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First dedicated Aboriginal housing strategy for South Australia

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Photo: A concept design for the Bedford Park Elder Village by C4 Architects.

The South Australian government has committed \$4 million for a 40-unit housing development in the southern Adelaide suburb of Bedford Park to accommodate Aboriginal Elders as part of a new ten-year strategy aimed at “hitting the reset button” on the state’s provision of Aboriginal housing.

The Elders Village, to be built close to the culturally significant site of Warriparinga near the Sturt River in Bedford Park, will be delivered by the state government in partnership with national not-for-profit housing provider Aboriginal Community Housing Limited, the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation and the Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation.

Adelaide firm C4 Architects is designing the village, which will include an outdoor fire pit and disability-friendly units with kitchen, dining, living, separate bedroom and bathroom to promote independent living.

The land, currently owned by the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, is being granted to the Kurna Pangkarra Property Trust, a subsidiary of native title holders Kurna Yerta Aboriginal Corporation.

Kurna Nation Pangkarra Property Trust chair Garth Agius welcomed the initiative. “Adelaide has been our home for thousands of years,” he said. “This is still our traditional lands, our Yarta, our country Pangkarra, but as the traditional owners we still do not own our own homes.”

Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation CEO Joe Morrison said the project was about providing a culturally appropriate independent living solution for Aboriginal people in South Australia. “The ILSC believes the joint approach between native title holders, the State Government, community organizations and a federal government entity is the key to successfully delivering a project which will provide long term social and cultural benefits for Aboriginal elders on Kurna country,” he said.

Construction on the village is expected to begin in early 2022.

The South Australian Aboriginal Housing Strategy 2021-31 also allocates \$28.4 million for a remote housing replacement program over six years, \$34 million for remote housing maintenance over five years and \$17 million new social and affordable housing over six years.

Housing solutions will be co-designed by communities “to increase the cultural awareness capacity of the housing sector.”

The development of the strategy has been spearheaded by the SA Housing Authority’s head of Aboriginal housing Erin Woolford, a Kuyani-Arrernte woman.

SA’s minister for human services Michelle Lensink said the strategy would continue to be shaped by Aboriginal people.

“We’re really excited to launch our new Aboriginal housing strategy – the state’s first stand-alone housing strategy which addresses the specific housing needs of Aboriginal South Australians,” she said.

“We know that better housing is a key factor in closing the health and life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

“Housing provides a stable place from which to access health services, access and maintain employment, attend school and generally increase social inclusion.”

Online source: [First dedicated Aboriginal housing strategy for South Australia | ArchitectureAU](#)