

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 5:22 PM
To: Committee, Public Works (REPS) <pwc@aph.gov.au>
Subject: RSF West priority works

Hello

I am Robyn Walsh I live in the City of Cockburn, about 10km from Garden Island as the crow flies. I am also a lifelong Peace activist and an environmentalist (both intergenerational) and as such there are many aspects of this proposal that are unsafe, pro-war and anti the environment especially in Cockburn Sound. I am a member of many organisations which stand for Peace, disarmament, and are fundamentally opposed to AUKUS.

I am opposed to this application from the ASA which would facilitate the storage of Low-Level Nuclear Waste from visiting US and UK nuclear powered submarines.

I oppose the presence of these submarines; the military build-up in the region to secure foreign forces and I absolutely reject the establishment of a facility to store radioactive waste from foreign defence forces.

I oppose anything which makes life on this planet and stewardship of it more fragile. There is nothing about the war machine which improves anything or any life better off. We need peace and safety and community across nations working together for everyone's betterment. Tell me/tell everyone who wins war! Diplomacy especially in the Indo-pacific is in Australia (and the worlds) best interests. Right now, our relationship with China is the most positive it has been in decades and here we are not only destroying that but making ourselves/especially me and my neighbours more unsafe. No one wins war and that is even more true of a nuclear way, even little accidents with nuclear radiation are catastrophic.

You have received a submission from Stop AUKUS and Nuclear Free WA, both of which I am a member of, so I will not repeat their researched and technical position, Social and Climate Justice position.

The promotional brochure the ASA published for public comment for the CIF licence reads: "the low-level radioactive waste management activities are similar to those that occur in over 100 locations nationwide, including hospitals, science facilities and universities". If this is the case, why does this waste need a special storage facility enabling long-term isolation?

Most hospital /science facility/university created nuclear waste is either very short-lived waste (VSLW) or very low-level waste (VLLW). After a decay period – generally a month or two - it can be placed in landfill. The waste at Garden Island is LLW and needs to be stored for 300 years, that is why longer-term storage is required. I heard Acting Prime Minister Richard Miles repeat this lie on ABC Perth radio today 24/7/2024. There was also no mention in the ASA brochure of intermediate level waste (ILW). The Medical

Association for Prevention of War (Australia) found out through questioning in Senate Estimates that ILW ‘may’ be stored at HMAS Stirling.

Additional pressure on the housing market from cashed-up US defence personnel.

According to the ABS census in 2021, on any given night in Australia there were 122,494 people sleeping rough. That number, given the current cost of living crisis, will have risen substantially in the past 3 years. If it is correct that part of the \$646 million urgent preliminary works is for the provision of accommodation for foreign military personnel and their families this is highly immoral.

There is a housing shortfall and shortage of construction workers in WA. The State government has committed \$200m for social housing, while private new builds continue. Given the region is suffering from worker shortages job creation from AUKUS, particularly in construction, is likely to bring new workers to the state putting further strain on existing housing stock – already running at a significant shortfall. This will impact on the rental market and more people will be forced onto the streets – to accommodate the 700 US defence personnel and an undisclosed number of UK defence personnel anticipated to be arriving from 2027. It is difficult to comprehend why so many are required to train the Australian defence personnel. Rather it establishes HMAS Stirling as a satellite US military base.

HMAS Stirling’s geographical position, close to thriving residential and tourist communities as well as being located in a highly sensitive ecological environment, means that it is not a suitable location for a nuclear propelled submarine base, let alone a nuclear waste storage facility. There are considerable and significant social and environmental impacts in addition to making the area a prime military target.

The constant goal for economic growth IS NOT STAINABLE, we must consider the Climate Crisis.

AUKUS Undermines Australia’s sovereignty.

Nuclear waste on Garden Island will impacts our way of life, to swim, to fish AND the wildlife including the Fairy Penguins.

The American Military presence in Cockburn Sound increases the probability of it being a first strike target in the event of hostilities breaking out between China and the USA.

Kind Regards
Robyn Walsh



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