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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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13 October 2008

Siobhan Leyne
Inquiry Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission No. 3
(Australian War Memorial:
Eastern Precinct Development)

SL 13/10/08

Dear Siobhan,

The RSL is aware that the 'Australian War Memorial Eastern Precinct Development' has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, for consideration.

The Objects of the RSL state that 'The League is established for the principal purpose of promoting the interests and welfare of former and serving members of the Australian Defence Force and their dependants and for this purpose has the following object – at (e) 'to ensure the preservation of the memory and the records of those who suffered and died for the Nation; to ensure the erection of Memorial's to their valour and that they have suitable burial places; to establish and preserve in their honour ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and other commemorative occasions.'

It is for the above reason that the RSL would wish to support the Australian War Memorial Eastern Precinct Development.

The Australian War Memorial is an iconic establishment and it almost deserves to be treated in a special light. It is the view of the RSL that almost everything about the AWM ought to be presented in a more dignified manner than perhaps some other complexes, and for this purpose, it is important that there are clear separations of function.

The RSL believes the following points to be relevant:

- With regard to the transport arrangements around the Memorial, bus and vehicular traffic should be clearly separate to the pedestrian traffic. The present arrangement whereby the buses are parked near to the front of the building regularly becomes quite confused when there are private cars dropping off passengers in the same area and then, on official occasions, the chauffeured VIP cars are also dropping off and turning in the same area as the alighting bus passengers;

LEST WE FORGET

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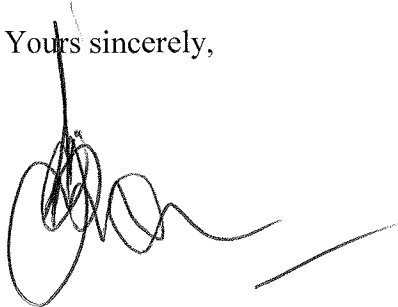
THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE

- The present temporary car parking arrangements under the trees in the front corner of the AWM precinct do nothing to enhance the dignity and surroundings of the buildings. The new formalised transport arrangements will be an immense improvement, and along with the new bus park and improved drop off arrangements, they will all greatly improve the overall visitor experience;
- This overall experience aspect will also be greatly enhanced by the repositioning and changes to the Outpost Café;
- The proposed arrangements will provide a significant enhancement to the Memorial and ensure a safe and controlled access for all Australians and especially those with special needs and those who would require access to handicapped facilities;
- The proposal will also provide the opportunity to extend the Memorial's gardens, and recognise the various forms of National Service through the new Memorial which is particularly important to a very large number of Australians, and long overdue.

In short, the RSL is of the view that the 'Eastern Precinct Development' is an opportunity to complete the external surroundings of the Memorial and provide for an enhanced visitor package that is second to none.

Forwarded for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DEREK J ROBSON', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

DEREK J ROBSON AM
NATIONAL SECRETARY