

From: Jock and Jan [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 10 June 2020 11:45 AM
To: Committee, Public Works (REPS) <pwc@aph.gov.au>
Subject: Submission on extensions to Australian War Memorial

The Australian War Memorial's \$498 million extensions should not proceed. They cannot be justified. The money would be better spent on direct benefits to veterans and their families and on other national priorities, especially following the COVID-19 lockdown and resulting long-term hardship to individuals around the country.

I have always been impressed with the Memorial and the Memorial should be revered, but Australia has many stories, not all of them by any means associated with war. Excessive veneration of the Anzac story denies the richness of our history, as presented in our many cultural institutions.

The Memorial wants added space to display more of the big artefacts representing recent conflicts (many of which were controversial), and to 'heal' veterans. Responsibility
The Memorial's ambition to provide a 'therapeutic milieu' for veterans trivialises the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and suggests that memorials can play such a role – a claim for which there is scant evidence.

The planned direct feed of current Defence Department activities is totally inappropriate in a war memorial.

Overall, the proposal is aimed at keeping the national focus firmly in an often murky past (Vietnam and Iraq wars particularly) when the future presents many challenges that will not be met by the approaches of the past.

Sincerely,
Dr Jock Churchman

