

Architects Woods Bagot Vysrose Pty Ltd Gwalwa Daraniki Association Aboriginal land rights
Bagot Road Dick Ward Drive McDonalds Restaurant Town Planning Authority

Big Theme Park planned for Darwin.

By John Loizou

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A huge commercial, tourism and leisure park is planned for Darwin.

The site earmarked is at Kulaluk, vacant Aboriginal land bounded by Bagot Road and Dick Ward Drive.

It was impossible to say how much the staged-development of the site would cost, the managing director of the company responsible for the plan, David Smith, said yesterday.

But the international food chain McDonalds has agreed to become a tenant and negotiations were being held with several other enterprises.

The proposal – developed by architects Woods Bagot for Mr Smith's Darwin-based family company Vysrose Pty Ltd – is now with the Town Planning Authority. It was lodged following the signing of an option for a long-term lease with the owner of the land, the Gwalwa Daraniki Association.

The proposal would include a motel-restaurant, holiday apartments, a nine-hole par-three golf course – including a driving range – a go-kart track and a water-theme recreation park.

This would include water slides, lakes, cable water skiing and white water rafting.

In addition venues for activities such as indoor cricket, volleyball, badminton, basketball and netball would be provided.

The Bagot Road frontage would be developed for a range of service and commercial uses.

The proposed development had the support of the Gwalwa Daraniki Association, Mr Smith said.

The agreement makes provision for Aboriginal employment.

“In addition, revenue generated from the lease agreement will have a significant positive influence towards the Kulaluk community's aspirations for self-determination,” he said.

Title to Kulaluk was won during the early days of the Aboriginal land rights campaign.

“The site will be extensively landscaped so that the open, natural character of the area is maintained,” Mr Smith said.

“The land uses proposed are all those appropriate for land close to an airport.”

In seeking statutory approval of the project, a preliminary environmental report would be provided to the Town Planning Authority.

Welcomed

The site is in the constituency of Millner MLA Ken Parish who welcomed the proposal yesterday.

“Mr Smith briefed me about it but I've known of his effort for 18 months and I'm very pleased to see it coming to fruition.

“The development will mean employment and training opportunities for both Aborigines and non-Aborigines.”