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Woollahra
NSW, 2025

20 February 2020

I refer to the application for a Packaged Liquor Licence (BWS Balgowlah) located at 31 Rosebery Street, Balgowlah, NSW 2093 (APP-0006545456).

Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) Health Promotion objects to the granting of this packaged liquor licence as it does not satisfy section 48(5) of the *Liquor Act 2007*. The overall social impact of this particular licence will be detrimental to the well-being of the local and broader community. The rationale and evidence for our position is outlined below.

NSLHD Health Promotion has an active interest in measures to prevent or reduce alcohol-related harms such as malicious damage, interpersonal violence, accidental injury and long-term health impacts.

Whilst we do not object to the majority of new liquor licence applications, we object to the granting of this particular packaged liquor licence due to the following concerns:

1. Hotspots of Domestic Violence Assault and Malicious Damage

The proposed location of the packaged liquor outlet is located within a “medium” hotspot for incidents of domestic assault as well as being located closely between two “high” hot spots in Balgowlah and Manly Vale as seen in Figure 1¹. There is strong evidence linking domestic violence with the density of packaged liquor outlets².

This is particularly concerning with evidence showing a 250% increase in the rate of domestic assault incidents in Balgowlah from the Year to September 2018 (117.7 per 100,000 population) and the Year to September 2019 (412.0 per 100,000 population)¹. Balgowlah also has a 4.6% higher rate of domestic assault incidents in NSW 2019¹.

Incidents of Assault (Domestic assault) from October 2017 to September 2019

Suburb	To September 2019	Year to September 2018		Year to September 2019	
	Trend: 2 year	Count	Rate	Count	Rate
New South Wales	Stable	29213	371.6	30950	393.7
BALGOWLAH	n.c.	10	117.7	35	412.0

¹ Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research – Incidents of Alcohol Related Assault (domestic) from Oct 2018 to Sep 2019. Available at <http://crimetool.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/>. Accessed 30/01/2020

² Livingston M, Wilkinson C, Room R. Community impact of liquor licences: an Evidence Check rapid review brokered by the Sax Institute (www.saxinstitute.org.au) for the NSW Ministry of Health, 2015.

Figure 1 highlights the hotspot for domestic assaults in relation to the proposed licence. According to the NSW Coroner’s Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015-2017, of the 77 reported homicide cases where offenders were identified, 49% of abusers had a history of problematic alcohol use⁷. Furthermore, 38% of abusers were using alcohol at the time of the fatal incident⁴. The review team provides recommendations for implementation by government and non-government agencies to reduce the incidence of domestic violence causing deaths. The most recent 2015-2017 report made an unprecedented recommendation relating to licensed premises, to reduce the risk of domestic violence related deaths in locations where incidents are known to be occurring. This recommendation states:

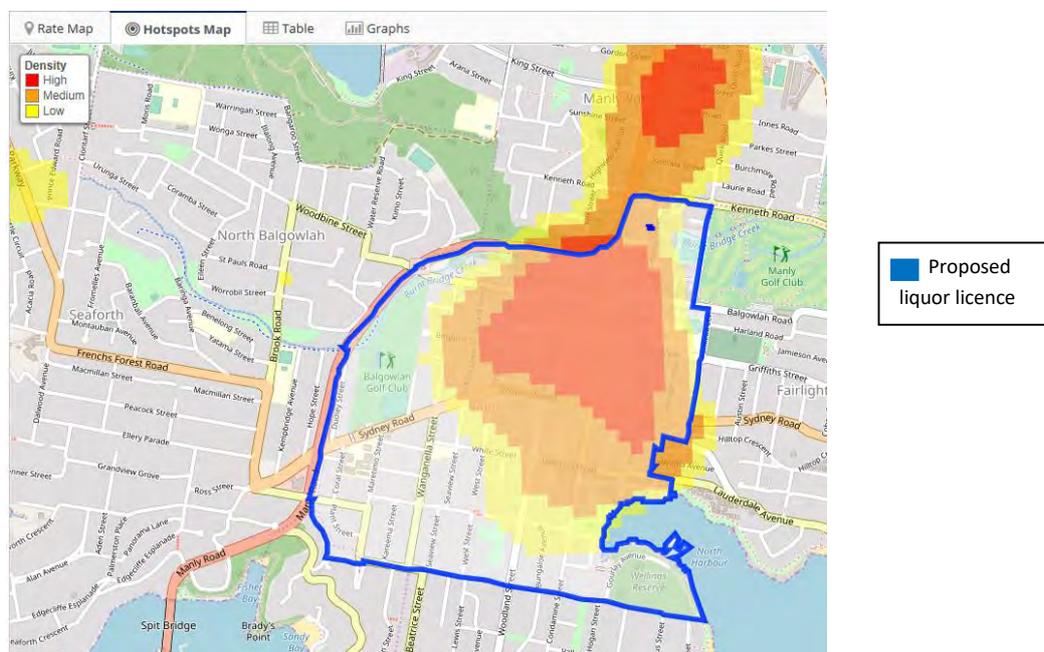
Recommendation 14:

“When making determinations regarding any alcohol licensing related applications in areas identified by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research as domestic violence ‘hot spots’, apply the following criteria:

- For any applications pertaining to an extension of trading hours, or the development of new liquor outlets or bottle-shops in domestic violence hot spots, there should be a rebuttable presumption against granting the application.³”

The Report on the Government Response to this Report states that Recommendation 14 is “Supported in Principle”⁴. We call upon the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to support the NSW Government’s endorsement of Recommendation 14 outlined in the abovementioned report and refuse this licence application as the premises is located within a hotspot for domestic violence and the applicant has not provided sufficient evidence to indicate that the increase in outlet density won’t increase domestic violence related assaults.

Figure 1: Incidents of Domestic Assault Hotspots from October 2018 - September 2019

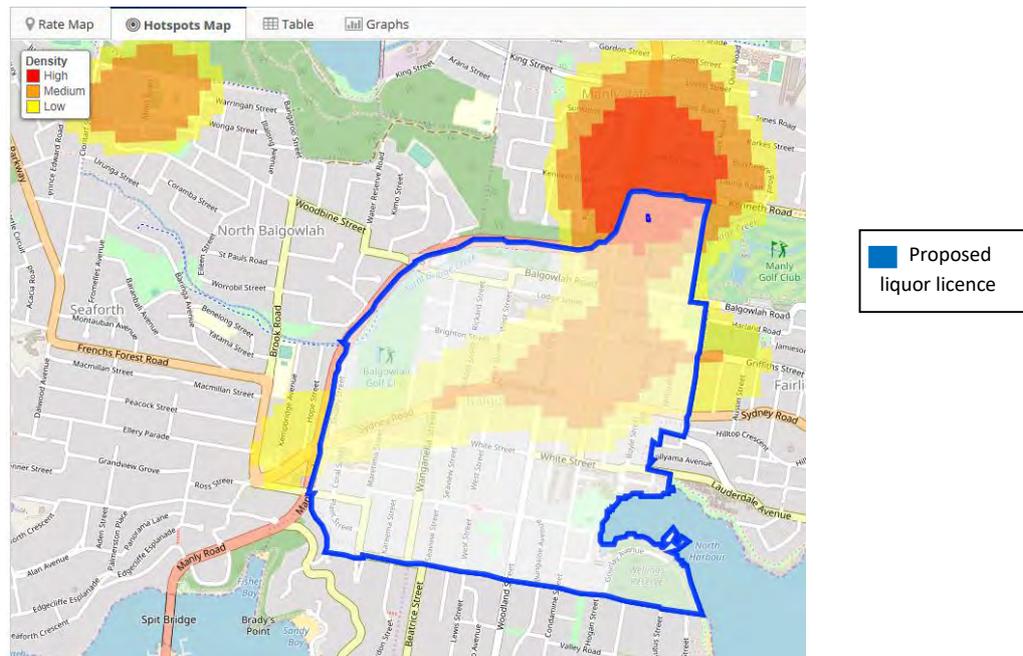


³ NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015-2017. State Coroner’s Court of New South Wales, Department of Justice, 2017

⁴ NSW Coroners Court website, Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015-2017 Government Response. Available at: [http://www.coroners.justice.nsw.gov.au/Documents/DVDRT%20Report%202015-17%20-%20Government%20response_received%2029June2018\(for%20web\).pdf](http://www.coroners.justice.nsw.gov.au/Documents/DVDRT%20Report%202015-17%20-%20Government%20response_received%2029June2018(for%20web).pdf) (Accessed 14/06/2019)

In addition, the proposed location of the packaged liquor outlet is located within a “high” hotspot for malicious damage to property⁵. This suggests that a higher proportion of these offences are occurring within close proximity to the proposed premises. The granting of an additional packaged liquor licence may increase the incidence of both domestic violence and other alcohol-related harm in the local area.

Figure 2: Incidents of Malicious Damage to Property from October 2018- September 2019



2. Oversaturation of Packaged Liquor Licences

The suburb of Balgowlah already has a packaged liquor licence saturation currently 4.1% above the NSW state average⁶. If granted, this liquor licence will raise this percentage even further leading to increased exposure and access to alcohol. Additionally, within a 900m radius of the proposed liquor licence premise, there are already four existing packaged liquor outlets (Dan Murphy's, Liquorland, ALDI and Vintage Cellars) as seen in Figure 3. Three of these existing liquor outlets are located within a short 300m radius of the proposed premise.

Increased alcohol outlet density is associated with alcohol related harm including malicious damage, interpersonal violence, increased alcohol-related presentations to emergency departments, poor health outcomes and alcohol-related chronic illnesses such as cirrhosis and alcoholic pancreatitis⁷.

Furthermore, a consequence of the excessive saturation of packaged liquor licences in the proposed area, is a high rate of theft by minors, particularly from Coles, Liquorland and ALDI, as reported by the Northern Beaches Local Area Police Command. Theft by minors has the potential to increase in secondary supply of alcohol. Furthermore, research indicates that as the number of alcohol outlets

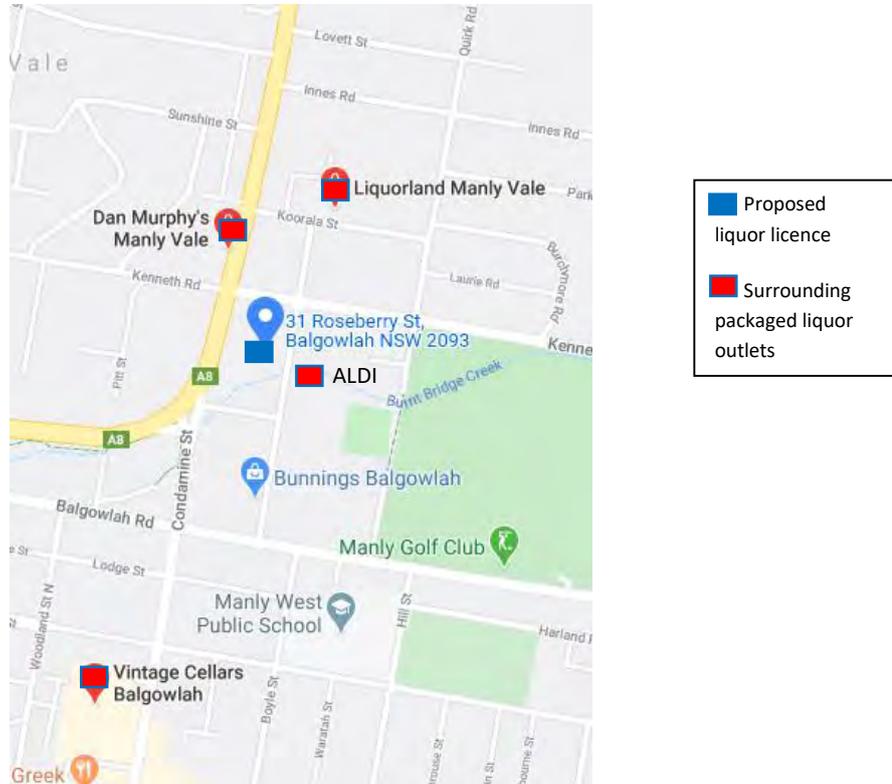
⁵ Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research – Incidents of Malicious Damage to Property from Oct 2018 to Sep 2019. Available at <http://crimetool.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/bocsar/>. Accessed 30/01/2020

⁶ Alcohol License saturation data obtained from Ministry of Health (via Liquor & Gaming NSW Business Intelligence Unit), July 2018

⁷ Livingston M, Wilkinson C, Room R. Community impact of liquor licences: an Evidence Check rapid review brokered by the Sax Institute (www.saxinstitute.org.au) for the NSW Ministry of Health, 2015.

increase in an area, the rate of adolescent alcohol use increases, with the most vulnerable young people aged 12 – 14 years.⁸

Figure 3: Packaged Liquor Outlets Surrounding Proposed Premise



3. Increased Risk of Alcohol-Attributable Health Impacts

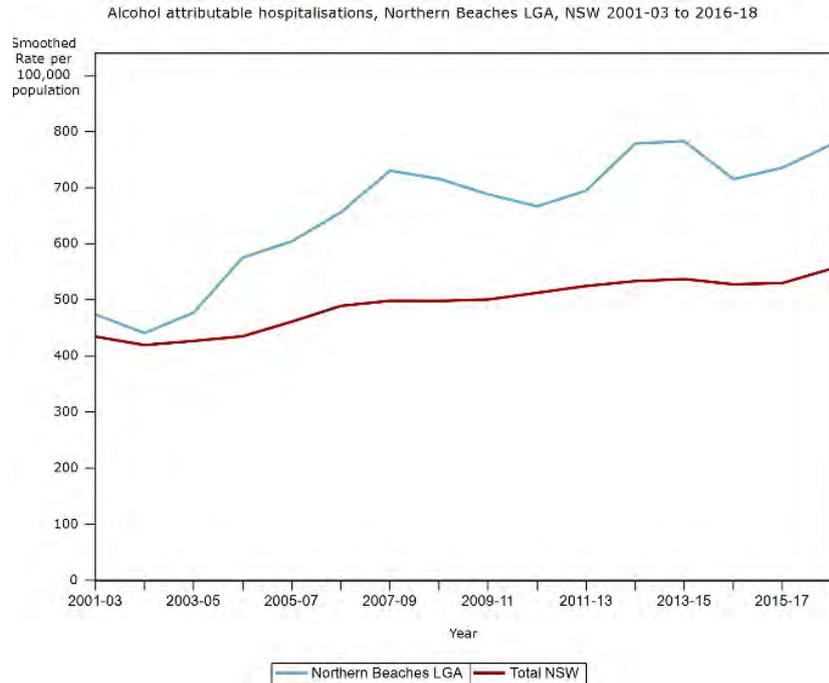
Whilst Balgowlah has a relatively high SEIFA score, it doesn't preclude residents from the significant harms associated with alcohol. According to an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare analysis of the Australian Health Survey 2011-12, adults living in the least disadvantaged areas are 1.4 times as likely to exceed alcohol consumption guidelines as those living in the most disadvantaged areas⁹. Healthstats NSW data also indicates that the most advantaged (ie least disadvantaged) population are more likely to drink daily or weekly than the rest of the population¹⁰.

Longitudinal evidence from 2001 to 2018 shows that the Northern Beaches LGA has had a consistently higher rate of alcohol-attributable hospitalisations than the NSW state average. Most recent health data from 2016-2018 highlights that the Northern Beaches LGA has an alcohol-attributable hospitalisation rate 39.9% higher than the NSW average.

⁸ Rowland, B., Tombourou, J.W., Satyen, L., Tooley, G., Hall, J., Livingston, M., Associations between alcohol outlet densities and adolescent alcohol consumption: A study in Australian students. *Addictive Behaviours* 39:282-288, 2014.

⁹ AIHW analysis of ABS Microdata: Australian Health Survey, National Health Survey, 2011–12. Available at <http://www.aihw.gov.au/risk-factors/alcohol/> (Accessed 1/3/2017)

¹⁰ NSW Population Health Survey (SAPHaRI). Centre for Epidemiology and Evidence, NSW Ministry of Health



More locally, there were 323 Emergency Department (ED) alcohol-related visits to the nearby (former) Manly Hospital in 2018, which was located just 3km away from the proposed licence. These presentations placed Manly Hospital's rate of alcohol visits per 1,000 unplanned ED visits 160% higher than the state average.¹¹

4. Pockets of Public Housing

There is a pocket of public housing within 300 metres of the proposed premise. There is clear evidence that alcohol dependence and illicit drug use are closely associated with social and economic disadvantage¹². The granting of this packaged liquor licence would increase access to alcohol and place an already vulnerable community further 'at-risk'.

The Authority is required to determine whether it is satisfied that overall social impact will not be detrimental to the well-being of the community under Section 48(5) of the *Liquor Act 2007*. The Northern Sydney Local Health District believes that this licence is likely to have a negative social impact and increase alcohol-related harm to the local and broader community. Consequently, we strongly recommend that this packaged liquor licence application is **refused**.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Macnaughton, NSLHD Health Promotion (Ryde Hornsby) at 02 8877 5118 or rebecca.macnaughton@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Paul Klarenaar | Director | NSLHD Health Promotion

¹¹ Emergency Department Presentations by LGA and Hospital obtained via NSW Ministry of Health, May 2018

¹² Wilkinson, R., Marmot, M., Social Determinants of Health: The Solid Facts. 2nd Edition, World Health Organisation, 2013