

Update on the World Heritage Listing for the Adelaide Park Lands and Rural Settlement Landscapes

Strategic Alignment - Our Environment
Public

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**City Planning, Development
and Business Affairs
Committee**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the World Heritage Bid Tentative List Submission for Adelaide and its Rural Settlement Landscapes (Tentative List Submission) since the Council decision on 12 March 2024, where the City of Adelaide elected to lead and fund the preparation of the Tentative List Submission ([Link 1](#)).

The World Heritage Bid for Adelaide and its Rural Settlement Landscape (World Heritage Bid) is identified as a measure of success in the City of Adelaide's Strategic Plan 2024-2028. World Heritage listing has been a long-term ambition of the City of Adelaide and is identified in the Council's Heritage Strategy 2021-2036 – Heritage: Our Future.

The World Heritage Bid is an objective, initiative and measure of success in the Kadaltilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority (Kadaltilla) Strategic Plan 2023-2028, including obtaining State Government support for World Heritage listing submission by 2026. Kadaltilla has been receiving regular updates on progress with the Tentative List Submission.

Preparation of the draft Tentative List Submission commenced in 2022 with the support of expert heritage consultants Duncan Marshall AM and Dr Jane Lennon AM. The draft Tentative List Submission has been prepared in accordance with the UNESCO World Heritage listing process. The UNESCO World Heritage listing process involves multiple stages with the Tentative List Submission being the first step in the process.

To be included on Australia's Tentative List, a Tentative List Submission must have the support of the State and Federal Governments and the Consent of the Traditional Owners through UNESCO's Free, Prior and Informed Consent process (FPIC).

In relation to the latter, UNESCO requires that 'parties shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before including the sites on their Tentative List'.

Subject to the incorporation of the Aboriginal Narrative, a UNESCO requirement, the draft is substantially complete with the following tasks required prior to submission to the State Government:

- Finalise the portions of the Tentative List Submission relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.
- Receive Consent to lodge the Tentative List Submission from the Traditional Owners whose lands may form part of the World Heritage property once listed.

Administration had undertaken targeted stakeholder engagement for the World Heritage Bid aiming to build broad public support for the Tentative List Submission and identify opportunities to unlock economic, tourism and social outcomes. Targeted partnerships are occurring with the University sector.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 9 June 2026 for consideration

THAT THE CITY PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL

THAT COUNCIL

1. Receives the report as contained in Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee held on 2 June 2026.
 2. Notes the engagement with Traditional Owners under the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent required by UNESCO for a World Heritage Bid Tentative List Submission.
 3. Notes the stakeholder engagement and marketing activities undertaken to support the World Heritage Bid and proposed next steps to develop this as a State tourism development opportunity.
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IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Environment Achieve world heritage listing of our Park Lands and protect their national heritage listing status and pursue State Heritage listing to strengthen protections.
Policy	As an action identified in the Heritage Strategy 2021-2036, the World Heritage listing of Adelaide and its rural settlement landscapes seeks to landmark the site and protect the area for future generations to enjoy and appreciate.
Consultation	The City of Adelaide has been working closely with the State Government, other local government bid partners, the Federal Government and Kadalilla / Adelaide Park Lands Authority for several years on the World Heritage Bid project. Aboriginal engagement and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes have been significantly advanced with all deliverables sought by Traditional Owners completed and with the Traditional Owner Groups for endorsement. In September 2025, stakeholder engagement commenced for the World Heritage Bid which is outlined in this report.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	The World Heritage listing process is contingent on Traditional Owner Consent through the FPIC process. In the circumstance that Traditional Owners do not Consent to the Tentative List Submission, the Submission will not be accepted by the Australian Government for consideration.
Opportunities	Opportunities created through World Heritage listing include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding and recognition of the significance of Adelaide and its rural settlement landscapes Global profile and cultural tourism business and international investment attraction Creating a shared narrative about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history that aligns with colonial settlement and promotes Reconciliation. Greater levels of protection.
25/26 Budget Allocation	The 2025/26 Annual Business Plan and Budget adopted on 24 June 2025 includes a strategic project allocation of \$178,000 for the World Heritage Bid project.
Proposed 26/27 Budget Allocation	The draft 2026/27 City of Adelaide Business Plan and Budget does not include a strategic project allocation for the World Heritage Bid project. Administration will seek to finalise project deliverables for the Tentative List Submission process through existing resources and other funding sources (refer below).
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	The World Heritage bid process is complex and lengthy. The process to achieve a Tentative Listing is expected to take 3-4 years, inclusive of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), research, drafting, engagement and approvals across multiple Councils, State and Federal Government. The City of Adelaide has been working to accelerate the Tentative Listing with resourcing and frequency of meetings in support of the FPIC process.
25/26 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	The Mount Lofty Consortium (the Consortium) that was formally leading the bid prior to March 2024 has indicated support to transfer approximately \$60,000 remaining in a fund set up by the Consortium to the City of Adelaide in 2026/27 to contribute towards the ongoing development of the World Heritage Bid.

DISCUSSION

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the World Heritage Bid Tentative List Submission for Adelaide and its Rural Settlement Landscapes (Tentative List Submission).
2. Following a Council decision on 12 March 2024 ([Link 1](#)), the City of Adelaide elected to lead and fund the preparation of the Tentative List Submission. Dedicated funding was provided to support the project in 2025/26.
3. This report outlines progress since the previous update provided to the City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee on 5 August 2025 ([Link 2](#)).

Tentative List Submission

4. The UNESCO World Heritage listing process involves multiple stages with the Tentative List Submission the first step in the process.
5. The steps to prepare the Tentative List Submission include:
 - 5.1. Prepare a draft Tentative List Submission
 - 5.2. Incorporate Aboriginal knowledge and Consent processes
 - 5.3. Finalise the Tentative List Submission
 - 5.4. Seek State and Federal Environment Minister Agreement to the Tentative List Submission
 - 5.5. Formal State and Federal Government support for the Tentative List Submission
 - 5.6. The Federal Government submits the Tentative List Submission document to the World Heritage Centre for inclusion in Australia's World Heritage Tentative List.
6. To be included on Australia's Tentative List, a Tentative List Submission must have the support of the State and Federal Governments and the Consent of Traditional Owners.
7. The relevant State Government Agency for the World Heritage Bid is the Department for Environment and Water. Following the 2026 State Government election, the relevant State Minister is The Hon. Emily Bourke MLC, Minister for Climate, Environment and Water.
8. The draft Tentative List Submission is substantially complete with the following tasks required prior to submission to the State Government:
 - 8.1. Finalise the portions relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history by these communities (the 'Aboriginal Narrative')
 - 8.2. Receive Consent to lodge the Tentative List Submission from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities whose lands may one day form part of the World Heritage property.
9. Through the development of the Tentative List Submission, the Administration has consulted regularly with State and Federal Heritage Agencies, local government stakeholder-partners and world heritage experts. Their advice continues to shape the project's direction and deliverables.
10. Administration has finalised work to refine research and attribute mapping undertaken through the heritage internship project.
 - 10.1. The purpose of this work was to clarify the areas that may one day form part of the World Heritage area, including the City of Adelaide, Adelaide Park Lands, Port Adelaide, Glenelg, McLaren Vale and Barossa Valley Character Preservation Areas.
 - 10.2. A plan of these areas is on the World Heritage Bid project website ([Link 3](#)).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement and Free, Prior and Informed Consent

11. Administration has undertaken a rigorous review of best practice for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities regarding the process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as required by UNESCO for World Heritage consideration.
12. FPIC is a process and methodology for undertaking early consultation and engagement to facilitate understanding and Consent from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for proposed actions affecting their lands and communities.
13. The UNESCO World Heritage listing process provides clear direction that FPIC must be demonstrated for all stages of the World Heritage Bid project.

14. The process must be free from coercion and allow the time and resources to enable traditional decision making by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
15. Administration engaged SA Native Title Services (SANTS) to facilitate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
16. City of Adelaide has held four workshops with the Aboriginal community representatives:
 - 16.1. Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation (KYAC)
 - 16.2. First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee #2
 - 16.3. Ngadjuri Nation Aboriginal Corporation
 - 16.4. Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation
 - 16.5. Peramangk Aboriginal Corporation
 - 16.6. River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation
 - 16.7. Narungga Nation Aboriginal Corporation.
17. The workshops have broadly covered the following themes:
 - 17.1. On 17 June 2025, the workshop provided an overview of the project including a briefing from Duncan Marshall AM on the global context of UNESCO World Heritage and FPIC as it relates to World Heritage.
 - 17.2. On 30 September 2025, the workshop focused on responding to feedback from Aboriginal community representative and included a session with Reconciliation SA to address aspects of truth-telling.
 - 17.3. On 17 February 2026, the workshop progressed co-selection of consultations to assist in developing the FPIC strategy and governance framework for the Tentative List Submission and Aboriginal Narrative.
 - 17.4. On 16 April 2026, the workshop was led by *indigenous2indigenous* Development Global (i2i), an Indigenous-owned and led advisory firm specialising in the practical application of FPIC. The workshop covered key aspects for the Tentative List Submission including:
 - 17.4.1. An engagement framework (informed by the City of Adelaide's work with Deloitte/Yamagigu Consulting developing the Aboriginal Engagement Framework for City of Adelaide processes).
 - 17.4.2. A truth-telling framework
 - 17.4.3. The Aboriginal Narrative
 - 17.4.4. Determination of the Consent artefact(s).
18. The City of Adelaide, with the support of i2i, is currently working to finalise the 'Aboriginal Narrative' and Consent artefacts with the Traditional Owners.

Stakeholder Engagement and Marketing

19. In September 2025, Administration began stakeholder engagement for the Bid in anticipation of the necessary approvals being granted for the Tentative Bid Submission.
20. The goal of the engagement is to secure broad public support for the Tentative List Submission and to identify opportunities to unlock economic and social outcomes. Stakeholders consulted include (but are not limited to):
 - 20.1. AEDA Administration
 - 20.2. Heritage experts and advocates
 - 20.3. Multicultural associations
 - 20.4. Tourism experts and operators
 - 20.5. Food and wine producers and experts
 - 20.6. Local government tourism officials and historical societies
 - 20.7. Hotel operators
 - 20.8. University sector
 - 20.9. State and Federal Government heritage agencies and institutions.

21. This work has been happening in parallel to the Traditional Owner engagement and has been framed as being subject to the support and Consent of Traditional Owners.
22. There has been a high degree of interest and support for the development of a World Heritage Bid.
23. Administration is preparing a marketing and promotions strategy for future stages of the World Heritage Bid project focused on:
 - 23.1. Connection: thematic connections between South Australian organisations, business and industries told through a shared colonial story.
 - 23.2. Diversity: South Australia's multi-cultural past and opportunities to promote greater inclusivity and understanding in our communities.
 - 23.3. Reconciliation: greater recognition and appreciation of Aboriginal culture in South Australia, and truth-telling about shared pasts and events.
 - 23.4. Bicentenary: a balanced and authentic story of South Australia's history prepared to support reconciliation and diversity as part of the Bicentenary in 2036.
24. The World Heritage Bid has been identified as a potential key economic driver that can assist in State economic development and elevate Adelaide's presence globally.
25. Various proposals to provide marketing, engagement and other material are being progressed through University partnerships. The outcomes of these projects are proposed to be exhibited in late June 2026 to support the Tentative List Submission.
26. Administration will continue to develop a strategy around promotions, activations and marketing of the World Heritage Bid in consultation with AEDA, and the University Sector.

Next Steps

27. Next steps for the project are summarised as follows:
 - 27.1. Finalise the Aboriginal engagement for the Tentative List Submission seeking Consent from Traditional Owners. This has been scheduled as a task for completion by end of Quarter 4, 2026/27, however FPIC is contingent on agreement by all participating Traditional Owner groups and then their Consent. This timeframe will continue to be monitored and revised in line with the FPIC process.
 - 27.2. Seek Council endorsement of the finalised Tentative List Submission.
 - 27.3. Finalise the marketing, communications and activation strategies and action plans for the World Heritage Bid.
 - 27.4. Submit the Tentative List Submission to the State Government.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – [Agenda – City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee – Tuesday, 5 March 2024](#)

Link 2 – [Agenda – City Planning, Development and Business Affairs Committee – Tuesday, 5 August 2025](#)

Link 3 – [City of Adelaide World Heritage Bid project website](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -