

Appendix 5 - Response to Objections – dated 4 April 2018

Objection	Comment
Suitability of the land for a place of worship	<p>A place of worship is not a prohibited use on the subject land. In fact the State Planning Policy under the Green Wedges supports development that provides for social benefits.</p> <p>The proposed place of worship provides religious and social benefits for people of the Islamic faith in and around Melton. This view was supported by VCAT in its decision relating to the previous amended permit. The Tribunal further added that the Green Wedges are now encouraged to contain a broader range of activities than previously.</p>
Excessive hours of operation	<p>The proposed use will not run for the full 18 hours, but will be broken down into four sessions. Each session will be for no more than 45 minutes each.</p> <p>The total hours for a full day will be 3 hours. It is considered that the time allocated for each session is not excessive, in the context of the surrounds.</p>
Traffic	<p>Council's Traffic engineers have not raised any concerns relating to traffic even though no traffic report was submitted. They consider that the proposed use and the number of vehicle movements that will be generated as a consequence of the hours being proposed will not have an adverse impact on the surrounding road network.</p> <p>Council's Traffic engineers also recommended that the constructed section of Harkness Road from the northern boundary of the Arnolds Creek estate to a point 10m north of the vehicle entrance to the subject land be spray sealed. This will lower dust levels and reduce road noise.</p> <p>In addition VCAT in its decision of the previous amended permit concluded that the traffic that would be generated by the increase in hours are not unreasonable.</p>
Off-site amenity impacts	<p>Although the proposed use of the subject land will be more intensive than the existing rural land use, the amenity impacts on the surrounding area are not unreasonable.</p> <p>Any potential amenity impact can be mitigated through specific planning permit conditions, which limit the size of the</p>

	<p>congregation, the hours of operation, and the noise generated by their activities.</p> <p>VCAT has considered a number of applications for places of worship in Green Wedge Zones, and has indicated that green wedge zones are active areas where agricultural, resource extraction and other activities with off-site impacts are encouraged and should be expected. Green wedge areas are not necessarily tranquil, low density residential precincts.</p> <p>In its decision relating to the previous amended permit the Tribunal concluded that there are no unreasonable amenity impact on the proposed cemetery and Harkness Road Gilgia Woodland. This is because the impact of the hours of use of the subject land would be minimal as most of the place of worship noise will be contained in a building.</p>
Devaluation of property	The devaluation of property is not considered to be a relevant planning consideration.