

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Report 1/2021

Referral made in April 2020

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

February 2021
CANBERRA

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Members

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List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

2.266 The Committee recommends that the House of Representatives resolve, pursuant to Section 18(7) of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, that it is expedient to carry out the following proposed works: Australian War Memorial Development Project.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act), the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works is required to inquire into and report on public works referred to it through either house of Parliament. Referrals are made pursuant to Section 18 of the Act, and by practice are made by the Minister for Finance or their delegate in the House of Representatives or the Senate.
- 1.2 All public works that have an estimated cost exceeding \$15 million¹ must be referred to the Committee and cannot be commenced until the Committee has made its report to Parliament and the House of Representatives receives that report and resolves that it is expedient to carry out the work.²
- 1.3 Under section 5 of the Act, a public work is a work proposed to be undertaken by the Commonwealth, or on behalf of the Commonwealth concerning:
 - the construction, alteration, repair, refurbishment or fitting-out of buildings and other structures;
 - the installation, alteration or repair of plant and equipment designed to be used in, or in relation to, the provision of services for buildings and other structures;
 - the undertaking, construction, alteration or repair of landscaping and earthworks (whether or not in relation to buildings and other structures);

¹ The threshold amount for a public work for Defence purposes is \$75 million as per *Public Works Committee Regulation 2016*, Part II, Section 7(a).

² The Act, Part III, Section 18(8). Exemptions from this requirement are provided for work of an urgent nature, defence work contrary to the public interest, repetitive work and work by prescribed authorities listed in the Regulations.

- the demolition, destruction, dismantling or removal of buildings, plant and equipment, earthworks, and other structures;
 - the clearing of land and the development of land for use as urban land or otherwise; and
 - any other matter declared by the regulations to be a work.
- 1.4 Section 17 of the Act requires that the Committee consider and report on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.
- 1.5 The Committee pays attention to the above matters and any other relevant factors when considering the proposed work.

Structure of the report

- 1.6 In considering the works, the Committee analysed the evidence presented by the Australian War Memorial and others, including submissions and evidence received at public and in-camera hearings.
- 1.7 In consideration of the need to report expeditiously as required by Section 17(1) of the Act, the Committee has only reported on significant issues of interest or concern.
- 1.8 Chapter 2 addresses the proposed Australian War Memorial Development Project. The estimated cost of this project is \$498.7 million (excluding GST).
- 1.9 Submissions for the project are listed at Appendix A, and hearings and witnesses are listed at Appendix B.

2. Australian War Memorial Development Project

- 2.1 The Australian War Memorial (AWM) seeks approval from the Committee to proceed with the proposed AWM Development Project (the Project). The project's aim is to provide additional and improved space for galleries, visitor circulation and amenity, storage of collections objects including archives, and support services.¹
- 2.2 The estimated cost of this project is \$498.7 million (excluding GST).
- 2.3 The project was referred to the Committee on 30 April 2020.

Conduct of the inquiry

- 2.4 Following referral, the inquiry was publicised on the Committee's website and via media release.
- 2.5 The Committee received 77 submissions, one confidential submission, and one confidential supplementary submission. A list of submissions can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.6 On 14 July 2020, the Committee conducted a project briefing, public and in camera hearings. A transcript of the public hearings is available on the Committee's website.

¹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 5.

Background

- 2.7 The AWM was conceived in 1916 by Charles Bean, Australia's official war correspondent in World War One, as a memorial and museum dedicated to those who fought in the war. In 1923, the Australian Government decided to proceed with the AWM, passing the original *Australian War Memorial Act* in 1925.²
- 2.8 The AWM's functions are set out in the *Australian War Memorial Act 1980* (the Act):
- Memorial – the Memorial leads the tribute to Australian servicemen and women who died in service of their country;
 - Museum – the Memorial collects, stores and exhibits a nationally significant collection of material that relates to the Australian experience of conflict and operations; and
 - Archive – the Memorial is a centre of historical research for Australian military history, and an archive which holds extensive official records and private documents, diaries and papers.³
- 2.9 The original building, located in the Canberra suburb of Campbell in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), was designed as both a national war memorial and museum, and according to the AWM is 'widely regarded as one of the most significant memorials of its type in the world'.⁴
- 2.10 Following a detailed inquiry process, the Public Works Committee of the 10th Parliament reported on the proposal, estimated to cost £253,079, in 1928.⁵ In 2019 Australian dollars, this equates to approximately \$20.8 million.⁶
- 2.11 While the foundation stone for the AWM was laid in 1919, construction in earnest did not commence until after the Committee of the 10th Parliament's consideration. This construction was delayed by both the economic

² Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 6.

³ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 6.

⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 6.

⁵ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Construction of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra*, 5 June 1928.

⁶ Using the Pre-Decimal Inflation Calculator as a guide
<<https://www.rba.gov.au/calculator/annualPreDecimal.html>> accessed 6 November 2020.

depression of the 1930s and the onset of World War Two, eventually being completed and opening in November 1941.⁷

2.12 Since its construction, the AWM has been subject to a number of referrals to the Public Works Committee. These include:

- In 1992, a proposal for the development of a storage and interim display space for large military relics in Mitchell, ACT to replace storage space at Duntroon, at an estimated cost of \$6.5 million.⁸
- In 1999, a proposal for the construction of the Anzac Hall extension at the Campbell site, to display large technology objects at the same location as the rest of the Memorial's collection, at an estimated cost of \$11.9 million.⁹
- In 2004, a proposal for the construction of the East Building at the Campbell site, to accommodate staff, research collections, and increase the available display space inside the main building, at an estimated cost of \$11.6 million.¹⁰
- In 2006, a proposal to redevelop gallery space within the AWM to provide for an improved post-1945 conflict gallery, and a larger Discovery Room, at an estimated cost of \$17.8 million.¹¹
- In 2008, a proposal to develop the Eastern Precinct and construct a National Service Memorial in the Memorial Courtyard, at an estimated cost of \$19.54 million.¹²

⁷ Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, *National Heritage Places – Australian War Memorial and the Memorial Parade*, <<https://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/places/national/war-memorial#:~:text=Bean's%20proposal%20was%20approved%20in,of%20the%20end%20of%20WWI>> accessed 2 November 2020.

⁸ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *17th Report of 1992: Storage/display facility for the Australian War Memorial, Mitchell ACT*, 16 December 1992.

⁹ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *13th Report of 1999, ANZAC Hall extension, Australian War Memorial, Canberra*, <https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=pwc/warmemorial/ncpindex.htm> accessed 28 September 2020.

¹⁰ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *New East Building for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT*, <https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=pwc/warmemorialeast/report.htm> accessed 28 September 2020.

¹¹ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Redevelopment of Post 1945 Conflicts Galleries and Discovery Room for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra ACT*, <https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_committees?url=/pwc/awmgallery/report.htm> accessed 28 September 2020.

- In 2013, a proposal to redevelop the First World War galleries at the Campbell site, within the Main Building, at an estimated cost of \$32.52 million.¹³
- In 2017, a proposal to construct a new storage facility at the Treloar Resource Centre site in Mitchell, ACT, at an estimated cost of \$16.1 million.¹⁴

2.13 The Committee notes that all of these projects considered between the original construction and the current proposal have been relatively small in scale, and aside from the construction of Anzac Hall, have not substantially altered the original building constructed between 1928 and 1941. As a result, the Committee is aware that the proposal under consideration represents the largest change in the AWM Campbell precinct since the opening of the AWM on Remembrance Day in 1941.

2.14 On 14 November 2019, the proposal was referred to the then Department of Environment and Energy for consideration pursuant to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act) for consideration. On 18 November 2019, the development project was announced by the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP. Shortly after this announcement, the proposal was declared a 'controlled action' requiring detailed assessment under the EPBC Act on 18 December 2019.¹⁵

2.15 In its submission, the AWM outlined the purpose of the current proposal:

The project will construct additional exhibition capacity to enable the Memorial to effectively tell the stories of Australian experiences of conflict and operations, in a manner that preserves the national significance of the Memorial whilst enhancing the visitor experience.¹⁶

¹² Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Report 9/2008*, <https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=psc/austwarmemorialeasternprecinct/report.htm> accessed 28 September 2020.

¹³ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Report 1/2013*, <https://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/house_of_representatives_committees?url=psc/awm/report.htm> accessed 28 September 2020.

¹⁴ Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, *Report 7/2017*, <https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Public_Works/AWMStoreProject/Report_7> accessed 28 September 2020.

¹⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Our Plans*, <<https://www.awm.gov.au/ourcontinuingstory/ourplans>> accessed 2 November 2020.

¹⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 5.

2.16 In order to meet this purpose, the AWM has established seven key objectives for the proposed works:

- Maintain the Memorial's national significance;
- Remediate existing constraints;
- Enhance gallery spaces;
- Improve the visitor experience;
- Improve the connection between the AWM and community memorials;
- Create information and reflective spaces for service men and women and their families; and
- Protect and showcase the National Collection.¹⁷

Need for the works

2.17 The AWM told the Committee the project need has been divided into three categories:

- Spatial constraints
- Lack of capacity to display large technology objects
- Visitor circulation challenges and compliance issues related to the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

Spatial constraints

2.18 The AWM described the spatial constraints in the existing gallery space, noting that the capacity of the lower level of the Main Building is particularly constrained. Further, according to the AWM, there is insufficient space for further expansion of galleries:

The Memorial has made significant financial investment and effort in recent years to maximise gallery space as effectively as possible by reconfiguring existing areas to be used for galleries. All effective space that could be converted to galleries, including corridors and circulation paths has now been repurposed into galleries. There is now no further opportunity to create additional gallery space without constructing new spaces.¹⁸

2.19 Noting that the lack of space has led to recent and current conflicts not receiving equitable representation within the Memorial, AWM stated that this 'may lead to recent veterans, including current servicemen and

¹⁷ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 5.

¹⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 9.

servicewomen, feeling that their service is less worthy than those who served in earlier conflicts'.¹⁹

- 2.20 The AWM provided two examples of the level of representation given to recent conflicts. The first is the Afghanistan War:

The war in Afghanistan is a vital period in Australian military history, however limitations on space have only allowed an audio visual display, a component of a damaged vehicle, and two small showcases to be displayed. This is entirely inadequate for conflict in which Australia has been involved for 19 years, where approximately 26,000 Australian Defence Force personnel have served and 42 have lost their lives.²⁰

- 2.21 In addition to the issue outlined above, the AWM continued:

In addition to the space restrictions, the Afghanistan gallery is located in the circulation path to the Research Centre. This location restricts the opportunity to place objects that would add to the stories described in the audio visual displays because the path must be kept open to allow visitors to access the Research Centre.²¹

- 2.22 The second example relates to Australia's role in East Timor (now Timor-Leste). The AWM noted that Australia played a leading role in the military intervention in East Timor following the successful independence referendum in 1999. According to the AWM:

The East Timor gallery is in an area of 50 square metres – this is completely inadequate for the significance of the role of the Australian Defence Force in the successful creation of a new country.²²

- 2.23 In addition to spatial constraints, the AWM also highlighted the quality of the modern conflicts galleries as being an issue, due to these galleries occupying space originally intended for offices and support services:

It therefore does not have the structural arrangement to suit galleries without significant changes to the key structural elements. Despite the Memorial having developed innovative solutions in creating the space for galleries, the constraints to provide equivalent standard galleries for the recent conflicts and operations that remain are:

¹⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 9.

²⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 10.

²¹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 10.

²² Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 10.

- Accessibility for the purpose of staging exhibitions;
- Floor loading constraints on the ground floor galleries;
- Lack of clear floor-to-ceiling space to mount some exhibits;
- A large number of columns supporting the floors above, which restricts functionality, accessibility and limiting capacity; and
- Variable floor levels due to the manner in which the Memorial was originally constructed.²³

Display of large technology objects

2.24 According to the AWM, the number of large technology objects (LTO) in its collection is expanding. It provided a list of LTOs it has recently acquired, or is in the process of acquiring:

- AP-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft;
- Components from HMA Ships *Sydney (IV)* and *Tobruk*;
- S-70A-9 Blackhawk helicopter;
- Two F/A-18 A Hornet fighter aircraft;
- Two Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles;
- Two Australian Light Armoured Vehicles; and
- RF111C Reconnaissance Aircraft.²⁴

2.25 AWM stated that, as the reliance on LTOs has increased in modern conflicts, these items are ‘necessary to enable the stories of Australians who served in conflicts and operations’.²⁵ AWM elaborated:

It is important that these objects are part of a conflict or operation gallery where they are a key element of the story, and not simply be displayed in a group of large technology objects away from the conflicts.²⁶

Circulation challenges and compliance

2.26 In regard to visitor circulation, the AWM noted the increase in annual visitor numbers. Specifically, while shortly after the construction of the original building annual visitor numbers were approximately 190,500 annually, in

²³ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, pp. 10-11.

²⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

²⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

²⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

recent years this number has grown to 1.1 million visitors.²⁷ According to the AWM:

The growth in visitor numbers combined with the increased usage of common or circulation areas in the Main Building for galleries has reduced the area for visitor movement, making visitor orientation and circulation constrained.²⁸

2.27 The AWM elaborated on the circulation issues:

The increase in visitation numbers, including school groups, presents visitors, particularly the elderly and those with accessibility requirements, with a more challenging journey through the building and galleries. This impacts the visitor experience adversely.²⁹

2.28 Additionally, the use of former circulation spaces for display spaces and exhibits is 'limiting the opportunities for visitors to quietly reflect on the stories' told by these displays and exhibits. According to the AWM, the only means of finding a quiet reflective space is to exit the Main Building, which it states is 'a common occurrence when veterans visit the galleries'.³⁰

2.29 The AWM also discussed compliance issues, in particular current building codes and disabled access. It noted that visitors with disabilities require assistance from Memorial staff to access some areas, and that this has not been addressed as doing so requires a major refurbishment.³¹

2.30 An example of the lack of appropriate disability access was provided by the AWM:

One is access from the carparks themselves. Anyone who parks in those carparks in the disabled spots and needs to access the building does not have a direct and easy route.³²

2.31 Another example of disability access compliance discussed by the AWM is the current front entry:

The lift to get into the main building from the front entry is not a lift where you can just go and push a button, and up you go; a visitor services officer

²⁷ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

²⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

²⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

³⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 11.

³¹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 12.

³² Mr Wayne Hitches, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 38.

needs to come down and assist with the use of that lift. The lift is a very tight, small lift which, in its current arrangement, has difficulties.³³

Options considered

2.32 Once the initial need for the proposed works had been established, the AWM devised four broad design options for consideration. These were developed in light of two key considerations: the need for additional gallery space, and the location of the new entrance.³⁴

2.33 Option one proposed the construction of a new glazed area behind the Main Building, and a new Anzac Hall with increased gallery space. The AWM outlined the key components of this option:

- New Southern Entrance to connect into the lower level of the Main Building;
- New Glazed Link integrating Anzac Hall and the Main Building;
- New Anzac Hall with galleries over both levels;
- New Research Centre;
- Bean Building refurbishment and extension;
- Main Building refurbishment;
- Additional above-grade car park to the northwest; and
- Public realm upgrade.³⁵

2.34 Option two proposed an underground development of the site, primarily to the east of the Main Building. This option looked to develop an entirely subterranean option built into the rising land to the east of the existing structures, and both minimised the visual impact and maintained the primacy of the Main Building. The AWM outlined the key components of this option:

- New Southern Entrance with a link into both the new subterranean gallery to the east and the lower level of the Main Building;
- New Glazed Link integrating Anzac Hall and the Main Building and the northern end of the new subterranean gallery;
- New eastern subterranean galleries;

³³ Mr Wayne Hitches, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, pp. 38-39.

³⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 14.

³⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 15.

- New Research Centre;
- Main Building refurbishment;
- Bean Building extension and refurbishment;
- Extension to the existing underground carpark; and
- Public realm upgrade.³⁶

2.35 Option three proposed the construction of new gallery space to the east and west of the existing Anzac Hall. The AWM outlined the key components of this option:

- New entry into the Main Building through the underground carpark;
- New connections from Anzac Hall to the Bean Building and the Administration Building;
- New above ground east and west galleries connected to Anzac Hall;
- New research centre;
- Main Building refurbishment;
- Bean Building refurbishment and extension;
- Additional above-grade car park to the northwest; and
- Public realm upgrade.³⁷

2.36 Option four proposed the use of underground car parking space for additional galleries, an alternative entry to the west of the Main Building, and a new structured car park at the western end of the site. The AWM outlined the key components of this option:

- New entry pavilion to the west connected to the Main Building;
- New Glazed Link integrating Anzac Hall and the Main Building;
- New Research Centre;
- Conversion of the underground eastern precinct carpark into galleries;
- Main Building refurbishment;
- Bean Building refurbishment and extension;
- An additional above-grade car park to the northwest; and
- Landscape and urban design upgrade.³⁸

³⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 16.

³⁷ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 17.

³⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 18.

2.37 Following an analysis of the technical and financial aspects of each option, as well as the extent to which they meet the identified need, Option one was selected. The AWM stated that Option one:

- Delivered additional space as close as possible to the Hall of Memory to ensure all galleries were as close as possible to the commemorative area and that all conflicts are treated equitably;
- Delivered additional space in the most compact setting and close to the primary circulation network;
- Provided clear circulation low to improve the visitor experience;
- Maintained the north-south spine and existing vista;
- Enabled the construction of large flexible spaces in the new Anzac Hall that can accommodate large technology objects as part of the galleries;
- Includes a new Glazed Link enabling the activation of the high value space to the rear of the Main Building which is currently unattractive 'dead space'; and
- Enables the differing ground levels at the rear of the Main Building to be addressed.³⁹

2.38 The AWM held a design competition for six design packages, two of which related to the Principal Project Architect and the Design Architect, while the remaining four were for specific architectural design services:

- Design Package 3 – Anzac Hall and Glazed Link
- Design Package 4 – New Southern Entrance
- Design Package 5 – Bean Building Extension and Research Centre
- Design Package 6 – Main Building Refurbishment⁴⁰

2.39 The selected design of Design Package 3 was a proposal to replace Anzac Hall submitted by Cox Architecture. A proposal from Scott Carver which both met the criteria and 'continued the development of the Memorial in a manner highly respectful' of the front vista was selected for Design Package 4. The other design packages were being developed at the time this proposal was referred to the Committee for inquiry.⁴¹

³⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 20.

⁴¹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, pp. 21-22.

Scope of the works

2.40 The AWM split the scope of the proposed works into six categories:

- New Anzac Hall and Glazed Link;
- New Southern Entrance;
- Bean Building refurbishment, extension and Research Centre;
- Main Building refurbishment;
- Galleries; and
- Public Realm and car parking.

2.41 In its submission, the AWM discussed the proposed scope of the new Anzac Hall:

A new two-level Anzac Hall will be a purpose-built facility to house and display exhibitions, including large technology objects. The new Anzac Hall is to be constructed in the location of the existing Anzac Hall and will approximately double the area of the purpose-built gallery in the existing Anzac Hall.⁴²

2.42 According to the AWM, the new Anzac Hall is ‘deferential to, and respectful of, the Main Building’, and the visual impact when viewed from Anzac Parade will be minimal. Further:

The circular shape of the southern wall of Anzac Hall enhances the capacity to view the Main Building ‘in-the-round’ from within the new glazed courtyard and from key vistas outside the building. The inclined roof of the new Anzac Hall, and the east and west access roads reduce the apparent scale of the new Anzac Hall adjacent to the Main Building and effectively integrate the building into the campus.⁴³

2.43 The Glazed Link is proposed to ‘make use of the high-value space’ between the new Anzac Hall and the Main Building. According to the AWM:

The link will strengthen and improve connectivity between the Main Building and Anzac Hall, thereby improving the visitor experience and enhancing circulation. The link is proposed to contain non-light sensitive large technology objects such as the F/A18 Hornet, RF111C Reconnaissance Aircraft,

⁴² Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 24.

⁴³ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 25.

various armoured vehicles, an additional café, and additional space to support the Memorial's educational programs.⁴⁴

2.44 The AWM elaborated on the design of the Glazed Link:

The Glazed Link itself adopts a very fine structure which delicately rests behind the parapet of the Main Building to minimise its visual impact. This will provide important connectivity between the Main Building and Anzac Hall.⁴⁵

2.45 The AWM told the Committee that Anzac Hall and the Glazed Link will provide the majority of the required 5,500 square metres of additional gallery space – 73 per cent – and will deliver a highly functional building which allow both large and small objects 'to be changed over quickly and at low cost'. The AWM added:

The large exhibition areas are high, contiguous spaces which can in turn be subdivided to accommodate a wide range of gallery layouts into the future. The larger spaces will be complimented with a selection of smaller, more intimate fixed galleries. To tell the stories in detail for visitors it is essential that a variety of spaces be created to link the equipment to the human stories of the servicemen and servicewomen.⁴⁶

2.46 The AWM outlined the proposed scope for the new Southern Entrance:

The proposed new Southern Entrance is located below the existing forecourt, and will improve the visitor arrival experience, support enhanced visit planning and orientation, and improve accessibility. The existing forecourt, stairs and entrance will remain as an option for visitors as it is now.⁴⁷

2.47 In addition to providing improved security screening, the AWM stated that the new Southern Entrance will add 'visitor functions including a 250-person theatre, function areas and public amenities'. It will be accessible via both the east and west, with direct car park access via paths. Additionally:

The entrance will be integrated into the parade ground to provide 'street level' access into the Memorial, thereby enhancing accessibility and connectivity. Visitors will enter the lower level of the Main Building through a set of two central stairs and two flanking lifts. Two new stairwells will be constructed

⁴⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 24.

⁴⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 25.

⁴⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 25.

⁴⁷ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 27.

either side of the top of the stairs in the lower level of the Main Building. The intent of the stairwells is to circulate visitors to the Pool of Reflection and Roll of Honour to maintain the connection to the Commemorative Area.⁴⁸

2.48 The Bean Building will be both refurbished and extended, which according to the AWM will:

...enable the relocation of the National Collection Branch to an area closer to the archives and loading dock, and will directly connect to the new Research Centre. This will significantly improve the function of the National Collection Branch.⁴⁹

2.49 Further, the AWM noted that the Research Centre, currently located in the Main Building, will be relocated to the area adjacent to Poppy's Café. This will be integrated with the Bean Building to provide 'efficient and secure access to the National Collection', and better promote the Memorial's research function.⁵⁰

2.50 The project proposes a refurbishment of the existing Main Building to address existing compliance limitations, 'refurbish existing modern conflict galleries, strengthen the existing structures', and convert support spaces into gallery spaces.⁵¹

2.51 The AWM noted that the refurbishment proposes 'floor levelling and removal of columns to increase the suitability for use as galleries and other visitor functions'. However:

The amount of floor levelling undertaken within the Main Building will depend on the available budget, which will be reviewed after the tenders have been completed for Design Packages 3, 4 and 5 which are the three new-build works. The Memorial is aware that in the Canberra construction trades are in high demand due to the high level of construction activity, and there is a risk that escalation will be above what is allowed for in the cost plan.⁵²

2.52 The AWM also stated that, as this element will not commence until 2024, design has not yet commenced.⁵³

⁴⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 27.

⁴⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 28.

⁵⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 28.

⁵¹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 29.

⁵² Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 29.

⁵³ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 29.

- 2.53 The gallery works to be undertaken in this proposal combine both new and upgraded galleries, with most being located in the new Anzac Hall. The existing First and Second World War galleries will remain as they currently are, and the overall number of galleries in the Main Building will 'be a function of a budget reallocation exercise after the tendered prices' for other scope items are known.⁵⁴
- 2.54 All gallery works will be focused on recent conflicts, with AWM setting out the priority of the various conflicts:
- Afghanistan;
 - Iraq and Northern Syria;
 - East Timor;
 - Peacekeeping operations; and
 - Humanitarian operations.⁵⁵
- 2.55 The final scope element outlined by the AWM are works to improve the Public Realm. According to the AWM:
- This includes landscape, precinct security and parade ground works that address accessibility constraints. The focus for the Public Realm is to improve connectivity around the site and includes improved pedestrian access links from the main car parking areas around the site and to the new Southern Entrance. There is no intent to construct any significant vertical structures within the Public Realm, with any external furniture limited to seating and small shade structures.⁵⁶

Cost of the works

- 2.56 The estimated cost of this proposal is \$498.7 million (excluding GST), to be spent over nine years. This includes all project costs, internal staffing, contingencies, cost escalation and professional fees.
- 2.57 The Committee notes that the project does not generate any revenue.
- 2.58 The Committee examined the estimated cost in in-camera hearings, and is satisfied that the costs have been adequately assessed.

⁵⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 29.

⁵⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 29.

⁵⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 30.

Inquiry process and evidence

- 2.59 As outlined in Chapter One of this report, the Committee's role and the focus of its scrutiny is outlined in the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*. As stated in Chapter One, under Section 17 of the Act, the Committee is required to inquire into and report on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.
- 2.60 In this inquiry, the Committee received a large volume of evidence from interested members of the public, organisations, and others responding to this proposal.
- 2.61 The Committee has chosen to report on all the evidence received against the reporting requirements under the Act and has based its recommendations on this.

Purpose of the work and the Need

Spatial constraints – space for modern conflicts

- 2.62 Many submitters and witnesses to this inquiry told the Committee that the AWM had not demonstrated that equitable representation for modern conflicts had been adequately established in justifying the need for the proposed works. For example, according to Professor Peter Stanley, former Principal Historian at the AWM:

The Memorial has not demonstrated that it has suffered any undue harm to its fabric or, more importantly, its collection. It has not shown that there is any stated need to increase its space on the Campbell site, or that it has suffered by any comparison with comparable national collecting institutions.⁵⁷

- 2.63 Equitable representation of modern conflicts is one of the key justifications for the proposal put forward by the AWM, as outlined above. Mr Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, former Memorial director told the Committee that:

⁵⁷ Professor Peter Stanley, *Submission 39*, p. 1.

This is no more than an emotionally-based claim which has been fostered by the suggestion those who participated in overseas commitments in the last decade or so have been ignored and overlooked, therefore justifying much of the proposed expenditure. Peacekeeping and related commitments have been covered at the Memorial since the early 1990s, to my knowledge.⁵⁸

2.64 Mr Gower elaborated on the coverage of modern conflicts:

That sub-gallery was periodically updated and further fresh cover was undertaken when new galleries were opened in 2007. Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan were included, a special temporary exhibition had been staged before then on Iraq, and the latter section included Donaldson VC's medals and uniform. A fresh gallery on Afghanistan was opened in 2013, but it was not a great success, needing later updating.⁵⁹

2.65 Mr Gower, a veteran of the Vietnam War himself, further noted that:

There is an enduring fact about conflicts that has to be said. The public, rightly or wrongly, are not really interested in some. Overseas conflicts are not equal – the intensity of operations varies, as does the effect on participants and the impact on the nation. Senior Memorial managers have to make some hard decisions about space allocations.⁶⁰

2.66 While recognising that the Memorial exists to 'commemorate service and sacrifice in all commitments', Mr Gower stated that the level of public interest must be kept in mind. He provided the following example:

Were there no conscription, I very much doubt there would have been much public interest in the harsh Vietnam War, and the 500 plus combat deaths. The Korean commitment, another very taxing war with also some very hard combat, came to be regarded as the 'forgotten war'. The excellent new gallery of over a decade ago didn't change this perception.⁶¹

2.67 Mr Gower noted that recent servicemen and servicewomen 'deserve space but not the huge additional spaces' discussed in this proposal.⁶² Mr Brendon Kelson, also a former Memorial director, echoed this perspective, arguing that 'scale and proportion are fundamental', but also emphasising that 'these

⁵⁸ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 14.

⁵⁹ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 5.

⁶⁰ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 5.

⁶¹ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 6.

⁶² Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 6.

comments are no reflection on the quality and worth of Australian service people'.⁶³

- 2.68 Other submitters disagreed that equitable representation requires expansion and additional space at all. For example, Heritage Guardians told the Committee that:

The discrepancy between space and collection size needs to be met, not by continued expansion, but by taking difficult decisions. Professor Peter Stanley wrote in 2019 that, if Memorial management wanted to display more of its collection, it should do what other cultural institutions do – decide what can and cannot be displayed within the budgets provided'.⁶⁴

- 2.69 In relating this perspective to equitable representation of modern conflicts, Heritage Guardians stated:

Space could be taken from exhibitions depicting older wars. Professor Stanley said that, for example, removing the *Emden* gun from the First World War galleries would be unlikely to upset naval veterans of that war – because they are all dead.⁶⁵

- 2.70 Dr Linda Young supported the views put forward by Heritage Guardians, and added that the representation argument spoke to an 'apparent vision of infinite expansion':

The planned redevelopment suggests that the AWM will and must expand endlessly. It is unrealistic to plan that every decade of events should be added in ever-larger buildings that impose on the significance of the existing site.⁶⁶

- 2.71 The AWM responded to these concerns, noting that 'nearly a quarter of a million Australians have deployed overseas to conflicts and peacekeeping operations over the past 75 years', but also that the Memorial devotes 'about two per cent of gallery space to recognising their service and telling their stories'. Mr Matt Anderson, current AWM Director, told the Committee an anecdote to demonstrate why representation is important:

Just last Friday a recently returned Air Force veteran from a deployment to South Sudan was in the galleries with his wife and his young family, and he asked me where the Sudan gallery was. He wanted to show his young family

⁶³ Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 26*, p. 4.

⁶⁴ Heritage Guardians, *Submission 40*, p. 5.

⁶⁵ Heritage Guardians, *Submission 40*, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁶ Dr Linda Young, *Submission 9*, p. 2.

where he had been and what it was like. The best I could do was assure the veteran's wife and his kids that if the development receives the necessary approvals that his story, or at least a touchpoint to his and to other peacekeepers' stories, would be given the space and the honour it deserves.⁶⁷

- 2.72 The AWM also outlined the extent to which it had considered other means of creating additional gallery space within its existing facilities, noting that it had considered 18 different approaches.⁶⁸ For example:

The Memorial considered refurbishment of the Campbell Site as part of its examination of 'Adaptive Reuse Options' within its 2017 Initial Business Case (IBC). In the past two decades the Memorial has re-purposed some 800m² of circulation and back of house space for exhibitions. The IBC demonstrated that piecemeal additions to displays through further repurposing space in the Main Memorial Building was not sufficient as a long term solution to enable the Memorial to tell stories of contemporary and future veterans.⁶⁹

- 2.73 The AWM also told the Committee that the current proposal does include reconfiguration of existing space into galleries:

This development work will relocate the last back of house activities able to be moved to the CEW Bean building extension to enable us to reconfigure the final usable areas into appropriate gallery spaces. Areas such as Security rooms, Education and Visitor toilets must remain in the main building.⁷⁰

Committee comment

- 2.74 In the Committee's view, it is important that sufficient space is provided for modern conflicts. If the AWM is to continue to hold the special place it does in the minds of Australians, it is important that it continues to reflect the Australian experience of war and conflict. Having visited the AWM Campbell site and seen for itself the space given to modern conflicts and peacekeeping, the Committee accepts that while the amount of space devoted in future is a matter for further debate, the space devoted at present is insufficient and this must be addressed.
- 2.75 Many of the objections presented appear to relate to the specific amount of space devoted to modern conflicts, and the content of the galleries that will

⁶⁷ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 31.

⁶⁸ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 32.

⁶⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 3.

⁷⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 4.

be on display once the construction is complete. In this regard, the Committee notes that this proposal does not indicate the specific amounts of space to be devoted to modern conflicts. Rather, under this proposal the amount of available space for galleries is being expanded, with the content of these galleries to be determined later by museum specialists.

- 2.76 In the Committee's view, this is appropriate. In designing and planning for what goes into the newly constructed gallery space, it is important that the AWM continues to act in line with its commemorative and educational role, and few are better placed to ensure this than professional museum staff.
- 2.77 The Committee notes the various views put forward on the relative space devoted to specific conflicts. While some submitters put the view that modern conflicts, being smaller in scale and impact, do not require the same amount of space as historical conflicts of much greater scale and impact, other submitters have argued for a greater equality of space. Under the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* the space provisions for specific conflicts is outside the Committee's remit and the Committee is therefore unable to comment.
- 2.78 Rather, the Committee is satisfied based on the evidence received that these decisions are also a matter for museum and curatorial experts and that this is only possible with the expansion of available space for galleries.

Display of large technology objects

- 2.79 Another aspect of the perceived need for the proposed works that was thoroughly examined through the course of this inquiry is the lack of capacity to display LTOs in the current gallery configuration.
- 2.80 Dr Sarah Ryan argued that the display of LTOs was not central to meeting the guiding objectives of the AWM:

The 'stories' about recent conflicts should focus on the efforts that Australian people made, the price of those efforts, understanding the reasons for the conflict, and what the outcomes of the conflict were. Large technology objects are secondary, not 'critical' to this purpose, and because of their physical size, risk dominating the space and conveying the idea that this is what war is about.⁷¹

- 2.81 Dr David Stephens told the Committee that the AWM's arguments for the representation of modern conflicts is 'a smokescreen for its demand for

⁷¹ Dr Sarah Ryan, *Submission 57*, p. 2.

space to display planes, helicopters and other retired military equipment'. In Dr Stephens' view, these LTOs 'will be tourist attractions, big toys for the boys and prominent advertisements for the companies that make them'.⁷²

2.82 Dr Douglas Newton made a similar point:

The new Development Project's similar stress on spaces for the display of more war weaponry in the redevelopment project is also very concerning. Wide-eyed-schoolboy wonderment in weaponry is, of course, easy to evoke. But it is scarcely reconcilable with the AWM's purpose, elevated above all others, to provide a sombre space for remembrance – a shrine – above the museum.⁷³

2.83 The perceived shift towards the display of military hardware would, according to Mr Gower, shift the visitor experience at the AWM:

A visit to the Memorial should be educative and engaging. Visitors should leave pensive, thoughtful and disturbed by the loss of young Australian lives – and I say this as a veteran of the Vietnam War and as a forward observer in combat. This has been the case at the Memorial for many years, and no expenditure of half a billion dollars is needed to improve this situation. It's going to change the whole memorial, to no real effect apart from the destructive loss of its acknowledged unique heritage attributes.⁷⁴

2.84 Ms Kellie Merritt presented a similar perspective on the display of LTOs, noting that the 'display of decommissioned military hardware of more recent and current theatres of war' will detract and distance visitors 'from the understanding of commemorating and honouring our war dead and the impact of the cost of war' on those affected by it. In Ms Merritt's view, the proposed works run 'the risk of glorifying war'.⁷⁵

2.85 To support her contention, Ms Merritt drew on her family's experiences as a Defence family:

The kids and I have experienced plenty of open days on various bases in Australia and the UK, where the public and Defence families are able to get up close to aircraft and military hardware. I can't overstate the promotional purpose, awe-inspiring and recruitment agenda that also underpins these

⁷² Dr David Stephens, *Heritage Guardians, Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 2.

⁷³ Dr Douglas Newton, *Submission 24*, p. 3.

⁷⁴ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 14.

⁷⁵ Ms Kellie Merritt, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 25.

events. These are up-close experiences that are accessible in other environments, and I don't think they're appropriate in the AWM.⁷⁶

2.86 Mr Gower also examined the contribution that display of LTOs to the goals of the AWM:

The AWM quite properly holds a major collection of items whose sole purpose is to help visitors commemorate and understand better the service and sacrifice of their fellow Australians. The concept of 'commemoration by understanding' summarises the approach. This remains valid. Implicit is any item that is collected must be capable of assisting that concept. Items must possess a thing called 'provenance' to justify being acquired; illustrative of this is the Lancaster *G for George*, an 89 operation survivor of the Australian 460 Sqn Bomber Command which lost over 180 aircraft.⁷⁷

2.87 Mr Gower disputed that the LTOs listed in the AWM submission for future display satisfy the requirement for provenance:

I cannot see any justification, as is proposed, to display an F-111 on the Campbell main site in pride of place (it had a very minor warlike role), nor two F-18s, a Blackhawk helicopter and a P3 Orion. Yes they had long service lives, but fail the provenance test. The Memorial is not supposed to be the repository for end-of-life service cast-offs.⁷⁸

2.88 In terms of provenance, Mr Kelson agreed with Mr Gower, stating that:

These LTO – aircraft, helicopters, land and sea craft – are the stock-in-trade of military museums, not a memorial, and serve no commemorative purpose. They stand to distort and unbalance the Memorial's collections and massively elevate one contemporary part of our history over the rest.⁷⁹

2.89 In regard to the display of LTOs, the AWM stated that 'LTOs are as critical to telling these stories relating to modern conflicts and operations just as they have been for previous wars'. Further:

The Memorial's development project is not intended simply to display LTOs in greater number, rather it is intended to address issues that prevent the telling of stories of recent conflicts and operations at a level of detail consistent with earlier conflicts, and the issues that impede the Memorial properly

⁷⁶ Ms Kellie Merritt, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 25.

⁷⁷ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 6.

⁷⁸ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 6.

⁷⁹ Mr Brendon Kelson, Heritage Guardians, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 3.

recognising the service of those who served in recent conflicts and operations.⁸⁰

2.90 Dr Sarah Ryan discussed other options for public display of LTOs:

There are other options for making these objects available for viewing by the public at less expense and without diluting the 'memorial' function. They do not need high quality, expensive buildings appropriate to the national capital. They could be housed in dedicated buildings in regional areas, for example, perhaps attached to existing or historic military depots, and providing a boost to regional tourism. Or simply incorporated in other museums as technically advanced products of their time.⁸¹

2.91 Mr Kelson agreed that there are other ways to satisfy the perceived need to display LTOs:

The Memorial now has a large property holding in Mitchell which, in its own words, will satisfy its storage/exhibition LTO needs for the next 8-9 years... Everyone interested in military hardware and technology knows where the LTO collection is and how to get there; it is a mere ten minutes drive from Canberra's Civic Centre and has light rail to its door.⁸²

2.92 According to Mr Kelson, similar institutions around the world display collections at multiple locations. For instance:

Tate Britain has its collection spread across four [sites]; the Imperial War Museum has five locations in the United Kingdom with its aircraft and LTO collection concentrated in Duxford, and hour's drive from London; and the National Air and Space Museum in Washington has an outstanding second facility across the border in Virginia.⁸³

2.93 Mr Gower supported this perspective, noting that it is not possible to continually expand institutions' main sites, and that it is more cost effective to expand to multiple locations instead.⁸⁴

2.94 In response to the concerns raised about the place of the LTOs discussed by the AWM for possible inclusion in the proposed new galleries, Mr Kerry Stokes of the AWM Council noted that:

⁸⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 9.

⁸¹ Dr Sarah Ryan, *Submission 57*, p. 2.

⁸² Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 26*, p. 5.

⁸³ Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 26*, pp. 5-6.

⁸⁴ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 7.

Nothing's been decided yet in terms of what goes into the galleries. They were all put in the drawings as indications of space use, not of what the galleries will be. It's six or seven years away before the galleries open. They'll start planning the internal galleries now, but the plans that we've put forward are indicative to show what can fit into these spaces, not what is actually going to be in there. That'll be determined by historians and curators; it won't be determined by the council or the architects.⁸⁵

2.95 The AWM elaborated on this point:

The Memorial is currently undertaking detailed curatorial research to determine the content, layout and exhibition design of the new galleries. Until this work is completed, which will take several years, the Memorial is unable to provide a square metre measurement [of the space that will be occupied by LTOs].

The memorial can however demonstrate that the new galleries will enhance the visitor experience by reducing the 'density' of LTOs across the site.⁸⁶

2.96 At present, the AWM displays 52 LTOs, including 'large vehicles, aircraft or substantial partial objects such as the HMAS Brisbane bridge'. Once the gallery redevelopment is completed, the AWM estimates that this will increase to 62 LTOs, and that some currently displayed LTOs may be removed for conservation and curatorial purposes.⁸⁷

2.97 Furthermore, the AWM stated that it has a 'demonstrated history of displaying LTOs in an appropriate and respectful manner that does not glorify war', serve as a promotion for weapons manufacturers or 'place LTOs in the role of "big boy toys"'. The AWM provided the following example:

The Second World War Lancaster 'G for George' is a prime example of the manner in which the Memorial integrates LTOs into its broader storytelling and commemoration. This display sensitively integrates the 'Striking by Night' audio visual with the Lancaster LTO all of which is supported by a carefully curated and moving display of supporting objects and stories of those who served, and in the case of some 3,500 Australians tragically lost their lives, on aircraft like 'George'. It should also be noted that the Lancaster was also considered a technologically advanced LTO in its day and is not

⁸⁵ Mr Kerry Stokes, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 36.

⁸⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 4.

⁸⁷ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 4.

considered any less impressive than current LTOs in respect to the initial visual impact on a visitor.⁸⁸

2.98 In terms of suggestions that the AWM move towards displaying the collection across multiple sites, the AWM responded that:

Comparisons with the Imperial War Museum (IWM) or Smithsonian museums are not appropriate on the simple basis that these institutions do not have a commemorative role for their communities in the same manner as the Memorial does. They are distinctly, and deliberately, separated from their respective national memorials or their national 'Unknown Soldiers' and serve as museums and archives only.⁸⁹

2.99 According to the AWM, splitting the collection in this way would not meet the Memorial's obligation to act as 'the national shrine, museum and archive' of Australia's military history. In order to meet this obligation, 'it is necessary and appropriate for contemporary stories to be told at the Memorial's Campbell site'. The AWM continued:

In particular they must be located with a clear and strong connection to the heart of the Memorial – the Commemorative Area including the Hall of Memory and the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier and Rolls of Honour – as the stories of their forebears are. The Memorial's proposed plan does this in a manner that no LTO display or other museum at its Mitchell facility ever can.⁹⁰

Committee comment

2.100 Regarding the display of LTOs, the Committee sees merit in the arguments put by submitters such as Major General Steve Gower. That is, any items that are put on display must hold a link to memorialising Australians who have served in modern conflicts. As such, the Committee notes the evidence given by the AWM that the actual displays that will go into the newly constructed gallery spaces have not yet been determined, and that the final determination as to what is displayed and how it is displayed is to be decided by museum and curatorial professionals.

2.101 In the Committee's view, this is appropriate. As Mr Gower argued, items displayed at the AWM must have provenance, and no one is better placed

⁸⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, pp. 4-5.

⁸⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 10.

⁹⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 10.

than to ensure both provenance and sensitive, appropriate gallery displays than those with the professional background to make such a determination.

- 2.102 In terms of putting LTOs on display at another site, such as the Treloar Resource Centre, the Committee notes the argument put by the AWM that this is not possible for a range of reasons.
- 2.103 Having also inspected the Treloar Resource Centre, the Committee has seen for itself that at present, this site is directed towards storage and preservation of military relics. In its current form, it is problematic to display these relics in a way that both contextualises their role and pays tribute to those who served in the conflicts in which they were used. Further, the Treloar Resource Centre is only open once a year for the 'Big Things in Store' display, limiting capacity for the public to view the items stored there.⁹¹
- 2.104 The Committee also understands the argument that these displays should be located at the AWM's Campbell site. In order to maintain the link between the commemorative and educational roles of the AWM, the best solution is to ensure that modern conflicts receive representation as close as possible to the commemorative areas such as the Pool of Reflection and the Roll of Honour.
- 2.105 The Committee accepts the argument that additional space is required. As a result, the proposals considered during the options stage of this project seem to be the most appropriate response to the identified need. The Committee finds that the need for the works exists, and that the options examined in light of this need are the most appropriate for addressing it.

Circulation challenges and compliance

- 2.106 The Committee did not receive a great deal of evidence around the aspect of circulation challenges and compliance.
- 2.107 Mr Stewart Mitchell, the former Head of Buildings and Services at the AWM, told the Committee that the proposed works will not address some aspects of the identified need:

It does not address circulation issues; most of the proposed new exhibition would be at the very rear of the site with no changes to (or funding for) the First and Second World War galleries in-between, there are not only undeveloped or non-existent concepts for egress from a cavernous new

⁹¹ Australian War Memorial, *Big Things in Store: See what's landed*, <<https://www.awm.gov.au/visit/events/BigThings>> accessed 4 November 2020.

southern entry, and there is no apparent consideration of well-established statistical studies of optimum visitor time in the building and the impact of significantly increased size on visitation and sense of place.⁹²

Heritage considerations

- 2.108 Many submitters and witnesses to this inquiry raised the potential heritage implications of the proposed works.
- 2.109 These heritage implications ranged across a wide array of aspects of the proposed works, from the overall project and its impact on the entire Campbell precinct, and the specific aspects such as the demolition of Anzac Hall and the reconfiguration of the South Entrance.
- 2.110 The Committee notes that the heritage aspects are the subject of concurrent examination by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE) pursuant to a referral under the EPBC Act.⁹³
- 2.111 Some submitters raised the concurrent approval processes being undertaken by both the Committee, on behalf of the Parliament, and DAWE on behalf of executive government as presenting issues with due process.⁹⁴ The Australian Institute of Architects outlined this concern:
- The Institute is extremely concerned that the Public Works Committee will be asked to make a final determination on the Development Project without necessary information on the heritage impacts of the development.⁹⁵
- 2.112 While the Committee is not seeking to replicate the EPBC Act heritage assessment process, in order to do justice to the evidence received during the course of this inquiry, each of the key heritage impacts are examined below.

Glazed courtyard and Anzac Hall

- 2.113 As discussed earlier in this report, the AWM proposal to construct a glazed courtyard located between the proposed new Anzac Hall and the existing Main Building, and the demolition of Anzac Hall, constructed in 2001, has attracted considerable feedback during the course of this inquiry.

⁹² Mr Stewart Mitchell, *Submission 17*, p. 2.

⁹³ Australian War Memorial, *Development Project: EPBC Final Preliminary Documentation*, <<https://www.awm.gov.au/ourcontinuingstory/ourplans/EPBC-final-prelim-doc>> accessed 12 October 2020.

⁹⁴ For example, see Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*.

⁹⁵ Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*, p. 3.

2.114 The key heritage concerns relating to the proposed works were outlined by Mr Geoff Ashley, a heritage consultant and architect at Ashley Built Heritage:

- Firstly, the bulk and visibility of the glazed courtyard addition to the Memorial would significantly impact the visibility of its architectural values and form associated with its deeper meaning as a memorial shrine.
- Secondly, the demolition of the recent award-winning Anzac Hall would result in the loss of a highly contributory component of the AWM Campbell Precinct included on the [Commonwealth Heritage List], carefully set back from main Memorial to protect its setting, while still having its own architectural qualities of the highest order.
- Thirdly, the change in the arrival experience to the AWM will result in a reduction, delaying and obscuring what currently is an immediate and profound experience of the memorial aspect.⁹⁶

2.115 On the specific impact of the Glazed Courtyard, Mr Ashley commented:

The key adverse impact will be from the glazed courtyard addition that would be a major accretion butted up to the side wings of the Memorial and will result in the loss of the external visibility of the semicircular apse form, as well as obscuring views of the dome and leaving the whole cruciform plan visually truncated. This will also impact the intangible heritage values associated with the shrine function of the AWM.⁹⁷

2.116 The Glazed Courtyard would also affect the qualities of the Main Building when viewed from the northern elevation of Mount Ainslie by ‘creating one large roof form’, which according to Mr Ashley is not in keeping with the setting of the AWM or its architectural values.⁹⁸

2.117 According to Mr Stewart Mitchell, the scope of works proposed provides the additional space identified as being necessary ‘at huge cost to the unique character of the building and site’.⁹⁹

2.118 The Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) told the Committee that it was concerned that there had been a public commitment to a development plan which would demolish Anzac Hall.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Mr Geoff Ashley, *Submission 38*, p. 1.

⁹⁷ Mr Geoff Ashley, *Submission 38*, Attachment A, p. 37.

⁹⁸ Mr Geoff Ashley, *Submission 38*, Attachment A, p. 38.

⁹⁹ Mr Stewart Mitchell, *Submission 17*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*, p. 3.

2.119 While not a heritage listed building itself, the Institute noted that Anzac Hall ‘has been lauded for its sensitivity to the heritage and cultural context of this national memorial while also providing functional design’.¹⁰¹

2.120 More generally, the Institute argued that Anzac Hall was ‘painstakingly designed and crafted’ to honour the service to Australia of those who have served and died in war. According to the Institute:

It's a building that forms an integral part of the War Memorial site itself whose sacred and special significance is the sum of all of its parts. It's a building that now holds two decades worth of precious experience where countless veterans, families and their visitors have engaged in shared remembrance.¹⁰²

2.121 The Institute also stated that Anzac Hall is acknowledged as contributing to the Campbell precinct in the AWM’s heritage listing, and that ‘given time, it is extremely likely that Anzac Hall would obtain a direct heritage listing in its own right’.¹⁰³

2.122 Mr Penleigh Boyd characterised the demolition of Anzac Hall as ‘contrary to the respectful preservation of Australia’s heritage’:

Anzac Hall is a work of great architecture, elegantly complementing the original memorial building and beautifully integrated into its landscape setting at the base of Mount Ainslie.¹⁰⁴

2.123 Mr Mitchell characterised the demolition of Anzac Hall as ‘a shocking waste’ and disagreed that the need for additional gallery space outweighs the retention of Anzac Hall. Mr Mitchell stated that this shows ‘a fundamental lack of understanding of the value, quality, and significance’ of the building.¹⁰⁵

2.124 Mr Mitchell told the Committee that the proposed works are not consistent with the AWM’s own Heritage Management Plan (HMP). Mr Mitchell noted that both the 2011 HMP and the 2019 HMP (which has not yet been endorsed) specify the retention and conservation of Anzac Hall.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*, p. 3.

¹⁰² Ms Julia Cambage, Australian Institute of Architects, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 19.

¹⁰³ Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁴ Mr Penleigh Boyd, *Submission 13*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ Mr Stewart Mitchell, *Submission 17*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ Mr Stewart Mitchell, *Submission 17*, p. 3.

2.125 In relation to the demolition of Anzac Hall, some submitters raised process issues relating to the design competition outlined above in the section on options considered. For example, the Institute stated that the Reference Design was a mandatory requirement in the architectural design competition 'even though three other Preliminary Designs met the same floor space requirements but retained Anzac Hall'.¹⁰⁷

2.126 Mr Mitchell also commented on this issue:

Renowned architects and heritage professions, with years of significant experience at the AWM, have already provided alternatives that are consistent with the AWM Heritage Management Plan, do not involve the destruction of Anzac Hall and are less costly – but these have been ignored in the current proposal.¹⁰⁸

2.127 One such alternative that was raised during this inquiry is for the further development of the Treloar Resource Centre in the nearby Canberra suburb of Mitchell. Mr Kelson outlined the key aspects of this proposal:

Mitchell has all along been the professional museum answer to the Memorial's space needs for LTO. It follows the excellent and highly popular example set by the Imperial War Museum with its LTO collection off-site in Duxford, a bit more than an hour's drive from London. Mitchell is a bare 10-15 minutes by light rail or car from Canberra's Civic Centre.¹⁰⁹

2.128 In Mr Kelson's view, developing the Treloar Resource Centre at a final cost of approximately \$100 million is a 'value for money and a highly attractive proposition for a government currently facing national crises on a number of fronts'.¹¹⁰

2.129 Mr Gower supported this view and outlined a detailed proposal to acquire the additional gallery space without needing to replace the existing Anzac Hall. According to Mr Gower, a combination of moving non-gallery functions to the Bean Building and pursuing the development of sites outside the Campbell precinct, including the Treloar Resource Centre, would satisfy the space requirements of this proposal without requiring the demolition of Anzac Hall.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ Mr Stewart Mitchell, *Submission 17*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 26.1*, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 26.1*, p. 2.

¹¹¹ Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) ME, *Submission 25*, p. 8.

2.130 Some submitters expressed support for the replacement of Anzac Hall. Mr Tim Sullivan questioned the basis for arguing for Anzac Hall having heritage value:

I am bewildered by the assertions that Anzac Hall is of such heritage value that it ought not be removed. By what yardstick is such an evaluation possible? Because the architectural profession gave one of its peers a prize? Whilst it is recognition of good work, it is not a conferring of significance on the building. Surely the client who commissioned that work cannot lose all rights in such a short period of time when it has determined the building is no longer fit for purpose?¹¹²

2.131 According to Mr Sullivan, the arguments against the replacement of Anzac Hall could – and were – deployed against the proposal to construct Anzac Hall in 1999.¹¹³

2.132 The AWM responded to community concerns about the demolition of Anzac Hall. In relation to the process issues in the design competition, AWM stated that the competition brief for the design package noted that:

Tenderers have the option available to construct a new Anzac Hall or consider the retention and utilisation of the existing Anzac Hall in their proposed Concept Design option, if the spatial and functional area requirements can be achieved.¹¹⁴

2.133 The AWM continued:

The removal of the existing Anzac Hall structure, located within the site area, was not a requirement of the design competition. Architects were free to explore retention and expansion of the Anzac Hall structure as their design solution. Therefore retention, modification or expansion of the existing Anzac Hall was then a 'live' option until July 2019 when the Council of the Australian War Memorial endorsed the recommendation of the Design Competition Jury that the replacement of Anzac Hall was the best option.¹¹⁵

2.134 On the responses to the Design Competition, the AWM told the Committee that:

The Design Competition received four entries from some of Australia's most renowned architecture practices one of which provided a design that retained

¹¹² Mr Tim Sullivan, *Submission 31*, p. 3.

¹¹³ Mr Tim Sullivan, *Submission 31*, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 7.

¹¹⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, pp. 7-8.

a heavily modified Anzac Hall. The jury considered this design closely but ultimately ranked it lower as the existing building significantly constrained the usability of this design. It was the expert opinion of the jury that this would likely result in the physical building design driving exhibition design and the visitor journey/flow/experience, thereby unsustainably constraining the Memorial's operations, now and into the future.¹¹⁶

New Southern Entrance

2.135 Mr Roger Pegrum, an architect at Pegrum and Associates, also provided input into the heritage considerations relevant to this proposal. On the existing Southern Entrance, Mr Pegrum told the Committee:

Not surprisingly, considering its origin and its purpose, the symbolic entry to the memorial was designed with intelligence and great sensitivity. The War Memorial sits firmly astride the land axis of Canberra, with a single entry portal in the centre of its facade. This is approached by foot from terraces which step up from the natural contours of the site. The commemorative heart of the memorial then reveals itself slowly, as visitors climb two gentle flights of stairs to the entry portal and cross the threshold. A vestibule opens up to the quiet garden courtyard with a long reflecting pool, unroofed, open to the southern skies. Either side are sheltered colonnades with the names of the more than 60,000 Australians who've died as a result of war. More steps in the same straight line bring you to the Hall of Memory and the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.¹¹⁷

2.136 In Mr Pegrum's view, the proposed works will 'effectively mothball the front staircase' and instead thrust visitors off to the sides. This would act to disrupt the 'powerful and solemn processional design and a critical part of the visitor experience of the Memorial', which currently provides a view over the central courtyard, down Anzac Parade, and across to Parliament House.¹¹⁸

2.137 Mr Pegrum also raised possible difficulties with undertaking the new Southern Entrance works, noting that 'digging an underground entrance' into the existing sandstone façade 'is not something that can be done quickly

¹¹⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 8.

¹¹⁷ Mr Roger Pegrum, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Mr Roger Pegrum, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 9.

or without considerable care'.¹¹⁹ Mr Pegrum argued that this aspect of the works posted a risk as damage to the building fabric.¹²⁰

2.138 Mr Wayne Hitches of the AWM responded to concerns about changes to entry via the Southern Entrance:

The commemorative entrance will absolutely remain open and available to the public. It's not closing. There are two additional entrances on the lower level, which will come in from the east as a direct access from the car park and from the west as a direct access from the car park. I would also like to say that that entrance underneath does not go through the sandstone façade. It is underneath it, through a plant room, and we're not putting the main building at any risk in any fashion to come through there.¹²¹

Committee comment

2.139 Heritage considerations emerged as perhaps the major controversy in the evidence to this inquiry. Many submitters took serious issue with the proposal to replace Anzac Hall in particular, and to a lesser (but still important) extent, the proposal to reconfigure the Southern Entrance.

2.140 The proposed replacement of Anzac Hall is also of concern to the Committee. As the evidence shows, Anzac Hall is clearly a building of great significance to a large number of people. In addition, the Committee notes that it is currently less than 20 years old, and having visited the site, is very much fit for purpose in terms of its current use.

2.141 However, the evidence received indicates that as Australia and its role in conflict evolves, so must the premises on which the AWM is located. Anzac Hall was constructed as a bespoke building, intended to serve a specific purpose. As outlined in the identification of the need for these works, the space requirements at the AWM is shifting and the facilities available need to shift along with it.

2.142 The Committee notes the extensive efforts made by the AWM to consider a range of options in relation to addressing this shift in purpose and the resultant need. The AWM outlined the many different ways of addressing the need that were considered, including in the design competition where one of the four proposals received envisaged the retention of Anzac Hall. While it may not be ideal to replace a 19 year old building, the AWM

¹¹⁹ Mr Roger Pegrum, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 10.

¹²⁰ Mr Roger Pegrum, *Submission 42*, Attachment 1, p. 15.

¹²¹ Mr Wayne Hitches, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 38.

believes that doing so is the best way for the AWM to meet the identified need.

- 2.143 A related consideration is the potential (and actual) heritage value of the existing Anzac Hall. Again, this Committee is not the adjudicator of the various claims made about this heritage value, and notes that this aspect of the proposal is subject to review by DAWE subject to a referral under the EPBC Act.
- 2.144 DAWE is the appropriate authority to adjudicate these claims. In order to both ensure that due process has been observed, and so that the Committee can be certain in its recommendations on this proposal, the Committee has deferred its report on the outcomes of this inquiry until after the heritage assessment had been significantly progressed.
- 2.145 In this way, witnesses to this inquiry can be reassured that the appropriate steps have been taken within government to ensure that heritage considerations related to this proposed works have properly considered in line with the relevant legislation. Additionally, the Committee can be reassured that the works it is being asked to approve are the works that will ultimately take place. Reporting on this proposal earlier than the Committee has would have run the risk of the Parliament approving works that are later subject to substantial alteration. This is not a risk the Committee was willing to take.
- 2.146 The Committee notes that, in its submission, the AWM expected that the EPBC Act assessment would be completed by the end of May 2020, shortly after this proposal was referred to the Committee for inquiry.¹²² However, the AWM states on its website that the second phase of consultation under the EPBC Act did not commence until July 2020.
- 2.147 The second phase of consultation resulted in approximately 50 updates, clarifications or changes to the project documentation. These changes 'are supported by more than 35 formal commitments' that the AWM 'will carefully manage the heritage impacts of the project' and 'continue to offer meaningful community engagement throughout future project activity', including the design of exhibitions, should the proposed works receive all relevant approvals.¹²³

¹²² Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 34

¹²³ Australian War Memorial, *Our Plans*, <<https://www.awm.gov.au/ourcontinuingstory/ourplans>> accessed 2 November 2020.

- 2.148 On 1 October 2020, the AWM publicly released its 'Final Preliminary Documentation' for this proposal.¹²⁴ This is, in effect, the final stage of consideration by DAWE under the EPBC Act, and is intended to incorporate the design changes required by DAWE to maintain the extant recognised heritage values of the existing site. It is also noteworthy that this step has taken place after an 11 month public consultation process, which in this case has run parallel to the Committee's consideration of the project.
- 2.149 Given the scale of change made as a result of the EPBC Act process, the Committee is confident that the EPBC examination and approval of the project, although independent, compliments the Committee's scrutiny of this project.
- 2.150 Additionally, the EPBC Act process and the Committee's consideration are not the only outstanding approvals required before the proposed works are able to proceed. As noted by the AWM, the proposed works are to be undertaken on land that sits within the Parliamentary Triangle, and as such National Capital Authority consideration and approval is also required.¹²⁵

Consultation

- 2.151 The AWM outlined its efforts at community consultation around this project:
- The Memorial is a widely known institution and the Memorial has made an effort to consult the local community widely. The Memorial has undertaken significant national consultation as part of the EPBC process. There were 46 individual sessions undertaken nationally, with feedback being positive.¹²⁶
- 2.152 According to the AWM, these consultation sessions were held in every state and territory, and included both metropolitan and regional areas.¹²⁷ In addition to these public sessions, the AWM has, and will continue to consult with a range of other stakeholders, such as government departments, infrastructure owners and indigenous bodies. The AWM has also undertaken quarterly project updates with Memorial staff.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Final Preliminary Documentation available to view online*, 1 October 2020 press release, <<https://www.awm.gov.au/media/press-releases/EPBC>> accessed 2 November 2020.

¹²⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 23 and 34.

¹²⁶ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 39.

¹²⁷ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, pp. 39-40.

¹²⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 40.

2.153 Many submitters and witnesses to this inquiry were critical of the consultation efforts made by the AWM. For example, on the 46 public consultation sessions held around Australia, Medical Association for the Prevention of War (MAPW) told the Committee that it has observed the consultation process carefully and that:

... we've been struck by the relative lack of success that the War Memorial has had in the ways it's gone about seeking public input. There were a series of face-to-face meetings over November and December and a little in January this year. I think there were about 46 meetings around the country. But most, though not all, of them were held at quite inconvenient times for a lot of people— during the day, when working people couldn't go. Overall, we thought that the War Memorial didn't make an effort to make those face-to-face meetings accessible to as many people as possible.¹²⁹

2.154 Dr Stephens was also critical of the consultation process:

The memorial's public consultation on the project has been haphazard, deceptive and careless and has lacked transparency. It has ducked and weaved and dithered in consulting with the relevant department on heritage matters. Much of the argument supporting the project has been based on emotive anecdote rather than evidence.¹³⁰

2.155 Mr Mitchell stated that the consultation process was based around the restrictive option that was selected for the design competition, which as noted above includes the demolition of Anzac Hall. In Mr Mitchell's view, the changes in documentation and concept design since consultation began are confusing even for professionals.¹³¹

2.156 In relation to consultation with the architectural profession, the Institute stated that the public consultation:

Predominantly related to early parts of the functional brief, rather than actual design concepts. It has also not included professional stakeholders such as the Institute or the Moral Rights holders of Anzac Hall.¹³²

2.157 The Institute elaborated on this point at the public hearings:

¹²⁹ Dr Sue Wareham, Medical Association for the Prevention of War, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 26.

¹³⁰ Dr David Stephens, Heritage Guardians, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 1.

¹³¹ Mr Stewart Mitchell, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 15.

¹³² Australian Institute of Architects, *Submission 61*, p. 2.

At the time we were first made aware of the proposed works and the proposal to demolish Anzac Hall, the moral rights holder had not been contacted. They since have been contacted, after much campaigning from the institute and other interested parties. What is important is that the moral rights holder is contacted and is able to offer comments but also able to access the building to be able to document it, in the event that it is to be demolished, so that they can have that for their records.¹³³

2.158 The AWM provided additional detail on its consultation processes:

We undertook consultations during the detailed business case to the extent that we could get people engaged with the project. Obviously, that was advertised, and the memorial has its Communications and Marketing section that promoted the consultations. There were a range of drop-in sessions and sessions in Canberra that people booked to go to, there were some sessions around the country and there was a lot of engagement on social media. I have to say that the detailed business case consultation wasn't a poll on whether the project was supported; it was gathering information to feed into the design, such as veterans facilities and capacity in the memorial to reflect on veterans' service. We looked at the galleries themselves, at accessibility; a lot of people provided a lot of comments about those.¹³⁴

2.159 The AWM told the Committee that at all stages, they have held consultation to the extent it was possible to do so:

During the detailed business case stage, we did consult to the extent that we could, noting that it was a government process. Once the project started to move, we had a major EPBC consultation last year where we went to 42 places and showed the initial designs to people for comment.¹³⁵

2.160 Mr Stokes added further detail on the points at which the proposed works were publicised:

...before it was made public by the Prime Minister [in November 2018], six months earlier I'd written to the architects institute in Victoria to advise them of what we were thinking and asked them if they wanted to have an involvement. We never had a reply; they acknowledged that later. But we did go to the effort of making contact. When the Prime Minister announced it in November, there were 800 people present. It got the widest possible publicity. It was covered in every bit of media in the country. From that point on, we were involved in consultations before the design. So it was very widely done.

¹³³ Ms Clare Cousins, Australian Institute of Architects, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 20.

¹³⁴ Mr Tim Wise, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 35.

¹³⁵ Mr Tim Wise, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 35.

It was only after the final designs came out that the special-interest groups seemed to gather their momentum.¹³⁶

2.161 On the outcomes of the consultation, Mr Stokes emphasised that the AWM ‘will not satisfy every single person’. He added that, considering the scale of the project, ‘very few people have said any adverse comments’.¹³⁷

2.162 Mr Hitches noted that 1,500 media releases relating to the proposed works had been published in approximately 12 months, and that consultations were not yet complete:

We are about to embark on the gallery community engagement. That will start at the end of this year, and that is very much in line with what will go into the buildings. It will have a very large involvement of people.¹³⁸

2.163 Mr Anderson told the Committee that he personally had contacted key stakeholders, such as former AWM directors, MAPW and Heritage Guardians, so as to ‘understand where they’re coming from and what their interests are’. Mr Anderson noted that the Memorial is personal, that everyone has a vested interest in how it is put together and that as director, he is ‘keen to understand what those vested interests are’.¹³⁹

2.164 More generally, Mr Anderson spoke of the value of consultation with key stakeholders:

The most important part for us is to ensure that, when we get into the gallery design phase, the consultation is as broad and as deep and as meaningful as it can be, so that, when we tell a story in a gallery about a contemporary operation or service, that actually resonates and provides meaning and understanding such that when someone progresses up onto the commemorative area and to the Roll of Honour they understand the circumstances and the consequences of the operation that’s recorded on the Roll of Honour.¹⁴⁰

2.165 Mr Anderson emphasised that the consultations and responses received have already produced results, particularly in that it has highlighted the need to gain a better understanding of public perceptions of the project:

¹³⁶ Mr Kerry Stokes, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 35.

¹³⁷ Mr Kerry Stokes, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 35.

¹³⁸ Mr Wayne Hitches, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 35.

¹³⁹ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 36.

¹⁴⁰ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 36.

I've only been in the job for a couple of months and I wanted to make sure that my information was accurate and that I was getting a sense of contemporaneous information, as the chair said, from people who are across Australia who visit the War Memorial. What do they think? I listen to the ABC every morning and I read the local papers here in Canberra. I have a sense of the Canberra-centric view, but we are the Australian War Memorial and I need to understand what Australians think, on a larger canvas, so that's why we're surveying all visitors to the memorial.¹⁴¹

2.166 In regard to public support for the project, the Committee received evidence of widely diverging public sentiment. Heritage Guardians referenced a Canberra Times survey which received 329 responses, of which 80 per cent were opposed to the proposed works.¹⁴² Heritage Guardians also highlighted an online petition against the project from April 2019, which gathered 1,236 signatures.¹⁴³

2.167 In contrast, the Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association conducted its own online survey. Of the 315 respondents, approximately 75 per cent agreed with the proposal, and approximately 17 per cent disagreed. Additionally, around 80 per cent agreed that 'by more fully telling the stories of modern veterans, this will deliver increased social heritage value to those veterans and their families'¹⁴⁴.

2.168 The AWM also conducted a survey involving visitors to the Memorial site. According to the AWM:

We've had 10,000 visitors and we've only, at this stage, as of this morning, had 312 respond. But that's our sample number: of 10,000, 312 have responded. Five per cent of those who responded are opposed to the development.¹⁴⁵

Committee comment

2.169 As is often the case, the extent and appropriateness of public consultation emerged as a major issue in the evidence to this inquiry.

2.170 As noted by the AWM, in a proposal of this type and scale it is never possible to please all parties. Furthermore, given the important place the

¹⁴¹ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, pp. 39-40.

¹⁴² Heritage Guardians, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 1.

¹⁴³ Heritage Guardians, *Submission 40.1*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁴ Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association Inc, *Submission 76*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁴⁵ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 39.

AWM holds for Australians, there were always going to be some who are not satisfied with the proposed works.

- 2.171 Rather than focus on the outcomes of the consultation, the Committee's interest is more in the process itself. It accepts that it will not be possible to please every stakeholder and that these works will mean that some stakeholders will get what they want, while others will not. This was always going to be the case with works of this nature, in an institution as central to Australian life as the AWM.
- 2.172 The Committee notes that the circumstances since the referral of this inquiry have not been conducive to large-scale and widespread public consultation. The COVID-19 pandemic has made public meetings problematic, and many of the activities which would usually take place in public consultation for major projects such as this would not have been possible.
- 2.173 Nonetheless, the Committee notes that a large portion of the evidence on consultation related to activities undertaken prior to the referral, and prior to the onset of the pandemic. While the AWM seems to have made strong efforts to engage as widely as possible, as well as conducting a targeted campaign to engage directly with as many key stakeholders as possible, the Committee notes that a number of these stakeholders do not feel that this is the case.
- 2.174 Whether this dissatisfaction is related to the outcomes of the consultation or the process itself, the Committee is not in a position to draw any definite conclusions. The Committee would simply encourage the AWM to continue to consult as widely as possible, and in as inclusive a way as it can. Naturally, once the pandemic has passed this consultation can be expanded, and the Committee would appreciate regular updates on the extent and outcomes of any future consultation, both in regard to the works themselves, and their future contents of the gallery space constructed.

Effective use of public money

- 2.175 In regard to the most effective use of public money in addressing the identified need, the Committee received evidence relating to two aspects of this proposal. The first was in relation to the specific works proposed, primarily the replacement of Anzac Hall and the related construction of a Glazed Courtyard. As discussed above, some submitters argued that a more effective use of public money would be to develop the Treloar Resource Centre in the nearby suburb of Mitchell.

- 2.176 As this matter has already been canvassed in the report, this section will focus on the other key response to this term of reference: that the money proposed to be expended on this proposal would be better spent on direct benefits to veterans, or on Canberra's other major cultural institutions.
- 2.177 A large proportion of the responses received to this proposal made the argument that the project funding should be directed towards support for veterans.
- 2.178 Mr Graham Freeman outlined the devastating impact that war can have on participants:

Over the last century, very many people in the armed forces have suffered poor mental health following service, particularly from active service but also from duties within Australia. The large number of people who could not settle back into civilian life after the two world wars is very well known.¹⁴⁶

- 2.179 Mr Freeman noted that historically, Australia has not dealt with this impact effectively:

The forces' culture is one of strength and perseverance in adversity, and contempt for weakness or failure. People who are seen as failures are treated like dirt and there is very little support for them while in the forces nor when they leave.¹⁴⁷

- 2.180 In Mr Freeman's view, the proposed funding for this proposal 'would be better spent on greatly strengthening the support for veterans and ex-service people'.¹⁴⁸
- 2.181 Ms Glenys Davies agreed, stating that the proposed extensions 'would squander funds needed for services or direct benefits to veterans'.¹⁴⁹
- 2.182 Mr David Wise contrasted the proposed works with the potential good redirecting funding directly to veterans could achieve:

I also have the gravest doubts this allocation of funds is for the most benefit of current and former service personnel and their families who have been affected badly by their service. Many of our veterans are homeless, struggle with mental health, and have a shockingly high rate of taking their own lives.

¹⁴⁶Mr Graham Freeman, *Submission 21*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁷ Mr Graham Freeman, *Submission 21*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ Mr Graham Freeman, *Submission 21*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁹ Ms Glenys Davies, *Submission 28*, p. 1.

Surely the funding for the War Memorial extension would be better put towards their needs?¹⁵⁰

2.183 Remembering and Healing Inc. echoed these sentiments and related it to social issues in the veteran cohort, noting that:

Public funds now more than ever firstly have to ensure that the basic needs of citizens are met before enlarging an already sufficient building. To provide ongoing, secure, subsidised housing for ex-service personnel and their families would address the well documented problem of homelessness of this group.¹⁵¹

2.184 Ms Rose Costello compared the public money earmarked for this proposal to funding for services to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):

There is clearly evidence that there is not enough money available to treat and properly rehabilitate service people returning from war who are suffering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It surely is a disgrace when it is necessary for young men and women volunteers to sit at tables outside shopping centres, indeed my own local one: the Jamison Centre - selling expensive raffle tickets to collect money for the treatment of veterans experiencing this debilitating illness. PTSD is directly related to their time in combat.¹⁵²

2.185 Admiral Chris Barrie also questioned whether the proposed works would help service the needs of the veteran community to the same extent as redirecting the funding:

I think the \$0.5 billion cost for the proposed development at the AWM could be much better spent on the building, equipping, and staffing of a national advanced brain and mind research institute that is dedicated to becoming a world class centre of excellence in the treatment of PTSD.¹⁵³

2.186 The AWM responded to these concerns, noting that the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Darren Chester MP, has publicly stated that this proposal 'does not come at the expense of investing in veterans' services'.¹⁵⁴ The AWM went on to note that Mr Chester has 'provided assurance to the Memorial in writing' on 16 July 2020 that:

¹⁵⁰ Mr David Wise, *Submission 36*, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ Remembering and Healing Inc., *Submission 33*, p. 1.

¹⁵² Ms Rose Costello, *Submission 46*, p. 2.

¹⁵³ Admiral Chris Barrie, *Submission 37*, p.2.

¹⁵⁴ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 6.

The funding for the Australian War Memorial redevelopment project is separate to, and does not come at the expense of, funding for veterans' services and support.¹⁵⁵

2.187 While funding provided for such services is a matter for government and falls outside the scope of this inquiry, the Committee notes the figures provided by the AWM, which show that around \$100 billion has been budgeted for veterans' services and support during the ten year life of this proposal.

2.188 More generally, some submitters noted that the current public health situation made the proposed expenditure problematic. According to Mr Steve Meekin:

Given the financial costs to our country of dealing with the COVID-19 epidemic, I believe it is imprudent to proceed with the majority of the proposed works. Almost \$500 million is a very considerable sum and much of it could be better spend elsewhere.¹⁵⁶

2.189 One specific means of redirecting the funds discussed in evidence was spending money on other cultural institutions. For example, Mr Meekin stated:

While the AWM is a very highly regarded national institution, it is not the most significant institution and certainly not the only institution of national cultural significance. It sits alongside the National Library of Australia, the National Archives of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, the National Gallery of Australia and the National Portrait Gallery.¹⁵⁷

2.190 Mr Meekin contrasted the provision of funding to these institutions with that expenditure proposed for the AWM:

Most of these institutions have had their funding constrained in recent years through a succession of budget cuts and so-called efficiency dividends imposed by the government. All of these institutions will likely have very worthy plans of their own to enhance the public accessibility of their collections and to better preserve and expand their current collections.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 6.

¹⁵⁶ Mr Steve Meekin, *Submission 32*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ Mr Steve Meekin, *Submission 32*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁸ Mr Steve Meekin, *Submission 32*, p. 1.

2.191 A similar point was made by Dr Narrelle Morris, who stated that these institutions have ‘seen their expert staff numbers shrink, collections pared back or cancelled, projects limited and opening hours shortened’. According to Dr Morris:

While memorialisation of the military service of Australian service personnel and services relating to Australian military history are very important to Australia, these aims should not be consistently prioritised over the aims of the other, equally important Australian national-cultural institutions. The funds for this project would be better spent in the Australian national interest if they were parcelled out to support as many national-cultural institutions as possible.¹⁵⁹

2.192 According to Mr Meekin, the AWM has ‘done extremely well in the last twenty years’ with a series of expansion projects, and the current proposal ‘would represent a distortion of its place among our most significant national cultural institutions’.¹⁶⁰

2.193 Ms Lindy Ross highlighted the possibility that the amount of funding for this proposal could be seen as a reflection of how Australia’s history is prioritised:

Spending almost half a billion dollars on just one of our national institutions demonstrates an unbalanced commitment to all the other aspects of our history – it indicates an unwarranted emphasis on all things military and a worrying lack of recognition for those institutions which celebrate all the other aspects of Australian life.¹⁶¹

2.194 In this regard, several submitters argued that a better use of AWM funding would be the establishment of a memorial or museum dedicated to furthering public understanding of European settlement of Australia and the Frontier Wars. Mr Martin Bonsey put this idea in terms of reconciliation:

I would like to see any changes at the AWM focused on the possible contribution it could make to reconciliation between our First Nations people and the rest of us through formal acknowledgement and description of the forceful, military and warlike dispossession that post-1788 settlement entailed. At present there is a gaping hole.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Dr Narrelle Morris, *Submission 62*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ Mr Steve Meekin, *Submission 32*, p. 1.

¹⁶¹ Ms Lindy Ross, *Submission 45*, p. 1.

¹⁶² Mr Martin Bonsey, *Submission 44*, p. 1.

2.195 Mr Peter Griffin argued that a memorial focused only on conflicts which occurred outside Australia prevents a 'robust and viable' understanding of Australian history, and that devoting space at the AWM to the Frontier Wars would act as an official acknowledgement of the 'historical truth of these wars'.¹⁶³

2.196 MAPW elaborated on this point:

A proposed huge redevelopment of the AWM which continues to pay marginal attention to the Frontier Wars, the conflicts that have had a profound and lasting impact on the descendants of this land's original inhabitants, simply magnifies the deep stain of colonial dispossession on our national story. The Frontier Wars were recognised as "war" as they occurred. The arguments that they were simply skirmishes between settlers and original inhabitants, or that they don't belong in our national war memorial, are unsustainable.¹⁶⁴

2.197 Mr John Taylor related the suggestion of greater indigenous representation to the vision of Charles Bean in creating the AWM, noting that there is little or no recognition of indigenous soldiers, let alone the 'lives lost in "Frontier Wars" between colonial settlers and First Nations inhabitants'. In Mr Taylor's view, this is inconsistent with Bean's 'view that was should not be glorified, but that those who died fighting for their country should be remembered'.¹⁶⁵

2.198 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) Inc. submitted a proposal that funding should be redirected to other institutions. It stated that between 2008 and 2017, NFSA funding has declined by 20 per cent in real terms, and further noted that others such as the National Library of Australia had been forced to scale back its display of collections.¹⁶⁶

2.199 According to the Friends of the NFSA, the redirection of funding would do more good for the wider community than spending \$500 million on a single institution:

There is no evidence that in making this allocation the Government considered what benefits the broader Australian community could derive from an equitable distribution across the whole range of our cultural institutions. For example, a relatively modest amount of funding compared to what is being

¹⁶³ Mr Peter Griffin, *Submission 49*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ Medical Association for the Prevention of War, *Submission 48*, p. 5.

¹⁶⁵ Mr John Taylor, *Submission 53*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 34*, pp. 2-3.

invested in the AWM would allow both the NFSA and the National Archives to significantly advance their work in digitising their collections.¹⁶⁷

- 2.200 Some submitters argued that the remembrance aspect would be better served via spending money on satellite institutions around the country. For example, Mr Richard Groves stated:

I think it is very important to spend money right now on important public cultural infrastructure, but that the spend be distributed throughout the nation. The idea that the Australian War Memorial having many satellite sites around Australia is not unreasonable. As you would realise, it is very expensive for Queenslanders to get to Canberra, so why not have, like say the Smithsonian Museum or The Imperial War Museum in the UK, dedicated satellite sites of the Australian War Memorial distributed throughout our nation?¹⁶⁸

- 2.201 Mr Groves elaborated on this idea, linking it to economic stimulus and the COVID-19 pandemic discussed above:

There are sites and communities around the nation, many forgotten, that could benefit from having a War Memorial satellite facility being built and dedicated to all past and present members of the ADF and their families from those particular regions. Canberra does not deserve all of the attention, or economic stimulus, that would be generated by this current proposal. In spreading the spend, also ensure that small builders and smaller professional practices such as architects and engineers are engaged.¹⁶⁹

Committee comment

- 2.202 On the effective use of public money, the AWM has put the view that these works do not detract from the quantum of funding put towards the needs of veterans and the ex-service community. Even under the current economic circumstances, the government has provided detailed assurance that funding both for these works and direct support to veterans exists, and has been included in forward budget estimates.
- 2.203 While many submitters have put the view that the funding for this project should be redirected into direct benefits and support for veterans, this is not for the Committee to determine. The Committee has been asked to make a recommendation on whether these works should go ahead as planned and

¹⁶⁷ Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc., *Submission 34*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁸ Mr Richard Groves, *Submission 70*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁹ Mr Richard Groves, *Submission 70*, p. 3.

funded, not whether other needs are more appropriately serviced by the proposed expenditure.

- 2.204 On a side note, however, the Committee notes that the expenditure of \$498 million over the next 10 years could offer a considerable boost to the local economy, and that the various trade and construction packages let as a result of these works may act as a significant economic stimulus.
- 2.205 Further, maintaining the ongoing relevance of the AWM to Australians will help attract visitors to the AWM. This can have a twofold effect. Firstly, it will attract tourists to Canberra, boosting spending which is of benefit to the local community. Secondly, Australians more generally will benefit from learning more about their country's engagement in conflict and war, and the enduring effect this has on Australian society.
- 2.206 Whether one agrees that the exhibits which ultimately occupy the new gallery space contribute to this understanding or not, if people are attracted to the AWM to view these new galleries, they will also gain a better understanding of historical conflicts by viewing existing galleries, some of which this proposal does not intend to change.

Present and Prospective public value of the work

Support for the proposal

- 2.207 In addition to the evidence opposing the proposed works, the Committee received submission in support of the project. For example, Mr Daniel Mulqueen noted the public value of telling the stories of recent conflicts:

Having worked at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance for more than a decade, including the period of its major renewal and expansion that opened in 2014, I have seen the powerful impact telling the stories of our veterans has on them, their families and the public. The similar improvements undertaken at Sydney's Hyde Park Anzac Memorial also demonstrate the importance of telling the stories of veterans broadly and deeply and I am confident the Memorial's plans will contribute greatly to the veteran community of Australia.¹⁷⁰

- 2.208 Mr Mulqueen offered his opinion as a museum professional, stating that having reviewed the proposed works, he believes they are 'appropriate, sensitive to the existing building and most importantly will ensure the

¹⁷⁰ Mr Daniel M Mulqueen, *Submission 27*, p. 1.

Memorial is able to continue to remember and honour those who have served, and those who will serve, well into the future'.¹⁷¹

2.209 Mr Michael Gordon, a former employee of various war memorials around the world, spoke of the '... value these institutions possess in supporting veteran communities and their families'. According to Mr Gordon:

Memorials like AWM, Anzac Memorial in Sydney and the Shrine have evolved from being solely war memorials that serve as a place of pilgrimage, contemplation and healing, to international tourist destinations. Regardless of their initial intent or the desire to avoid this fate, they are attractions; and they are now held accountable to the same standards and visitor expectations as all attractions.¹⁷²

2.210 Mr Gordon argued that failure to adapt to the competition to maintain people's attention risks a 'loss of relevance in society' to the detriment of 'the struggle to be heard and help change people's lives for the better'.¹⁷³

2.211 Mr Tim Sullivan similarly argued that the proposed works will be beneficial to veterans in 'helping others understand what they have done and why'. Furthermore, Mr Sullivan stated:

A large part of the AWM's constituency is people—like me—who have a family history associated with voluntary military service in defence of our national sovereignty and our national interests. The recent commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac and its underlying theme of a century of service showed how deeply valued the Memorial is in telling the stories of service and sacrifice by Australians on the global stage. So many people look to the Memorial for association with their family and personal history, for validation of sacrifice, for connection with others who share that history.¹⁷⁴

2.212 Mr Richard Rolfe AM noted his support for the proposed works:

I believe it is essential that the extension to the Australian War Memorial proceeds so that those who have served, as well as their families and all Australians can have galleries presenting their stories so that the living can continue to heal, and so the dead are remembered for their sacrifice.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Mr Daniel M Mulqueen, *Submission 27*, p. 1.

¹⁷² Mr Michael Gordon, *Submission 43*, p. 1.

¹⁷³ Mr Michael Gordon, *Submission 43*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁴ Mr Tim Sullivan, *Submission 31*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁵ Mr Richard Rolfe AM, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

2.213 Mr Rolfe continued, highlighting the catharsis that can be offered by the public acknowledgement of shared suffering by veterans who will ‘talk amongst themselves but are not as open around those who have not served’:

I would only ask that you consider the cathartic assistance you will be providing to the families of the latest generation that have fought and died, as well as the cathartic assistance you will provide to the latest generation who served and survived, but were damaged as a result of their service.¹⁷⁶

2.214 Mr Bill Roberts OAM, National President of the Vietnam Veterans Federation, noted the organisation’s support for ‘better acknowledgement of the service of contemporary veterans’ at the AWM. However, Mr Roberts declined to comment on the specific plans before the Committee, or the alternatives presented in this report.¹⁷⁷

2.215 Mr Dean Lee, Chief Executive Officer of Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance, echoed the affirmation that veterans receive from the type of recognition proposed under this project:

It is my direct, first-hand experience that the interpretation of modern era conflicts is extremely powerful in affirming the service of contemporary veterans. As has been expressed to me in various forms by veterans visiting the facilities I have led: If memorials fail to reflect the service of all veterans it's as if their sacrifices never happened. Providing a place inclusive of the service and sacrifice of all members of the Australian Defence Force is both necessary and appropriate.¹⁷⁸

2.216 Major General Greg Melick, a member of the AWM Council but writing in a personal capacity, noted that recognition of modern conflicts brings a range of benefits. He noted that:

It is also important to have a place to show families, who have suffered long deprivations whilst members have been on active service, not only what their loved ones were doing but also that their nation appreciates their sacrifice.¹⁷⁹

2.217 Major General Melick provided an example of his experience of the lack of space available to modern conflicts:

¹⁷⁶ Mr Richard Rolfe AM, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁷ Mr Bill Roberts OAM, *Submission 71*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁸ Mr Dean Lee, *Submission 51*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ Major General Greg Melick, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

I have seen obviously emotionally upset veterans of the conflict in Afghanistan crowded into the narrow space currently provided to commemorate their activities. It is embarrassing that what has been our longest running conflict is commemorated in a passageway leading to toilets. These veterans deserve better, including space commensurate with other major campaigns.¹⁸⁰

2.218 According to Major General Melick, under the directorship of Steve Gower, the AWM 'became far more innovative and relevant', but that 'space was already becoming an issue' at that stage. Further, at present Major General Melick noted that 'space restrictions have caused the Memorial to become more and more like a rabbit warren' which does not include spaces for emotionally impacted visitors to withdraw and impedes free movement during peak times.¹⁸¹

2.219 Sandwalk Partners highlighted the benefits to tourism which can accrue from the conduct of the proposed works:

Research into cultural tourism in Australia indicates that culture is important both as motivation and secondary experience to many of Australia's key markets. The Australian War Memorial is an important asset to attracting visitors to Australia and Canberra. The proposed expansion of the Memorial will better equip it to provide access and engagement with:

- a uniquely Australian tangible heritage in the form of its collections, exhibitions, personal stories and engaging ceremonies;
- intangible heritage in the form of community-held knowledge that provides a 'sense of nation' and authentic connection with community;
- a passionate connection with core subject matter and stories, expertly interpreted and conveyed, that will extend the experience, knowledge, and understanding of visitors and the community.¹⁸²

Memorial function

2.220 Some of the responses had a focus which appeared to relate to the memorial function of the Australian War Memorial. For example, Dr Sue Wareham of the MAPW outlined concerns, expressed by many who engaged with this inquiry, that the proposed works will cause a shift in the way the AWM is perceived:

¹⁸⁰ Major General Greg Melick, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

¹⁸¹ Major General Greg Melick, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

¹⁸² Sandwalk Partners, *Submission 65*, p. 1.

The sheer scale of the proposed works will turn our solemn commemoration into grand triumphalism of a type that we might associate with heavily militarised societies rather than a nation that seeks peace. Visitors would walk amidst decommissioned military hardware, an experience which is clearly intended to inspire awe and fascination at the technology itself. This would tend to dwarf and marginalise the human element: the very people whose deaths we are commemorating.¹⁸³

2.221 MAPW also discussed the potential politicisation of the Memorial, stating that:

A further deeply troubling aspect of the proposal is the planned live feed of current ADF operations in wars that have not yet finished. Clearly, material that is critical of current operations or portrays them in a negative way would not be exhibited. This would have the effect of placing such wars beyond the reach of criticism or dissent, thus undermining a crucial part of our democracy.¹⁸⁴

2.222 MAPW continued, noting that this raises questions about the future direction of the AWM, and risks the Memorial 'becoming a politicised outlet for the Defence Department, complicity with military propaganda and being used as a tool for military recruitment'.¹⁸⁵

2.223 The History Council of Western Australia echoed MAPW's concerns in this regard, adding that:

The AWM focusses little attention on war's wider impacts on society, and by concentrating on displaying military hardware "enforces the simplistic notion that Australians' experience of war starts and finishes with battles, using high tech equipment, rather than vulnerable human beings".¹⁸⁶

2.224 Ms Bridget Brooklyn added to this perspective, noting:

The Memorial's persistence in celebrating the Anzac Story in a way that fails to acknowledge its historical context has fostered an alliance of military history with nationalism that is inappropriate in a taxpayer-funded collecting institution.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ Dr Sue Wareham, Medical Association for the Prevention of War, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 23.

¹⁸⁴ Medical Association for the Prevention of War, *Submission 48*, p. 5.

¹⁸⁵ Medical Association for the Prevention of War, *Submission 48*, p. 5.

¹⁸⁶ History Council of Western Australia, *Submission 8*, p. 2.

¹⁸⁷ Ms Bridget Brooklyn, *Submission 30*, p. 1.

2.225 Ms Brooklyn argued that some AWM activities have ‘elevated military history without acknowledgement of its place in relation to other aspects of nation-building’.¹⁸⁸

2.226 Mr Richard Broinowski AO raised similar concerns:

... the proposal to extend the Memorial into an exhibition of war fighting machinery is a distortion of its original purpose. It should not become an advertisement for American, British or French military technology. It should not be supported by the weapons industry, or become a money-making machine to create in Australian youth a morbid curiosity about the latest killing technology. It should not be a carnival of warfare.¹⁸⁹

2.227 The History Council of Western Australia stated that this proposal has led to the AWM being characterised as ‘Disneyland’ and ‘a theme park’, which will not help to ‘increase Australians’ understanding of the wars in which our nation has taken part’.¹⁹⁰

Benefit for veterans and healing

2.228 One of the benefits of the proposed works mentioned by the AWM is that it will help address the perception that, under the current configuration of gallery space, veterans of recent conflicts may be left ‘feeling that their service is less worthy than those who served in earlier conflicts’.¹⁹¹

2.229 In the evidence to this inquiry, this has been linked to public comments made by a former director of the AWM, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, who argued:

Critics of the redevelopment fail to understand that the memorial is part of the ‘therapeutic milieu’ for men and women and their families coming to terms with what they’ve done for us and the impact it’s had on them. As one Vietnam Veteran wrote: ‘I regard the War Memorial as being part of veterans’ welfare which for too long we didn’t get.’¹⁹²

2.230 This contention was thoroughly examined in the evidence to this inquiry. For instance, Heritage Guardians stated that:

¹⁸⁸ Ms Bridget Brooklyn, *Submission 30*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ Mr Richard Broinowski AO, *Submission 5*, p. 1.

¹⁹⁰ History Council of Western Australia, *Submission 8*, p. 2.

¹⁹¹ Australian War Memorial, *Submission 1*, p. 9.

¹⁹² Australian Strategic Policy Institute, *The Strategist Six: Brendan Nelson*, 24 April 2019, <<https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-strategist-six-brendan-nelson/>> accessed 10 October 2020.

Healing is outside the charter in the *Australian War Memorial Act 1980*, as has been pointed out by both a former Director, Steve Gower, and a former Principal Historian of the Memorial. The latter, Professor Peter Stanley, also notes that the Act does not even refer to veterans, which suggests that recent stress on the Memorial providing a special place for veterans, rather than all Australians, is misguided.¹⁹³

2.231 Heritage Guardians further argued that the idea of providing a ‘therapeutic milieu’ could in fact be antithetical to the role of the AWM:

The historian, Nicholas Brown, has noted how ‘the adoption of a therapeutic model can also serve as a means of forgetting, or setting aside, some more complex questions about the contexts of historical trauma for the sake of manufactured, superficial and ultimately unsustainable narratives of national unity’. These ‘complex questions’ – why wars are fought, how they affect nations, and whether they are worth it - are the ones that the Australian War Memorial has been notably bad at addressing.¹⁹⁴

2.232 MAPW also discussed the role of memorials in providing support to veterans:

Literature reviews bring together large bodies of research. In 2015, 32 articles were analysed to gather a set of risk factors for PTSD. One risk factor was a lack of post-deployment support, but support provided through memorials was not mentioned. In 2019, another comprehensive literature survey had no references to memorial based therapy. Indeed, in October 2019, the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists put out a position statement on the mental health of veterans and Defence Force service members; this statement also did not mention any possible therapeutic role for war memorials. The memorial's ambition to provide a therapeutic milieu derives from wishful thinking.¹⁹⁵

2.233 Heritage Guardians also discussed the medical evidence gathered by Dr Charlotte Palmer of a perceived therapeutic role for the AWM:

PTSD and Moral Injury are complex and profoundly disruptive to the lives of sufferers and their families... Any well-founded therapeutic input is welcome, but glib and selective accounts or affecting anecdotes from individuals – like those found in the Memorial’s promotional material – are insufficient to justify

¹⁹³ Heritage Guardians, *Submission 40*, p. 7.

¹⁹⁴ Heritage Guardians, *Submission 40*, p. 7.

¹⁹⁵ Dr Margaret Beavis, Medical Association for the Prevention of War, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 25.

the claim that an expanded Memorial, replete with retired military machinery, will provide a therapeutic milieu.¹⁹⁶

2.234 Many submitters to this inquiry took issue with the proposed works' perceived benefits to veterans. For example, Mr David Wise told the Committee:

I also have the gravest doubts this allocation of funds is for the most benefit of current and former service personnel and the families who have been affected badly by their service. Many of our veterans are homeless, struggle with mental health, and have shockingly high rates of taking their own lives. Surely the funding for the War Memorial extension would be better put towards their needs?¹⁹⁷

2.235 In regard to the potential healing role of representation, the Committee also heard from Ms Kellie Merritt, whose husband Paul was killed on operational duty in Iraq and whose name appears on the Roll of Honour. Ms Merritt spoke of her family's connection to the AWM:

Informally, it would be common for me and my kids to find ourselves at the iconic central common area that is the reflection pool, hall of memory and adjoining passageways on a Sunday afternoon. This space is very special. It's the heart of the AWM and sets an intangible but meaningful tone that will be changed by the burden of a brutish building on its shoulders. The AWM encapsulates its mission of helping Australians to remember, interpret and understand the Australian experience of conflict and operations, and its enduring impact on Australian society.¹⁹⁸

2.236 Ms Merritt's evidence focused largely on the commemorative role of the AWM:

As a family closely connected to war grief, your private bereavement extends into the public commemorative space. This experience has meant that I pay particular attention to how war commemoration is presented and constructed in the public domain. In other words, commemoration of the dead doesn't begin and end on the battlefield, so it's not static and there's always a context.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ Heritage Guardians, *Submission 40*, p. 7.

¹⁹⁷ Mr David Wise, *Submission 36*, p. 2.

¹⁹⁸ Ms Kellie Merritt, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 25.

¹⁹⁹ Ms Kellie Merritt, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 25.

2.237 Ms Merritt noted that she supports ‘considered and proportional change’, but that this change needs to be in keeping with the mission statement of the AWM. In her view, the current proposal does not achieve this:

Considered reflection and the complex context of current conflicts and recent ADF deployments have to be interpreted thoughtfully, combined with an open understanding of their enduring impact on Australian society. It must be clearly, appropriately and proportionately articulated and curated. Bigger does not mean better and more expensive does not buy broad commemoration.²⁰⁰

2.238 Ms Merritt was concerned that the proposed works, via their ‘confronting scale’, will mean that the ‘poignant, meaningful moments’ she has spent at the Hall of Memory and the Reflection Pool with her family will be ‘lost within all of that military hardware’.²⁰¹

2.239 Conversely, Mr Matt Anderson shared anecdotes from his time as AWM Director about the positive role that representation in the gallery spaces could have. For example:

Our longest and continuing war, Afghanistan, has a temporary albeit powerful audio-visual display in an area that has been carved off from the research centre. Its galleries are in an exit corridor. Those who have served in the Middle East area of operations are encouraged to sign the Tarin Kowt Wall. For many, we are told that this is a powerful moment in their homecoming. For others, and we know this because we’ve been told both by the veterans and their clinicians, coming to the memorial and signing the wall has positive mental health benefits.²⁰²

2.240 Mr Anderson shared an anecdote relating specifically to one of the LTOs the AWM is currently unable to display, which he argued speaks to the benefit the proposed works would bring veterans:

I received an email just this morning about the power of the memorial. This is from the driver of a Bushmaster named Debbie that we have in our collection. It was in the Middle East back in 2013, but it’s not on display yet. He says: ‘I was part of the 3RAR brigade deployed to Afghanistan in June 2012. As you can imagine, I was very surprised when your story about an IED-damaged Bushmaster’ — an IED is an improvised explosive device — ‘was brought to my attention, as I was the driver of the vehicle when it struck the IED. I am

²⁰⁰ Ms Kellie Merritt, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 25.

²⁰¹ Ms Kellie Merritt, Private Capacity, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, pp. 26-27.

²⁰² Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 31.

writing to inquire whether this vehicle will be on permanent display, because I'm very eager to see the vehicle, as I was returned to Australia within days of the incident.'²⁰³

2.241 This Bushmaster is currently not on display at the Memorial, and is instead in the AWM storage facility in the Canberra suburb of Mitchell at the Treloar Resource Centre. Mr Anderson continued:

In 2014, we brought him to the memorial and took him up to Mitchell. He had a private tour, and he climbed into Debbie, and as he climbed out of Debbie he remarked that he'd finally completed his 2012 supply mission. That's just one example of one individual, but it shows that the power that we have for veterans is to see their service recognised and to allow veterans to find a touchpoint—if not an actual object that they served with, something that they can relate to.²⁰⁴

2.242 Professor Colonel Susan Neuhaus, a former peacekeeper in Cambodia and Bougainville, veteran of the Afghanistan War and AWM Council Member, also addressed the issue of healing for veterans and their families:

In relation to the healing question, that is a very difficult question, because clearly healing takes very different forms for individuals, for families and also for the broader society. But, as somebody has mentioned, the very first part of healing is acknowledgement and validation. But it's more than just being able to run your fingers across the brass on the Roll of Honour; it's being able to understand the stories of the living, breathing person that was behind that. Families will continue to grieve, but to know that the story of their loved one has been included is incredibly powerful and healing. It's healing, too, when they go into the galleries and they see hanging in the gallery a portrait of a widow or a daughter. When they see that, they can understand that their sacrifice as a family also hasn't been forgotten.²⁰⁵

2.243 In Colonel Neuhaus's view, the proposed works will help to communicate the core mission of the AWM in a way that is meaningful to those who have experienced war and warlike operations and their families:

One of the biggest challenges, I think, for my generation is that when the War Memorial was built we were a whole society at war. You could go down the road to the grocer, to the school, to anywhere, and everyone's life was affected

²⁰³ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 37.

²⁰⁴ Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 37.

²⁰⁵ Professor Colonel Susan Neuhaus AM CSC, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 38.

by war. That's clearly not the case now. For most of us it's very difficult for our families to understand the experiences that we've had. It's almost impossible for the general society to understand what that means to us. It's just so important that they do connect and that they remember why we committed troops to Afghanistan, why we sent people of peacekeeping missions, and why any of us were prepared to put on a uniform and serve our country.²⁰⁶

2.244 Mr Tim Wise of the AWM also emphasised that the proposed works are not intended simply to display the machinery of war:

We are also constructing reflective spaces for veterans, because veterans are sometimes emotionally impacted by their experience and, at the moment, there is no space for them, so they are literally taken outside the building. What we're going to do is build reflective spaces for them in the gallery.²⁰⁷

2.245 These anecdotes notwithstanding, the AWM disputed either healing or the 'therapeutic milieu' forming a part of the either the purpose or need identified when developing this proposal.²⁰⁸ The AWM clarified its position on the benefits to veterans of greater representation for modern conflicts:

The Memorial has however always had a role in national grieving and healing. This is a natural second order effect of any site of commemoration and one that is particularly evident at the Memorial and it is a tangential and visible benefit of the project, not one upon which it has been predicated or developed.²⁰⁹

2.246 The AWM continued:

To address the concerns raised by several other witnesses we are able to clarify that the Memorial is not, and does not claim to be, providing medical assistance or clinically based therapeutic services to veterans but rather, through education and social support, helping both veterans and others understand and come to terms with the cost of war.²¹⁰

2.247 Nonetheless, the AWM outlined the small role played by respect and recognition plays in providing social support to veterans, noting that numerous studies indicate a 'strong connection between supportive

²⁰⁶ Professor Colonel Susan Neuhaus AM CSC, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 38.

²⁰⁷ Mr Tim Wise, Australian War Memorial, *Committee Hansard*, 14 July 2020, p. 39.

²⁰⁸ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 3.

²⁰⁹ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 3.

²¹⁰ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 3.

attitudes in family and community and healthy reintegration'. Furthermore, the AWM told the Committee that respect and recognition form part of the Department of Veterans' Affairs Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant.²¹¹

2.248 According to the AWM:

In this capacity the Memorial is part of the social infrastructure helping educate the broader Australian community as to what our veterans have done for us and the impact it has had on them and their families. Education of this nature contributes to higher social support for veterans and their families, especially in the context of modern conflicts and operations where so few Australians have a direct connection to those who served compared to the national experiences of the First and Second World Wars.²¹²

2.249 Dr Brendan Nelson also responded to arguments against a healing role for the AWM:

I saw and felt it every single day of my seven years leading the Memorial. Appreciating it requires both an open mind and emotional empathy. The Memorial tells stories that hurt, in doing so they heal. Apart from many powerful stories in support of this, one of the key drivers of Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) is – meaninglessness. If you believe that what you did doesn't matter, doesn't count – that people neither know or care about what you did, as a veteran you feel a devalued and diminished individual. Having 'your story' told and proudly so at the Nation's War Memorial is a very important part of the solution. Many Vietnam Veterans suffered such emotions for decades after their return.²¹³

Committee comment

2.250 In terms of the perceived healing role of representation in the AWM gallery spaces, the Committee received widely varying evidence. The Committee received evidence to the effect that there is little therapeutic value in representation for modern conflict, and also that veterans of modern conflict and their families do seem to take at least some solace in their experiences being memorialised.

2.251 In light of these competing perspectives, the Committee is not able to make any determinations on the perceived therapeutic value. There is clearly an ongoing debate on this issue.

²¹¹ Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, pp. 3-4.

²¹² Australian War Memorial, *Answers to Questions on Notice*, 14 July 2020, p. 4.

²¹³ The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, *Submission 75*, p. 3.

- 2.252 That said, the Committee notes that the AWM, in the materials it has provided to the Committee, does not put the ‘therapeutic milieu’ argument forwards as a justification for the proposed works. This argument was made by Dr Nelson, both in the evidence to this inquiry and elsewhere.
- 2.253 Further, to the extent that the AWM does discuss ‘healing’ as a justification, it is almost entirely in terms of the experiences of individuals. This fact should not be overlooked. If individuals have benefited from having their experiences represented at the AWM, this does hold some value and needs to be taken into account. While the Committee understands that not all veterans, their families, and indeed their descendants, will necessarily derive any benefit from seeing their experiences represented, this is simply another reflection of the varied meanings that Australians find in the AWM.
- 2.254 As such, the Committee does not find the lack of confirmation that institutions like the AWM having a therapeutic role in veterans’ mental health a compelling argument against the proposed works.

Final Committee comment

- 2.255 As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the Committee received a large amount of evidence in response to this proposal. This high level of public interest is a clear reflection of the important place the AWM holds in the minds of many Australians.
- 2.256 There are myriad intangible and non-monetary aspects to this proposal. These aspects speak directly to the heart of what it means to be Australian, what the history of Australia means, and where the country sees itself going into the future. The AWM is a part of a much wider debate and discussion about these matters, and maintaining its ability to perform this role is an important cultural benefit to all Australians.
- 2.257 The Committee has considered the proposed works against Section 17 of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*. As well, it has listened to and considered the views of all submitters, the witnesses at the public hearing and a range of correspondence on the proposal.
- 2.258 In terms of the purpose and need for the works, the Committee accepts the argument put by the AWM and others that additional space is required to better reflect Australia’s engagement in modern conflicts. This need is reflected by the comment above, that the AWM holds a range of meanings to different sections of Australian society. In the Committee’s view, it is

important that, as much as is possible, these meanings are reflected in the items displayed at the AWM and the current facility limits this.

- 2.259 The Committee also considers that, although it has not been addressed significantly in evidence, the circulation challenges and compliance need to be addressed to ensure that the AWM is accessible to all Australians and visitors.
- 2.260 In relation to the heritage considerations, the Committee acknowledges that there are a range of views in relation to the proposal to replace Anzac Hall. Many of these views relate to the status of Anzac Hall, a building less than 20 years old and one that many submitters consider a work of great architecture.
- 2.261 The Committee notes that the heritage aspects of the project were considered through the EPBC process. The Committee does not make any comment on the heritage aspect except to note that it needs to be able to ensure all heritage aspects are also being considered appropriately as they are by the EPBC process.
- 2.262 Within the context of the present and prospective public value of the works, the Committee understands the importance of this wider historical debate in informing the views of many of the groups and individuals who gave evidence on this proposal. The Committee recognises this input as being an important part of the discussion around the meaning of Australia's participation in war, and furthermore as a reflection of the fact that the AWM means many different things to different people.
- 2.263 The nature of the responses received to this proposal shows that the place held by the AWM in the minds of Australians is varied. That is, the AWM means different things to different people, and it is important that its displays reflect the varied nature of remembrance in this country. This is true for both the actions of Australians long ago, who some Australians count as their ancestors, and for actions taken recently, which have directly affected the lives of some Australians and their families.
- 2.264 As such, these differing understandings of Australia's shared military history help set the context for the widely varied perspectives put forward by those who support or oppose this proposal.
- 2.265 The Committee finds that the proposed works are appropriate to meet the identified need, and that these works should proceed.

Recommendation 1

- 2.266** The Committee recommends that the House of Representatives resolve, pursuant to Section 18(7) of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, that it is expedient to carry out the following proposed works: **Australian War Memorial Development Project**.
- 2.267 Proponent entities must notify the Committee of any changes to the project scope, time, cost, function or design. The Committee also requires that a post-implementation report be provided within three months of project completion. A report template can be found on the Committee's website.

Mr Rick Wilson MP
Chair

A. List of Submissions

Australian War Memorial Development Project

- 1 Australian War Memorial
 - 1.1 Supplementary to submission 1
 - 1.2 Supplementary to submission 1
 - 1.3 Supplementary to submission 1
 - 1.4 Supplementary to submission 1
 - 1.5 Supplementary to submission 1
 - 1.6 Confidential
- 2 Mr Brett Odgers
- 3 Mr Chris Emery
- 4 Ms Pamela Collett
- 5 Richard Broinowski AO
- 6 Dr Martin Branagan
- 7 Professor Anthony Reid
- 8 History Council of WA
- 9 Dr Linda Young
- 10 Margaret O'Callaghan
- 11 Mark Bainbrigge
- 12 Karen Dahl
- 13 Mr Penleigh Boyd
- 14 Robert Heron

- 15 Heritage Guardians on behalf of 82 individuals
- 16 Peter Freeman OAM
- 17 Mr Stewart Mitchell
 - 17.1 Supplementary to submission 17
- 18 Roger FitzGerald
- 19 John Myrtle
- 20 Dr Jock Churchman
- 21 Graham Freeman
- 22 Catherine Sullivan
- 23 Dr Ray Edmondson
- 24 Dr Douglas Newton
- 25 Steve Gower AO AO (Mil), ME
 - 25.1 Supplementary to submission 25
- 26 Mr Brendon Kelson
 - 26.1 Supplementary to submission 26
 - 26.2 Supplementary to submission 26
- 27 Daniel M Mulqueen
- 28 Ms Glenys Davies
- 29 Ms Lucia Mayo
- 30 Dr Bridget Brooklyn
- 31 Mr Tim Sullivan
- 32 Mr Steve Meekin
- 33 Remembering and Healing Inc
- 34 Friends of the National Film and Sound Archive Inc.
- 35 Mr Mark Dawes
- 36 Mr David Wise
- 37 Admiral Christopher Barrie
- 38 Mr Geoff Ashley
- 39 Prof. Peter Stanley

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- 40 Heritage Guardians
- 40.1 Supplementary to submission 40
 - 40.2 Supplementary to submission 40
- 41 Mr Richard Rolfe AM
- 42 Roger Pegrum
- 43 Mr Michael Gordon
- 44 Mr Martin Bonsey
- 45 Mrs Lindy Ross
- 46 Ms Rose Costelloe
- 47 Mr Richard Terry
- 48 Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)
- 48.1 Supplementary to submission 48
- 49 Mr Peter Griffin
- 50 Ms Jennifer Dunstan
- 50.1 Supplementary to submission 50
- 51 Dean M Lee
- 52 Max Ball
- 53 Mr John Charles Taylor
- 54 Ross Kingsland AM
- 55 Grahame Crocket
- 56 Confidential
- 57 Dr Sarah Ryan
- 58 Mr Graham O'Loghlin
- 59 MAJGEN Greg Melick
- 60 Helen Flaherty
- 61 Australian Institute of Architects
- 61.1 Supplementary to submission 61
- 62 Dr Narrelle Morris
- 63 Mr Garry Browne

- 64 Mr Peter Sherman
- 65 Sandwalk Partners
- 66 Mary Napier
- 67 Cathryn Rodriguez
- 68 Confidential
- 69 Judith Spence
- 70 Richard Groves Architects
- 71 Vietnam Veterans Federation
- 72 B F Atkinson
- 73 Confidential
- 74 *Name Withheld*
- 75 Dr Brendan Nelson
- 76 Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association Inc
- 77 Ms Sharon Bown

B. List of Public Hearings and Witnesses

Australian War Memorial Development Project

Tuesday, 14 July 2020– via Teleconference

Australian War Memorial

Heritage Guardians on behalf of 82 individuals

Roger Pegrum, Pegrum and Associates

Steve Gower AO AO (Mil), ME, Private capacity

Mr Stewart Mitchell, Private capacity

Australian Institute of Architects

Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)

Mr Geoff Ashley, Principal Ashley Built Heritage

Dissenting Report

*Mr Tony Zappia MP and Mr David Smith MP,
Australian Labor Party*

Australian Labor Party Members' Position

The Australian War Memorial (AWM) is one of Australia's pre-eminent cultural institutions and a place of deep importance for all Australians. It was founded as, and remains, a place of remembrance as a memorial and shrine to all Australians who have served in conflict, but in addition it serves as both a museum and research centre.

The AWM's mission is to assist Australians to remember, interpret and understand the Australian experience of war and its enduring impact on Australian society. By deepening our understanding of the experiences and sacrifices of Australia's veterans and their loved ones, we ensure we not only remember and reflect on their service but strengthen our resolve to support current and ex-service men and women now and into the future.

The AWM has stated that the redevelopment project is necessary to expand its display capacity so it can stage more exhibitions of its collection of artefacts from modern conflicts, and also relieve circulation pressures caused by high visitor numbers. Labor members have provided broad bipartisan support for the intent behind the AWM expansion. This will help to more fully recognise and honour the service and contribution of veterans of recent conflicts and peacekeeping operations, as well as female and Indigenous service personnel.

However, the Labor members of the Committee have sought to hold the Government and the AWM to account over the proposal to ensure it is delivered on time and on budget. We also seek to ensure that effective community and stakeholder consultation is undertaken on the proposal, and that the heritage and integrity of the building – as a solemn place of commemoration – is preserved.

It is appropriate that this proposal is subjected to a number of approval processes in addition to this inquiry, examining various aspects of the project. We expect that these processes will also consider issues and concerns raised by stakeholders. In this regard, the Labor members welcome the heritage approval received pursuant to the referral under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* (EPBC Act) on 10 December 2020.

Labor members expect the AWM to tell the full story of Australia’s wartime history, and believe the refurbished galleries should include recognition of the physical and mental suffering of returned service people, and the impact of service on families and loved ones. In addition, Labor members want to see tangible support and recognition for veterans, and welcome the fact that funding for the AWM expansion will not come at the expense of veteran mental health and other services.

Labor members also welcome the AWM’s assurance that it will ensure future construction work tenders for this project will include criteria for employment and other opportunities for veterans and defence family members and businesses.

Recommendation 1

Labor members support in principle the intent behind the AWM development project.

Anzac Hall

We note the AWM's view that the current Anzac Hall is not able to be extended and is no longer fit for purpose to meet the AWM's need to tell the stories of recent conflicts. Notwithstanding the EPBC Act approval noted above, Labor members acknowledge that some stakeholders have raised concerns about the demolition of Anzac Hall as part of this project.

These stakeholders noted Anzac Hall's acknowledged contribution to the heritage value of the site, and the professional opinion that it can be adaptively reused.

Recommendation 2

Labor members believe that the Government should consult further on this issue and consider alternative approaches that do not involve the complete demolition of the existing Anzac Hall.

Project Cost

The cost of this project is estimated at \$498.7 million over nine years, which equates to approximately \$55 million per year. This compares to approximately \$11 billion per year in total government spending on veterans, most of which goes towards payments to veterans and support services, and not commemoration, including around \$230 million allocated to veteran mental health annually.

The Labor members note advice from the AWM that to meet the project objectives approved by the Government through the AWM's 'Two Stage Capital Works Approval Process', the current budget is required and any reduction would result in an equal reduction in visitor experience, relevance and project deliverables.

However, Labor further notes a 2019 paper by a former Memorial official,¹ supported by a former director of the AWM in evidence to this inquiry,² which stated the AWM could meet all of its current and future needs at the Mitchell precinct Treloar Resource Centre site at a cost of around \$100 million, or around 20 per cent of the cost of the redevelopment project at the Campbell site, consistent with its own submissions to the Committee in 2017.

¹ Richard Llewellyn, 'The Australian War Memorial Redevelopment Program: the "Mitchell Option" Reassessed', *Honest History*, 2019, <<http://honesthistory.net.au/wp/lllewellyn-richard-the-australian-war-memorial-redevelopment-program-the-mitchell-option-reassessed/>> accessed 19 February 2021.

² Mr Brendon Kelson, *Submission 26.2*, pp. 2-3.

Recommendation 3

Labor members believe that the Government should consider a range of lower cost options that would still meet the stated purpose of the proposed works, while achieving better cost-effectiveness and value for money for the taxpayer.

**Mr Tony Zappia MP
Deputy Chair**

Mr David Smith MP