



# DETERMINATION OF MERGER NOTIFICATION M/24/058 – BAUER/CERTAIN ASSETS OF LIGHT BLUE MEDIA CAMBRIDGE LIMITED

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## Section 21 of the Competition Act 2002

### Proposed acquisition by Bauer Media Audio LP of certain assets of Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited

Dated 21 October 2024

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1. On 4 October 2024, 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 transaction whereby Bauer Media Audio LP, acting by its partner Bauer Media Audio Limited, both of whom belong to the group of companies headed by Heinrich Bauer Verlag Beteiligungs GmbH (“the Bauer Group”) would acquire certain assets currently owned by Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited, and which form the business which operates as Star Radio in Cambridgeshire, in the UK (the “Proposed Transaction”).
2. The terms of the Proposed Transaction are set out in a Letter of Intent dated 3 October 2024 (“the LOI”) and, subject to Irish regulatory approval, the Proposed Transaction will be implemented in accordance with the terms set out in the LOI.
3. Based on the fact that the Bauer Group control businesses within the State that carry on a “media business” (as defined in section 28A(1) of the Act), and that Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited operates a “media business” elsewhere, the Commission considers that the Proposed Transaction constitutes a “media merger” for the purposes of Part 28A of the Act.
4. The parties are involved in the following business activities:

*The Bauer Group*



5. The Bauer Group is a German media business which operates in 13 countries, reaching over 200 million consumers worldwide. The Bauer Group is active in three business areas: Publishing, Audio and Online Comparison Platforms.
6. Bauer Media Audio LP is a limited partnership registered in England and Wales. Bauer Media Audio Limited is a private company limited by shares, incorporated, domiciled and registered in England and Wales. Bauer Media Audio Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Heinrich Bauer Verlag Beteiligungs GmbH, a German company, registered in Hamburg, which heads up the Bauer Group.
7. The Bauer Group is active within the State in national, regional and local radio broadcasting markets, and it also owns a number of magazine titles. It entered the markets for radio broadcasting in the State in 2021, following its acquisition of Communicorp Group Limited.

#### *Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited*

8. Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited is a private limited company which is incorporated, domiciled and registered in England and Wales. The principal activity of the company is radio broadcasting.
9. The Target Assets are owned by Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited and form the business Star Radio. Star Radio is a local radio station in Cambridgeshire which has a listenership, on average, of 35,000 over the last 12 months. Star Radio provides news bulletins covering local, national and international stories, and it also provides sports, entertainment and weather updates. Star Radio also has an online presence, through its website, where listeners can access recently played content, news stories, and a live listening function.
10. 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 for assessing certain notifiable mergers or acquisitions under section 18 of the Act since:



- None of the undertakings involved in the Proposed Transaction are active or potentially active in the same product and geographic markets in the State<sup>1</sup>.

11. In the light of this, the Commission considers that the Proposed Transaction will not substantially lessen competition in any market for goods or services in the State.

### **Ancillary Restraints**

12. No ancillary restraints were notified to the Commission.

### **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 Bauer Media Audio LP, acting through its partner Bauer Media Audio Limited, both of whom belong to the Bauer Group, would acquire certain assets of Light Blue Media Cambridge Limited, 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

**Ibrahim Bah**

**Director**

**Competition Enforcement and Mergers Division**

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission's Simplified Merger Notification Procedure Guidelines can be found [here](#).