

To: Public Works Committee (PWC) of Australian Federal Parliament

Subject: Feedback on proposed extensions to the Australian War Memorial

As a resident of Canberra interested in our history and culture, I would like to share with you some serious reservations about the proposed extension to the Australian War Memorial.

Australia's national cultural institutions together preserve our history and promote cultural understanding among all Australians. Many of these institutions, such as the National Library, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery, are struggling under ongoing reductions in federal subsidies. The extravagant amount allotted to the extension of the Australian War Memorial elevates it above other institutions that are equal or more important to our national identity.

Australia is not a bellicose nation. We have participated in several wars to support our allies, even when such wars were not directly in our national interest. For our future, we need to focus on peaceful coexistence not militarisation.

The planned extension includes the demolition of the Anzac Hall, which received the Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Public Architecture in 2005. Many architects and designers have voiced strong opposition to the destruction of Anzac Hall.

Rather than very expensive large spaces to exhibit more war material, the Australian War Memorial should pause and consider its purpose within the history and cultural

identity of Australia. The AWM has yet to properly reflect Australia's Frontier Wars, which should be a priority in the ongoing reconciliation process. To further a peaceful, positive future for all, the AWM should also include a Peace Studies Centre. Both exhibits and discussion of the Frontier Wars as well as a Peace Studies Centre are crucial to encouraging positive participation by young people as citizens in our democracy.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this very important event that will have ramifications well into the future.

Sincerely,

Pamela Collett

