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By Ed Leahy

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Sainsbury's toiled in past three months



Britain's second largest retailer had the lowest gain in market share out of the big four ahead of "pivotal" merger

The merger between Sainsbury's and Asda was given added rationale after new data showed both companies lagging in retailer market share.

According to Kantar figures Sainsbury's achieved a meagre 0.2 per cent gain in market share during the past three months, with Asda a slightly higher 1.4 per cent.

Their findings come one day after Sainsbury's posted an 18 per cent fall in profits in their annual report yesterday.

In contrast Tesco gained 2.1 per cent of the market, Morrisons 2.2 per cent, with discounters Aldi and Lidl still making headway at 7.7 and 9.1

per cent respectively. Online retailer Ocado topped the overall table again, notching up market share capture of 12.7 per cent.

Fraser McKeivitt, head of retail and consumer insight at Kantar Worldpanel, comments: "This is a pivotal moment for the British grocery market. A merger between Sainsbury's and Asda would transform the traditional landscape placing nearly a third of market share in the hands of the joint supermarket giant, though the march of the discounters – and any enforced store closures – could impact this figure."

Overall, the British grocery market grew at its slowest rate since March 2017 at 2.0% – the result of

lower grocery price rises. The like-for-like inflation rate is now 2.1% and is expected to fall further in the coming months.

Fraser McKeivitt continued: "Tesco and Morrisons both performed strongly this period. Morrisons was crowned the fastest-growing traditional supermarket, raking in sales growth of 2.2% and holding market share at 10.5%. Although Morrisons continues to prove a favourite with shoppers in its northern heartlands the retailer is also excelling in the capital, where it is growing at its fastest rate. Meanwhile, for the twelfth consecutive period, Tesco has grown more than 2.0% – the first time the retailer has achieved this since March 2011."