

Heritage Guardians

Equity for our cultural institutions

MEDIA RELEASE: Distinguished Australians come out against the \$498m proposed extensions to the Australian War Memorial

More than 80 prominent Australians have signed a letter opposing the \$498m plan to extend the Australian War Memorial.

Among the signatories are renowned Australian authors, Richard Flanagan, Thomas Keneally, and Don Watson, leading historians Marilyn Lake, Stuart Macintyre, Mark McKenna, Henry Reynolds, and Clare Wright, three former heads of Australian government departments, two former Australian ambassadors, a former Director and Deputy Director of the War Memorial, and the founding Chair of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017.

The 83 signatories include 24 recipients of awards in the Order of Australia.

‘The Australian War Memorial’s \$498 million extensions should not proceed’, the letter says. ‘They cannot be justified, they show the Memorial is being given preference over other national institutions, and the money could be better spent.’

‘We have just seen over \$350 million spent by the Commonwealth on the Anzac Centenary and the Sir John Monash Centre in France. Should further money be spent on these extensions rather than on other needy cultural institutions or direct benefits to veterans and their families?’

[The letter and the full list of signatories.](#)

[Today’s story online.](#)

Contact: David Stephens for Heritage Guardians 0413 867 972; 02 6251 5842;

admin@honesthistory.net.au

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Heritage Guardians: coordinating community action on the War Memorial extensions

‘[It should] ... not be colossal in scale but rather a gem of its kind’ (Charles Bean and the Australian War Museum Committee, 11 October 1923, on the proposed building and collection)