

Joint venture between the Jape family company, **Citiland** (previously Vysrose Pty Ltd) and the Kulaluk leaseholders (Gwalwa Daraniki Association). In June, 2011, the Minister for Lands and Planning, Gerry McCarthy, approved the rezoning for light industry of two areas of bushland on the 301 hectare Kulaluk lease between Bagot Road, Dick Ward Drive, Fitzer Drive and Totem Road.

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The Editor

Northern Territory News

Dear Sir

In June, 2011, the Minister for Lands and Planning, Gerry McCarthy, approved the rezoning for light industry of two areas of bushland on the 301 hectare Kulaluk lease between Bagot Road, Dick Ward Drive, Fitzer Drive and Totem Road. The proposed development is a joint venture between the Jape family company, **Citiland** (previously Vysrose Pty Ltd) and the leaseholders. The land has remained as bushland until now because: (a) the land is in the flight path of the international airport; (b) the land was inside Bagot Aboriginal Reserve between 1938 and 1965; (c) in 1979 the land was granted to Larrakia people and associated Aborigines on the understanding the special purpose lease would be held for community and conservation use.

By 2006 the leaseholders, the Gwalwa Daraniki Association, had amended their constitution to restrict membership to 'a minimum of 5' providing 'at least half shall be Aboriginal people', all of whom must have lived on the lease for 'at least 12 months' and be 'members of the Danggalaba Clan' *or* their non-Aboriginal spouses. The constitution has none of the safeguards of the Land Rights Act or the Native Title Act, where interested parties need to be consulted.

Much of the remainder of the lease is under a caveat with Gwelo Investments who hope to construct a marina and canal housing development. The *NT News* reported that the GDA received payment for signing the caveat ('Landowners already cashing in on marina', *NT News*, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009). The GDA lawyer, Michael Chin, told the newspaper: 'A developer doesn't go on and prepare detailed plans unless they can get some commitment from the landowners.'

Previously, opposition from the Darwin public and Aboriginal stakeholders have prevented most of the proposed schemes that are not in keeping with the conservation and heritage value of the land. Two exceptions were the failed aquaculture projects that have devastated 5 hectares of coastal land on the lease near Ludmilla Creek. This area is yet to be restored as required by the development permit.

The question I and many others are asking is, "How is it that an area of such public interest set aside for community use can now be controlled by so few people, with the support of the NT Government, to the detriment of the general public and the wider Aboriginal community?"

Yours sincerely

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