

The battle to keep French isle McDonald's-free

Level 1 • Pre-intermediate / Intermediate

1 Warmer

- Describe or draw the McDonald's logo.
- What name do people use for the logo? Read paragraph 16 to check your answer.

2 Key words

Match the key words with the definitions. Then, find them in the article to read them in context. The paragraph numbers will help you.

organic

waste

battle

slogans

sustainable

- short phrases that are easy to remember and state what a group of people believe
_____ (para 1)
- a fight between two groups of people _____ (para 1)
- food that is produced or grown without using chemicals _____ (para 2)
- using methods that do not harm the environment _____ (para 2)
- rubbish; the useless materials, substances or parts that are left after you use something
_____ (para 2)

suffer

site

appealed

finer

petition

- money that you must pay when you break the law _____ (para 5)
- formally asked a court of law to change its decision _____ (para 5)
- experience something bad and the effects of it _____ (para 10)
- a document signed by many people that asks someone in authority to do something
_____ (para 12)
- an area of land where something is being built or could be built _____ (para 15)

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Choose a side: the battle to keep French isle McDonald's-free

Angelique Chrisafis

24 August, 2018

- 1 Inside an old holiday club on the pretty Île d'Oléron off France's Atlantic coast, a group of people were printing T-shirts with anti-burger slogans. The T-shirts asked people to choose their side in the island's battle with McDonald's.
- 2 "Oléron is a beautiful place; it's important to protect it," said Nicolas, 36, an IT worker, who volunteers on a local project to make furniture from old wood. "We don't need McDonald's. We want to have local organic food, sustainable development, zero waste – ways of living that aren't about mass consumption."
- 3 The Île d'Oléron, which is 19 miles long and the second-biggest island off mainland France after Corsica, is a major tourist destination. The number of people on the island grows from 22,000 in winter to more than 300,000 in August.
- 4 There has been a four-year legal battle over whether a McDonald's should open on the island. Grégory Gendre, the mayor of the small town of Dolus-d'Oléron, is leading the fight against the fast-food company. Gendre first refused planning permission for a McDonald's drive-through restaurant in 2014.
- 5 In autumn, 2017, a court said that the town had no legal reason to stop McDonald's and must allow it to start building or pay fines of €300 a day. The mayor appealed and a new decision is expected in September, 2018.
- 6 Gendre, an ex-Greenpeace worker, promised to create an environmentally friendly, sustainable alternative to McDonald's in an old holiday club. He said most people agreed with him that they should keep McDonald's off the island. But some islanders say everyone should have the right to eat a Big Mac if they choose.
- 7 Despite difficulties in the past, McDonald's has become a huge success story in France. It sells two million meals a day and is doing better there than in many other countries.
- 8 "This is not war – it's just common sense," said Gendre in his office at the town hall. "McDonald's represents yesterday's way of doing things – it's completely old-fashioned."
- 9 Gendre is trying to turn Dolus into a centre for sustainable living with local food in school canteens, lower carbon emissions and less waste.
- 10 The son of a local doctor, Gendre said the Île de Oléron would be the first to suffer from rising sea levels and the increasing amount of plastic in the sea. "If we want to survive as an island, we have to do things differently," he said.
- 11 The battle to stop McDonald's is not about beauty. They would build the drive-through on a commercial estate far from the island's vineyards and beaches. Instead, the mayor's legal argument is that there would be problems from increased traffic and the risk of accidents.
- 12 A petition against McDonald's on the island has more than 81,000 signatures.
- 13 Emilie Mariot, 41, an organic farmer on the island, said: "My fight against McDonald's is not about going to war. It's about finding alternatives – looking back to tradition, learning from how people lived on the island before."
- 14 The nearest McDonald's to Dolus is 11 miles away over the bridge to the mainland. At the hairdresser's, a painter in her 40s said banning McDonald's was wrong: "Everyone should have the right to choose what they eat."
- 15 At a bowling alley near the suggested McDonald's site, the manager, Jean-Michel Arnaud, said: "You can't stop people eating what they choose. McDonald's might be an economic opportunity and create jobs."
- 16 One restaurant owner in the north of the island said smaller fast-food restaurants might close if McDonald's arrived and people would lose their jobs. "Why do McDonald's want to be here?" he said. "In winter, the population is mainly older people. If it's just so they can put up a big sign of the golden arches, we have to fight."

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3 Collocations

a. Match the words in the left-hand column with those in the right-hand column to make collocations from the article.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. mass | a. emissions |
| 2. legal | b. consumption |
| 3. planning | c. opportunity |
| 4. carbon | d. battle |
| 5. commercial | e. permission |
| 6. economic | f. estate |

b. Match the collocations with their meanings.

- poisonous gases that go into the air _____
- official permission from local government to make changes to a building or to build a new one

- an area of land where there are businesses, factories and workshops

- the excess use of something by a large number of people _____
- chances of new jobs and income _____
- a fight that takes place in the courts with lawyers and judges _____

4 Comprehension check

Use the collocations from task 3 to complete the sentences about the article.

- The mayor of Dolus-d'Oléron first refused _____ for a McDonald's drive-through restaurant on the island in 2014.
- In September, 2018, the courts should end the long _____ about having a McDonald's on the island.
- The suggested site of the new McDonald's is on a _____ and not on a beautiful part of the island.
- The mayor's office says a drive-through fast-food restaurant will bring more cars and more _____.
- Many people on the island want organic food, sustainable development and zero waste, not _____.
- Some local people say that the arrival of McDonald's could be a useful _____ for the island.

5 The island

- What facts do you know about the island? Write seven things.
- Look online for images and maps of the island. Are these similar to picture of the island you had in your head while you read the article?

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6 Quotes

Find the quotes in the article.

- Who said them?
- What do they mean? Explain the quotes in your own words.

1. McDonald's might be an economic opportunity.

2. McDonald's represents yesterday's way of doing things.

3. Everyone should have the right to choose what they eat.

7 Discussion

If you lived on the island all year, would you be for or against McDonald's?

I would be for / against McDonald's because ...

As a visitor, how would you feel about a McDonald's on the island?

I would / wouldn't be happy to find a McDonald's on the island because ...