

Terms of Reference

World Heritage Status: Steering Committee

The goal of the Steering Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee) is to progress St Helena Island's application for World Heritage Status. A primary objective of the Group will be to gain enough knowledge, data and understanding of local opinion to support a conclusive decision on whether it is in the island's best interests to use this particular mechanism to preserve its heritage and biodiversity.

In the event of a positive decision, the Committee will be responsible for taking forward the detailed work of developing the Scoping Document into the St Helena World Heritage Implementation Plan - securing public support and Government approval to proceed, and to develop the strongest possible UNESCO World Heritage Site application.

The Committee will:

1. Review the work of the Scoping Group to ensure they have a robust view of the findings, and the knowledge gaps that exist.
2. Devise a Brief for an Expert Consultant to work alongside them, with a view to providing answers to the gaps; this should be in the form of a World Heritage social, economic and environmental impact study that fully explores and analyses the opportunities, obligations and implications of a successful full application for both a natural and mixed designation, and an assessment of the levels of commitment and support of all key stakeholders to protect the site, as well as future resourcing and sustainable management. As a minimum this should include opportunities and obligations around preservation, conservation, planning, costs, social, economic and environmental benefits, resources needed, and any legislative, regulatory or management changes required for both options. (In essence this would constitute evidence of the viability of proceeding to a full nomination and upon which a decision can be taken on whether and how best to proceed).
3. Take advice on how the feasibility work may be funded (initial dialogue with FCO and DCMS was that they were supportive in principle).
4. Make and retain contact with the experts consulted by the Scoping Group, as well as additional experts they may identify; relationships with these experts should be further developed by the Steering Committee so that the Island can benefit from their expertise and cultivate ongoing support (voluntarily, where possible), and to aid the Committee's decision-making.
5. Understand the WHS process, identify key specialists and to start forming relationships (including with English Heritage and JNCC, as the UK's official advisors, and the UK National Commission for UNESCO which has a broader remit as advisor to Government on all UNESCO-related matters, plus a range of other cultural and natural heritage bodies, including the national UK committees of IUCN and ICOMOS).
6. Conduct further investigation of the cultural values to see if there is a case for future nomination as a cultural landscape under cultural criteria.
7. Make a recommendation to ExCo on whether or not to proceed with a full nomination, and the specific nature of the bid; the recommendation should include the full implications of such decision.
8. Communicate with the public, stakeholders and decision-makers throughout the Committee's work, to ensure that all recommendations and decisions fully reflect the broadest possible views of St Helena.

9. Confirm and set out the nomination process and timelines.
10. Develop the St Helena World Heritage Implementation Plan reflecting the findings and fulfilling the actions outlined in the Expert Consultant's report.
11. Develop St Helena's full World Heritage Site Status nomination with assistance from experts and submit to UNESCO.

The Committee's work will be considered complete when the full Nomination has been submitted; or, when a final decision has been taken not to progress with the Nomination.

Roles and Governance

The World Heritage Community Steering Committee is established with broad representation, including a tri-partite partnership between Government, Business and Civil Society and experts from the community. Membership of the Steering Committee will include:

- From Government: at least one Elected Member; Chief Secretary (or her delegate); Head of Governor's Office; and Director of Tourism (ESH will also provide a secretariat / administrative support)
- From Business: at least two Members of the Business Community (at least one of whom will be from the Chamber of Commerce)
- From Civil Society: at least two people from civil society or charitable bodies
- From the Community: at least two people from the wider community (these places would be advertised)

To support and ensure continuity, two of the Committee Members should be from the earlier Scoping Group. This is a group of twelve people – a large group, to ensure broad representation, enable the work to be progressed, and so a wide range of stakeholders can be accessed.

A Chair will be nominated from the Committee's membership.

Frequency of Meetings

- The Steering Committee will determine how many meetings are needed.
- Meeting dates / times should be agreed in advance for the convenience of Committee members.

The Steering Committee will agree the procedures by which the Committee will be managed.