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Protesters claim Jape subdivision will result in traffic lights on Dick Ward Drive.

This morning between 7am and 8am protesters held up mock traffic lights and banners claiming that the proposed Jape Light Industry subdivision would result in the slowing of commuter traffic on Dick Ward Drive. The subdivision has been approved on the Kulaluk lease area between Dick Ward Drive and Bagot Road, with access from Dick Ward Drive. The protesters claim that the development will inevitably lead to traffic lights being installed between Totem Road and Fitzer Drive, slowing the flow of traffic.

In addition, the subdivision is in the flight path of the International airport, raising the concern of Robert Calaby, Aerodrome Safety and Standards Manager, who wrote on 20 July 2012, “In June 2010 DIA objected to the proposed rezoning of land on Lot 5182 from RD (Restricted Development) to SU (Specific Use) as it was a major departure from the safety net of the restricted zone designed to protect airport operations from incompatible land use...all matters are still pertinent.” The DIA objection was confirmed by Robert Calaby in letters to Development Assessments Services on 31 January 2014 and 10 October 2014.

One of the protesters, Dr Bill Day, said today the subdivision was the result of a secret deal between the Aboriginal group that holds the lease and Jape and would result in the alienation of land granted to Larrakia people in 1979. Between 1938 and 1965 the land between Fitzer Drive and Totem Road was part of the Bagot Reserve and holds many sites of significance, including the site of the Retta Dixon Homes. It remained a part of a green belt extending from East Point to Lee Point and Holmes Jungles.

Dr Day said that in the 1970s he had been involved in the preparation of alternative plans for the area that would provide jobs for Aboriginal people, conserve the bushland, and foster cultural understanding. He said that there was a growing reaction amongst Larrakia people and Bagot residents against the sell-off of land won by the sacrifices of a previous generation.

Protesters vowed to return to Dick Ward Drive with their signs between 7am and 8,30am on Friday 6th February.

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