

## DETERMINATION OF MERGER NOTIFICATION M/25/081 – CELTIC MEDIA/THE TUAM HERALD

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### Section 21 of the Competition Act 2002

### Proposed acquisition by CMNL Limited, trading as Celtic Media Group, of sole control of The Tuam Herald

Dated 16 December 2025

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#### Introduction

1. On 1 December 2025, in accordance with section 18(1)(b) of the Competition Act 2002, as amended (the “Act”), the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (the “Commission”) received a notification of a proposed acquisition whereby CMNL Limited (“CMNL”), trading as Celtic Media Group (“Celtic Media”), would acquire sole control of certain businesses and assets<sup>1</sup> of The Herald Printing & Publishing Company Limited (“The Herald Printing and Publishing”), specifically The Tuam Herald (“The Tuam Herald”) (the “Proposed Transaction”).<sup>2</sup>
2. Given that both Celtic Media and The Tuam Herald carry on a “media business” in the State (as defined in section 28A(1) of the Act), the Commission considers that the Proposed Transaction forms part of a class of merger and acquisition specified by the Competition Act 2002 (Section 18(5) and (6)) Order 2007 (S.I. No. 122/2007) for the purposes of section 18(1)(b) of the Act.

#### The Proposed Transaction

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<sup>1</sup> The certain businesses and assets which form part of the Proposed Transaction are the newspaper title, website, goodwill, business operations, advertising and circulation functions and any other associated services of The Tuam Herald.

<sup>2</sup> Celtic Media and The Tuam Herald are collectively referred to as the “Parties” hereafter.



3. The Proposed Transaction is to be implemented pursuant to a Business Transfer Agreement dated 28 November 2025 between CMNL and The Herald Printing and Publishing.
4. The business activities of the undertakings involved are:

***The Acquirer – Celtic Media***

- Celtic Media is a local newspaper publishing company which publishes six weekly local newspapers in print and digital format across Co. Meath, Co. Cavan, Co. Westmeath, Co. Mayo and Co. Offaly. Celtic Media also owns various social media channels associated with each of its six titles.<sup>3</sup>
- Celtic Media also provides graphic design and digital consultancy services to its own titles as well as to other local newspaper publishers, including to The Tuam Herald.

***The Target – The Tuam Herald***

- The Herald Printing & Publishing publishes a weekly local newspaper, namely The Tuam Herald in Co. Galway.
5. After examination of the notification, the Commission has concluded that the Proposed Transaction falls within the scope of paragraph 2.1 of the Simplified Merger Notification Procedure Guidelines (“SMNPG”) for assessing certain notifiable mergers or acquisitions under section 18 of the Act since:
    - (a) two or more of the undertakings involved in the merger/acquisition are active in the same product and geographic market, but their combined market share is less than 15%;
    - (b) where one or more undertakings involved in the merger/acquisition are active in any market(s) which is upstream or downstream to a market(s) in which

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<sup>3</sup> Celtic Media’s six titles in the State are: the *Meath Chronicle*; the *Anglo Celt*; the *Westmeath Examiner*; the *Westmeath Independent*; the *Connaught Telegraph*; and the *Offaly Independent*.



another undertaking involved is active, but the market share of each in each market is less than 25%; and

- (c) none of the exclusions stipulated in paragraphs 2.8 to 2.15 of the SMNPG apply to the undertakings or the markets in which the undertakings operate.

#### **Ancillary Restraints**

- 6. No ancillary restraints were notified.



## **Determination**

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, in accordance with section 21(2)(a) of the Competition Act 2002, as amended, has determined that, in its opinion, the result of the proposed acquisition whereby CMNL Limited, trading as Celtic Media Group, would acquire sole control of certain businesses and assets of The Herald Printing & Publishing Company Limited, specifically The Tuam Herald, will not be to substantially lessen competition in any market for goods or services in the State, and, accordingly, that the acquisition may be put into effect subject to the provisions of section 28C(1) of the Competition Act 2002, as amended.

For the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

**Alan Scarlett**

**Director**

**Mergers Division**

**Competition and Consumer Protection Commission**