

World Heritage Bid - Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)

Wednesday, 5 March 2025
Reconciliation Committee

Strategic Alignment - Our Environment

Public

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the Tentative List submission for the World Heritage Bid. The Tentative List submission is being prepared in 2025 and targeting submission to the Federal Government by early 2026.

The report focuses on processes being established to enable consultation with Traditional Owners about the World Heritage Bid using the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

The Australian Heritage Council and the Federal Government require the World Heritage Bid to gain consent from First Nations groups through the FPIC process before they will consider submitting a nomination to UNESCO for inclusion on the Tentative List for World Heritage.

FPIC is a fundamental principle that protects Indigenous peoples' rights to make informed decisions about activities affecting their lands, territories, and resources. Central to FPIC are the principles of Early Engagement, Equal Consideration, and Participation. It ensures that consent is given freely, without coercion or pressure, and obtained prior to project approvals or decisions. A short explanation of the FPIC process is provided in [Link 1](#).

The World Heritage Bid aligns with the City of Adelaide's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2024–2027 Action 5.4: 'Investigate opportunities to embed Kaurna cultural heritage advice within Council resourcing'.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL

THAT COUNCIL

1. Receives and notes the report on the World Heritage Bid – Free, Prior and Informed Consent, as contained in Item 5.2 on the Agenda for the meeting of the Reconciliation Committee held on 5 March 2025.
2. Notes that Administration will work with South Australian Native Title Services to lead the consultation with Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal stakeholders.

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	<p>Strategic Alignment – Our Environment</p> <p><i>Achieve world heritage listing of our Park Lands, and protect their national heritage listing status and pursue State Heritage listing to strengthen protections</i></p>
Policy	<p>Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan 2024-2027</p> <p><i>Action 1 - Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</i></p> <p><i>Action 5 - Create engagement protocols that enable the representation and partnership of the Kaurna People</i></p> <p>Adelaide Park Lands Management Strategy</p> <p><i>Strategy 3.1 Recognise, promote and protect sites of Kaurna cultural heritage and significance and work with Kaurna people to provide education to the community about these sites.</i></p> <p><i>Strategy 3.16 Progress World Heritage Listing of the Adelaide Park Lands and City Layout.</i></p> <p>Heritage Strategy 2021-2036 and Action Plan</p> <p><i>1.9 Prepare tentative bid for World Heritage List nomination</i></p> <p><i>3.1 Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support, promote and share their cultural heritage and modern stories, and recognise the Kaurna people as the traditional owners.</i></p>
Consultation	Preliminary engagement with the Kaurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC) has commenced. South Australian Native Title Services (SANTS) will support Administration with further consultation with KYAC and other Traditional Owners and Aboriginal stakeholders.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	<p>Opportunities for reconciliation created through World Heritage listing include creating a shared narrative about First Nations culture and history that aligns with colonial settlement. The FPIC process aligns with the Stretch RAP as it progresses governance and engagement protocols that enable representation and partnership with Kaurna and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p> <p>Other opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening trust and inclusivity with Traditional Owners. • FPIC is a principle enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Applying FPIC will position the City of Adelaide as a leader in reconciliation and ethical governance. • Utilising the World Heritage Tentative List submission as a catalyst for truth-telling and greater recognition.
24/25 Budget Allocation	The 2024/25 Annual Business Plan and Budget did not allocate funding to progress the World Heritage Bid. Project management of the bid is being managed within existing resources.
Proposed 25/26 Budget Allocation	A budget proposal for the World Heritage project, including ongoing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, is being prepared for consideration in the 2025/26 Annual Business Plan and Budget process. The project is currently unfunded in 2025/26 and subject to budget deliberations and decision by the Council.
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The principles of FPIC have the potential to be adopted more broadly by the City of Adelaide in its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The World Heritage project provides a valuable opportunity to apply FPIC in practice, allowing the City of Adelaide to refine its approach and draw lessons for future engagements.

24/25 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Administration is seeking to progress with FPIC engagement in 2024/25 subject to quarterly budget review processes.
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. The City of Adelaide's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 has a commitment to pursuing a World Heritage listing for the Adelaide Park Lands, City Layout and its Rural Settlement Landscapes.
2. The areas considered for World Heritage listing will demonstrate colonial settlement from the 1830s to 1870s, including the experience of settlement by First Nations people.
3. These areas extend beyond the City of Adelaide local government area and incorporate the rural settlements landscapes which reflect how South Australia was surveyed and settled by European colonisers.
4. The World Heritage project is seeking to engage with multiple Aboriginal language groups that are the Traditional Owners of these areas.
5. This report focuses on processes being established by the City of Adelaide to enable consultation with Traditional Owners using the principles of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)

6. The right to FPIC is recognised by native title, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the World Heritage Convention.
7. FPIC is a collective right of Indigenous people to give or withhold their consent at key decision-making points during a proposed activity affecting their traditional land, or rights in general.
8. Central to FPIC are the principles of Early Engagement, Equal Consideration, and Participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as traditional land custodians.
9. A short explanation of the FPIC process is provided in [Link 1](#).
10. Elements to consider for implementation of FPIC are:
 - 10.1. Policy alignment: Integrate FPIC principles into the City of Adelaide's policies, procedures, and decision-making frameworks.
 - 10.2. Stakeholder engagement: Work collaboratively with Kaurna and Aboriginal community leaders, organisations, and Elders to build trust and mutual respect.
 - 10.3. Transparent communication: Provide clear and accessible information about the purpose, potential impacts, and outcomes of proposed activities.
 - 10.4. Capacity building: Support Administration to engage with FPIC processes by providing resources, training, or independent advice if needed.
 - 10.5. Long-term relationship: Build ongoing partnerships rather than one-off consultations to demonstrate a genuine commitment to reconciliation and trust-building.

World Heritage Bid – Tentative List Submission

11. The Australian Heritage Council and the Federal Government require the World Heritage Bid to gain consent from First Nations groups through the FPIC process before they will consider submitting a nomination to UNESCO for inclusion on the Tentative List for World Heritage.
 - 11.1. The World Heritage listing process establishes FPIC as a framework for respectful and inclusive decision-making with Traditional Owners.
 - 11.2. FPIC forms part of the processes for identifying, nominating, managing, and protecting World Heritage properties.
 - 11.3. The World Heritage Bid project depends upon a successful FPIC process and gaining endorsement from First Nations groups in accordance with FPIC principles.
12. The City of Adelaide's World Heritage Bid presents an opportunity to implement FPIC principles, setting a precedent for how cultural, environmental, and developmental initiatives can be carried out in genuine partnership with Traditional Landowners and custodians.
13. The City of Adelaide has commenced positive discussions with Kaurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC) on the World Heritage Bid and FPIC.
 - 13.1. This includes a workshop held on 4 October 2024 with KYAC Directors, Heritage Consultant Duncan Marshall AM and the Administration, to provide information about the World Heritage Listing process and advice to KYAC on their rights under FPIC principles.

- 13.2. At the 4 October 2024 workshop, the City of Adelaide received confirmation that KYAC will be the primary endorsing body for the FPIC process for the World Heritage Tentative Submission. It was determined that there is in-principle support for further development, engagement with other Aboriginal cultural authorities and collaboration with South Australian Native Title Services (SANTS). This is to ensure the framework is both culturally appropriate and aligned with best practice.
14. Administration has commenced discussions with SANTS' regarding Traditional Owner consultation requesting SANTS' to:
 - 14.1. Act as a key liaison with Traditional Owner groups in South Australia. The language groups may include Ngadjuri, Peramangk, Ngarrindjeri and Kaurna.
 - 14.2. Ensure Traditional Owners are familiar with the FPIC Principles and consenting rights.
 - 14.3. Provide advocacy support to Traditional Owners.
 - 14.4. Facilitate culturally appropriate engagement and consultation processes.

Next steps

15. The next steps to be undertaken for FPIC as part of the World Heritage Bid are:
 - 15.1. Partner with SANTS' to commence Traditional Owner engagement in March 2025 and undertake FPIC processes.
 - 15.2. The Tentative List submission is being prepared in 2025 and targeting submission to the Federal Government by early 2026.
 - 15.3. The World Heritage project provides a valuable opportunity to apply FPIC in practice, allowing the City of Adelaide to refine its approach for future engagements.
 - 15.4. Pending the outcomes of this work, the principles of FPIC have the potential to be adopted more broadly by the City of Adelaide in its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 [–Free, Prior and Informed Consent \(FPIC\): World Heritage Bid](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -