JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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Expressions of interest open for a new nature-based tourism lodge in Central Australia

A nature-based tourism lodge overlooking the spectacular Palm Valley catchment in remote Central Australia could soon become a reality under a new plan by the NT Government and Traditional Owners.

“An Expression of Interest to develop a parcel of land known as Lhilpa or ‘Red Mallee’, 140 kilometres west of Alice Springs will be released at the North Australia Investment Forum in Darwin next week,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“The site poses an exciting opportunity for the Centre that will help attract more visitors to the Territory and provide a substantial economic boost for the region.

“This is a golden opportunity not to be missed.”

The 190,000 square metre parcel of land sits adjacent to the majestic West MacDonnell Ranges and is perched on top of a ridge that provides breath-taking views over the catchment area.

The site has the potential to be turned into a spectacular resort with potential concepts ranging from the highest-calibre similar to Longitude 131 at Uluru to a more accessible but still exclusive offering.

“The area will have year-round access with recent figures showing an 18 percent growth in holiday visitors to Central Australia last financial year creating new demand for more nature-based accommodation experiences in the Centre,” Mr Giles said.

“The proposed resort would be environmentally responsible and a nature-based development while still delivering exceptional standards of comfort and style.

“It would also be located on the culturally significant country of the Western Arrente Traditional Owners who look forward to welcoming more visitors to their land and sharing their stories.

“Traditional Owners are looking for a development which respects the country on which it is situated.”

David Ross, Director of the Central Land Council said he congratulated the Traditional Owners on taking the initiative to develop tourism enterprises on Aboriginal freehold land.
“I hope that this process will deliver quality expressions of interest from businesses with the capacity of partnering with them on equal terms. I also hope it will put to rest the myth that land tenure is a barrier to economic development,” Mr Ross said.

“The Traditional Owners of Lhilpa expect to play an active role in the planning and implementation of this project.”

The proposed development is being facilitated by the Northern Territory Government and the Central Land Council, to achieve the aspirations of Traditional Owners for tourism development on their land.

“The selection process for a preferred developer will follow NT Government procurement best practice, however the final decision on a selected proponent and final concept vests in the traditional owners through the Ntaria Aboriginal Land Trust,” Mr Giles said.

The EOI closes on 31 January 2016. For more information or to lodge an expression of interest, contact Rob Williamson at Savills email: rwilliamson@savills.com.au or telephone 08 8237 5026.

For further information go to: http://www.tourismnt.com.au/

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