

CCPC blocks daa purchase of car park near Dublin Airport

Decision due to concerns deal would lead to higher prices for consumers.

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) has blocked the sale of a car park near Dublin Airport to daa due to concerns that the deal would lead to higher prices and lower service quality for consumers.

Daa had proposed to buy a car park located on the Swords Road in Santry from Mr Gerard Gannon. A QuickPark-branded car park had operated on the site before closing in September 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. Daa currently owns and operates all other large car parks serving Dublin Airport.

Details of the transaction are available at the following link: [M/23/011 daa plc/Certain Assets of Mr Gerard Gannon](#)

Brian McHugh, CCPC Chairperson, said:

“Competition among businesses is vital to drive value, consumer choice and innovation. Our investigation found that this deal would eliminate daa’s only significant competitor for public car parking serving Dublin Airport and result in daa essentially having a near monopoly. This would be likely to lead to higher prices for consumers because daa would not have to compete to win car parking customers.”

The CCPC’s investigation

The CCPC was notified of the proposed purchase in March 2023. The CCPC carried out a preliminary investigation and concluded that a full investigation was needed before making a final decision. During the investigation, the CCPC issued legal requests to the parties involved for further information and engaged with many third parties. The CCPC received 18 submissions from third parties, 16 of which raised concerns about the purchase.

In December 2023, the CCPC issued its [preliminary findings](#) to daa and the owner of the site, explaining its concerns about how the deal could reduce competition for public car parking spaces near Dublin Airport. The parties responded to the CCPC in January.

The CCPC’s investigation found that the deal would substantially lessen competition in car parking serving Dublin Airport, as daa would own over 90% of the public car parking spaces if the purchase went ahead. As daa would not face competition for customers from any other large car park providers, this would have harmful consequences for consumers.

The CCPC’s decision

The CCPC found that:

- If the purchase went ahead, daa would control over 90% of the car parking spaces serving Dublin Airport. Although there are six hotels which provide car parking to airport passengers, these car parks are very small in comparison, with five of the six having a share of approximately 1% each.
- The car park provides an important level of competition in the market for public car parking spaces near the airport. Without this competition, daa would be able to increase prices or reduce service quality for its car parks with limited consequences.

- In the past, daa responded to competition from QuickPark to win business – for example, through discounts and other promotional campaigns. If daa purchased the car park, this competition would be lost and daa would not face the same pressure to attract potential customers by improving its prices or service quality.
- The car park was, and remains, an attractive and viable business opportunity for alternative purchasers.
- Permitting daa to purchase the car park would have been likely to result in consumers facing increased prices or reduced service quality.

The CCPC therefore concluded that the proposed purchase by daa would substantially lessen competition and blocked the deal.

The CCPC will publish the full 300-page decision, with confidential information redacted, on its website within 60 working days.

No further comment can be made at this time.

END

Further information for media

Transaction details

Daa plc (daa) is a State-owned public limited company whose principal activities involve the operation and management of Dublin and Cork airports.

Mr Gerard Gannon is a property developer active in the sale and development of residential and commercial property.

Daa sought to purchase a site located on R132 Swords Road, Co. Dublin, on which a car park was previously operated by QuickPark.

The car park site is currently owned by Mr Gannon and the proposed acquisition would have seen daa acquire the freehold interest in, and therefore sole control of, the site.

The CCPC investigation found that the car park was and remains an attractive and viable business which will provide an important level of competition in the market for public car parking serving Dublin Airport. While the car park is currently closed, the owner of the car park was free to operate the car park themselves or through a third party, throughout the period of the CCPC review.

The CCPC completes its investigations as promptly as possible. Mergers which raise significant competition concerns can take some time to investigate and this is also the case in other jurisdictions.

This CCPC investigation required the careful review and consideration of multiple submissions from the parties, the issuing of 5 legal requests for further information to the parties, engagement with third parties, the analysis of several thousand documents and an oral submission hearing at which the parties presented their views on the case to the CCPC.

The parties can appeal the Commission's decision to the High Court within 40 working days.