

How much gallery space will there be in the Australian War Memorial after the current redevelopment and how much of that will be devoted to the Australian Frontier Wars?

- A. 9954 sq m gallery space in pre-redevelopment Memorial¹
 - B. 7748 sq m new gallery space produced by redevelopment²
-
- C. 17 702 sq m total gallery space after redevelopment
 - D. 410 sq m gallery space to be devoted after redevelopment to 'pre-1914 conflicts', i.e. New Zealand Wars, Sudan, Boxer Rebellion, Boer War AND Frontier Wars³
 - E. 2.3 per cent = D. as a percentage of C.⁴ Note that the figure at D. includes space for those four small imperial wars as well as the Frontier Wars. 'Planning the content [of the pre-1914 gallery] will commence in 2025. The decision on space allocation specific to frontier violence, will be made during the interpretive design process in 2026' (source: note 3 below).
 - F. 198 sq m gallery space (out of the 410 sq m above) to be devoted after redevelopment to the New Zealand Wars, Sudan AND Frontier Wars.⁵
 - G. 1.1 per cent = F. as a percentage of C. Note that the figure at F. includes space for those two small imperial wars as well as the Frontier Wars.

¹ August 2023 emailed advice to Honest History from senior War Memorial officer.

² March 2023 [advice to Honest History from senior War Memorial officer](#).

³ ['Is this "substantial"? War Memorial finds another two square metres for the Frontier Wars \(and four other Pre-1914 conflicts\)', Honest History, 5 May 2023.](#)

⁴ This is the relevant calculation (rather than D. as a percentage of B.) as the Memorial has advised that the pre-1914 galleries will be developed in *refurbished* rather than new space. Note also that the 7748 sq m figure at B. is not beyond dispute. Former War Memorial officer Richard Llewellyn [believes the figure is only 4291 sq m \(comments\)](#); substituting Llewellyn's figure for B. above makes total gallery space after redevelopment (C.) just 14 245 sq m and D. as a percentage of C. becomes 2.9 per cent.

⁵ [Answer to Question on notice no. 643 \(Portfolio question number: 49\) 2023-24 Budget estimates Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Defence Portfolio; Senator Ross Cadell: asked the Australian War Memorial on 31 May 2023](#), pp. 16-17.

Bottom line

Honest History has followed [12 months of the Memorial's twists and turns on this subject](#). The War Memorial's 'much broader, much deeper' depiction of frontier conflict (then Council Chair Nelson in September 2022), its 'substantial' presentation (current Council Chair Beazley in early 2023), turns out, on the Memorial's own figures, *to be taking up just 1.1 per cent of total gallery space after the redevelopment – and that small proportion is to be shared with the contingents sent to the New Zealand Wars and the Sudan*. Between them, the Australian colonial contingents to New Zealand and the New South Wales contingent to the Sudan lost nine men (all from the Sudan contingent and all to illness) while the Frontier Wars killed between 20 000 (the Memorial's own figure) and 100 000 Australians.

Honest History

1 December 2023