

The Leppington Progress Association on behalf of the residents of Leppington and Catherine Field strongly object to:

**State Significant Development Application- Proposed Minarah College 268 to 278 Catherine Fields Road, Catherine Field. (SSD 30759158)**

The Association on behalf of the residents of Leppington and Catherine Field have expressed our objections in previous submissions and strongly object again to this proposed development.

Our objections are based on the following:

- **The school is in an RU4 Primary Production Small Lot Zone.**

The proposed school is incompatible with the RU4 Primary Small Lot Zoning objectives.

The school is located within the Catherine Field precinct of the South West Growth Area (SWGA) which has not been released or rezoned and rezoning will not happen **in the foreseeable future**” as stated by Camden Council. Leppington Sage 3 and Stage 4 of the SWGA have been released but not rezoned as they are unable to be connected to the Wastewater system at this time.

Catherine Field North, Catherine Field, where the Proposed Minarah College would be located, and Rossmore are not rezoned and is will not happen in the foreseeable future.

Camden Council states that Catherine Field Precinct will not be released or zoned in the foreseeable future due to the **“fragmented nature of the area and there is no lead developer looking to progress the rezoning of this land”**.

While the area remains RU4 Primary Production Small Lot, it is a rural area with insufficient infrastructure to support a development of this size. Catherine Fields Road is a rural road with no shoulder, footpaths, curb and guttering, street lighting, bike paths or a piped underground stormwater system or is the area connected to sewage to support a development of this size at the current time.

In response to community concern regarding the school being built in an RU4 Primary Production Small Lot Zone, examples were provided, by the applicant, where schools were built prior to land being rezoned and released. It was then stated that:

*It is considered common practice for precinct planning to occur around existing community and social infrastructure, specifically schools.*

This may be common practice in some LGA’s but is not common practice in the Camden Local Government Area.

Leppington Stage 1 which was rezoned in 2015 can be used as an example of good planning by Camden Council where current and future residents’ needs were considered.

Since rezoning of Stage 1, housing has been undertaken and as a result 2 Independent Schools have opened to cater for the growing population in the area.

Leppington Anglican College Opened in 2023 and  
Amity College Leppington Opened in May 2024.

Precinct planning needs to be undertaken, the area rezoned and infrastructure in place to support a development of this size.

- **Catherine Field Road which fronts the proposed site is a rural road which is unable to cater for the increased traffic generated by this school.**

Catherine Field Road is narrow with no shoulder and caters for local traffic only. Transport NSW has indicated that there are no future upgrades planned for Catherine Field Road, a collector road, nor Camden Valley Way or Bringelly Road.

The traffic generated by a school of 980 students would cause considerable damage to the road surface where the cost of repair would fall to ratepayers and negatively impact the lives of residents that live along Catherine Field Road and surrounding roads. There is the potential for an increase in traffic accidents caused by the increase traffic on a rural road. Catherine Field is a rural area where noise travels over large areas and the traffic noise will impact the lives of residents living around the school and along surrounding streets.

A survey of staff and students attending Minarah Green Valley Campus indicate that:

90% of students travel to school by private vehicle, 4% by bus and 6 to 7% walk.

97% of staff travel to and from school via private vehicle.

74% of students arrived at school between 7:45am-8:15 am and

76% leave school between 3:15pm and 3:45pm.

Minarah Green Valley Campus is in an established residential area where there is curb and guttering, footpaths and public transport yet 90% of parents drive their children to school.

Catherine Field is a rural area with no curb and guttering, footpaths and very limited public transport. It would therefore be reasonable to suggest that 100% of students and staff would be driven/drive to school as they cannot walk, ride, cycle or catch public transport.

Therefore, the data provided in Tables 17 and 18 below are flawed as they do not correctly indicate the true number of trips that would happen while this area remains rural.

Using the survey data, provided by GV Campus it was determined that the school would generate the following AM and PM trips during the school peak hours:

Students Stage 1: 157	Staff Stage 1: 15
Stage 2: 320	Stage 2: 33
Stage 3: 482	Stage 3: 50
Stage 4: 482	Stage 4: 50

*Table 17 Staged Student Trip Generation*

*Table 18 Staged Staff Trip Generation*

When using the above figures, the trip numbers place an enormous strain on the wellbeing of residents that live around the school and will greatly impact their ability to move freely around their community at specific times of the day. The school is located on Catherine Fields Road with no close feeder Roads, so all traffic is required to drive along Catherine Fields Road twice in the mornings, one to drop children off and then return to home/ work and twice in the afternoon, to pick up and return home.

When the community is zoned and developed there will be a greater number of roads around the school that would better cater for the volume of traffic. Improved public transport and the ability of students to walk and ride to school on footpaths that result from zoning and development will also reduce the impact of the need for parents to drive their children to school.

When residents, parents and staff find it difficult to move around the school particularly at peak times they may attempt to use alternative roads such as Deepfields and Anthony Roads.

Local residents are very aware of the dangers associated with flooding of the Anthony Road causeway which has resulted in one fatality during a flood incident. It would be irresponsible to pass this development as it has the potential to put lives at risk.

The provision of shuttle buses from Leppington Station and Minto Station, would make very little, if any, impact on the travel habits of the school cohort, at this time, as the schools own surveying indicate 90% of parents from Green Valley Campus drive their children to school when public transport is available.

It is noted in **Action Plan Measures Table 6** that the school would educate students and staff about reducing dependency on private vehicles in several different ways. As the school is in an area that will not be rezoned in the foreseeable future, the measures outlined do not apply to this site at this time. For staff, Ride2Work or Walk2work Day is not safe along a rural road that does not have a safe shoulder.

For students to Walk Safely to School and a Walking School Bus is illogical in a rural unzoned area with no curb and guttering and when students do not live close to the school.

These are excellent ideas but not for 10 or more years when the area is rezoned. This further illustrates that the school is working on the premise that the area will be rezoned soon, however, there is no foreseeable timeframe for rezoning to occur at this time.

- **The negative impact of traffic and associated noise on the Wellbeing and Quality of Life of existing Residents.**

Traffic generated from the school and the impact on the lifestyle and wellbeing of existing residents is unacceptable. The traffic will have a negative impact not only around the school but on all residents living on Catherine Fields Road and users of Camden Valley Way in the morning and afternoon peak.

The Minarah Green Valley Survey indicated that  
74% of students arrived at school between 7:45am-8:15 am and  
76% leave school between 3:15pm and 3:45pm.

The traffic generated in this 30min window would mean that queuing would happen along Catherine Fields Road which would further restrict movement of residents and degrade the rural road.

Residents moved to Catherine Field to enjoy a quiet rural lifestyle, and this will be shattered if the school is allowed. For the health and wellbeing of residents this application should be denied.

- **Construction noise and operational noise, if the school is passed, generated by the site will have a negative impact on the health, wellbeing, and existing lifestyle of residents.**

Construction noise, air-borne particulates, vibration impacts, trucks, and heavy machinery on site and on Catherine Fields Road, which will take place over 4 stages, with each stage taking 40 to 52 weeks, a total of 160 to 208 weeks, will negatively impact the lifestyle and wellbeing of the residents over the long term.

#### **As noted by Camden Council's 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 Submission page 6**

"After proposed noise controls are implemented, the following noise exceedances are expected across all receivers (with the exception of R3 – Light Industrial at 225 Deepfields Road) during the duration of construction:

- Stage 1: up to 40dB(A) exceedance;
- Stage 2: up to 40dB(A) exceedance;
- Stage 3: up to 38dB(A) exceedance; and

Stage 4: up to 33dB(A) exceedance.

A note was made in the ENIA that Stage 4 is not expected to be delivered until 2041. The Construction and Vibration Noise Management Plan is not accepted due to the significant acoustic exceedances during demolition, earthworks, and construction despite mitigation strategies being implemented.

It is unreasonable that existing residents are expected to experience that level of disturbance over a period of 10+ years (as Stage 4 is not expected to be delivered until 2041).”

If the school is allowed to operate the applicant has indicated that the school will operate 7am to 9pm, 7 days per week.

As noted previously this is a rural area where noise travels over a large area.

Operational hours, the construction timeline over 10 years and traffic noise generated from this site is considered to have an unreasonable impact on the amenity of the surrounding area, both during construction and ongoing operation.

Until the area can be rezoned and infrastructure put in place this development should be denied due to the profound impact placed on the current residents.

- **The school is not connected to the sewer as the area is unzoned**

As the site is unzoned it is not connected to the sewer, and there is no capacity to service the school at the present time. Areas that have been released but not zoned are still waiting for sewer connection.

Camden Council has concerns regarding the establishment of a new school without connection to reticulated sewer.

Onsite Treatment and Irrigation onto the playing fields of the school have been identified as the preferred option for the schools Effluent Management prior to connection to the sewer.

Irrigation of treated effluent onto the schools playing fields has the potential to cause health issues to staff, students and residents particularly during periods of heavy rain where the soil will become waterlogged, and overflow may occur into waterways that are close to the site.

This is totally unacceptable to the staff, students and residents and the application should be denied until the area can be connected to the sewer.

- **The site is identified as being flood prone land** as noted by Camden Council.

A school of this size being built on identified flood prone land has the potential to cause greater flooding to surrounding properties.

Replacing natural permeable soil with large areas of impervious surfaces such as concrete surfaces including footpaths and roof areas to the large number of buildings in addition to the use of the playing field as a dispersal zone for wastewater will further add to the flood nature of this land.

The applicant’s representative has admitted that one neighbour across from the site will have an increased flood risk. How many other neighbours will be impacted when water is captured and moved away from the site by a piped underground storm water system? Where will the water go and how many neighbours will be impacted. What will be the impact on South Creek? These questions must

be answered and the flooding issue fully investigated which is part of the Precinct Planning process. Precinct Planning must be undertaken prior to a school of this size being sanctioned on this site.

- **The Environmental Impact Statement as it relates to this development is developed on the premise that Catherine Field will be rezoned and redeveloped and will change from a semi-rural area to a residential precinct.**

When looking at the areas around Catherine Field that have been released and rezoned, growth has been very slow.

Leppington North Precinct, which was rezoned in 2008, now known as the Town Centre, 18 years later in 2026 this precinct has a rail line and a Woolworths store that opened 2023 a McDonalds which opened December 2024, a service station opened in 2025, and a Child Care Centre opened in 2026.

Catherine Field North, **Catherine Field** and Rossmore **are yet to be released or rezoned and will not be rezoned in the foreseeable future.** A great deal of development will happen in the other rezoned/released areas before Catherine Field will be realised.

To illustrate this point:

**EIS 6.17 Social Impact 6.17.2. Assessment** *The assessment of the development against the 9 criteria areas has determined that the proposed school is deemed unlikely to generate any long term or significantly negative social impacts that require mitigation. Whilst the proposal will see a significant change of use and intensification of use of the site, this is considered necessary given the planned future character of the area which will see the construction of a new residential precinct.*

The above Social Impact Study again does not realise that the area will not be rezoned for the foreseeable future which could be ten or more years which is regarded as Long Term. Ten or more years will result in significant negative long term social impacts to the current residents if the development is passed.

We object to a school of this size being built with no associated infrastructure in a semi-rural area to cater for future growth that may or may not happen for many, many years.

- **Staff numbers vary throughout the report and seem inconsistent with other education institutions.**

The school comprises an Early Learning Centre (ELC) for 60 student school, a School for Specific Purpose (SSP) for 30 students, a Primary School accommodating 505 students and a High School for 385 students.

The school indicates it has 45 Full Time Staff and 6 SSP staff which equals 51 staff.

The Waste Management Assessment shows 51 Full Time Staff plus 8 casual. The Amended Design Report shows 51 Full Time Staff plus 6 casual while the amended application letter shows 99 operational jobs.

Staff numbers, impact parking spaces, only 51 staff spaces have been provided and that is insufficient for a school of 980 students.

51 Full Time Staff is clearly insufficient when the school comprises an Early Learning Centre where student to staff ratios, are much greater and an SSP for 30 students where a teacher and a support teacher are required in each class which has a much lower staff to student ratio.

**ACARA: The Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, reports that, *The average student to teaching staff ratio was lower in independent schools (11.8 students per teacher) compared to Catholic and government schools (13.4 students per teacher).*** <https://www.acara.edu.au/>

The staff to student ratio for the proposed school at Catherine Field would be 19.2 students per teacher. This cannot be an accurate figure.

Accurate staff numbers must be provided as they impact staff parking spaces and trips generated which impact traffic around the school.

- **There are existing schools and school sites identified in Precinct planning to cater for future growth in the school age population.**

The Social Impact Assessment identified the catchment for the proposed school to include a 10km radius from the proposed site. It also identified 3 close Primary schools and one independent high school.

When looking closely at the available information it is easy to identify numerous Public and Independent Faith based Schools, including Catholic, Islamic and Anglican schools with a **10 km driving range from the proposed site** and several schools where the site has been identified, and are yet to be built as part of the Precinct Planning Process.

The schools would include;

Schools	Distance from proposed site	Status
<b>Public Schools</b>		
Leppington Primary	9.3 Km	Celebrated 100 years in 2023
Oran Park Primary	4.5km	Opened 2014 due to population growth
Oran Park High School	5.2km	Opened 2020 due to population growth
Denham Court Public School	7.7 km	Opened November 2021 due to population growth after rezoning.
Proposed Leppington High School	8.5 Km	Located in the Town Centre which was zoned in 2008 Opening 2027
Gregory Hills Primary School	8.8Km	Opened in 2020 due to population growth
Gregory Hills High School	8.8Km	Opened in 2025 due to population growth
Emerald Hills Primary School	5.4Km	To open 2028 due to population growth in zoned area
Gledswood Hills Public School K-6	4.2	Opened in 2020
Barramurra Public School Oran Park	5.2km	Opened in 2021
<b>Independent Faith Based Schools</b>		
Amity College K-12	8.6 km	Opened in 2024. Catering for 1000 students. Found in Stage 1 Leppington, Zoned 2015.
Leppington Anglican College K- 12	8 km	Opening in 2023. Catering for 1000 students. Found in Stage 1 Leppington Zoned 2015
Macarthur Anglican School	7.8 km	Opened 1984

Magdalene Catholic High School Smeaton Grange	8.2 km	Opened 1999
St Benedicts Catholic College Oran Park (7-12)	5.7Km	Opened 2021
St Justine's Catholic Primary School Oran Park	5.6 km	Opened 2012
Unity Grammar K-12 Austral	8.9 km	Opened in 2008
Belfield College Rossmore	7km	Embedded in its community
Schools slightly farther than 10km of the proposed area		
Amity College Prestons	17km	Established in 1996 and embedded in its community

This list is not representative of all schools in the area as there are several sites for proposed schools that form part of the Precinct Planning Process.

It can be seen from this list that the area is well cater for in terms of public and Independent Faith Based Schools.

- **The school is not in the public interest.**

Until Catherine Field is rezoned, and infrastructure is delivered, a school of 980 students should not be supported as the impact on the existing residents are significant and therefore not in the public interest.

The applicant is seeking to develop relatively cheap rural land prior to precinct planning/rezoning. This provides a private benefit for the applicant at the expense of the wider community.

- **A school of this size has the potential to negatively impact the precinct planning process.**

The school, if approved, has the potential to dictate the planning process around the school and not allow the precinct planning process to operate independently, fairly and sustainably and could negatively impact the surrounding landowner's future zoning of their properties.

As stated by Camden Council, 'The proposed site does not consider the precinct planning process, which may ultimately reveal that this location is not the most appropriate or desirable location for a school and/or is a highly desirable location for a different land use.'

There are already released and or zoned areas (or precincts currently being rezoned) within the SWGA which would be more appropriate locations for the proposed school.

Leppington Progress Association on behalf of the residents of Leppington and Catherine Field strongly oppose the development of Minarah College SSD 30759158 and urge that the application for this development be denied.

Yours sincerely,



Secretary  
Leppington Progress Association

