claim to possess. She is often commended by clients as "a first-class China specialist and a 'go-to' lawyer".

Experience

- **CSCEC NZ:** Advising on its acquisitions and developments of various construction projects such as the Seascope Tower, Ballantyne House and Tamaki Village development.
- **Skykiwi Group:** Advised on the corporate restructurings and management buy-out of its Hong Kong parent

and PRC shareholders.

- **NZRIG:** Advising on its acquisitions of a number of plant-based and bio-dynamic businesses across both the North and South Islands.
- **PRC SOE:** Advised on its establishment of a joint venture with well-known local developer to partake in development projects under the Tamaki Regeneration Programme and its various other construction project acquisitions.
- **PRC listed wood processing conglomerate:** Applied for, and obtained, OIO consent for its proposed acquisition and development of a particle board manufacturing plant in the Bay of Plenty. Advised on its establishment of a product supply chain. Advised on its acquisitions of assets and developments of a suite of reconstituted wood board manufacturing plants in the East Coast.
- **PRC Fortune Global 500 companies:** Advised on their acquisitions of forests and forestry rights (including Crown forestry licences), management and log sale and purchase arrangements in different regions across both the North and South Islands.
- **PRC-NZ sheep dairy joint venture and technology development companies:** Advising on their investment strategies, corporate and commercial matters.
- **An NZ tertiary education institute:** Advised on its establishment of a joint bachelor-degree-programme with a university in Northern China to facilitate wine-making education export from New Zealand.
- **A confidential client:** Advised on their application for, and obtained, a derivatives issuer licence from the FMA, and the establishment of their financial services business.
- **Various Asian and Chinese companies and individuals:** Advising on their acquisitions of businesses and assets, and establishments of agency, supply and distribution networks and other commercial arrangements. Advising on their applying for, and obtaining, consents under overseas investment, competition, natural resources and immigration laws.

Recognition

- *Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2021:* Next Generation Partner for Corporate M&A
- *Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2020:* Next Generation Partner for Corporate M&A
- *Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2020:* Recommended Lawyer for Projects and Resource Management (including Environment)
- *University of Auckland Law School's Nominee for the Vice-Chancellor's prize for the best PhD thesis for the year 2019*
- *New Zealand Law Awards 2019:* International Deal of the Year – Finalist
- *Legal 500 Asia Pacific 2019:* Recommended Lawyer for Corporate M&A

Insights

- "NZ-PRC Free Trade Agreement upgrade," *Dentons Kensington Swan article*, February 2021
- Book chapter entitled "Law and finance: from 'transplantation' to 'better' corporate governance in China" in P.M. Vasudev and Susan Watson (eds) *Global Capital Markets: A Survey of Legal and Regulatory Trends*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK, 2017
- Book chapter entitled "China" in Gwendoline Griffiths (ed) *International Acquisition Finance*, Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2010

- Co-author, Book chapter entitled "China" in Gwendoline Griffiths (ed) International Acquisition Finance, Oxford University Press, 1st edition, 2006

Activities and Affiliations

Memberships

- Council Member, New Zealand China Council
- Immediate Past President, Hong Kong New Zealand Business Association
- Member, New Zealand Law Society
- Member, Law Society of England and Wales
- Member, Law Society of Hong Kong

Areas of focus

Practices

- Corporate
- Corporate Governance
- Immigration
- Real Estate
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Overseas Investment

Industry sectors

- Construction
- Asia Business

Education

- University of Auckland, Doctor of Philosophy in Law

Admissions and qualifications

- England and Wales
- Hong Kong
- New Zealand

Languages

- Cantonese

- Mandarin