Alice Springs native title holders have directed the Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation to enter into an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Northern Territory Government over land earmarked for development at Larapinta.

At meetings held this week the native title holders gave their agreement to the ILUA, which will enable blocks at Larapinta to be released for residential development in Alice Springs.

Lhere Artepe chairman Brian Stirling and Minister for Central Australia Dr Peter Toyne said the agreement was an historic decision that would see native title holders play a strong role in the future development of Alice Springs.

“It’s been a lot of work and it’s taken up a lot of time for native title holders but we have achieved a real milestone with this agreement,” Mr Stirling said.

“Native title holders fought for their rights for many years and it was a difficult decision for many to give up these rights in the subdivision area so the Larapinta development can go ahead.

“But the negotiations have made Lhere Artepe and native title holders stronger and more confident about similar projects in the future.”

Dr Toyne congratulated native title holders for giving agreement to the ILUA and said it proved the NT Government’s approach of entering into such agreements worked.

“We have stuck to our approach of consultation, not confrontation, and this agreement is the proof, with the first new substantial residential land release in Alice Springs for 10 years on the horizon,” he said.

“Lhere Artepe must be congratulated for continuing to work on this agreement in the face of relentless criticism and negativity from some quarters.

“This agreement will lead to the release of new land at Larapinta and lays the groundwork for land releases in the future.”

Mr Stirling said Lhere Artepe would be writing to the Government giving them formal notification of the agreement and to make arrangements for the document to be finalised before the official signing in the near future.

“We are very happy to have reached this agreement but there’s still a lot of work to do in getting the ILUA registered with the Native Title Tribunal and also making decisions about the development itself,” he said.
“I have to thank the Central Land Council for its continuing support of Lhere Artepe during the negotiations and also to the NT Government for its patience.

“We will continue to work on the Larapinta agreement and look forward to working with the Government on future land issues in Alice Springs.”