

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS BRINGS LORD MANDELSON TO AUSTRALIA

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills' Australian offices will this week host Lord Peter Mandelson and Mr Gregor Irwin from London-based strategic advisory firm Global Counsel, along with two of Herbert Smith Freehills' leading European infrastructure M&A partners, Gavin Williams and Ben Ward.

During their visit the group will meet with Herbert Smith Freehills' clients in Melbourne and Sydney where they will share insights on international trade and investment, including the effects of Brexit on the UK and Europe, the impact of the current US administration and wider regional issues in Asia-Pacific.

Global Counsel helps companies and investors across a wide range of sectors to anticipate the ways in which politics, regulation and public policymaking create both risk and opportunity - and to develop and implement strategies to meet these challenges.

Lord Mandelson is the chairman of Global Counsel and a former European Trade Commissioner, British First Secretary of State and was a Cabinet Minister under both the Tony Blair and Gordon Brown governments.

Gregor Irwin is Global Counsel's Chief Economist. Before joining Global Counsel, he was the Chief Economist of the British Foreign Ministry. He has also worked for the Bank of England and the British Treasury on international economic and financial issues.

Speaking on the impact of Brexit on the UK and Australia's relationship, Lord Mandelson said:

"Following Brexit, any new trading partnership negotiated between the UK and Australia is going to reflect the fact that Asia not Europe now sets the political compass in Canberra, which might surprise some in Whitehall.

“To forge a closer relationship with Australia, corporate leaders in Britain are going to have to commit time, innovation and capital to future-proof their business against lower cost competitors – many of whom are near neighbours to Australia.

“There will be significant opportunities for Australian business to invest in the UK going forward, particularly in the infrastructure sector. We hope to share our knowledge with Herbert Smith Freehills’ clients on the opportunities and the pitfalls that are likely to emerge as Australia and the UK work to build a new mutually beneficial relationship post-Brexit.”

[Andrew Pike](#), Herbert Smith Freehills’ Regional Managing Partner, Australia, said: “As a firm we pride ourselves on offering clients sector-specific expertise and a global perspective to help them better understand and adapt to the rapidly changing markets in which they operate. It’s another way that we partner with our clients to help them succeed and flourish.

“Since the UK voted to leave the European Union, we have been working with Global Counsel to provide our European clients with a holistic perspective on Brexit, its impact on their activities and its place in the wider geo-political landscape. We are delighted to now offer the same critical insights to our clients in Australia.”

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