



30 March, 2017

CICRA forces Sandpiper rethink and protects consumer choice

Sandpiper has submitted a revised application to acquire a number of Costcutter stores in Jersey after CICRA advised that the original acquisition application was unlikely to succeed.

The Channel Islands Competition and Regulatory Authorities (CICRA) had concerns over the original application made by Sandpiper in November 2016 to acquire 16 Costcutter convenience stores from JMart.

The application was referred to a phase 2 review in December when CICRA (under the Jersey Mergers and Acquisition regime) said the proposed acquisition as it stood had the potential to harm consumer interests reducing competition in particular in island grocery stores.

Sandpiper withdrew its original transaction on 10 March, 2017. Its revised application has reduced the number of Costcutter stores in the acquisition proposal from 16 to 13 – excluding the St Ouen, St John and Green Island stores.

CICRA chief executive, Michael Byrne, said: “We looked carefully at what this acquisition might mean for those who rely on these stores for their shopping needs and found there were risks consumers could be less well served if the transaction went through as originally intended.”

“Sandpiper has now registered a new application excluding those stores from its proposal where CICRA identified concerns.”

CICRA will consider the new application and aims to complete a new phase 1 review within five weeks.

A copy of the amended application form can be found on the CICRA website www.cicra.je should anyone wish to comment.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

All enquiries should be directed in writing to CICRA chief executive, Michael Byrne, in Guernsey at Suite 4, 1st Floor, La Plaiderie Chambers, La Plaiderie, St Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 1WG or in Jersey at the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority, 2nd Floor, Salisbury House, 1 - 9 Union Street, St Helier, Jersey JE2 3RF. Alternatively email info@cicra.gg.

In line with CICRA's consultation policy, it intends to make responses to the consultation available on the CICRA website. Any material that is confidential should be put in a separate annex and clearly marked as such so that it may be kept confidential. CICRA regrets that it is not in a position to respond individually to the responses to this consultation.

About CICRA:

The Channel Islands Competition and Regulatory Authorities or 'CICRA' is the name given to the Jersey Competition Regulatory Authority (JCRA) and the Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority (GCRA) (formerly the Office of Utility Regulation). The JCRA was established under the Competition Regulatory Authority (Jersey) Law, 2001, and the GCRA was established under The Guernsey Competition and Regulatory Authority Ordinance, 2012. In Jersey, the telecoms and postal sectors are regulated by the JCRA, which is also responsible for administering and enforcing the Competition (Jersey) Law 2005. In Guernsey the telecoms, postal and electricity sectors are regulated by the GCRA, which is also responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Guernsey competition law since it came into force on 1 August 2012.

By working together and sharing resources and expertise between the islands, CICRA strives to ensure that consumers in all the Channel Islands receive best value, choice and access to high quality services.