

# CONVERSATION WITH GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR

Ben Birks shares his insights on JC&C's strategy to capture growth opportunities in Southeast Asia.



## Q WHAT IS JC&C'S OVERALL STRATEGY?

**A** Looking first at our desired outcome, our ambition is to contribute positively to the growth and development of Southeast Asia, and at the same time, we aspire to elevate the communities within which we operate.

We achieve this by investing in diversified market-leading businesses, with good growth potential and strong earnings, which are well positioned to benefit from the themes of urbanisation and the emerging consumer class in the region.

By working closely with our portfolio companies, we support them to reach their potential. Practically, I believe our management expertise, established networks, relationships and deep regional understanding provide us with a strong foundation to progress this ambition.

## Q HOW DOES JC&C ADD VALUE TO ITS BUSINESSES?

**A** Having a clear view of the Group's role is an important part of our approach towards our portfolio companies. We proactively review our portfolio on an ongoing basis and see six broad areas where we make a difference in supporting our companies to grow and achieve their potential.

We provide input to the strategic direction of our portfolio companies through Board and management representation, and support future growth through the allocation of capital. We leverage our broader Jardines network to provide our portfolio companies with a capable talent pool and Learning & Development capabilities, as well as provide access to the Group's networks and relationships including financial contacts, government stakeholders or other partners. We also work to guide and strengthen ESG practices across the portfolio. Finally, we support our portfolio companies to digitally transform their business and operations to ensure that they are future-ready.

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## Q WHAT ARE SOME MACRO THEMES THAT YOU IDENTIFY WILL SHAPE YOUR FUTURE IN AN EVOLVING WORLD?

A There are three key themes that we pay close attention to.

1. **Digital revolution and disintermediation:** This is transforming the way businesses operate, and adapting our operations and business models is a key focus. An example is our directly owned automotive businesses, where we set up Jardine International Motors (“JIM”) to unify Jardines’ automotive strategy and combine expertise from North Asia and Southeast Asia. JIM’s digital transformation initiative includes modernising our core systems, building a data-centric approach to mapping and managing the customer journey, and most importantly, building closer customer relationships through digital connectivity.
2. **Climate change:** To limit the impact of global warming, many new government regulations and targets have been introduced. Other factors that are changing the landscape in which businesses operate include social and consumer expectations as well as capital, investor and financing exclusions. There is an increasing focus on ESG and climate action at JC&C; it is key to the long-term sustainability of our businesses and the shape of our overall portfolio.
3. **Economic inclusion:** Contributing to social and economic inclusion is a key component of both our business focus and also our broader responsibility within our local communities. This includes products and services that increase access to energy and infrastructure, housing and transport, food and finance, clean and safe environments, all underpinned by decent work opportunities.

## Q WHAT IS JC&C’S OVERALL APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY, GIVEN THAT ESG IS ONE OF THE FOCUS AREAS FOR THE GROUP?

A ESG is an important part of our Group strategy and we continue to work closely with our businesses to ensure that we are well positioned to manage both the risks and opportunities around ESG issues.

In terms of deploying capital, ESG is one of the lenses that we consider to be central to our decision making.

In 2020, we conducted climate risk assessments of our businesses. In 2021, we are enhancing our internal capabilities and actively engaging the Task Force for Climate-related Financial Disclosures (“TCFD”) framework to help guide our thinking and actions.

During the year, we also conducted a social impact assessment of our portfolio companies and have identified three United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that the Group will focus on: Good Health & Well-being (SDG3); Quality Education (SDG4) and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG8).

At JC&C, we provide decent jobs and development to 240,000 people in Southeast Asia; this is aligned to our objective to elevate communities in the region.

We are committed to excellence in corporate governance and we continue to share best practice with our businesses to enhance existing corporate governance policies and practices. Moreover, we aim to continually improve our Singapore Governance and Transparency Index (“SGTI”) scoring (top 10% in 2020) and ensure a high standard of corporate governance across our entire portfolio.