

B2B used car auction merger cleared by CMA

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The final decision follows a consultation on the CMA's phase 2 interim report.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has today cleared Constellation Developments Limited (Constellation)'s deal – through its British Car Auctions (BCA) business – to buy ABVR Holdings Limited (Aston Barclay), following an in-depth phase 2 investigation led by an independent inquiry group.

BCA and Aston Barclay both offer used vehicle auction services to large national business vendors and buyers.

The clearance comes after the inquiry group investigated concerns that the deal could reduce competition in the UK.

When investigating a merger, the CMA compares its effects with what would likely happen if the merger did not go ahead. In this case, having conducted a thorough investigation, the inquiry group found that if the deal had not gone ahead, the most likely outcome would have been that Aston Barclay would close and some of its assets would be sold to buyer(s) that would not be able to compete closely with BCA for large national vendors. This means that, with or without the merger, the competitive pressure exerted on BCA by Aston Barclay would be lost.

The inquiry group has therefore decided that the deal should be allowed to proceed.

Cyrus Mehta, chair of the independent inquiry group, said:

Having reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the likely impact on Aston Barclay's business if the deal did not go ahead, we have found that this deal does not substantially reduce competition.

For more information, visit the Constellation / ABVR merger inquiry page.

Notes to editors:

1. Today's decision marks the end of the CMA's investigation.
2. Constellation Developments Limited (Constellation), through its British Car Auctions (BCA) business, is the largest provider of business-to-business (B2B) used vehicle auction services in Great Britain (GB). ABVR Holdings Limited (Aston Barclay) is the third largest supplier in the same market.
3. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/b2b-used-car-auction-merger-cleared-by-cma>