

## MERGER ANNOUNCEMENT M/22/062 – AHL / NHL

### Section 21 of the Competition Act 2002

### Competition and Consumer Protection Commission clears proposed merger of the businesses Associated Hardware Public Limited Company and National Hardware Designated Activity Company into United Hardware Designated Activity Company

18 May 2022

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The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission has today cleared the proposed transaction whereby the businesses of two hardware buying groups, Associated Hardware Public Limited Company (“AHL”) and National Hardware Designated Activity Company (“NHL”), will merge into AHL’s and NHL’s existing joint venture, United Hardware Designated Activity Company (“UHL”). The proposed transaction was initially notified under the Competition Act 2002, as amended, on 22 November 2022, and subsequently re-notified on 7 April 2023

The Commission has formed the view that the proposed transaction will not substantially lessen competition in any market for goods or services in the State. The Commission will publish the reasons for its determination on its website no later than 60 working days after the date of the determination and after allowing the parties the opportunity to request that confidential information be removed from the published version.

#### **Additional Information**

AHL is a co-operative buying group which represents independent builder’s merchants and hardware/DIY retailers throughout the State. Since its establishment in 1972, AHL offers support services such as marketing and store operations to the Members.

NHL is a co-operative buying group which represents independent builder’s merchants and hardware/DIY retailers throughout the State. Since its incorporation in 1965, NHL offers support services such as marketing and store operations to the Members.

UHL is a joint venture buying operation owned 50/50 by AHL and NHL with a board comprising of 4 directors from AHL, 4 directors from NHL, 2 independent non-executive directors (one being the Chairman) and the CEO.