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JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Reference: Anzac Hall extension, Australian War Memorial

MONDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 1999

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Monday, 22 November 1999

Members: Mrs Moylan (*Chair*), Mrs Crosio, Mr Forrest, Mr Hollis, Mr Lindsay, Mr Ripoll and Senators Calvert, Ferguson and Murphy

Senators and members in attendance: Senators Calvert and Ferguson and Mr Forrest, Mr Hollis, Mr Lindsay, Mrs Moylan and Mr Ripoll

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

Anzac Hall Extension, Australian War Memorial, Canberra

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Committee met at 10.08 a.m.

CHAIR—I declare open this public hearing into the construction of Anzac Hall. The project, with an estimated budget of \$11.9 million, was referred to the Public Works Committee, for consideration and report to parliament, by the House of Representatives on 19 October 1999.

In accordance with subsection 17(3) of the Public Works Committee Act 1969:

- (3) In considering and reporting on a public work, the Committee shall have regard to—
- (a) the stated purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - (b) the necessity for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - (c) the most effective use that can be made, in the carrying out of the work, of the moneys to be expended on the work;
 - (d) where the work purports to be of a revenue-producing character, the amount of revenue that it may reasonably be expected to produce; and
 - (e) the present and prospective public value of the work.

Earlier this morning the committee received a briefing and inspected the site of the proposed works. Today the committee will hear evidence from the Australian War Memorial, the National Capital Authority and ACROD.

[10.09 a.m.]

GOWER, Major General Steve, Director, Australian War Memorial

MARSHALL, Mr Barrington Charles, Director, Denton Corker Marshall Pty Ltd

NORTHEY, Ms Vicki, Project Manager, Gallery Development, Australian War Memorial

PINCOTT, Mr Rory James, Director, Donald Cant Watts Corke (ACT) Pty Ltd

ROOT, Mr Peter Kenneth, Managing Director, Root Projects Australia Pty Ltd

CHAIR—Welcome. The committee has received the submission from the Australian War Memorial dated October 1999. Do you wish to propose any amendment?

Major Gen. Gower—An amendment to pages 18 and 19 of the submission has been furnished to your secretariat.

CHAIR—Thank you. It is proposed that the submission be received, taken as read and incorporated in the transcript of evidence. Do members have any objection? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The documents read as follows—

CHAIR—The summary statement has been incorporated into the transcript of today's proceedings. Would you like to make an additional opening statement? If that is the case, could you please limit it to no more than five minutes.

Major Gen. Gower—Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to invite the architect to say a few words about the design that is being proposed for Anzac Hall. Before I invite him to speak I would like to reiterate that we at the War Memorial believe this project is arguably the most exciting and most important since the memorial's opening in 1941. We believe that we have demonstrated the standard of museum practice in our gallery redevelopment project, which has been undertaken to date, and also our skills in project management to deliver this project within budget, on time and to a standard that all Australians would be proud of.

I would now like to invite Mr Barrington Marshall to make a few remarks about the design concept that is being offered for Anzac Hall.

Mr Marshall—I will just read out a brief statement. The Australian War Memorial, sited on the land axis at the northern end of Anzac Parade and backdropped by Mount Ainslie, is one of Canberra's most powerful visual icons. Anzac Hall is to be sited behind the memorial such that it is not visible from any point along the land axis up to and including Parliament House. Whilst the overall volume of Anzac Hall is dictated by internal display and exhibition requirements, its external form is of considerable significance in preserving the integrity of the memorial. To this end, Anzac Hall has been designed not as an extension to the original but as a contemporary addition which is a memorable presence in its own right that nevertheless remains clearly subservient to the original.

The external form of Anzac Hall is principally composed of two elements. A masonry wall of height and length approximately equal to the east and west wings of the memorial and set 20 metres to the rear at right angles to the axis, establishes a simple but powerful backdrop. The colour, tone and texture of this wall is similar to that of the sandstone of the memorial, but composed of larger-scale elements in stack-bonded pattern. Behind the wall is a seemingly disconnected, sweeping and gently curved roof plane which floats above low recessive walls rising out of a native grassed plain. Along its northern edge, this fine-edged symmetrical roof form follows the sweep of Treloar Crescent; along its eastern and western faces, the edges radiate back to the memorial dome. The roof surface is of a soft grey zinc colour.

These two simple but powerful forms combine to produce a building which, when viewed from ground level or Mount Ainslie, neither dominates nor diminishes the memorial. The external display courtyard formed by the wall to the rear of the memorial enhances the visitor experience of the original building in the round by focusing attention back towards the dome. From Mount Ainslie, the expansive roof to Anzac Hall, whilst in itself an elegant and sensuous form, will blend, by virtue of its soft warm grey toning, into the grey greens of the native landscape to ensure the dominant reading of the green copper memorial dome remains. Thank you.

CHAIR—I might lead off the questions with one on the costings. I notice that when this was first referred the cost was \$11.9 million, but the Federation Fund is providing \$11.9

million and I notice the Australian War Memorial is contributing \$930,000. Can you tell us what the proposed cost estimates are for the project in total?

Major Gen. Gower—At this moment they are as submitted. The AWM direct costs listed in our submission are subject to confirmation. With respect to our workshop, we would wish to bring it to the main site but it is possible that we will not. We are still exploring with the architect whether in fact siting a workshop immediately alongside a large exhibition hall is good practice, particularly with respect to noise suppression. It may well be that we will not continue with that proposal to site the workshop underneath the patio on the south-eastern corner.

CHAIR—So that would account for the additional expenditure?

Major Gen. Gower—Yes. We have currently earmarked \$0.4 million for the workshop. It is probable at this stage that we will not be going ahead with siting that facility in the vicinity of Anzac Hall.

CHAIR—So what we are doing today is solely approving Anzac Hall, not a workshop?

Major Gen. Gower—That is correct.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Mr LINDSAY—I guess we should get to the issue that is worrying a number of committee members—the form of the add-on. Mr Marshall, you used words like ‘an elegant and sensitive form’ and ‘a contemporary addition’. I do not know about these things but, when I first saw the reports from the NCDC and the Heritage Commission and looked at that, I thought it was like my railway station in Townsville, which was a heritage building and then in 1965 something was added on in contemporary form—and my city hates it. How are we to be satisfied that the form that you are proposing to add is in fact the appropriate form? We have heard your opening statement—perhaps some of the other witnesses might like to comment—but I have to say that I have grave concerns about what I see in the form of the additions.

Major Gen. Gower—Perhaps before the architect speaks, I might say a few words about consultation. As one would expect, we have consulted quite widely with respect to this particular concept design with the National Capital Authority—and they have made a submission which your committee members would have—and the Australian Heritage Commission. Likewise, we have consulted with the Returned and Services League and its National President is very supportive of the proposal. Regarding the thinking behind the concept, I will now hand over to the architect.

Mr Marshall—Mr Lindsay, you are quite right that it is obviously a very sensitive issue to put a new building behind a building like the memorial, which is a very sensitive building and obviously is a building in the round. What we set out to do was to make sure that we did not produce a competing building. To that end, I guess what I was trying to say in my opening statement was that we are really producing a non-building. When you go and visit the memorial, what you will actually see behind it is a very simple stone-like wall as a

backdrop to the memorial. In fact, as you walk around the memorial, in a sense, you will not even be aware that there is a building, as such, behind the memorial. When you do walk around and see the building from behind, it will not again read quite as a building. It will simply read as this very simple plate-roof form floating over the landscape.

It was not as though an architect was saying, 'Here is an opportunity to produce a building. Look at us! Look how clever we are!' We have sunk the building into the ground. It is very low key: the colour, the toning—everything—is downplayed and there is almost no indication in Anzac Hall, in a sense, that it is a building, because we are extremely mindful of our responsibilities.

Mr LINDSAY—The evidence that you have provided indicates that the main wall will be of pre-cast concrete and it will have a stack-bonded stone-like appearance?

Mr Marshall—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—Does that really match what the existing building looks like?

Mr Marshall—Yes. We were conscious that we were producing a new building or a new form behind the memorial. What we did not want to do was to mimic the memorial by having a stone size and pattern that was exactly the same as the memorial, because clearly this is not part of the original memorial building. So what we decided to do was to use a material that has the colouring and the texture. We would be picking on perhaps the darker of the tones in the natural stone colour in the memorial but using it on a scale that is less building like. I suppose that is the only way I can describe it. So we very deliberately picked a material that feels sympathetic to the memorial but is not, in fact, exactly the same material.

Mr LINDSAY—Your evidence is suggesting that what you are proposing to build is specifically going to look like an add-on, so there will be no confusion—everyone will know it is an add-on. Is that right?

Mr Marshall—That is true.

Mr LINDSAY—What does the community feel about that? Your evidence is saying that they will not even notice the add-on.

Mr Marshall—Obviously I cannot speak for the community, but what I would like them to feel is that in fact there has not been a building put behind the War Memorial; all that has happened is that we have put up a very simple wall to act as a backdrop behind the memorial. So it will feel like a landscape component rather than a building component.

Mr LINDSAY—We saw this morning the concept of circulation in the museum and a suggested single walkway across that mezzanine level. Are visitors able to go down to ground floor level once they enter the new building?

Mr Marshall—Yes. What happens is that they enter at the mezzanine level—that is about 4½ metres higher than the ground floor level of the main hall—and they then get an

overview of the whole hall. There is then a lift access and stairs that take you down to the lower level and there will also be, as part of the exhibit fit-out, ramps that extend from the mezzanine and allow you to move out into the space and also down to the lower level.

Mr LINDSAY—That introduces two questions. In your evidence on the gallery floors, you said one is going to be basically a concrete floor with a sealer on it and the upstairs one will have a carpet tile finish. Why have you chosen to have a concrete floor on the ground floor of the new building?

Mr Marshall—Basically because the ground floor is essentially where all the exhibits will sit and, as part of exhibition fit-out, as time goes by you have to move very heavy equipment across the floor. That floor has to be very flat, very smooth and very durable. Obviously, within the exhibits themselves there will be different floor finishes that suit the exhibits.

Mr LINDSAY—Coming back to the question of circulation, was it considered that visitors should be encouraged to come across at mezzanine floor level, go downstairs and return on another path at ground floor level?

Mr Marshall—No, they will come in at mezzanine level and then they will go out onto the lower level.

Mr LINDSAY—I know what they will do.

Mr Marshall—They will circulate around the lower level and then come back up to the mezzanine level and circulate back through the building.

Mr LINDSAY—But I asked you: was it considered that in fact there should be a second connection back to the main building at ground floor level to improve the circulation of the visitors? So you would come in on one path and go out on another path?

Major Gen. Gower—If I may, I believe that is a museum question. Circulation paths in museums are quite vital. On the ground floor, the First World War and Second World War areas are chronological galleries with a very strong story line. The axis through the Hall of Valour, through Aircraft Hall, through Anzac Hall, is a themed series of galleries and you will be approaching Anzac Hall through Aircraft Hall through that simple axis you have mentioned. When you return from the Anzac Hall experiences, which will be a number of experiences—naval, air and land—with coherent story lines on the floor, you will then come back into Aircraft Hall and finish and exit through the Hall of Valour. Then, having returned to the central stair area, you will make your choice about what subsequent circulation path you are going to follow. It may well be downstairs, it may well be the Second World War or whatever.

Our circulation paths have been very carefully thought out. We have had them studied independently and the evidence suggests that people will be looking to follow that circulation path provided we maintain consistent axial paths and keep it simple. If you come down to the ground floor, you will have lost that simplicity if you were to return to the main building.

Mr LINDSAY—In relation to the new building and looking ahead in the years to come with exhibitions perhaps changing, what facilities have been provided for service access to new displays so that cables can be got here or got there, considering that you might not have thought about where one would need to get them? What kind of technique are you using to provide for something that perhaps we do not know about in the future?

Major Gen. Gower—Perhaps I may say a few words before inviting the architect to comment on how he has met our requirement. We see this exhibition hall as needing to be very flexible. When it opens we will not be able to display the major icon which is ‘G for George’—it will not be conserved and will not be ready for display by then. We will be able to display the cockpit, but that is all. So it is very important and uppermost in our mind that we need to have a hall to which you can introduce exhibits, take other exhibits out and with the flexibility to add special effects.

We did ask the architect to look very carefully at providing that for us with the aim, in the longer term, of having this object theatre whereby, with the dramatic use of sound and light, you could almost tell a story and bring the relics to life. Having just said that, I will invite the architect to continue as to how he has met that requirement.

Mr Marshall—There are a series of pits inlaid flush with the floor on the ground on the main floor level that run across the hall, which obviously give you power access and all those sorts of things for exhibits in those positions. Around the back perimeter—around the Treloar Crescent curve—there is—for want of a better word—a ‘false’ wall which provides cabling and service access all the way around the perimeter edge because a lot of the displays will be fanned, as it were, around that curved surface.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you. Finally, how many car parks exist at the moment? How many are going to be reprovided and who determined what the necessary reprovizion should be?

Major Gen. Gower—A total of 355 car parks are being envisaged to the west and to the east of the main building. We have discussed this with the National Capital Authority and I understand the National Capital Authority suggested extra car parking spaces be added, on the basis of multiplying the square metres of the floor space, and we have met that requirement as well. We believe that 355 car spaces will meet the requirement for visitation to the Australian War Memorial with this increased display in Anzac Hall.

Mr LINDSAY—What are the existing numbers that are provided?

Ms Northey—At the moment we have approximately 270.

Senator FERGUSON—I have never seen a building that is being added to an existing icon that everybody agrees with anyway, so you would be doing pretty well if you got 100 per cent community support. At first glance, it blends in very well. You have won me over. One question about access to that rear building: is the only access you have to put exhibits in—it was very small printing—a tilt-up door with hydraulic jacks? Is that the only access to that building for major items?

Major Gen. Gower—There are two items. There is the one you are referring to, Senator Ferguson, on the western side. There is another access point to the east of the actual connection underneath the patio area.

Senator FERGUSON—For smaller items?

Major Gen. Gower—We believe large items will be capable of being moved into that area through that access.

Senator FERGUSON—Is there anything you would not be able to get in through that tilt door? I cannot read the figures, but I think it is 10 metres wide.

Mr Marshall—It is about 10 metres wide and seven metres tall.

Major Gen. Gower—Obviously, if you bring in ‘G for George’ it comes in parts.

Senator FERGUSON—Yes, I understand.

Major Gen. Gower—Our collection services staff have done a lot of analysis of the access and the size of our major relics and how we might be able to get them in and out. To start with we will have to have a display in lieu of ‘G for George’ of aircraft. So we will have to get those in and out reasonably simply to get George back in. So it is a complex problem, but we have to put ‘G for George’ back on display as soon as possible because of what it represents.

Senator FERGUSON—You have talked about the number of items of historical interest that you currently warehouse that are only available to the public on Wednesdays and Sundays. How many items of significance will still be left at Mitchell that at some stage in the future you would want to house?

Major Gen. Gower—It is a bit hard to quantify that. We have an extraordinarily rich and diverse collection of items, most of which have very strong provenance—that is, a story associated with them. But of that collection, there are a number that the Australian people demand to see. They want to see the midget submarine. They want to see ‘G for George’. There is other material out at the Treloar Centre, such as the First World War tank, which we believe people want to see; the meteor that was used in Korea—we have never displayed that—and a Beaufort bomber. The Beaufort represents the most numerous of all Australian local production aircraft in the Second World War. That has never been on display. So we have a whole raft of exhibits out at Treloar. Bear in mind it is a repository and you saw how crowded it is. We believe we can provide an outstanding range of exhibits in Anzac Hall and then still have the capacity to change things over and reinterpret and recognise anniversaries and so forth.

Senator FERGUSON—The only reason I asked is that, once this building is complete, it is difficult to envisage anywhere else that you could enlarge your area at the War Memorial without affecting the aesthetics of the place, if you are going to keep your visual line of sight and you have gone back into the hill. What you cannot get in this new building it is unlikely

another building will be built anywhere else in the area to house, unless you have some visions for the future that we do not already know about.

Major Gen. Gower—We have a site master plan which has been developed in consultation with, and with the very strong input of, the National Capital Authority. Currently, where a requirement for extra gallery space arises, you could look at expanding on the western side of the main building inside, that is currently staff amenities and an area that is used for education programs. On the master plan, the research centre is located in a brand-new building out to the east behind our restaurant. Were that building constructed, all the area of the research centre is available for a new gallery. So there are some options for normal galleries of the type you saw this morning. For large relics, I would see this proposal as certainly being adequate for a long time.

Senator FERGUSON—In your submission you talk about a 30 per cent increase in visitors to the memorial this year. Bearing in mind that probably 90 per cent of the Australian population do not know that extensive renovations have been done up there—the average person knows the War Memorial exists and comes to Canberra and wants to see it when they come here—how do you account for the extra 30 per cent?

Major Gen. Gower—Madam Chair, we have undertaken a strong marketing—I hesitate to use that word in association with the Australian War Memorial, but certainly a publicity—campaign to make Australians aware that we have undertaken a major refurbishment program at the memorial. We have also, under Their Service, Our Heritage program, a major program of touring exhibitions going around Australia. As part of that process we have a text panel talking about the developments here in Canberra. Probably as a result of a combination of publicity with that and other things, we have more visitation. I have just had a note, Madam Chair. We have an award winning web site which is getting a lot of ‘hits’, I think is the vernacular. We get publicity that way too.

Senator FERGUSON—I know from my own state, in particular, that there are a significantly increased number of school visits to Canberra and to Parliament House. I have noticed the numbers that have come. Are you finding throughout the years that more and more schoolchildren are coming on official visits to visit the War Memorial while they are here, or has that number remained constant over a period?

Major Gen. Gower—We strongly encourage visits by school groups. We have a major education program for schools, curriculum based in some cases. We have embarked on a program encouraging schools in New South Wales and Victoria to come more frequently. The New South Wales Premier wants all schoolchildren in New South Wales to visit the Australian War Memorial during their schooling. We would like to encourage that for all states of Australia. We have a wreath laying program on Tuesday for Australian schools. A school in South Australia, Port Vincent Primary, took a major part in Remembrance Day laying a wreath. We encourage that. The numbers are coming up. There are over 90,000 this year. We are aiming to get 100,000 in the next couple of years.

Senator FERGUSON—And that is of your total visitors in a year of about 800,000, is it?

Major Gen. Gower—It is more like 900,000.

Mr FORREST—I did not attend the inspection this morning because I have been a regular visitor to the museum. I would like to congratulate Major General Gower. It is a national icon. I was there a couple of months ago doing the tourist thing myself with some guests. Two things disappointed me, though: car parking—I am pleased to see that is being addressed with another 145 car spaces—and the restaurant.

I refer to the confidential cost estimate without talking about the figures. I note there is an amount in there that refers to the cafe and mezzanine, both items lumped together. I would like confirmation that a substantial upgrade will be made of the cafeteria. Two things happened. Three buses arrived. It took a very long time to be served. Then it was difficult to find a place to sit and eat what we had purchased. Could you run us through what is planned for the cafeteria?

Major Gen. Gower—I apologise for any inconvenience caused during your visit. We accept that the present cafe arrangement is not adequate. It is outsourced, as you would imagine. The proposal for a cafe as part of the Anzac Hall project is an important one because we believe the length of visitation will be greater with Anzac Hall. At the halfway point, if you follow the circulation path, you may want to have a piece of focaccia or a cup of coffee or a more substantial meal. Current plans are for the cafe to be on the mezzanine. On the right-hand side as you come in there is a terrace and this area we have also set aside for a cafe.

The reconciliation of the scope and the budget will not allow us at this stage to completely fit out that cafe. But then we have high hopes of coming into some long-term commercial venture with a supplier who will take over operation not only of that cafe but of the existing restaurant, 'Poppies', plus cater after-hours functions and things like that.

Mr FORREST—The significant sum in the cost estimate is allocated for the cafe within the museum itself, is it? It is not for the existing restaurant?

Major Gen. Gower—No, that is for Anzac Hall, fitting for, but not with, so to speak. It will not be completely fitted out. We do not have the funding provision to do that. However, we are reasonably confident we can come up with a long-term joint venture with a restaurant operator to fit it out and have it functioning. That is a separate issue.

Mr FORREST—That will suffice. Can I confirm the car parking. The plans provided in a submission—I note the plans on the wall are slightly different—refer to 256 car spaces on the western end of the crescent. But on my plan it says, 'Future parking, 86 spaces on the eastern side behind the restaurant and future bus parking'. Can you confirm that those total 86 spaces are in this budget we are reviewing today?

Ms Northey—Presently the 86 are not in our cost estimates, but we have had that costed at approximately \$80,000. We are very confident that in the next couple of years—hopefully before Anzac Hall opens, but we cannot guarantee that at this stage—those 86 will be built.

Mr FORREST—So the budget only includes the 256 spaces on the western side?

Ms Northey—And the refurbishment of the eastern side where the buses and the disabled car parking is noted. So we are looking at that as well.

Mr FORREST—I note that there is bus parking and a future 13 spaces at the front of the building. I assume those 13 would be for disabled access only?

Ms Northey—The ones closest to the building are, yes.

Mr FORREST—I am interested in the roof issue. Could you confirm how accurate the photo mosaics on the wall are and the model colours? I am concerned because the evidence you have submitted suggests that an extra \$2 million might be needed for an alternative roof. If it is only colour, I am surprised that is the kind of cost involved.

Major Gen. Gower—We submitted a proposal that could be reconciled within the available funding. We believe the advice from the National Capital Authority and the Australian Heritage Commission that there be copper on that roof is desirable. But, on the advice of the architect, we are quite comfortable with his proposed solution, which fits into our budget and which does not detract from the copper of the dome. I request the architect to say a few more words on that.

Mr Marshall—At the moment the roof is a metal deck which can be coloured any colour we want.

Mr FORREST—It is colourbond, is it not?

Mr Marshall—It is a colourbond surface. We will be selecting a soft zinc grey colour—in other words, a warm mid-grey. You asked why it is \$2 million for this extra roof. It would be possible to put a zinc roof on the building. A zinc roof superficially will look exactly the same in terms of colour. It is just this dilemma in a building of such importance. It is the quality of the material we are talking about for a zinc roof. That would be very nice to do, but obviously is impossible to do within the budget. Visually I suspect you would not be able to tell whether this was zinc or colourbond unless you were able to get up on the roof and touch it. So from Mount Ainslie it will look exactly the same and from down at eye level it will look exactly the same. Obviously, it would be very nice to be able to afford to have a zinc roof simply because it is the right material for a building of this quality.

Mr FORREST—It looks exactly the same. What is the point of an extra \$2 million?

Mr Marshall—We are not suggesting that it has to be done. That is why we are quite comfortable with the colourbond roof. It is the same reason, I suppose, you could say that there is copper on the dome of the memorial. You could probably achieve a similar effect with a metal roof that was painted with a copper paint. But there is something that seems more appropriate about a genuine copper roof.

Mr FORREST—The other question I have is in respect to the procurement process, which was described as ‘document construct’, a slightly different term. I am wondering what the nuance of that is.

Major Gen. Gower—To explain that, I ask our project management consultant, Mr Peter Root from Projects Australia, to field that question.

Mr Root—We have recommended ‘document construct’ for a couple of reasons. The normal architectural process goes from concept design to design development to contract documentation. What we are doing in this case is retaining a direct responsibility from the architects to the client during the design concept and the design development phase of the project. When we reach the point where we are moving into contract documentation we want to novate the architectural contract under the control of the construction contractor.

The reason we are doing this is that, when we looked at a risk assessment on this project, there were two areas of risk that we really needed to manage. The first was, because it is such an important site and such an important building, it was very important that the War Memorial and the other stakeholders here in Canberra, particularly the NCA and the Australian Heritage Commission, had an opportunity to have a very high influence over the design concept and the design development. At the end of the design development all of the fundamental design issues are locked up and approved.

The other major risk we wanted to manage was any risk associated with documentation variations during the course of the project. Through novating the documentation phase of the work under the construction contractor we are effectively selling down the risk of those variations to the construction contractor. We also benefit from that in that there is constructibility advice from the construction contractor that is incorporated into the document for the project. Apart from the risk management issues, we also believe that will assist us in being able to complete the construction phase of the project in the optimum time.

Mr FORREST—It is not a complicated building. It is a very simple building in comparison with others this committee has looked at. We have been asked to countenance all sorts of interesting procurement processes. The most interesting of all was the National Museum. Unless there is a very tight construction program, I am not convinced as to why we would depart from a conventional process where drawings and specifications are properly documented. In a proper tender for a very tight specification, probity and all the other things are just catered for naturally in that process. Why are we departing from that for a simple building?

Mr Root—We are not departing from a very tight specification or a fully resolved design. In fact, we are putting a lot of effort into ensuring those circumstances exist. The construction program is very tight. The memorial is wanting to open this facility on Anzac Day in 2001. One of the risks we need to manage through our procurement process is the need for the contractor to be able to get on with the work and do it without any conflict or dispute. This procurement process, I believe, enables us to do that.

Mr FORREST—The other question is about disability access. I was very pleased to see in a submission received today that ACROD are to be embraced in the planning process in that a disability consultant is to be engaged. I was a bit disturbed that in the submission from ACROD they indicated that they had been asking for special access and lifts and issues like that for some time. Could you give me the confidence that their needs will be addressed? A lot of disabled Australians, particularly the elderly, will want to come and see this icon. I

would want to know that every effort was being made to ensure they had an enjoyable experience.

Major Gen. Gower—We want to do exactly that. I would certainly underscore the importance of providing for the disabled. I was somewhat surprised by the submission. I thought we had been working quite closely in recent years. I could list a number of initiatives which we were very happy to undertake whereby disabled access has been enhanced tremendously into the main memorial building.

It is a building that does not lend itself very easily to allowing for the needs of the disabled. For example, the front flight of steps to get into the commemorative area has a disabled lift on the left-hand side as you face the building and we have plans in our budget next year to refurbish that lift completely. There has been a suggestion in the ACROD submission that some sort of shelter be placed there. We are very happy to look at that, though you run into heritage and visual considerations because it is right in the front facade of the building.

Over the last two years we have put disabled access on to the first floor in the commemorative area with ramps out on to the parapet looking back down Anzac Parade and ramps on either side of the Hall of Memory. There is a ramp at the back of the building with disabled access and the access through the sculpture garden to the front door is now fully code compliant on the incline. There is access on the western courtyard and at the rear if someone wishes to not go to the front door, so to speak, but come in at the back door to save the length of the approach. We are increasing the number of disabled car parking spaces at the front and we are very happy to do that.

At the end of the day you try to be strictly code compliant. The codes are there for a very good reason. I noticed in the submission that there is some suggestion that we should do more than the code. If that is possible and it does not have a huge cost, then that would be fine. We have made every effort to be code compliant. Disabled access is tremendously important in this project and we are going to engage a consultant to work through some of these aspects.

One major thing remains in the main building. There is no way you can get a wheelchair into the lower commemorative area. We looked at that two years ago and the proposed ramp arrangement would have ruined the whole visual sight lines of the step down and step up. We do have staff who are trained to help the disabled and they do it very happily. We do have wheelchairs available, not for hire—they are totally free of charge. It is an area we take very seriously and we are going to put a consultant on. We will do all we can to ensure this proposed new building meets the requirements.

Mr FORREST—There is a particular item in the estimate that identifies the sort of cost for providing this access. I note the submission is making suggestions about the facilities for people with hearing difficulties and braille for the blind. I am wondering with a museum exhibit how much of that expectation could ultimately be delivered. What is the kind of cost feel for all of that?

Major Gen. Gower—All of these requirements do come with a cost penalty and I think that is well known. It is a matter of how far one goes when immediate urgent requirements meet the code and how far you go beyond that. We are very happy to explore initiatives and we propose having a consultant to work through them with us. Some things could clearly be prohibitive—some of the suggestions about making lifts larger to take stretchers, and things like that. We are not dismissing that but we would say that comes with a very big penalty if you were making lifts bigger. We will work through all of this in our proposal.

Mr FORREST—How do you propose to meet ACROD's suggestions halfway? Is there some suggestion that the consultant will have a working committee? I think there is going to be some need for compromise.

Major Gen. Gower—We have only last week received the submission from ACROD. I think it is a matter of getting this consultancy on board and seeing where the common ground can be. Without taking that advice, I believe our proposals meet the code requirements to start off with. The codes have been developed by a lot of working parties taking a lot of skilled advice to meet community expectations. One great thing about the gallery redevelopment project to date is that we have made the building, as far as we can, totally code compliant, which it sadly was not for many years.

Mr HOLLIS—Most of the questions I wanted to ask have already been asked so I will not belabour the point. I will just say that I think this is a very exciting project and it will complement what is already there. As someone who in the past has been known to be occasionally critical of architects, I think the architect in this case has done a magnificent job.

To follow on from what my colleague Mr Forrest said, we have a letter—I guess you have it—from the Australian Heritage Commission and they say:

The Commission considers that a grey colourbond roof is less than optimal, given Anzac Hall's location and prominence, and strongly recommends further investigation of the feasibility of alternative quality materials.

Mr Marshall—I guess that is referring to the zinc roof or the copper roof. Even if the money could be found for the zinc or the copper roof, we believe it should not be the copper roof because we think that will make the new roof too visible from Mount Ainslie and we would really prefer the memorial to be the dominant feature. I really cannot say much more about it other than, as an architect, one would have expected in designing this building that if, as it were, cost were not an option, one would have automatically opted for a natural zinc roof because that seems the appropriate roof for a building of this stature and in this position. Failing the ability to find the money for that, we believe that the roof that we have selected will present no visual problems at all. Certainly, in longevity terms, it will be fine, too.

Mr HOLLIS—Major General Gower, I heard you answering my colleague Senator Ferguson's questions about visitation this year—very impressive. Do you think that this facility will actually increase visitation or will it just complement what you already have there? Will it be a big selling point or will it just complement what you already have there?

If you think it will increase visitation, do you have any idea of numbers that it would increase visitation to?

Major Gen. Gower—I would certainly hope that it would increase visitation but I understand the advice to date is that it is more complementing the place as a tourist attraction. We are certainly going to use it strongly in publicity and marketing to continue to attract people to the Australian War Memorial. Any cultural institution has to do that all the time. You do that with a series of programs, new exhibitions, public events, and so forth. I would be delighted if the visitation increases but I see it more as complementing and underscoring the attraction of this national institution.

Ms Northey—We do expect that the length of the visit will, of course, increase because of Anzac Hall. Through all of our visitor evaluation that we have been running for a number of years, certainly the major requests that we have had are, ‘Where is the midget submarine?’ in particular, and ‘Where are the rest of your collections?’ As the director pointed out previously, Treloar Centre is an opportunity for people to see those collections but, of course, they are not interpreted and they also do not allow us to use the wide range of collections the memorial has, including film and sound—and you saw a sample of that today in that video. What we want to do is to provide a wider range of experiences and opportunities in Anzac Hall and have people return more often. Return visitations are bread and butter for all museums, and that is one of our major goals.

Mr HOLLIS—I note that where you are going to construct this facility there are a number of trees which have to be removed. Just so that people will not start protesting about the removal of trees—I think it was you, Major General, or it might have been Mr Root—one of you told us this morning the story of the trees and about their removal. I wonder whether we could have that on the public record.

Major Gen. Gower—The advice we have indicates that those trees are not of a type that should remain. Certainly they shed their limbs, I will not say with alarming frequency, but sufficiently to cause us problems with damage to vehicles in that car park. Having said that, the row immediately adjacent to Treloar Crescent will remain and there will be total landscaping of the proposed new site of more appropriate trees.

Mr RIPOLL—What sort of work will be carried on in the workshop between the War Memorial and the new building? What sort of noise levels are involved? I am concerned that the type of work that might go on there might raise noise levels.

Major Gen. Gower—I think they are the very concerns we have that will probably result in the workshop not being sited there. They do final assemblies, the preparation of display cabinets and things like that. We have outsourced most of our workshop staff, apart from a core of about three or four, and we add teams as required to that. The ability to have a workshop on site is a very good and a desirable facility. But if it comes with penalties in terms of noise from suppliers coming through with timber and sheet metal and so forth—you would have to have a soundproofing cost to make sure that the noise in there is isolated completely from the visitation experience in nearby Anzac Hall and, indeed, in the cafe terrace above it—we are leading our thoughts towards having the workshop not on that site at all, but out at Treloar.

CHAIR—What is going to happen to the existing facility at Mitchell? Can you briefly outline that for us?

Major Gen. Gower—Mitchell consists of three buildings, two major repository storage buildings and a workshop. One building houses, as well as our art collection and sculptures and so forth, our laboratories for textiles, fabric, art and so on. We will need to look at the possibility of rationalising our holdings there. That is in our business plan if Anzac Hall goes ahead. We still need a storage repository area and a workshop but, if Anzac Hall is successful, it means that the area can revert to its original cause of supporting the storage, maintenance and restoration of the national collection. There are some very skilled people working out there in the various conservation fields.

Senator FERGUSON—I notice that there are 285 car parking spaces now. Do your employees use that car park as well?

Major Gen. Gower—Yes, they do. It has been estimated that perhaps upwards of 110 spaces are used by employees.

Senator FERGUSON—You have got 176 full-time employees I note. If 100-odd spaces are being used by employees, it means that you have got less than 200 for the 2½ thousand to 3,000 that you average per day visiting the museum. Do you think that 355 is going to get rid of the problem of car parking for visitors?

Major Gen. Gower—Our studies and advice indicate that it is certainly adequate in the foreseeable future, but I think car parking is something that has got to be reviewed all the time. Ideally, I would like to see the car parking underground somewhere. I have noticed that the National Gallery of Australia and other major institutions have underground car parking as well as surface car parking. In our 10-year development plan, we have earmarked the need for underground parking at some stage. I do not suspect I will be Director then but someone should prosecute very vigorously the second half of that plan.

Senator FERGUSON—Even if you could find other car parking arrangements for staff, it would leave the total 385 for people who are coming and going during the day at all times. If it ever became a problem the solution might be to take those 100 or so cars and find another car park for permanent staff, either underground or close by, and leave the public car parking for those are actually coming and going all day.

Major Gen. Gower—That is something we need to look at in due course, certainly on major events such as Anzac Day. For the next one we are looking at perhaps having the public come to a central area and take buses to there because the visitation at about that period is so great that it is almost a nightmare in the area of parking.

Senator FERGUSON—Could I ask what are the admission charges now for the War Memorial?

Major Gen. Gower—There are no admission charges whatsoever except for Treloar. If you wish to visit on the Wednesday and on the Sunday when that is open there is a small charge. For ex-service persons there is no charge.

Senator FERGUSON—You have a place in the memorial for donations though, don't you?

Major Gen. Gower—Yes. We do encourage donations. There are boxes on either side of the entrance and we have done all sorts of studies of where box locations get the maximum yield. People do use the commemorative pool as an area they throw coins into which we harvest.

Senator FERGUSON—Can you give us any idea of what donations are received by the War Memorial on an annual basis approximately?

Major Gen. Gower—I will take that on notice if I may. I would not want to mislead you. It is certainly five figures.

Senator FERGUSON—Yes, it is considerable.

CHAIR—Thank you.

[11.07 a.m.]

BURNHAM, Mr Keith, Principal Town Planner, National Capital Authority

PEGRUM, Ms Annabelle, Chief Executive, National Capital Authority

CHAIR—Welcome. The committee has received a submission from the National Capital Authority dated 15 November 1999. Do you wish to propose any amendment?

Ms Pegrum—There is no amendment.

CHAIR—It is proposed that the submission be received, taken as read and incorporated in the transcript of evidence. Do members have any objections? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The submission read as follows—

CHAIR—I now invite you to make a short statement of no more than five minutes duration in support of your submission before we go to questions.

Ms Pegrum—Thank you. We would like to start by saying that the National Capital Authority does fully support the design concept that we have seen and commends both the architects and the Australian War Memorial for the solution that is being proposed, as well as for the consultation that has taken place with the authority in relation to this particular proposal.

In that regard, we are particularly pleased that the new Anzac Hall is respectful of the existing building and is subservient to it in its design, form and volumes. It also meets, in general principle, the requirements of the master plan that has been agreed with the authority and the Australian War Memorial. We have a number of issues that we expect to see resolved as the design is developed but perhaps the most important is in relation to the roof, particularly in the materials that are currently being proposed. To that end, I would like to make comment that goes to what I consider might be an ambiguity within the Australian War Memorial's submission and a point of clarification.

The first goes to their report on page 4 section 23 which suggests that the authority has stated that our approval was qualified by the recommendation that the memorial seek additional funds to allow for a better roof. In fact, what the authority did do was state that it was prepared to support the Australian War Memorial in any additional funding bid that they might make to secure a copper or similar roof. Equally, in their report on page 7 under section 40, the War Memorial suggests that the only significant point from which the roof can be seen is Mount Ainslie.

The authority's view is that that would be the most significant, but it would suggest that this building is primarily one where the roofscape is more important than the building elevations. In fact, even from the imagery that is available to the committee you can see that the roof will be quite visible from Treloar Crescent and from the western and eastern sides of the memorial site. To that end, our concern goes further than just a simple aesthetic; it goes to the quality of the roof in detail, of the way in which it is fixed and the way in which the edged treatment will appear from a close view of the roof on the site. So, we do have some substantial concerns about the nature of the roof, and we are yet to be convinced that the colourbond roof would even come close in appearance to a copper or similar—such as a zinc—type of roofing material.

The other reservation goes to the connections in relation to the proposed building and the existing building. The authority did have strong reservations originally about a central connection. Those reservations have been set aside by the options that have been explored by the architect, together with the War Memorial, and we are now quite comfortable that that is the best solution that is available, subject to the nature of the detail in the way in which that connection will be made.

Finally, with respect to the car parking, our understanding with the War Memorial was that the 355 spaces would be provided within this budget, including the 86 to the east of the War Memorial building. Our primary concern is that all car parking spaces are sealed and that there are not some that are sealed and some that are gravel.

As I said, with the exception of the roof material which we consider to be of major concern, the authority is very pleased with the building as proposed at this time.

CHAIR—Thank you very much.

Mr FORREST—Is your objection to the roofing material or just the colour?

Ms Pegrum—It is not the colour, it is the actual quality, feel and texture of the roof. That is why I draw attention to the fact that this roof is very close to the ground. I think you can see from the images available to the committee that you will be able to see it from close quarters. It is a very important design element of this construction. From our point of view, there is a clear difference in quality between a metal roof that has a dark or a light grey colour and the patina that you get from a copper or similar roof, and also the nature of the profiling and the way in which the connections are made.

I think anyone who views the War Memorial will recognise the importance of that and the quality of the roof on the current dome. I draw the attention of the committee to the fact that the War Memorial is in fact replacing the existing flat roof, at a cost of some \$2 million, that is on the existing building.

Mr FORREST—If we found the money, which is fairly unlikely, and made a roof out of copper, it is going to be copper colour, and it is going to be that way for about 30 or 40 years before it becomes the colour of the dome that is on the memorial now. If you do it in zinc, zinc is basically zincalume, it is bright, shining, a tin shed. I am a bit confused. If it is a matter of the colour, I am sure any one of the manufacturers could provide some kind of even speckled finish and it would be much less cost than going to an alternative high-cost material. I cannot see how the authority has the right or justification to impose such a cost impost for something that is not the issue that you think it is.

Ms Pegrum—We are not convinced that it is not the issue. We have no evidence to date of the materials being proposed by the architect, other than a text statement saying that grey colourbond is an option. The authority has not said that it will not give works approval to other than a copper or similar roof, it is saying that this is an important issue that needs to be considered and looked at. It is not imposing the cost on the building. The building has been designed and the cost plan given and as part of that design, the roof itself is an important element of the overall composition.

There could have been other solutions. We are very pleased with the one being proposed, but we have a responsibility to state where we believe the design element will have a very important and significant visual impact and where the quality of the material being used should be of an order not to detract from the overall memorial or its setting. In this instance, we are yet to be convinced of that. And subject to materials, details and profiling being shown to us, we reserve the latitude to vary that position but we have no evidence to that at this time.

Mr FORREST—Is the position on car parking not negotiable? Must there be 355 car parks provided?

Ms Pegrum—The 355 number has been generated. I think my colleague, Mr Burnham, can set out for you how that occurred and why we believe that to be the important number at this time.

Mr Burnham—The 355 was derived taking into account that the Anzac Hall itself would result in an increased length of stay and therefore less turnover in the car park. We looked at figures used by the ACT government in relation to museums and art galleries and required an additional two spaces per 100 square metres of floor space, plus replacement of the existing car park. That is how the figure of 355 was derived. We would be very concerned if the 355 were not provided at the same time as the opening of Anzac Hall.

Mr FORREST—To the extent that approval would not be granted, how far would your concern go? We have been told in evidence that the extra 86 are not included in the current budget. Are we going to be 86 short?

Ms Pegrum—It would be inappropriate for me to pre-empt the decision of the authority itself in regard to this, but I can say that it would be of significant concern and it may then be an issue of looking at temporary car parking or the like.

This particular building is being put there to enhance visitor understanding and experience of the War Memorial. If they were unable to find appropriate parking at that time it would detract from that experience and would reduce the viability of the building as an exhibition, and particularly in relation to the return visitation that the Australian War Memorial sees to be most important. These numbers are not dragged out of the sky, they are generated intelligently and the expectation is that that is the number that is likely to be required for visitors at opening.

Mr FORREST—Normally car parking requirements are part of normal town planning rules. Someone sets some rules for so many car parks per square metres. The War Memorial believes that they can cope with the extra parking with the number they are intending to provide within the budget. What formula do you use that says that they have it wrong?

Ms Pegrum—I am sorry, I do not understand that the War Memorial says they have it wrong.

Mr FORREST—No, they are quite happy to survive with fewer than 355. In fact, they are happy to be 86 short, as I understand. They believe that that will be sufficient to satisfy their needs. What rationale do you use that says that they have it wrong?

Ms Pegrum—May I start by saying that today was the first time that we became aware that the 86 places were in question. To date, the Australian War Memorial has not questioned the total number with the National Capital Authority, although there has been some discussion about just where they might be and whether they should be sealed or unsealed. I am not able to say that the War Memorial believes that they do not need 86 at this point, what I understood them to say was that they did not intend to provide them as part of this budget process.

Mr LINDSAY—Staying on car parking, in projects which you previously approved, and now with the benefit of hindsight, can you give examples where you have technically set a level of car parking and it has proved not to be enough?

Mr Burnham—We can take that question on notice and get back to you.

Mr LINDSAY—You said that you determined the number of car parking spaces on an intelligent basis, but at this stage there are no technical rules laid down as to how you determine car parking spaces. That is what local authorities seem to tell me. Is that your advice?

Mr Burnham—Madam Chair, just looking at the figures that are presented before us: the actual proposal as we have heard it today is actually for the memorial to provide less parking than is currently provided.

Mr LINDSAY—Yes.

Mr Burnham—I think commonsense would dictate that some additional parking is required as a result of the increased length of stay and also the likely increased visitation levels.

Mr LINDSAY—Your evidence also talked about bus parking. You suggested that, given that increased attendance is expected, you would be concerned to ensure that suitable arrangements for bus parking were made. Have you some advice on that?

Ms Pegrum—We are supportive of the location for the proposed bus parking in the future and we understand that that will be a future development, but our understanding at this point in time is that the current provisions for bus parking at the War Memorial will be retained. Again, that is a point where more detail will be required as the design develops, on just how they intend to provide for the buses.

Mr LINDSAY—You have no objection to removal of the trees?

Ms Pegrum—It is always unfortunate to see existing landscape removed, but on this occasion the trees are not of a particularly significant type; they are not heritage listed. There are some problems associated with those types of trees and proximity to built forms, so we accept and support the War Memorial's position that they need to be removed for this development.

Mr LINDSAY—We have seen a lot of discussion about the roof and your submission takes some time about that. What would you do with the roof?

Ms Pegrum—Our view is that a good quality material—as we said, copper or similar, and zinc would certainly be appropriate—should be used for this roof. Madam Chair, I suppose our position has been that that was not a requirement of the master plan, because one does not know what type of building design will be proposed. But what was evident in the master plan was a concern about the view of this particular proposal from Mount Ainslie and surrounds.

Mr LINDSAY—Instead of arguing about quality, then, why are you not arguing about aesthetics? That seems to be what you are putting.

Ms Pegrum—The aesthetic of the roof proposed is quite remarkable. It is a beautiful geometry that respects the overall geometry of the site; it has some very interesting allusions that one can pick up—it has been talked about as a helmet on the site, and similar types of statements have been made about it—it has a strong and simple form in relation to the building; and it provides an excellent backdrop along Treloar Crescent. So, in aesthetic terms, the proposal as a design form, shape and position, we believe is very good. What we are arguing about is the quality of the material in which it will be built.

Mr LINDSAY—Some could say, looking at what is proposed over there, that the roof is just a large, flat space. Did you consider thinking through that the form of the roof should be broken up so it was not simply a large, flat space?

Ms Pegrum—Our view is that the fact that it is a strong sweep is a positive thing, and that to break it up would start to fight with the volumes of the existing building, which break very clearly into three component parts when viewed from the rear. So, in fact, it is very respectful of those volumes of the existing building by being singular.

Mr LINDSAY—You would have heard the architect's evidence that the colour of the roof will be chosen to be the optimum colour. You still persist with wanting copper, even though the colour will be optimum.

Ms Pegrum—We are not persisting with one in copper. We are saying it should be of a high quality of 'copper or similar material', or equal to that. We have not seen the material that the architect is proposing and no material sample boards have been made available at this time. We reserve and wait on that. I do not think this is just an issue of colour. As I have said, the authority's concern is with the total quality of that roof.

Mr LINDSAY—Finally, your evidence says that all materials would be the subject of works approval by the authority. How far do you take that? If the architect comes to you and says, 'All right, here is what we are proposing for a roof,' do you have the authority to say, 'No, we don't want that'?

Ms Pegrum—Yes, we do. There have, of course, been no works approval applications made to the authority on any part of the building at this time. What has been submitted for our support in principle is the design concept. That is why it was so important to make clear those elements that we would particularly be looking at when works applications were made. It is also why we have made the statement in relation to the roof fairly broadly, to allow evidence to be put forward that there are options to a copper or equal roof.

Mr LINDSAY—So you are telling the committee that, if the architect comes to you with a domestic Colourbond roof, you could very well say no?

Ms Pegrum—That is correct. We could.

CHAIR—There are no more questions. Thank you.

[11.26 a.m.]

**MARTIN, Mr Eric John, Deputy Chairman, Access and Mobility Committee,
Australian Capital Territory Division, ACROD Ltd**

**WILLOUGHBY-THOMAS, Mr Mervyn, Member, Access and Mobility Committee,
Australian Capital Territory Division, ACROD Ltd**

CHAIR—Welcome. Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Mr Willoughby-Thomas—I have been a member of ACROD's Access and Mobility Committee for about 20 years now, and closely involved with access issues, the same as Eric is.

CHAIR—The committee has received a submission from ACROD dated 15 November 1999. Do you wish to make any amendment?

Mr Martin—Yes. We have tabled a one-page amendment today to clarify a couple of points.

CHAIR—It is proposed that the submission be received, taken as read and incorporated in the transcript of evidence. Do members have any objections? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The document read as follows—

CHAIR—I now invite you to make a short statement, which should be limited to five minutes or less, in support of your submission before we go to questions.

Mr Martin—I thank the committee very much for the opportunity to present ACROD's view. The difficulty that ACROD had with this submission was really a lack of detail and a lack of clarity in the PWC statement of evidence. This is, unfortunately, not an uncommon issue. The other aspect was the confusion in respect to some of the information that was put forward. For instance, there was reference to two standards: part 1 and part 2 of AS1428. Those two standards require different levels of access to be provided. In reading the statement we were not quite clear as to which was being proposed by the War Memorial or the design team. They do impact on space requirements and other issues. Because the War Memorial is very much a public building and has a lot of elderly and interested members of the public attending, we would strongly suggest that part 2 is the code or standard that is used in this case. That was not clear in the information provided.

We are aware that the War Memorial has been doing a lot in more recent years about upgrading its access, and that is certainly to be commended. But, because the whole of the access to Anzac Hall is through the existing building, it was not clear to us whether all the access issues in respect of the movement pathway system from the car park through the existing building to Anzac Hall will be included in this proposal or whether some issues were left to later work. Because it was an integral part of the total success of the Anzac Hall, we thought it was necessary to raise this issue. The building at the moment is not perfect but it has certainly moved a lot in the last few years in respect of improving that aspect.

Another issue which was not entirely clear is dealing with the full range of disabilities—the hearing impaired, the visually impaired as well as the physically impaired. They require different issues to meet their requirements, but that did not come out very clearly.

In a site visit that the War Memorial took us through to further clarify some aspects, issues like additional car parking for people with disabilities were pointed out to us. That was not clear on the documentation that was provided with the statement. So once again there were some things that were happening which we were not aware of, and the car parking is actually commended as well.

So they were the issues in an overview of the concerns that we had. It really boils down to this lack of clarity and direction in which the access provisions were being adequately catered for. I would ask Merv to deal, by way of example, with a couple of issues and then we will open for questions.

Mr Willoughby-Thomas—I would like to pinpoint some of the more essential points that affect access, if I might—I do not think I will take as much as five minutes. We recognise that the architects intend a high level of access and we appreciate that. We recognise a high level of access to all. The Anzac Hall will have major relics and there will be quite a lot of noise. I get the impression that the whole of the back wall is going to be full of changing pictures and sounds and things—I do not know quite what. It is certainly going to be an area that could affect some of the elderly people dramatically. I could see that people would be very much affected, possibly needing toilets and such like just to recover a

little bit; I don't know. I have asked that they recognise that there should be breaks in the sound for the sake of those with a hearing disability such as myself. Even in this room, the loop was very good on the perimeter but not quite so good in the middle, but I can hear.

Cars have been covered already. We have asked for two unisex toilets on the mezzanine rather than just one unisex plus the men's and the women's, simply because some disabled people need to transfer to a WC on one side, others another side. Unisex toilets are available for everyone; they are not really designated just for disabled people. I think one should bear in mind that electric scooters are becoming very much more common. If one can get one into the building, then they also would be needed, but they would certainly need a large toilet to be able to manoeuvre at all.

Signage certainly needs considerable thought. Even the attendants in the memorial at the moment recognise that there is a difficulty in interpreting the signs, the arrows and such like. We have made a point for the exterior of the building that the signs are not well arranged and the graphics are rather too light instead of being of a medium character or at least a bold sometimes.

We have put in an amendment for the major lift into the building to be on the south-west corner rather than the north-west. I would like to think that the electrical services consultant has enough experience of the effect of PA systems on people with a hearing disability, because many of them, particularly in airports, are quite ineffective.

Lighting and signage need to be considered in unison. So often you have the two consultants and they do not get together enough. We have quoted sizes of wheelchairs' turning circles and suchlike to assist the architects in recognising the real needs of lift sizes and suchlike. Although we have Australian standards, they are minimum sizes; they do not necessarily represent what should be done for the type of facility that is being built.

Finally, we are very pleased to think that an access consultant is likely to be provided. That access consultant should be someone who is regularly in touch with disabled people and their problems. The average architect really has so much to battle with, with changing legislation, standards and suchlike, that you really cannot keep up with everything and you need a bit of help to guide you through those points.

One final thing, if I might, is that the unisex toilet allows people of the opposite sex to assist someone with a wheelchair or other disability in the cubicle. That is why it is so important.

CHAIR—Thank you. Mr Martin, you have mentioned the lack of clarity in terms of provision of facilities for people with a disability, but are you satisfied that you have got access to the decision makers and that there is a good consultation process?

Mr Martin—In the past, the War Memorial has been very interested in the access committee's views and comments; there has never been a difficulty in that. It was just unfortunate that on this particular project the consultation occurred at the statement of evidence stage and there was not clarity in that. It has worked well in the past and we do not doubt that it should work very successfully in the future.

CHAIR—So you are confident that you will continue to have that access and be able to have input into the design as it affects people with a disability?

Mr Martin—Yes, but I think there need to be some fundamental decisions made in respect of the level of access and whether part 1 of the code is to be applied or part 2, because they do require different levels of standard. That is a policy decision, in part, from the War Memorial rather than something that we would determine, but we would certainly encourage any consultation process to accept the higher level of standard.

CHAIR—There being no other questions, we thank you.

[11.37 a.m.]

GOWER, Major General Steve, Director, Australian War Memorial

MARSHALL, Mr Barrington Charles, Director, Denton Corker Marshall Pty Ltd

NORTHEY, Ms Vicki, Project Manager, Gallery Development, Australian War Memorial

PINCOTT, Mr Rory James, Director, Donald Cant Watts Corke (ACT) Pty Ltd

ROOT, Mr Peter Kenneth, Managing Director, Root Projects Australia Pty Ltd

CHAIR—I remind you all that you are still under oath on this occasion as we now proceed to further questioning. Are there any questions from the committee?

Mr FORREST—I would like to pursue the question of the roof via the architect but, Major General Gower, you might like to answer as well. It seems to me that, with modern technology and material advance, people are objecting to Colourbond because of a perceptual problem that it somehow is going to look shonky or shoddy, but I have seen some very interesting colours and textures put onto Colourbond. Really, it is a zincalume with a colour stuck on it. I am sure that for a lot less than \$2 million we can get a very good result with that sort of experiment.

I am just wondering whether or not some samples or some effort can be made along that line rather than an expensive option. People standing on the top of Mount Ainslie are not going to be aware whether it is a copper roof or a zincalume roof with a colourbond texture on it. I am not happy and I am certainly not comfortable with wasting that sort of money when there are far greater needs on which we could spend it, like car parking and providing a better experience for disabled people. Are there some examples of product that could be used to help convince the National Capital Authority that we can still get a good result?

Major Gen. Gower—Probably it is best if I ask our architect to elaborate on that. We envisage a lot of detailed working with the National Capital Authority and it may well be that perhaps some appropriately textured material could be produced in sample size that may meet with their requirements. I will hand over to the architect.

Mr Marshall—I would like to say that obviously we would not even propose a colourbond roof if we did not think that we could produce a roof that was appropriate to this building. Obviously, the National Capital Authority will be concerned about the detailing of that roof. Certainly the edge treatment will be done in such a way that it will not look like a colourbond roof. It will be very fine, very elegant, and be done in precisely the same way as it would be done had we been doing a zinc roof.

On the one hand I can say to you that we are very comfortable that we can produce a roof that the authority will be happy with, but on the other hand I would nevertheless say that if we had our preferences we would still prefer to have a zinc roof—for the patina it gives, for the look as it changes over time. Whilst that is very subtle and cannot be

quantified in any terms that I could convince anybody of, it is simply the right thing to do. But, knowing that we do not have the money to do it—as architects we have a responsibility to bring this building in on cost—we have come up with a solution that we believe will be appropriate, if not perhaps quite as good as it could otherwise have been.

Mr FORREST—I have seen colourbond look like terracotta tiles. You can shape it, mould it and make it look like all sorts of alternative products and it is not until you get on the roof that you see that this is not what it appears to be.

Mr Marshall—I think the difficulty here is that it is such a large area that it actually comes in standard profiles. Whilst it is possible to muck around with the profiles and things like that on smaller roofs, on a roof of this scale to try and change the profiles inevitably increases the cost enormously. Whilst that does not increase it to the level of zinc or copper, it certainly adds hundreds of thousands of dollars to it when you work it out over the area of the roof. So we would be looking for a standard. We would have to look for a standard profile on the roof generally, but we would then treat the edges in a different manner. That is costing us extra money but we are able to do it within the budget.

Mr LINDSAY—The roof seems to be attracting some attention. My only concern is one of aesthetics. I am not a professional and at the end of the day I have to be guided by you guys. But your magic word before was the standard profiles. In the material that you have provided there, you are going to have a large area of Colourbond roof. You are convinced that that is what people should see and you should not break up the surface in any way?

Mr Marshall—Yes, I am convinced. Again as Ms Pegrum was alluding to, it is a subjective decision, but we felt that, rather than break the roof up into a series of zones or bays or whatever to try and give it more articulation, the best thing was simply to downplay the roof. In fact, even that view from Mount Ainslie is a little deceptive, in that the trees will hide more of the roof as they grow around the edge. But again we were faced, when we were doing those perspectives, with the problem that, if we show it exactly as it is at the moment and we show no roof at all because the trees have covered it, we will be accused of faking the drawing.

I can only say that we thought about it; we thought very seriously about whether we should break the roof into segments. We decided that the most appropriate thing was to just keep it as a low sheen. From a distance it will read as just a simple, smooth surface, but it will not be a shiny surface. When I talk about zinc I am not talking about a silvery, glittery surface; I am talking about the colour of lead. I suppose that is the colour that most people would associate it with.

Mr LINDSAY—The risk for us as the Public Works Committee might be this, and I seek your advice on it: you have seen that the NCA have been very strong in their view about the roof. You have heard them say today that in the subject of works approval they could refuse the roof. Where does it leave the PWC if the NCA decides that the roof is not appropriate? How are we protected in whatever approval we might choose to give you?

Major Gen. Gower—To guard against that possibility we have submitted a new policy proposal to the extent of \$2 million—that is the estimate of this copper or zinc treatment for

the roof that is perhaps favoured by the National Capital Authority. They have said they would support us, should that be the desired outcome. I can only say that we want an exhibition space that is 3,000 square metres and, just from a management point of view, I do not want a place that has a wonderful roof and ends up 2,200 square metres to fit within the budget.

The reality of the budget is \$11.9 million. That was produced, when you do estimating, on a concept by another architect. Right at the start, Denton Corker Marshall said they were not satisfied with those plans; they were inadequate. What we see today and you are considering today is the outcome. In case we end up with copper—and I think it is fair to say that we support our architect's advice—we have put in a bid for the extra \$2 million. Frankly, I would love to use that \$2 million, were it available, in other ways.

Mr LINDSAY—What would be your view if this committee, as one of its recommendations, took up Mr Forrest's view that the proposed roof is entirely satisfactory and we would not like to see an extra \$2 million spent on the roof? What would your view on that be?

Major Gen. Gower—I would hate to be set at odds with my esteemed colleague the CEO of the National Capital Authority, but were the committee in its wisdom to take that approach, I would be totally supportive of it.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you, General. Just to make life a tad easier, let us look at the disabled issues. A couple of the recommendations from ACROD suggested that all lifts need to be of a size large enough to accommodate wheelchairs with carers and enable them to turn around 180 degrees. Do you accept that recommendation?

Major Gen. Gower—I do not want to give a categorical answer to that. I have been advised during the break that we are using the higher part of the code, part 2. It is our wish to instruct the architects and the builders to follow the code, naturally enough, because that has been produced as a standard. A lot of the detail, I suspect, surrounding ACROD's comments will emerge and firm up and I think we can get common ground as things develop.

For example, one of the witnesses talked about a lot of noise and a back wall being full of colour. That is not the case. We do not know exactly what is going to be in the various parts; we have only got concepts being developed at this moment. We know we want object theatre and we know we want dramatic interpretations using sound and light. We accept that we do not want to cause distress or to have the volume too great for comfort to those who are disabled. I think that sort of thing can emerge during the planning stage. We have only got a design concept.

Mr LINDSAY—One of the other recommendations was that, with people more and more using electric scooters, there should be provision for wider turning circles. You are saying that you do not know the technicality of that—and I do not know the technicality of that—but you would take that on board and check if it was in the part 2 standard or whatever. Is that so?

Major Gen. Gower—We are very happy to do that. I can say, though, that we have a member of staff who gets around in an electric scooter. I do not think he has complained yet: he finds access quite acceptable.

CHAIR—The National Capital Authority raised the issue of car parking bays and, in fact, could require additional bays. What allowance is there in the budget for that to be the case?

Major Gen. Gower—We have had a lot of discussions with the NCA on this. I am quite happy to accept the 355. I have the dilemma, though—this is the crunch point in all projects; you do your budget scope reconciliation—that it would be most imprudent of me as CEO to commit us to a course of action where we do not have the funds, and I do not have the funds for that extra 80-odd on the eastern side. However, I can say that I am confident that in the next financial year I can find some funds. Car parking is important for visitor experience and the public in Campbell—I do not want to see overflow going into the nearby suburbs. I believe the extra car parking space is something I need to address as part of our normal budget appropriations, to do it from outside the project as such.

CHAIR—I notice that the existing budget for car parking bays is quite frugal.

Major Gen. Gower—Yes. It comes back to the point that we want a building of excellence compatible with the main building, the site and so forth for exhibitions. That is our focus. We realise that things like car parking, landscaping, the cafe and so on will need to be picked up from within our budget and we intend to do that. I think I could confidently say that by the time the building is open we will have provided for the car parking. I would not like this committee to think we are walking away from it or doing something inadequate, but I cannot do it within the budget at the moment.

CHAIR—Thank you.

Major Gen. Gower—Earlier on you did ask about financial contributions and so forth, and I took that on notice. I can now say the amount was \$222,907 in the last financial year.

Also, there was a point made by the ACROD gentlemen who said that we had a lot of elderly visit us. That is not our main visitation. All our surveys show that we get a visitation which really reflects a cross-section of the Australian community—lots of families and things like that. Whereas we will respect and do all we can to meet the requirements of the disabled, the Australian War Memorial is something that all Australians in their diversity visit, and we welcome that.

CHAIR—Thank you for that point of clarification.

Mr FORREST—I would be interested to have the committee have access to those figures if they are in a form that is publishable.

Major Gen. Gower—I would be delighted to make that available.

CHAIR—Thank you very much. We have received three letters which have been circulated to members. It is proposed that the letters be received, taken as read and incorporated in the transcript of evidence. Do members have any objections? There being no objection, it is so ordered.

The letters read as follows—

CHAIR—Before closing, I would like to thank the witnesses who have appeared before the committee today, and also thank the committee members, *Hansard* and the secretariat.

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 at public hearing this day.

Committee adjourned at 11.51 p.m.

