



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Official Committee Hansard

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
WORKS

**Reference: Australian War Memorial Eastern Precinct Development and National
Service Memorial, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory**

MONDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2008

CANBERRA

BY AUTHORITY OF THE PARLIAMENT

INTERNET

Hansard transcripts of public hearings are made available on the internet when authorised by the committee.

The internet address is:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard>

To search the parliamentary database, go to:

<http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au>

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Monday, 13 October 2008

Members: Mr Butler (*Chair*), Senator Troeth (*Deputy Chair*), Senators Mark Bishop and Forshaw and Mr Champion, Mr Forrest, Mr Lindsay, Mr Price and Mr Slipper

Members in attendance: Mr Butler and Mr Lindsay

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

Australian War Memorial Eastern Precinct Development and National Service Memorial, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

WITNESSES

ADLER, Ms Rhonda Kaye, Assistant Director and Branch Head, Corporate Services, Australian War Memorial..... 1

ANDERSON, Mrs Nola May, Assistant Director and Branch Head, National Collection, Australian War Memorial..... 1

GOWER, Major General (Retired) Stephen Newman, Director, Australian War Memorial 1

HARALAMBOUS, Mr Harry, Project Director, Coffey Projects..... 1

JENNINGS, Mr Stanley Earle, National President, National Servicemen’s Association of Australia..... 1

JOHNSON, Mr Richard Anthony, Director, Johnson Pilton Walker Pty Ltd..... 1

MITCHELL, Mr Stewart Scott, Head, Buildings and Services Section, Australian War Memorial..... 1

WITHNELL, Ms Helen Margaret, Assistant Director and Branch Head, Public Programs, Australian War Memorial..... 1

Committee met at 10.12 am

ADLER, Ms Rhonda Kaye, Assistant Director and Branch Head, Corporate Services, Australian War Memorial

ANDERSON, Mrs Nola May, Assistant Director and Branch Head, National Collection, Australian War Memorial

GOWER, Major General (Retired) Stephen Newman, Director, Australian War Memorial

MITCHELL, Mr Stewart Scott, Head, Buildings and Services Section, Australian War Memorial

WITHNELL, Ms Helen Margaret, Assistant Director and Branch Head, Public Programs, Australian War Memorial

HARALAMBOUS, Mr Harry, Project Director, Coffey Projects

JOHNSON, Mr Richard Anthony, Director, Johnson Pilton Walker Pty Ltd

JENNINGS, Mr Stanley Earle, National President, National Servicemen's Association of Australia

CHAIR (Mr Butler)—Welcome. I declare open this public hearing of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works' inquiry into the proposed development of the Australian War Memorial's eastern precinct development, and development of the National Service Memorial, in Canberra. Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Major Gen. Gower—Mr Stewart Mitchell is here as the project manager. Mr Earle Jennings is here representing the National Servicemen's Association of Australia, should you wish to have further information about the National Service Memorial, which is an integral part of the courtyard adjoining the main building to the east. Mr Richard Johnson is our architect for this project.

CHAIR—Is Mr Haralambous employed by the War Memorial?

Major Gen. Gower—Yes, under a contract as a consultant. He is the project management consultant.

CHAIR—We might ask Mr Jennings to give some evidence separately—without being overly formal about this—so that we hear from the War Memorial and then hear separately from Mr Jennings's association.

Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise that these hearings are formal proceedings of the parliament. Consequently they warrant the same respect as proceedings of the parliament itself. I remind witnesses that giving false or misleading

evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. Major General Gower, do you want to make some introductory remarks?

Major Gen. Gower—Thank you very much to you and your committee for giving us the opportunity to present for your consideration what we believe is a most worthwhile and important project. As you would have seen on examination of our submission, over the last decade we have had quite a few projects that have appeared before the Public Works Committee. Anzac Hall, which you saw this morning, was a major project which enabled us to put on display our iconic major relics with a unique and innovative object theatre style of presentation. The CEW Bean building, which you also saw this morning, was opened in April 2006. In addition to housing staff, that building also houses collection items displaced from the main building so that we could do the Conflicts 1945 to Today galleries. Those galleries were opened by our Prime Minister in February of this year. Both of these two projects have been great successes.

In parallel with those works relating to the galleries and the presentation of the Anzac story, we have redeveloped the grounds in accordance with a site development plan giving particular consideration and priority to the heritage considerations. We first of all developed the western precinct. That was done to a plan developed by Richard Johnson. That gave us an extra area for commemoration and a further amenity for our many visitors. In accordance with that site development plan, we then redeveloped the parade ground, introducing into the parade ground those noble materials such as granite and sandstone which are an integral part of the main building.

We now come to this project—which, as I said, is a very important one for the Australian War Memorial—whereby we want to develop the eastern side of the main building. This proposed redevelopment will be in accordance with the site development plan, as updated in 2006, and our heritage management plan. This project is intended to satisfy a number of objectives. First of all is the provision of an underground car park of 191 spaces. We had intended to have 200 spaces, but as you would have seen in our supplementary submission, that had to be reduced for budget considerations, and because of the site aspects, to 191. That is also inclusive of access spaces, which take up quite an amount of space. We think it is very important to provide an underground car park. Currently, on the existing site out to the east, the temporary car park is a particular eyesore, which is quite unacceptable on a national site.

We wish to provide a fitting location for the National Service Memorial. Over 290,000 Australians served in the two national service schemes and we wish to provide a fitting location for that major memorial. We want to provide for a more flexible cafe-cum-kiosk and function centre. This is intended as a quick turnover, midrange food facility, seating some 100 patrons, with provision for 120 further spaces outside. As you will hear from Mr Johnson, that design features innovative heating and cooling features and the use of natural light. Importantly in a site visited by many, many Australians of all ages, we have to pay particular attention to the access, safety and amenity of that eastern side. At present disabled parking is there and there are coaches arriving and disgorging young school children and picking up people—it is quite a dangerous area that requires a lot of supervision. We would like to rectify that by enhanced traffic control methods: a drop-off outside and, in the case of schoolchildren, a school access area for their special use. The coaches will then be parked further away, beyond the proposed underground car park. That will be either the pickup point or the buses will come back past the schools' entrance.

We believe that is a very important part of the plan. There will be a facility for eight coaches to park on that other site.

We believe this proposal will enhance the setting of the main building by removing that coach and car park on the immediate eastern side of the main building, which is just a mass of asphalt and does not show off the main building's wonderful design to its rightful capacity; unlike, as you have seen, on the western side. It will enable us to rejuvenate that area completely, getting rid of the temporary car park. Appropriate landscaping will conceal the impact of the underground car park. All of this work will be in accordance with our site development plan and our environmental management plan.

So this is a very important project for us. We believe we have an experienced management team in place to deliver the project within the budget allocated and on time. We wish to deliver it between Anzac Day 2009 and Anzac Day 2010 for obvious reasons. We have the benefit of what I believe is an outstanding design by one of Australia's leading architects, Richard Johnson. Mr Chair, you would be aware that Mr Johnson designed the shortly-to-be-opened National Portrait Gallery. He is doing work on the Sydney Opera House to try and restore it to the vision from Joern Utzon. He also did the Asian Gallery at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. So he is very experienced and sensitive to the requirements of museums and to heritage matters. We also have a very experienced project management consultant. The responsibility remains with the Australian War Memorial, but we rely on an experienced project management consultant to give us up-to-date information about costings and tenders and then for superintendent duties on the site. The consultant is Coffey Projects Australia. If approved, as I said, I believe we can deliver something of great value to the Australian people in the schedule we have outlined. Mr Chair, unless you or your fellow committee member has any other questions, I propose to introduce Mr Johnson to brief you on the design formally.

CHAIR—Yes, thank you. For the record, I should also note the visit that we had to the War Memorial. The committee had the ability to view a range of drawings and also to visit different parts of the site to have a very clear idea in our mind of where it is proposed to undertake these changes to the War Memorial, so we have that in our mind.

Mr Johnson—As the director has said, the design is entirely consistent with the memorial's vision for the site outlined in the site development plan that was previously prepared. Importantly, it brings this part of the site into line with the overall standards, amenities and character of the balance of the site; a character and setting, I might say, far more appropriate for such an important national institution. It also addresses a number of critical functional, environmental, heritage, public accessibility and safety issues in an integrated design as part of a total site strategy.

There are a number of key elements of the proposal. Firstly, the Memorial Courtyard, incorporating the National Service Memorial, to the immediate east of the memorial building, is a simple and formal space, contemplative in nature. The Eastern Cafe Court and the cafe itself, again, are simple in design, far more accessible than the existing building, in scale with the site and unobtrusive in the landscape. The cafe utilises natural light and ventilation when conditions allow, and it has a highly energy-efficient heating and cooling system, with water collection and water conservation strategies. The underground car park is conveniently located close to the main memorial, with natural light and ventilation also. There is coach parking with convenient

and, importantly, very safe drop-off, pick-up and parking in a remote part of the site for eight buses. The landscape will be significantly improved and intensified, and the removal of the temporary eastern car park will have a great impact on the approach to the memorial from that sector.

Design of all of these elements supports a central focus on the land axis, respects the dominance of the heritage building of the memorial, preserves vistas up and down Anzac Parade and extends the existing landscape character as part of the Mount Ainslie vegetation. It certainly improves the arrival sequence from the east, improving access to the memorial for those with disabilities. The cafe and the eastern landscape areas are considerably improved. They are safer and they have far more amenity, particularly for those arriving by coach, school groups and those with mobility issues. The new cafe and car parking are unobtrusive and well away from residential areas, and the coach parking has new landscaping to soften and screen it from view from the street. Traffic studies indicate that the development has no adverse traffic impacts and can be accommodated with no changes necessary to local intersections.

The key objectives for the design have been simplicity, consistency in materials and landscape species, and an architectural character and scale consistent with the existing buildings and landscape. The materials and finishes have been selected with emphasis on quality, durability, cost effectiveness and low maintenance. The project delivers an integrated, environmental, sustainable design and services solutions. We have water conservation arrangement strategies, day lighting in the cafe—as I said—natural ventilation and thermal comfort, and attention to indoor air quality. In fact, our engineering modelling has indicated that 45 per cent less greenhouse gas emissions will occur with this design than with more conventional fully air-conditioned design. The landscape design will be predominantly reinforced with existing native vegetation, low maintenance and low water consumption. Over 100 new trees will be planted, and the eastern temporary car park will be reinstated as natural landscape.

I think the extent of the development has been carefully considered to minimise impact on the existing trees. The impact of the new coach parking has been minimised by maintaining the existing vegetation and the stormwater channel with its vegetation, and planting additional trees and native shrubs in berms along the street edge to screen the buses. The new cafe has been carefully cited at a lower level than the existing one, to improve access, to be less obtrusive in the landscape and to reinforce the dominance of the memorial in its landscape setting from that approach.

In conclusion, this integrated design continues a successful transformation of the memorial and its setting that began over a decade ago. It addresses a number of critical and pressing issues in a cost-effective and environmentally responsible way. It enhances the historic importance of the memorial and its setting, significantly improves the visitor experience, access, safety and amenity, and provides a suitable setting for the National Services Memorial.

Mr LINDSAY—First and foremost, I do not know what the overall future site plans are for that area. Can you put on the record some evidence that this is consistent with the site plan, that it will not prejudice what you may be wanting to do in the future. You might tell me if there is anything else planned for the eastern side of the site. So let us at that evidence, please.

Major Gen. Gower—I can provide that. I believe it is totally consistent with the site development plan. There is provision down the track, if the need is there, for that underground car park to be extended—just as we did for the Bean building. I think you need to look at future development of the site. However, it is totally consistent and I will be very happy to provide that information.

Mr LINDSAY—So you are saying that in relation to the car park, for example, if it is overloaded, you have room for future expansion, if visitor numbers further increase?

Major Gen. Gower—We generally believe that the design of the underground car park is consistent with doing an extension further out to the east, but that is well down the track; it is not in prospect. We do take that into account on the site. As I mentioned, the CEW Bean building holds collection items. Although a lot of collection items are now electronically born, it may well be that our research centre will have a lot more paper based material and we would have to look at extending that further east and that design caters for that. It is not envisaged at the moment, but that is typical of our thinking when we do these plans.

Mr LINDSAY—In preparing for this project, you gave us evidence that you had very wide community consultation. I noted that one of the things was a letterbox drop. Where did you letterbox drop? Who did you drop to? And did you get any response at all back from the letterbox drop?

Major Gen. Gower—As I indicated in the submission, we did have wide consultation particularly with the neighbourhood, those in the vicinity. We held a meeting, but it was in my absence. It might be best, with your permission, Mr Chairman, if I invite Ms Helen Withnell, the Assistant Director Public Programs, who chaired that consultative meeting with the nearby residents, to give her version of what transpired.

Ms Withnell—We letterbox dropped to all Campbell residents. When we held the public meeting on 27 August 2008, 26 residents turned up. It was a very supportive meeting, very productive. All of those people present were very appreciative of the consultation process and the fact that we had invited them there.

The key issues raised were in relation to the bus car parking on Treloar Crescent, as we showed you this morning, the traffic flow, the impact from both vistas, particularly from Fairbairn Ave, and also trees. All of the responses we gave at that meeting, including input from the architects and a heritage consultant we had there, satisfied the people who were there.

As a result of that meeting, we undertook a further traffic study to have a look at the impact of the bus car park and the set down and pick up. One of the things that we noted very much at that meeting was that, because of the increase of parking in the underground car park, we anticipate very strongly the incidence of car parking in Campbell streets would be significantly decreased. If you go to the memorial, particularly during the school holidays, you will find that quite a lot of those streets immediately adjacent to the memorial are quite heavily parked by visitors. So we anticipate that there will be a big impact on that as well.

Mr LINDSAY—Going to the wider key stakeholder consultations, were there any negatives at all that you can tell us about that came out of those wider consultations?

Major Gen. Gower—I am aware of no major ones. There has been normal discussion, listening to views respectfully and, if you can, accommodating them. For example, a key stakeholder is the National Servicemen's Association of Australia. We have talked with them over quite some time. In that respect I would be very happy for you to hear from Mr Jennings in due course as to how he found that consultation. In addition, there are a number of smaller groups of associated national service men whom we consulted. There was a lot of consultation with other bodies, as indicated in our submission. Heritage was an area where we spent a lot of time talking to interested groups. If you wish to have further information, perhaps the project manager, Mr Mitchell, could brief you on that.

Mr LINDSAY—No, that is fine. I think you are telling me what we need for the record. In your evidence you indicated that you thought this was subject to the EPBC Act. Are you just being careful? Is it really subject to EPBC?

Major Gen. Gower—I think you need to be careful. We had a heritage consultant, as indicated in our submission, and we have undertaken the development of strategies and the preparation of registers as required by the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. If you would like further detail, Mr Mitchell has been heavily involved in that material, the preparation of it and the endorsement of it by memorial management before it goes to the department, and we will be happy to take detailed questions.

Mr LINDSAY—Can Mr Mitchell just give us two sentences on: are you subject to it and why?

Mr Mitchell—Yes, we are certainly subject to the EPBC Act as national heritage and we will be referring the project to the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts under that act.

CHAIR—The only building that is affected by this is the existing cafe?

Mr Mitchell—Yes.

CHAIR—And there are going to be some trees removed?

Mr Mitchell—That is correct.

CHAIR—From my recollection of looking at the inspection, probably in the order of 20 with over a hundred planted?

Mr LINDSAY—With the EPBC process, do you expect that that will not be a risk to this process? Do you expect that this project will just go through? There is a fast track system, is there not, where you do not have to go out to public consultation and so on? Will it just be straightforward routine approval?

Major Gen. Gower—I do not think I would expect anything to be straightforward. Whatever they require to meet the act, we will endeavour to adhere to it.

Mr LINDSAY—I understand that, but there are short processes and long processes. This will be a short process and you do not expect a risk to the project?

Major Gen. Gower—That would be my view unless you have further information, Mr Mitchell.

Mr Mitchell—No, that is my view. We have been talking with the department on a number of occasions, and the NCA as well. With our heritage consultant, Godden Mackay Logan, we do not expect that we will have issues with that process.

Mr LINDSAY—In relation to the evidence that you expect to do this project between Anzac Day 2009 and Anzac Day 2010, where are you with the development of the documentation of the project? Will you be ready to go? For example, will somebody move in after Anzac Day 2009 and start work immediately? What is the process? What are you expecting to do?

Major Gen. Gower—We can give you a full brief with the project management consultant on that. We wish to seek this committee's approval for concurrent documentation so that we can meet that start date after Anzac Day next year. We would request that you give favourable consideration to that if you are able to so that we can do it in that window between the two Anzac Days to minimise disruption to the time when we have the maximum number of visitors on site.

Mr LINDSAY—I ask the inquiry secretary: have we got a letter requesting that?

Secretary—We just got it on the way here.

Mr LINDSAY—Okay. So we will deal with that. I think it will probably be favourably looked upon.

Major Gen. Gower—I will be delighted if that is possible.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you. So you are well organised to get the thing done in the right time frame and you do not expect any risks to be involved in that process?

Major Gen. Gower—The project management consultant could possibly give a more succinct answer for you. We rely on his advice with the delivery method and the procurement of it. In this particular case it is a simple and straightforward method. With the risks on site and the contingencies, we believe it is doable. There is nothing untoward about the project.

Mr LINDSAY—General, you have a very good project management consultant and he has done some wonderful work in Canberra. He might give us two sentences now on the fact that we will get this done on time.

Mr Haralambous—Certainly. We have thought deeply about the delivery system. As major public works are delivered, it is the old traditional lump sum delivery system, so the documentation will be procured and managed by Richard Johnson's organisation. There will be 100 per cent documentation, a lump sum will be sought and the contract will be issued to start after Anzac Day and finish before the next Anzac Day. There are no issues.

Mr LINDSAY—That was 2½ sentences! Thank you.

Mr Haralambous—My apologies!

CHAIR—Remind me to strike the last half-sentence!

Mr LINDSAY—We will probably leave it.

Mr Haralambous—I do not require any further fee for the extra half-sentence!

Mr LINDSAY—Well done! I have questions for the architect. Mr Johnson, I am not an architectural person, so please forgive me if I get it wrong. In looking at the lines of the cafe, I began to think: is that completely out of character with the other buildings that are on the site? Would you explain to us why you have chosen those kinds of lines. It looks, I suppose—I am struggling here—very modern, whereas the memorial itself, of course, has its heritage aspects in its design. How does it fit in with the CEW Bean Building next door? Tell me your rationale for designing a building like that.

Mr Johnson—I think the building is seen to be, more importantly, relating to the landscape and defining, in a landscape sense with garden walls and low elements, an external, formal civic or public space, part of which is the arrivals area, part of which is the memorial to the national servicemen and part of which is the cafe forecourt. I think there have been a number of successful contemporary expressions of architecture already around the site that sit harmoniously with the traditional. There was the administration building, the Anzac Hall and the Bean Building. I see the cafe as part of that ensemble of new architecture, but it is modest in expression, simple in its design and almost classical in its proportioning, and it has a simple range of materials that relate in tone back to the main building. I am very confident that it will blend in extremely well. The retaining wall at the south of the building will relate in material colour to the Bean building. From that, the simple concrete colour will relate to the memorial building.

Mr LINDSAY—Mr Forrest would want me to ask this of you: if you are standing on Mount Ainslie and you look down on this new building, how is the roof going to look?

Mr Johnson—The roof is extremely simple. It is not easy to get a clear vision because of the filtering through the trees, but any part of it that would be visible would present a very simple form, far simpler than the current roof, which has a lot of uncontrolled services out of it.

Mr LINDSAY—Is the entry and exit to the car park the same entry, where traffic comes and goes?

Mr Johnson—Yes, it is.

Mr LINDSAY—Have you looked at any traffic conflicts?

Mr Johnson—We have had our traffic consultants look at the numbers of cars and at the access and egress. It is perfectly adequate. We feel it is best to keep the entry and exit as far away from the memorial as possible.

Mr LINDSAY—You are going to remove a lot of soil. What are you going to do with that?

Mr Johnson—It will have to be removed from site.

Mr LINDSAY—You have no plan for where it might go?

Mr Johnson—No. When we seek expressions of interest from contractors, they might have some innovative ideas of how one might dispose of the soil, but there is certainly no acceptable location on site. The top soil we can reuse for re-establishing the temporary car park. Beyond that, I do not think we can use anything.

CHAIR—Am I right in saying that the underground car park only replaces the temporary car park?

Mr Johnson—No.

CHAIR—Is there a permanent car park as well?

Mr Johnson—The temporary car park is for roughly 50 cars and the new car park is for 191, including some accessible car spaces.

CHAIR—The only car park replaced is the temporary car park?

Mr Johnson—That is correct.

CHAIR—So your increased capacity is in the order of 140 spaces.

Mr Johnson—It is about 35 per cent extra capacity over the whole site. It is significant additional capacity.

CHAIR—Given you will lose that during the construction phase, and you will lose the cafe during the construction phase, what arrangements do you have in place to continue operations?

Major Gen. Gower—As far as the cafe is concerned, we have been involved in detailed negotiations with our food and beverage contractor. We are yet to reconcile a mutually agreeable recompense to them because it means a loss of revenue, although ultimately we share the revenue which comes in. I do not see it as a problem but certainly there is going to be a difficulty on the site for major functions and dinners in Anzac Hall because a lot of the food preparation has come out of the facility on that hill. That is an administrative thing we can work through. Disruptions on the site will be at their highest when there is concurrent preparation—the new coach park and the eastern courtyard area. All we can do to work our way through that is to let the public know and in certain cases there is nothing you can do apart from apologise and say, ‘We regret the inconvenience. We will finish this work as soon as we can and the outcome of this inconvenience will be a wonderful new facility.’ That is all one can do.

CHAIR—Does this close the circle on the site plan you talked about having been prepared 10 or so years ago?

Major Gen. Gower—It has been updated but essentially it does, although we will—

CHAIR—Building the western precinct—

Major Gen. Gower—Yes, the parade ground and now the eastern side. It would be remiss of us not to look at another master site plan to take us through the next decade or beyond. I think that is fundamental to management—you have to do that. As far as vision is concerned I know my particular vision does not go beyond this and nor should it.

Mr Johnson—There are small elements like the lighting master plan which will not yet be implemented by this proposal.

Major Gen. Gower—Yes, that relates to enhancing the main building lighting. It is a bit mixed—there is hot light and cold light. It is a wonderful iconic building and we have been looking at how the lighting might be improved. For example, down Anzac Parade you might see the stained glass windows back lit which would be a great improvement, but like everything else it takes its priority in the queue for funding so we are not implementing that at the moment. Thank you, Richard, for mentioning that.

CHAIR—Thank you, Major General and your staff, for your evidence today. I think we are finished with the War Memorial. Mr Jennings, can I call you to give evidence on behalf of your association. I will ask you to note the comments I made at the beginning of these proceedings about the nature of this evidence.

Mr Jennings—I understand, Mr Chairman.

CHAIR—Do you care to make some introductory remarks? We have seen a letter from you, on behalf of your association, which we have treated as evidence and we have had the opportunity to read that but if you would like to make some introductory remarks that would please us.

Mr Jennings—The National Servicemen's Association of Australia supports the submission by the Australian War Memorial for the approval of the redevelopment of the eastern precinct at the War Memorial. As you are aware, you stated that you have read our submission. If you wish I can pick some points out of that.

The association is involved, because the National Service Memorial will form part of the precinct. The memorial will be dedicated to national servicemen who served between 1951 and 1972, and those who died in active service in Borneo and Vietnam. The association has branches in all states and territories representing the 290,000 young men who were called up for training in the Navy, Army and Air Force. The association has raised the estimated cost of between \$300,000 and \$500,000 and to date the figure stands at \$529,666 and some cents.

The memorial donations have come from the federal government, state governments, councils, RSLs, public industry and national servicemen and their families. We have a wide cross-section of people who have contributed to the memorial. The funds are there and available to the memorial as, if and when they are required.

As Richard has outlined, the memorial is a fountain designed by his architectural firm. It has a square sandstone base, matching the material of the Australian War Memorial itself, which will represent the Army. The reflection of the sky in the polished black granite slab will represent the Air Force and the water in the large bronze bowl will represent the Navy. The fountain will use recycled water harvested from the roof of the Australian War Memorial but can stand alone as a memorial if the drought continues. The memorial will stand in its own courtyard mounted by matching sandstone paving, seating and box hedges.

We sent the concept, which you have all seen, to all of our 139 branches to vote and received a 99.9 per cent approval. We are happy to be able to say that the one branch that did hold out has now approved and we now have 100 per cent acceptance of the proposal. At the request of the AWM we also circulated the concept to the four small kindred national service organisations, with a combined membership of about 400 to 500. They too have approved the concept. We believe that we have 100 per cent acceptance of the memorial as outlined in the concept.

We do want to stress that the association is building the National Service Memorial on behalf of all national servicemen, not just the association. We picked up the running and started it all off but, as I said, it is for all national servicemen, not just for the association. That has been our approach all along. We support the redevelopment of the eastern precinct because we believe it will be a significant improvement in access to the Australian War Memorial and the public amenity.

The status of the War Memorial as an Australian icon in its role in honouring Australian servicemen and women in all conflicts has led to a large increase in visitor numbers, as committee members would know from their own observations. We think that the new eastern precinct will be of immediate and long-term benefit to the War Memorial and its visitors.

Mr LINDSAY—One branch expressed reservation. What was their reservation?

Mr Jennings—I think it was a reservation of the president. He was having, let us say, a disagreement with the state branch, and he straight away said no. We did write to them and ask them to explain it but we did not receive any answer. We asked the state branch to look into it. They approached the executive committee of that branch and that executive committee then passed the acceptance.

Mr LINDSAY—So your evidence is that in the years to come there could be no objection to this. No-one will be unhappy? Everybody signed off?

Mr Jennings—That is right.

Mr LINDSAY—Well, how could you ask any more questions if that is the case?

CHAIR—Mr Jennings, I imagine if this proposal for the War Memorial is approved—the general renovation of the precinct—you would be very happy with the location of the National Service Memorial? It is incredibly prominent. I cannot imagine a more prominent place—except, maybe, smack bang in the middle of the front.

Mr Jennings—We are not going to say no.

Mr LINDSAY—Will Brigadier Weekes's name be on it anywhere?

Mr Jennings—No, unfortunately there are no names that go on it.

CHAIR—On behalf of the committee can I congratulate you, Mr Moulder, and other officers and members of your association for a wonderful fundraising effort on behalf of 290,000 servicemen and their families. It is a wonderful job. Thank you for the evidence you have given today in support of the War Memorial for their general proposition.

Resolved (on motion by **Mr Lindsay**):

That, pursuant to the power conferred by section 2(2) of the Parliamentary Papers Act 1908, this committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it and submissions presented at public hearing this day.

Evidence was then taken in camera

Committee adjourned at 11.20 am