

AWM judgement damning

The Australian Heritage Council has delivered a damning judgement on the AWM expansion (Editorial "AWM redevelopment row continues", October 15, p20), but It won't end the saga. Here is a solution.

First Mitchell. The AWM began extending its facilities here in 1993 specifically for the storage and exhibition of large technology objects (LTO). Last year Dr Nelson announced Mitchell can now meet all LTO needs for eight to nine years and, before long, expected demands for the next 50 years. The LTO now flowing from Defence serve no commemorative purpose, warrant no place in the memorial and should go to Mitchell. That would remove \$480 million for the display of LTO from the estimated \$498m to be spent on the AWM makeover. Cost to complete the Mitchell development: no more than \$60m.

Second. During the term of my successor, Steve Gower, award-winning architect Richard Johnson designed a sizeable exhibition hall to fit neatly and unobtrusively to the side of Anzac Hall. It was a Centenary of Anzac project which, despite its excellence, was dropped from the program. Cost today: around \$25 million.

Together, for less than \$100m, the recently acquired LTO would go where they ought to be and better space would be available in the memorial to tell the stories of Australians in recent conflicts. The memorial's heritage status would be preserved, Anzac Hall would continue to be "fit for purpose" and exciting opportunities would be opened up to revitalise the Memorial.

Brendon Kelson, director

AWM 1990-1994

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6978504/act-election-result-is-definitive-proof-voters-want-light-rail/?cs=14244>