



OFFICE OF THE HON MATT KEOGH MP
MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL

MC22-003239

Dr David Stephens
admin@honesthistory.net.au

Dear Dr Stephens

Thank you for your correspondence of 4 August 2022 to the Director of the Australian War Memorial (the Memorial), Mr Matt Anderson, and your follow up correspondence to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs regarding the Memorial's Development Project. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

In response to your questions, I provide the following which I hope offers the clarity you are seeking:

1. Yes, the additional \$50 million provided to the Memorial was included as an equity injection in the overall Department of Veterans' Affairs budget for 2022-23.
2. As above, the funding change can be found in the Department of Veterans' Affairs budget for 2022-23.
3. As noted above the money was provided and published as part of the regular budget process.
4. The purpose of Senate Estimates is to provide Senators with the opportunity, through public hearings, to question officials directly about the objectives, operational procedures and efficiency of the programs for which they are responsible. The role of the Memorial's officials is to answer those questions and the Memorial provided answers accordingly at the April 2022 Senate Estimates process. Having reviewed the Hansard for 6 April 2022 it is clear that no Committee members raised the matter of funding and hence no discussion of the matter occurred.
5. The decision not to announce the additional funding was made due to the need to ensure 'value for money' procurement. The Memorial was, and is, in the process of procuring head contractors for the major construction elements of the Development Project. Revealing publicly that additional funding had been provided to the Memorial would likely have led to adverse impacts on financial negotiations with tenderers and increased taxpayer expense for construction works.

I assure you that the Minister, as well as Parliament and government more generally, continue to exercise appropriate oversight of the Memorial's Development Project.

Thank you for taking the time to write to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicola Gordon-Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with some loops and flourishes.

Nicola Gordon-Smith
Chief of Staff

5 September 2022