

The proposed Minarah College at Catherine Field is not strategically necessary, as the area is already well-served by existing educational facilities, with at least six similar schools within a 15km radius. Existing institutions—including Bellfield College (expanding to 1,640 students), Amity College (1,000 capacity), Unity Grammar (1,160 students), Arrahman College (expanding to 800), Al-Faisal College (expanding to 5,460), and Malek Fahd—are already undergoing expansions or operating nearby to accommodate demand. With four of these nearby Islamic schools upgrading to add over 6,400 places, the proposed development represents an oversupply of private, independent schools, undermining the rural character of the area rather than fulfilling a genuine, unmet need for educational infrastructure.

Furthermore, the project's parking and traffic provisions are grossly inadequate, even for a reduced population of 980 students. The current on-site parking and pick-up/drop-off capacity is statutorily insufficient, which will inevitably force hazardous overflow onto Catherine Field Road. This narrow, single-lane thoroughfare lacks the kerbs, gutters, and footpaths required to manage such a volume safely. Without high-frequency public transport, the resulting "traffic log jams" and obstructed residential access will compromise public safety. As Camden Council and the local community have argued, the scale of this development—on unsewered land—prioritises expansion over the fundamental rural character and safety of the area.

With only 30 dedicated "Kiss and Ride" spaces for a school of 980 students, what specific modelling shows these spaces can process hundreds of vehicles in a 15-minute window without causing a tailback onto Catherine Field Road?

ELC & SSP Requirements: Parents of Early Learning Centre (ELC) and School for Specific Purpose (SSP) students are legally required to escort their children into the building. Where are these parents expected to park, given that "Kiss and Ride" zones do not allow drivers to leave their vehicles?

If the single entry/exit point becomes blocked by a "traffic log jam" during peak hour, what is the contingency plan for emergency vehicles to access the campus?

The Transport & Accessibility Impact Assessment notes there are no current plans for footpaths in the area. How can the school claim to reduce car dependency when there is no safe way for students to walk or use public transport to reach the site?

Community members have noted that 80% to 90% of students are expected to arrive by private vehicle. Why has the applicant not planned for at least 100 on-site drop-off spaces to account for this reality?

Considering that the road near the location may not have street lighting or footpaths, how will the safety of pedestrians and drivers be ensured during these late-night weekend periods when the sports fields are used until 9:00 PM and the multi-purpose hall until 9:30 PM on Saturdays and Sundays?

What measures will be in place to prevent noise from the hall and fields from impacting nearby homes until 9:30 PM every weekend, and how will parking for these events be managed to avoid blocking residential access?

Who will be responsible for managing traffic and parking flow during these weekend hours?

To ensure the impacts of the proposal are accurately assessed, clarification is needed regarding the projected staffing numbers and their corresponding parking allocations. The proposal mentions a figure for full-time equivalent staff, but it is unclear how many total employees will be on-site at any given time, including part-time and casual staff across all roles. Further information is requested to understand the maximum potential headcount of staff and how this relates to the proposed number of parking spaces. Addressing any potential discrepancy and detailing how on-site parking for all employees will be managed is important for assessing the proposal's feasibility.

I request that the Commission conducts a meticulous, qualitative analysis of all public submissions to ensure that a high volume of "general support" comments is not mistaken for actual planning merit. It is crucial that the Panel distinguishes between submissions that provide a technical critique—referencing the DPHI Assessment Report and its recommended conditions—and those that merely state the school is a "good idea" without addressing the specific site-suitability constraints of the **Catherine Field** area. According to the NSW Planning Submissions Policy, the weight of an objection should be based on the relevance and evidence provided, rather than a simple tally of supporters who may live outside the impacted rural-residential zone.

Furthermore, I urge the IPC to scrutinise the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) Assessment Report, as it appears to gloss over critical infrastructure deficits. The report fails to provide a guaranteed timeline for **Sydney Water** sewer connection, yet it proposes an on-site wastewater management system in an area prone to overland flooding, which poses a significant public health risk. Additionally, the traffic and road safety measures mentioned in the report do not adequately address the danger of introducing nearly 1,000 students to a narrow, 80km/h rural road that currently lacks basic footpaths, kerbing, and guttering. The proposed hours of operation, extending as late as **9:30 PM on weekends** is entirely incompatible with the quiet, rural-residential amenity of the existing neighbourhood. For these reasons, I believe the application should be refused in favour of a site that is already properly zoned and serviced for large-scale educational establishments.

To further underscore the life-threatening nature of the local road network, this submission must highlight the tragic **drowning death of a local resident at the Anthony Road causeway** in nearby Catherine Field. This fatality occurred when a vehicle was swept off the submerged Anthony Road causeway during a heavy rain event, illustrating the extreme dangers of the local creek systems and the speed at which floodwaters can become lethal in this specific catchment.

Integrating this tragedy into the argument against Minarah College highlights a critical failure in the proposal's safety logic: if the existing infrastructure cannot protect long-term residents who are familiar with the terrain, it is grossly irresponsible to introduce nearly 1,000 students and staff to the same hazards. The Anthony Road tragedy serves as a grim warning that the "Shelter-in-Place" or "Early Evacuation" strategies proposed in the college's Flood Emergency Response Plan are dangerously optimistic. By increasing runoff through land clearing and diverting water toward the already-taxed Catherine Field Road, this development risks creating similar "death trap" conditions on the primary access routes used by the school and the wider community.

The proposed **Minarah College** development presents an untenable risk to public safety due to the documented **safety deficits** at the intersection of **Springfield Road** and **Catherine Field Road**. This location has a history of severe incidents, most notably a fatal head-on collision on Springfield Road, alongside frequent MVA responses recorded by the RFS. These accidents underscore a fundamental **incompatibility with existing infrastructure**; as noted in Community Road Safety Audits, the current road network suffers from narrow shoulders, inadequate lighting, and poor drainage that cannot safely support a high-volume school zone.

Furthermore, the **cumulative traffic impact** of the college will exacerbate these existing hazards. Introducing hundreds of daily vehicle movements into an area already prone to high-speed accidents creates an unacceptable safety environment for both students and local residents. Until the Transport for NSW Crash Statistics reflect significant infrastructure upgrades to mitigate these risks, the site remains unsuitable for a development of this scale.

Additionally, the development poses significant concerns regarding **environmental degradation** and **noise pollution** in what is currently a low-density semi-rural landscape. The conversion of this site will lead to the loss of permeable surfaces and local vegetation, potentially increasing runoff and placing further strain on an area already identified as having inadequate drainage infrastructure. Furthermore, the introduction of a high-capacity educational facility will generate constant acoustic disruption from mechanical plant equipment, public address systems, and the concentrated noise of hundreds of students. These sound levels are fundamentally inconsistent with the quiet character of Catherine Field, negatively impacting the amenity and wellbeing of neighboring residents.

Beyond the noise and traffic hazards, the proposal introduces a significant threat to the **residential amenity** through intrusive **light pollution** and a substantial **loss of privacy**. The installation of high-intensity security lighting and sports field illumination will cause significant light spill, destroying the "dark sky" character of this semi-rural pocket. This light encroachment, often referred to as "light trespass," is known to disrupt local wildlife and the sleep patterns of residents, failing to meet the standards for unobtrusive lighting in sensitive areas.

Furthermore, the multi-storey design of the college buildings creates a direct **overlooking issue** for adjacent properties. Residents who currently enjoy secluded backyards will face a permanent loss of privacy from elevated classrooms and walkways. This visual intrusion is contrary to established planning principles which require new developments to respect the privacy of existing dwellings. Without

significant setbacks or high-quality screening, the physical scale of the college will dominate the skyline and diminish the quiet enjoyment of our private homes.

In light of these cumulative impacts, it is clear that the current proposal does not meet the necessary safety or amenity standards for the Catherine Field community. Given the gravity of the **public safety risks** at the Springfield Road intersection and the significant **loss of local character**. The preservation of our community's safety and privacy must take precedence over the scale of this development.

I request that my personal information be kept private.

Regards

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