

Elders back our Lofty aim

Kaurna support boosts bid for world heritage status

KATRINA STOKES

THE Mt Lofty Ranges are a step closer to achieving world heritage status after gaining an official seal of approval from the Kaurna people.

Kaurna leaders have thrown their support behind the bid, labelling it "significant" in helping the state prosper through "nature-based tourism", as well as ensuring their own heritage is preserved.

While the coveted title is still years away, their support is an important milestone in the push and meets one of UNESCO's requirements to gain the world status.

Kaurna elder Lynette Crocker said she was pleased to be involved in the process.

"This is another part of culture healing for our community (and) we can re-immers ourselves back into our culture, our landscape and wonder of our place and where we belong," she said.

Ms Crocker said the leaders' signing of an agreement with the group behind the bid was "insurance" for the future, which would allow the Kaurna people to "get our story told" to

local, national and international visitors.

She said world heritage status would also "help the state get out of the (economic) bind that it's in".

"We have to look at future prospects and industry to create nature-based tourism," she said.

Mt Lofty Ranges World Heritage project steering group chair, Adelaide Hills Mayor Bill Spragg, welcomed the Kaurna support.

"It is very significant recognition of the Aboriginal story in relation to the Mt Lofty Ranges," he said.

"It's been ignored in the past. It's time it is recognised."

Ms Crocker said she did not fully support the proposal, announced by the State Government this week, to revitalise Cleland Wildlife Park with a cable car, zip-line and hotel.

"I'm supportive of development in conjunction with the Kaurna people (but) I'm not supportive of a flying fox whizzing through the site," she said.

But Mr Spragg said he did not believe the Cleland plans would interfere with the bid, because it focused on "farming



SIGNIFICANT: Frank Wanganen and Lynette Crocker, from the Kaurna Nations Cultural Heritage Association, at Mt Lofty House yesterday.
Picture: MATT TURNER

landscape", not pristine wilderness.

Ten councils and leading South Australian businesses also support the bid.

The bid spans the world-renowned food, wine and tourism regions of the Clare and Barossa valleys, Adelaide Hills, McLaren Vale and Fleurieu

Peninsula. The area is believed to meet the criteria because of its British, German and Polish settlement and its evolution of a distinctive regional culture.

It has already been nominated for national heritage listing, which must be attained before world heritage status can be finalised.