
From: Melanie Bruce
Sent: 27/05/2025 2:04:33 PM
To: Council Northernbeaches Mailbox
Subject: TRIMMED: Objection to DA2025/0132 – Proposed McDonald's at 37 Roseberry Street, Balgowlah

Attention: General Manager, Planning Department

Objection to DA2025/0132 – Proposed McDonald's at 37 Roseberry Street, Balgowlah

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as an employee of a local business located directly adjacent to 37 Roseberry Street, Balgowlah. I have been with Artifex for 4 years and I wish to formally lodge my **strong objection** to Development Application DA2025/0132 for the construction of a McDonald's restaurant (with drive-through) at this location. Our business has operated here for 30 years, and I am deeply concerned about the **negative impacts** this development would have on our community, local amenity, and existing businesses. In particular, the proposal on the grounds of: **(1)** traffic and parking concerns, **(2)** community character and amenity impact, **(3)** potential crime and anti-social behaviour, **(4)** environmental and business impacts (odour, noise, litter), and **(5)** disruption to long-standing local businesses. The proposed changes do not rectify any of the concerns raised by this community, not enough for this to go ahead. I respectfully urge the Council to **refuse** this application to maintain Balgowlah's community character and commercial integrity.

Traffic and Parking Concerns

The proposed McDonald's would significantly exacerbate already **chaotic traffic conditions** and parking issues in the Roseberry/Kenneth/Condamine Street area:

- **Ineffective Roundabout Proposal:** The updated plans include a roundabout at Roseberry and Hayes Streets, yet this token measure will not meaningfully alleviate congestion. Even the proponent's own traffic study initially noted there is insufficient space for a roundabout at that intersection and warned that attempting to install one could **increase travel times** *file-tdrfwjrblfyo5g9vntq8z8file-tdrfwjrblfyo5g9vntq8z8*. Introducing a small roundabout cannot counteract the sheer volume of vehicles already choking Roseberry Street, which services major retailers like Aldi, Woolworths, and Bunnings. In fact, Roseberry Street is often gridlocked – essentially a **"car park"** during peak periods due to existing demand. A high-turnover drive-thru will only add to this burden, funnelling constant streams of cars into an area that is already beyond capacity.
- **Hours Cover Peak Traffic:** The revised trading hours (5:00am–12:00am) do little to mitigate traffic impact. These hours still **span all peak travel times** – early mornings, daytime rush, and late evenings when deliveries and commuter traffic are heaviest. In effect, McDonald's would operate during virtually the entire daily cycle of traffic. The slight reduction from 24/7 to 19 hours a day is not a true compromise; it still encompasses morning commuter peaks, school drop-off/pick-up times, lunch hour, and evening peaks. Thus, the **existing chaos on our roads will persist** unabated during those critical periods. There will be no respite: trucks servicing the restaurant at dawn, drive-thru customers at all hours, and late-night patrons up to midnight will all contribute to congestion.
- **Parking Shortages and Illegal Stopping:** Parking in this industrial precinct is already scarce and inadequately policed. Currently we experience frequent issues with trucks and vans **illegally parking or unloading** on Roseberry Street, blocking lanes and driveways. This occurs due to the industrial nature of the area and the high demand from existing businesses. We have them driving across the grass, damaging the lawns too. The McDonald's will attract additional delivery trucks (for food supply) and a surge of ride-share and food delivery drivers (UberEats, etc.) who often stop wherever possible. It is foreseeable that these vehicles will further **clog loading zones or even double-park**, worsening safety and access for everyone. The

development's on-site parking may be compliant on paper, but overflow and erratic stopping are inevitable given the volume of customers a drive-through draws.

- **Existing Saturation and Safety Risks:** The local road network is **already saturated** – it can take 10–15 minutes just to travel a few hundred meters from Roseberry Street to Condamine Street at busy times. This over-saturation breeds driver frustration and unsafe behaviour. On a daily basis we witness risky U-turns, cars blocking intersections, and pedestrians dashing across streets under pressure. Adding more traffic will only **amplify these safety risks**. A fast-food drive-through by nature encourages quick in-and-out movements, which, in a congested setting, could lead to more accidents or near-misses. In short, the proposal would inject significantly more traffic into an area that **cannot handle it**, putting both drivers and pedestrians in danger.

For these reasons, I believe the development would **unreasonably worsen traffic flow, parking availability, and road safety** in and around Roseberry Street. The mitigation offered (a modest roundabout and non-24hr trading) is simply **insufficient** to address the scale of the problem. I urge Council to consider the everyday reality of this location's traffic snarls and recognize that this proposal is incompatible with an already strained infrastructure.

Community Character and Amenity Impact

The McDonald's development, even after recent revisions, remains out of step with Balgowlah's community character and the intended **planning controls** for this zone:

- **Excessive Signage and Branding:** The proponent's updated signage plans are still **excessive and intrusive** for our streetscape. While some reductions were made, the plans continue to feature multiple large illuminated signs (including a pylon sign and oversized logos) that are not characteristic of the local area. In fact, the scheme still **exceeds Council's normal signage limits**, requiring a special variation for having more than two identification signs per *frontagefile-tdrfwjrblyo5g9vntq8z8*. This kind of branding overload might be expected on a highway or in a commercial strip, but it is wholly inconsistent with the human-scaled, light industrial character of Roseberry Street. Our community values a relatively low-key visual environment; by contrast, the Golden Arches and bright corporate imagery would dominate the sightlines, especially at a prominent corner. Such visual impact would undermine the **neighbourhood aesthetic** and is not in keeping with the "look and feel" of Balgowlah.
- **Incompatible Land Use (Zone E3 Productivity Support):** The site's zoning (formerly B6 Enterprise Corridor, now E3 Productivity Support) is meant to support **productive enterprise and light industrial or business uses** that complement the area – not high-traffic fast-food outlets. The proposed use as a 24/7-style drive-through (even with slightly reduced hours) is fundamentally out of step with the **small-business nature** of the community. Roseberry Street and its surrounds are filled with local, independent businesses, showrooms, and service providers that have existed in harmony with nearby residences. In contrast, a McDonald's drive-through would operate at a scale and intensity that detracts from this balance. It would bring noise, late-night activity, and a transient customer base, whereas the zone's intent (and the community's preference) is for daytime-oriented businesses that **support local productivity** without harming amenity. Simply put, a corporate fast-food chain on this site would erode the unique character of Balgowlah, replacing it with a generic highway-style development. This is not what our local planning instruments envisioned for the E3 zone, nor what our community wants to see in its neighbourhood.

In summary, the McDonald's proposal fails to **respect the existing character and planning context** of the area. Even with revised signage and hours, it introduces an inappropriate commercial intensity and branding that would diminish the visual amenity and local character that residents and businesses cherish. The Council should uphold the intent of the zoning and the community's expectations by refusing a development so clearly **misaligned with the area's identity**.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Late-night fast-food outlets are known magnets for **loitering and anti-social behaviour**, and this proposal raises serious concerns on that front despite the reduction from 24-hour trading:

- **Extended Hours = Late-Night Loitering:** Operating from 5am until midnight means the restaurant would still be open very late into the night, especially on weekends. This creates a gathering point for youth and individuals at hours when supervision and public transport are

scarce. The proponent's own response acknowledges that anti-social behaviour is **more likely to occur between 12am and 2am**, which is precisely why they scaled back to a midnight *closingfile-tdrfwjrbfyo5g9vntq8z8file-tdrfwjrbfyo5g9vntq8z8*. However, even up to midnight, there remains a high risk of problems. Experience shows that fast-food outlets open late become **hang-out spots** for groups of young people or others looking for a place to loiter. Noise disturbances, vandalism, and petty altercations are real possibilities. The presence of on-site security or CCTV (as often promised via CPTED strategies) is not a guarantee against such behaviour – nearby residents and businesses could still suffer from late-night noise, trespassing, or littering on their properties as patrons spill out. Reducing operating hours by a few hours is simply **not enough** to eliminate the late-night nuisance factor inherent in this type of development. We have problems with school children before and after school hours as well as during on specific days, where they litter, cause havoc, throw stones at our windows and this is in broad daylight with our CCTV noticeable.

- **Evidence from Other Locations:** We need only look at nearby McDonald's locations on the Northern Beaches to predict the issues that could arise. For example, the 24-hour McDonald's in Brookvale has been a hotspot for late-night incidents – local news reported police being called to **two assaults in two days** at that restaurant [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com). This is despite security measures in place. Similarly, the Warriewood McDonald's has faced complaints about youth congregating and disruptive behaviour after dark. Even in broader Sydney, police have explicitly objected to new McDonald's restaurants due to concerns about crime; in one recent case, officers warned a 24-hour McDonald's would likely **cause noise and antisocial behaviour and "exacerbate" crime** in the area [9news.com.au](https://www.9news.com.au). These examples show that, even with cameras, lighting, and design strategies, **late-night fast-food venues attract problems** that are hard to contain. There is every reason to believe a Balgowlah McDonald's operating until midnight would follow the same pattern – becoming a late-night disturbance and a draw for exactly the kind of antisocial activity our community strives to prevent.

Considering these points, the **social risks** associated with this development are significant. The Northern Beaches community should not be subjected to an increased burden on police resources or a decline in public safety and comfort due to an unnecessary late-night drive-through. I urge Council to prioritise community safety and amenity by refusing a development that could become an **after-hours trouble spot** in Balgowlah.

Environmental and Business Impact (Odour, Noise, Litter)

The proximity of my business (and others) to the proposed McDonald's raises alarms about **environmental nuisances** – such as odours, noise, and litter – which would directly affect our operations and customer experience:

- **Pervasive Odours:** A McDonald's will produce near-constant cooking smells (grease, frying oil, exhaust from kitchen ventilation). These **odours will inevitably drift** beyond the restaurant's boundaries and seep into neighbouring premises. My showroom/business prides itself on a high-end environment for clients – an environment that is carefully controlled for comfort, including air quality. Even with industry-standard filtration, fast-food cooking odours are notoriously hard to eliminate entirely; McDonald's own documentation acknowledges the need for "appropriate control measures to limit cooking odours" in its ventilation systems mcdonaldsconsultation.co.uk. In practice, however, nearby businesses often still smell the fryers. The introduction of such pervasive odours next door would **harm the ambiance** I provide to customers, undermining the quality of experience that is essential to my business's success. This kind of impact is not reflected in the applicant's odour reports, which may show compliance with basic guidelines but do not capture the **qualitative damage** to a fine-tuned customer environment like ours.
- **Noise and Acoustic Impacts:** The acoustic report for the development likely focuses on meeting regulatory noise limits at the nearest residences, but it does not address the more subtle noise conflicts with a neighbouring showroom/business. The drive-through will bring loud idling engines, car stereos, ordering speaker noise, and the general bustle of a fast-food operation through late hours. While "acceptable" by some standards, this new noise next door will **disrupt the calm atmosphere** that my clients currently enjoy. It's important to note that our business hours overlap with the McDonald's (especially early morning and evening appointments), so we cannot simply "close our doors" to avoid the noise. The applicant's

acoustic assurances do not account for these real-world impacts on adjacent commercial occupants – impacts that could drive away clientele who expect a quiet, premium experience.

- **Litter and Waste Management:** Fast-food outlets unfortunately generate a significant amount of litter in their vicinity – from takeaway bags and wrappers to drink cups. The proponent has provided a Waste Management Plan, but in reality much of the litter generated will be **in the hands of customers**, not confined to bins. Our street already struggles with trash issues; for instance, windblown litter from the nearby Woolworths often ends up **dumped in front of my business** daily. A McDonald's will almost certainly worsen this problem, with McDonald's-branded packaging likely to be discarded up and down Roseberry Street. This not only hurts the environment but also creates an eyesore that **detracts from the professionalism** of our premises. Even if McDonald's staff conduct periodic litter patrols, they cannot catch every wrapper. The burden often falls on neighbouring owners (like myself) to clean up, which is an unfair imposition. The cumulative impact of more litter, more often, directly undermines the amenity and cleanliness of the area that we work hard to maintain.

In summary, the **environmental nuisances** – odour, noise, and litter – posed by this development are incompatible with the delicate environment required by adjacent businesses and are likely to impose new costs and discomforts on the community. The applicant's reports might claim impacts are within acceptable levels, but from a next-door perspective, even "moderate" disturbances can be highly detrimental. These issues further demonstrate that a drive-through fast-food outlet is **not suitable next to long-established, high-end businesses** in our area.

Business Disruption and Economic Impact

Finally, as a local business owner deeply invested in this community, I must emphasize how this development threatens to **disrupt and undermine local businesses** that have served Balgowlah for years:

- **Undermining Small Businesses and Chamber Members:** Our neighbourhood is characterized by a network of **long-standing small businesses**, many of which are proudly involved in the Manly Business Chamber and contribute to the local economy and community events. We have built trust with residents over decades. The introduction of a large multinational fast-food chain on Roseberry Street directly undermines this small-business ecosystem. McDonald's, with its massive marketing power and generic appeal, would siphon customer attention (and dollars) away from local eateries and shops. It sets a precedent that favours big corporations over local entrepreneurs. Moreover, it alters the unique commercial mix that makes Balgowlah special. Replacing a site that could be used by another local enterprise with a global fast-food franchise **diminishes the community's character** as a hub of independent businesses. Many of us fear that this development signals to other chains that our area is open for exploitation, potentially accelerating a decline of the bespoke local commerce we have fostered. This is not just another shop opening; it's a **direct challenge to the viability of its neighbours** and the values of our business community.
- **Impact on Client Perception and Property Values:** The presence of a drive-through McDonald's next door raises concerns about how clients (and potential future tenants or investors) will **perceive our location**. Currently, our business location is seen as a premium, tidy, and professional environment. If a fast-food outlet known for bright lights, noise, and late-night activity moves in, it could tarnish that perception. Clients may associate the area more with heavy traffic, litter, and a rowdy nighttime atmosphere than with quality local commerce. This shift in perception can tangibly hurt our patronage – for example, clients might avoid scheduling meetings at certain times to "avoid McDonald's traffic," or they may choose competitors in quieter locales. Additionally, there is a legitimate worry about **property values** and rentability of adjacent premises. Commercial tenants like myself value the current environment; if it degrades, property values could stagnate or drop as the location becomes less attractive. The development application does not address or compensate for these external economic impacts. The **costs would be borne by local businesses and property owners**, who stand to lose value and goodwill, while the multinational corporation faces none of these consequences.

In light of these points, it is clear that the proposed McDonald's would deliver a blow to the **fabric of our local business community**. The Council has a responsibility to consider not only the immediate planning merits but also the broader economic and social consequences of approving a drive-through

that could displace or diminish the very businesses that give Balgowlah its character. We urge you to stand with your local businesses, rather than against them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I firmly believe that the proposed McDonald's development at 37 Roseberry Street is **inappropriate for Balgowlah** and would have far-reaching negative impacts on traffic, safety, amenity, and the local economy. The modest concessions made in the revised proposal (such as reduced signage and curtailed hours) do not adequately address the fundamental conflicts this development poses. As a directly affected neighbour and a proud member of a small Australian manufacturing business that has been operating at this site for 30 years, I respectfully ask Northern Beaches Council to **reject DA2025/0132**.

Balgowlah's unique community character, safety, and commercial integrity are worth protecting. I thank the Council for considering my submission, and I trust that you will give weight to the concerns of residents and local businesses who have overwhelmingly voiced opposition to this development. Please help us keep Balgowlah a place we are proud to live and work in, free from the disproportionate impacts of an unsuitable drive-through restaurant.

Sincerely,

Melanie Bruce

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