
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Redevelopment of Post 1945 Conflicts Galleries and Discovery Room for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT

House of Representatives
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

March 2006
Canberra

© Commonwealth of Australia 2006

ISBN 0 642 78766 2 (printed version)

ISBN 0 642 78767 0 (HTML version)



Contents

Membership of the Committee	v
List of Abbreviations	vi
Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives	vii
List of Recommendations	viii

REPORT

1 Introduction	1
Referral of Work	1
Background	2
The Site.....	2
Options Considered	2
Inquiry Process	2
Inspection and Public Hearing.....	3
2 The Proposed Works	5
Purpose.....	5
Need	6
Scope	6
Project Delivery.....	7
Cost.....	7
3 Issues and Conclusions	9
Heritage Considerations.....	9
Display of the HMAS <i>Brisbane</i> Bridge.....	10

Environmental Factors	10
Airconditioning.....	10
Energy Conservation Initiatives.....	11
Local Environmental Impact.....	11
Equity Access.....	12
Consultation	12
Funding	12

APPENDICES

Appendix A – List of Submissions	15
Appendix B – List of Witnesses	17
Appendix C – Submission No. 1 from the Australian War Memorial	19
Appendix D – Official Transcript of Evidence	67



Membership of the Committee

Chair Hon Judi Moylan MP

Deputy Chair Mr Brendan O'Connor MP

Members Mr John Forrest MP

Senator Michael Forshaw

Mr Harry Jenkins MP

Senator Stephen Parry

Mr Bernie Ripoll MP

Senator the Hon Judith Troeth

Mr Barry Wakelin MP

Committee Secretariat

Secretary Mrs Margaret Swieringa

Inquiry Secretaries Mr Raymond Knight

Ms Vivienne Courto

Research Officer Ms Penelope Wijnberg

Administrative Officer Mr Peter Ratas



List of Abbreviations

AWM	Australian War Memorial
DEH	Department of Environment and Heritage
EPBC Act	<i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
NCA	National Capital Authority
the Act	<i>Public Works Committee Act 1969</i>
RSL	Returned and Services League of Australia
the Plan	The National Capital Plan



Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives

No. 74 dated Thursday, 1 December 2005

4 PUBLIC WORKS – PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE –
REFERENCE OF WORK – REDEVELOPMENT OF POST-1945 CONFLICTS
GALLERIES AND DISCOVERY ROOM FOR THE AUSTRALIAN WAR
MEMORIAL, CANBERRA, ACT

Dr Stone (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), pursuant to notice, moved – That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report: Redevelopment of post-1945 conflicts galleries and discovery room for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT.

Question – put and passed.



List of Recommendations

3 Issues and Conclusions

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that works relating to the proposed redevelopment of the post 1945 Conflicts Galleries and Discovery Room at the Australian War Memorial proceed at the estimated cost of \$ 17.8 million.

Introduction

Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 1 December 2005 the proposal to redevelop the post-1945 galleries and discovery room for the Australian War Memorial(AWM) was referred to the Public Works Committee for consideration and report in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act).¹ The proponent agency for this work is the Australian War Memorial (AWM).
- 1.2 The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, advised the House that the estimated cost of the project was \$17.8 million. Subject to parliamentary approval, the proposed works were planned to commence in July 2006 and be completed by October 2007.

¹ Extract from the *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, No. 61, Wednesday 12 October 2005

Background

The Site

- 1.3 The proposed works will be constructed within the AWM's main building and will include a glazed link to an exhibition of the bridge of HMAS *Brisbane*.²

Options Considered

- 1.4 One option was for deferral of the work; however, the AWM was aware of constant criticism from veterans and their families over some years. They argued that deferral would alienate stakeholders and exacerbate criticism of the inadequacies of these galleries. The redevelopment was in line with the Gallery Masterplan, formulated to provide a series of staged developments as funding became available.³
- 1.5 A more limited redevelopment of the Discovery Room was considered, but the space was considered too confined to offer school students interactive experiences that would meet curriculum needs.⁴

Inquiry Process

- 1.6 The Committee is required by the Act to consider public works over \$6 million⁵ and report to Parliament on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.⁶

2 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, Australian War Memorial, paragraph 7

3 *ibid*, paragraph 13

4 *ibid*, paragraph 14

5 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 18 (8)

6 *ibid*, Section 17

- 1.7 The Committee called for submissions by advertising the inquiry in the *Canberra Times* on Saturday, 14 January 2006. The Committee also sought submissions from relevant government agencies, local government, private organisations and individuals, who may be materially affected by or have an interest in the proposed work. The Committee subsequently placed submissions and other information relating to the inquiry on its web site in order to encourage further public participation.

Inspection and Public Hearing

- 1.8 On Friday, 10 February 2006, the Committee visited the Australian War Memorial to inspect at first hand the scope and environs of the proposed works. This was followed by an in-camera briefing on confidential costs, after which a public hearing was held in Parliament House, Canberra.⁷

⁷ See Appendix D for the official Hansard transcript of the evidence taken by the Committee at the public hearing on Friday, 10 February 2006 in Parliament House, Canberra

The Proposed Works

- 2.1 The AWM is located at the northern end of Anzac Parade in Campbell, bordered by Fairbairn Avenue, Limestone Avenue and Treloar Crescent.¹
- 2.2 The Memorial's Post 1945 Conflicts Galleries are located on the lower level of the AWM in the west wing. The Discovery Room is located on the lower level in the east wing.

Purpose

- 2.3 The purpose of the proposed work is the redevelopment of the Memorial's Post 1945 Conflicts Galleries and Discovery Room, and the upgrade of visitor facilities and some back-of-house areas.
- 2.4 Specifically, it is anticipated that the new galleries will:
 - provide over 1,700 square metres of exhibition space in the Memorial's main building to the same world class standards as the rest of the galleries;²
 - allow the display of major iconic objects like the Iroquois helicopter and armoured personnel carrier from Vietnam and other objects (for

1 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, page 27

2 *ibid*, paragraph 7

example part of a Canberra bomber) that could not previously be displayed due to limitation of low ceilings and columns;³ and

- allow display of the HMAS *Brisbane* bridge.⁴

2.5 This work is part of a 10 year plan to maintain the Gallery at best museum practice, reflecting its importance as a unique national institution.

Need

2.6 Visitor evaluation surveys have shown that the existing galleries rated low in terms of visitor satisfaction. The current gallery space allows a very limited coverage of operations and experience. Visitor and veteran comments have consistently criticized the inadequacies of the galleries and the presentations, which date back to the 1980s.⁵

2.7 A number of important iconic objects relating to the Post 1945 Conflicts cannot be displayed in the current space. These include:

- the HMAS *Brisbane* bridge (Vietnam and Gulf War);
- an Iroquois helicopter (Vietnam); and
- an armoured personnel carrier (Vietnam, Somalia, and East Timor).⁶

2.8 Over 110,000 school students visit the Australian War Memorial annually. The current Discovery Room is less than 100 square metres and can only accommodate 20 students per session.⁷

Scope

2.9 The proposed refurbishment work will comprise a total area of approximately 2,500 square metres gross floor area and will include:

- Post 1945 Galleries (1,300 square meters);
- Discovery Room (320 square meters);

3 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 7

4 *ibid*

5 *ibid*, paragraph 10

6 *ibid*, paragraph 11

7 *ibid*

- schools orientation (200 square meters);
 - visitor services offices (50 square meters);
 - staff and back-of-house facilities (200 square meters);
 - new compactus storage area (320 square meters);
 - new public toilets (65 square meters);
 - new plant rooms (140 square meters);
- 2.10 The new Discovery Room will be more than double the current size and will allow 60 students every 40 minutes to explore and interact with the different immersive environments planned.⁸

Project Delivery

- 2.11 It is proposed that the works will be delivered under a lump-sum contract. Subject to Parliamentary approval, tenders will be called in April 2006. Construction of primary works is scheduled for completion by the end of December 2006.
- 2.12 Gallery fit-out works will begin in January 2007, with the galleries ready to open to visitors by the end of October 2007.⁹

Cost

- 2.13 The estimated cost of the project is \$17.8 million.¹⁰ This figure includes:
- escalation costs;
 - contingencies; and
 - all professional fees and authorities charges.
- 2.14 It does not include GST, relocation costs, staffing costs, and stakeholder consultation costs professional design and management.¹¹

8 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 11

9 *ibid*, paragraph 119

10 *ibid*, paragraph 118

11 *ibid*

Issues and Conclusions

Heritage Considerations

- 3.1 The AWM's submission states that the site and the Memorial are covered by the Heritage Masterplan 1997.¹
- 3.2 The AWM proposes to reuse much of the lower level of the building, and it will require intervention into the building fabric to varying degrees. Further, a new opening will be created in the building's western façade.²
- 3.3 At the hearing, the committee learned that the AWM has engaged the help of Peter Freeman Pty Ltd, Conservation Architects, in order to ensure that the AWM proposal will be approved by the National Capital Authority (NCA). These architects provide specialist advice to the AWM on specific heritage issues, such as the cut opening to the western façade and the detail that the stonework will require.³ The inquiry heard that the NCA initially had concerns relating to the AWM's plans, including:

...the scale of the HMAS *Brisbane* in the courtyard, the intrusive nature of the bridge into the War Memorial and subsequently the

1 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 26

2 *ibid*, paragraph 27

3 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 6 - 7

impact that the development would have on the fabric of the building.⁴

3.4 The NCA was specifically concerned that:

Opening up the building, taking parts of the building away, would break down the original fabric.⁵

3.5 However, the AWM submitted their proposal to the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) for consideration. The NCA provided comments on the proposal to the DEH who then made a decision that the proposals, as they relate to the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, are not a controlled action.⁶ As a result, the NCA is satisfied that:

The development would be consistent with the provisions of the Plan.⁷

Display of the HMAS *Brisbane* Bridge

3.6 At the inquiry the AWM indicated that the HMAS *Brisbane* display was temporary and would continue for a minimum of 10 years.⁸ The Committee enquired whether the bridge from the HMAS *Brisbane* would definitely need to be removed after 10 years or if its display term could be extended.⁹ The NCA replied that:

In terms of any works approved and submitted under the Plan, they [AWM] identified it was temporary and in concert with the conditions of the DEH approval. They could come back and ask for that to be extended.¹⁰

Environmental Factors

Airconditioning

3.7 At the hearing the AWM told the Committee that:

4 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

5 *ibid*

6 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission 4, section 3.4

7 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

8 *ibid*, page 7

9 *ibid*

10 *ibid*, page 15

All museums have very strict parameters for not just temperature control but also humidity control.¹¹

- 3.8 As a result, museums can be quite energy consuming. However, the AWM added that new technologies, particularly those related to plant, mean that much of the plant can be run in a more energy efficient manner. Further, the Memorial has the added benefit of passive control, because of the mass of the building.¹²

Energy Conservation Initiatives

- 3.9 In its submission the AWM proposed a range of concepts to be incorporated in the design of mechanical services to minimise energy consumption in the redeveloped areas.¹³
- 3.10 At the inquiry the committee heard that the AWM is:
- ...also looking at, and have used in East Building, water-saving devices like the waterless urinal as one example and also energy efficient lighting wherever possible.¹⁴
- 3.11 The Committee was told that the AWM has a comprehensive and accredited energy management plan.¹⁵

Local Environmental Impact

- 3.12 At the inquiry the Chair observed that the AWM would have more visitors as the building expands, and asked what impact the current proposal would have on the environment and the surrounds of the Gallery.¹⁶
- 3.13 The AWM responded that it has no current plans to add car parking, but is very conscious of the impact of buses and additional car parking on the local residents.¹⁷ Further, the Memorial works with the NCA which has very strict guidelines regarding the use of the Memorial grounds. Another factor is that the Memorial grounds contain commemorative devices that require very respectful treatment.¹⁸

11 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 10

12 *ibid*

13 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 2, paragraph 3

14 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 10

15 *ibid*, pages 10-11

16 *ibid*, page 9

17 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, pages 9-10

18 *ibid*, page 10

Equity Access

- 3.14 The Committee heard that the AWM has engaged an independent consultant to advise it on access to the building. The AWM seeks to ensure that there is equity of both physical and intellectual access to its displays. As such the AWM is considering further options to ensure intellectual access for visitors.¹⁹

Consultation

- 3.15 Surveys undertaken by the AWM have indicated a need for the redevelopment of the Post 1945 Conflict galleries, particularly as some 43 per cent of visitors have some affiliation with the 110,000 who served in these conflicts.²⁰
- 3.16 In addition to public consultation, the AWM submission stated that it has been consulting widely with stakeholders, and that this process is considered to be an important part of gallery development. The submission received from The Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) stated that it values the consultation process that is undertaken, and that it strongly supports the AWM proposal.²¹
- 3.17 The AWM submitted that it has consulted with the NCA and the DEH, and has briefed the relevant ACT Government Authorities, the nearby Campbell High School and local residents. The AWM also plans to brief the Australian Greenhouse Office.²²
- 3.18 At the hearing, the Committee was told that the AWM has been
... having ongoing discussions with the NCA and the DEH over probably the last four years regarding the whole project²³

Funding

- 3.19 The total budget for the proposed gallery redevelopment project is \$17.8 million. The AWM explained that:
-

19 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 9

20 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 10

21 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No. 3

22 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 30

23 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 5

An amount of \$14.7 million has been allocated from existing reserves and prudent allocation of funds for all design, architectural primary works, building services, multimedia production, staffing, and gallery exhibition works.²⁴

- 3.20 The AWM plans to fund the remainder of the project through sponsorship and other fundraising activities.²⁵

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that works relating to the proposed redevelopment of the post 1945 Conflicts Galleries and Discovery Room at the Australian War Memorial proceed at the estimated cost of \$ 17.8 million.

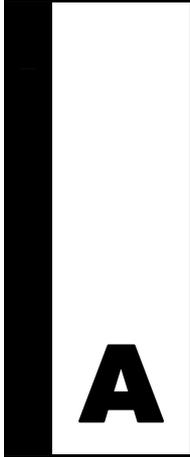
Hon Judi Moylan MP

Chair

29 March 2006

²⁴ Appendix C, Submission No 1, paragraph 15

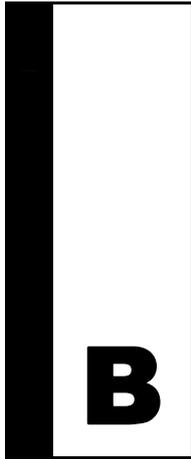
²⁵ *ibid*



Appendix A – List of Submissions

Submissions

1. Australian War Memorial
2. Australian War Memorial (Supplementary)
3. Returned and Services League of Australia
4. National Capital Authority
5. Australian War Memorial (Supplementary)



Appendix B – List of Witnesses

Major General Steve Gower, AO (Retd), Director/Chief Executive Officer,
Australian War Memorial

Ms Vicki Northey, PSM, Head of Gallery Development, Australian War
Memorial

Mr John Denton, Director, Denton Corker Marshall Architects

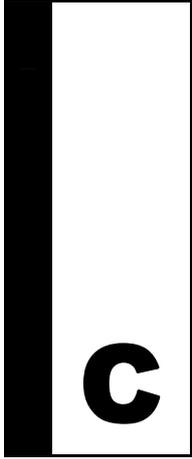
Mr Mark De Jager, Director, WT Partnership Quantity Surveyors

Mr Peter Root, Consultant Project Manager, Root Projects Australia

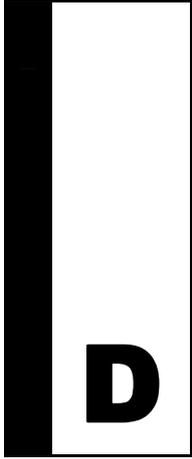
Mr Derek Robson, AM, National Secretary, Returned and Services League of
Australia

Mr Todd Rohl, Managing Director, Planning and Urban Design, National
Capital Authority

Mr Shamsul Huda, Principal Planner, Planning and Urban Design, National
Capital Authority



**Appendix C – Submission No. 1 from the
Australian War Memorial**



Appendix D – Official Transcript of Evidence