

Barnett plea for Burrup rock art

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Former resources development minister Colin Barnett has called on the State Government to insist that Woodside's \$5 billion Pluto gas project be located on cleared land adjacent to the North-West Shelf project on the Burrup Peninsula.

Mr Barnett said there was already a huge cleared site on flat land that should be given preference over uncleared land littered with ancient rock art that has been earmarked for the Pluto project.

The land to the south of the North-West Shelf project is managed by all six joint venture partners — Woodside, BHP Billiton, BP, Chevron Texaco, Shell Development and Japan Australia.

The Cottesloe MP has been supported by the National Trust, which this month wrote to Shell asking it to negotiate with Woodside so the heritage values of the area would not be lost.

National Trust chief executive Tom Perrigo said the land allocated to the proposed Pluto project, referred to as the Boongaree area, contains thousands of petroglyphs.

"We ask you as good corporate citizens to assist in averting a heritage catastrophe of monumental proportions," his letter to Shell read. "It is fairly obvious that for the Woodside Energy Pluto Project to develop in the Boongaree area of the Burrup is not a suitable heritage outcome and in fact, is a disaster.

"The trust recognises that Woodside Pluto is a competitor to yourselves. However, in this special case, the National Trust urges you as one of the joint venturers to negotiate with Woodside so the heritage values of the area will not be irreversibly lost."

Mr Barnett said the State Government allocated the land to Woodside and should be playing a greater role in determining the location of Pluto.

"This Government should be sitting down with the North-West Shelf joint venture partners and saying to them 'We're going to take that land back unless you resolve the problem with Woodside immediately'," he said.

Federal Environment Minister Ian Campbell is expected to take until next year before making a decision about heritage listing for the Burrup Peninsula.