

# DETERMINATION OF MERGER NOTIFICATION M/24/079 – THE RANGE LIMITED/CERTAIN ASSETS OF HOMEBASE

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## Section 21 of the Competition Act 2002

**Proposed acquisition by The Range (Ireland) Limited of two stores from HHGL (ROI) Limited and three stores from HHGL Limited.**

**Dated 10 January 2025**

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1. On 20 December 2024, in accordance with s.18(1)(a) of the Competition Act 2002, as amended (the “Act”), the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (“the Commission”) received notification of the proposed acquisition whereby The Range (Ireland) Limited (“The Range”) would acquire the leasehold interest in two stores from HHGL (ROI) Limited (“Homebase Ireland”) and three stores from HHGL Limited (“Homebase UK”) (the “Proposed Transaction”).
2. The Proposed Transaction is to be implemented pursuant to an agreement of sale, between Homebase Ireland, Homebase Ireland’s liquidators,<sup>1</sup> Homebase UK, and Homebase UK’s administrator<sup>2</sup> and The Range (the “Agreement of Sale”). Under the Agreement of Sale, The Range would acquire the leasehold interest in five stores of Homebase Ireland and Homebase UK, together with the store’s business and assets (the “Target Stores”).<sup>3</sup>
3. The parties are involved in the following business activities:

***The Range:***

4. The Range is a multi-channel retailer selling a broad range of consumer products for everyday use. The Range is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Range Home and Garden PLC, a UK headquartered company which is ultimately controlled by Norton Group Holdings Limited.

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<sup>1</sup> Damien Murran and Enda Lowry

<sup>2</sup> Gavin George Scott Park, Gavin Maher, and Adele MacLeod.

<sup>3</sup> The Proposed Transaction does not relate to the acquisition of any of the stock in any of the stores currently.

5. The Range has over 200 stores in the UK and 8 stores in the State. The Range stocks 140,000 products across 16 departments, ranging from furniture and homeware to decorating and DIY along with art supplies, toys and crafts.

***Homebase Ireland and Homebase UK:***

6. Homebase Ireland and Homebase UK are part of the HHGL Group, which is controlled by Hilco Capital. Homebase is a home improvement DIY retailer.
7. In 2024, Homebase Ireland and Homebase UK experienced financial difficulties. Homebase UK is under administration in the UK and joint liquidators have been appointed over Homebase Ireland. Absent a change of ownership, the Target Stores will cease trading in the near future.
8. The Target Stores operate under the *Homebase* brand. The products sold by *Homebase* are primarily used for residential repair, maintenance and improvement activities (“RMI”) in the home and garden.

**Decision:**

9. 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(1) of the Act since:
  - Two or more undertakings involved in the Proposed Transaction are active in the same product and geographic market, but their combined market share is less than 15%.
10. This conclusion was reached on the basis that, although there is a horizontal overlap between The Range and Homebase Ireland and Homebase UK in the retail supply of DIY products in the State and in a local catchment area, the combined market share of the Parties in these potential markets in the State and local catchment area will be less than 15%.

**Ancillary Restraints**

11. 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 of the leasehold interests in two stores from HHGL (ROI) Limited and three stores from HHGL Limited, will not be to substantially lessen competition in any market for goods or service in the State, and, accordingly, that the acquisition may be put into effect.

For the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission

**Ibrahim Bah**  
**Director**  
**Competition Enforcement and Mergers Division**