

Burrup heritage gets nod

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The State Government has dropped its opposition to the heritage listing of the gas-rich Burrup Peninsula, saying it believes that ancient Aboriginal rock art can be protected without jeopardising industry.

Alan Carpenter, who has previously warned that heritage listing would be an economic catastrophe, said yesterday proposed changes to the Federal Government's environmental protection laws would address his concerns that third parties could take injunctions against activity that interfered with the rock art.

But the Premier said he still expected the listing to make concessions for industry to ensure that projects were not put at risk.

Woodside said yesterday it had reversed its opposition to the proposed heritage listing and flagged a compromise position to accommodate its plans for the multi-billiondollar Pluto gas project.

Woodside, which originally pledged to fight the heritage listing, wants a 6.8sq km site excised from the plan to create a gas precinct which will take in the proposed site for Pluto.

Federal Environment and Heritage Minister Ian Campbell is expected to make a decision on the heritage listing next year after the Australian Heritage Council recommended 874sq km of the North-West, including 100sq km of the Burrup, be heritage listed.

Senator Campbell extended public comment on the boundaries of the listing until yesterday.

Mr Carpenter said he had notified Senator Campbell of the State's change of position, but the boundaries of the listing were yet to be negotiated.

AMANDA BANKS