

From: Brett Odgers [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 20 May 2020 4:21 PM
To: Committee, Public Works (REPS) <pwc@aph.gov.au>
Subject: [REDACTED] Australian War Memorial Development Project

The Chair
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

I make this submission as a member of the Walter Burley Griffin Society Ltd and lifelong resident of Canberra. The Society's principal aim is to work for the conservation of Canberra's heritage, including the winning Griffin town plan, and fulfilment of Canberra's potential to be a great National Capital.

My submission addresses terms of reference (2) Need and (3) Cost Effectiveness.

Need

Three aspects of 'need' are of great concern:

- The National Capital represents and symbolises the national ethos, character, history and achievements of Australia. The presence and expansion of the AWM is manifestly out of proportion to the rest of Canberra's symbols and institutions and thus prejudices and distorts Canberra's current status and future prospects as the National Capital of Australia.
- Canberra has plenty of land and existing buildings for the storage of museum objects; the AWM does not need to arrogate more scarce designated land for national capital purposes.
- From the viewpoint of the Australian community and visitors to Canberra, there is a host of potential and alternative needs, benefits and symbols they would expect and demand to see in the National Capital. There is no evidence of adequate demand for the extent of development planned by the AWM. On the other hand, there is abundant evidence that the processes of public consultation on this project have been too restrictive and unaccountable.

Cost Effectiveness

From a heritage viewpoint, the Anzac Hall (2001) should not and need not be demolished. It is universally admired, sacred and sacrosanct, wondrous, beautiful

and spiritually impressive. It should be preserved, thus saving both substantial funds and the loss of the Hall so highly valued.

A paramount consideration for the development of the National Capital is equity in resources allocation to our national cultural institutions. The allocation to the AWM for this project throws it all out of balance and risks enduring damage to the other institutions.

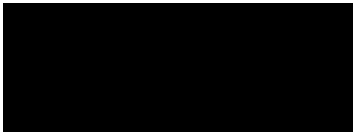
For example, the Australian National Archives doe not have its own building or even adequate rented spaces. The National Library of Australia is having to publicly 'cloud fund' digitisation of the diaries, notebooks, drafts, correspondence, other papers and unpublished memoir of A. B. "Banjo' Paterson. Most significantly, the National Capital Authority is so bereft of adequate funding that it no longer carries out, or is capable of performing, its responsibilities for planning and developing the National Capital.

Conclusion

The Australian War Memorial's \$498 m extensions cannot be at all justified and should not proceed.

Thank you

Brett Odgers



20 May 2020

