



Woodside study spurs new calls to move plant

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A 500-page report into the environmental risks of Woodside's multi-billion-dollar Pluto gas project has prompted renewed calls for the proposed development to be shifted to protect ancient rock art on the Burrup Peninsula.

Shadow environment minister Steve Thomas said the draft report, released yesterday for public comment, also raised other serious environmental concerns related to dredging and seabed disturbance which should not be lost in the debate over Aboriginal rock art.

The detailed Public Environment Report outlines potential environmental risks and proposed management plans for the massive Pluto project, including its offshore platform, gas processing plant and storage facilities.

Woodside yesterday said an alternative site proposed by opponents of the plan was owned by a joint venture of which Woodside was only a

one-sixth participant and the venture had not accepted a plan for the Pluto project to be put on the cleared land.

"Given the progress already made with the detailed engineering and design studies, the Pluto industrial sites represent the only option that can satisfy customer requirements for LNG supply from late 2010," a spokeswoman said.

Woodside also revealed that it had responded to an application for an emergency heritage listing of the site, submitting that the six registered sites in the application would not be disturbed by the development.

The report, prepared by Woodside to satisfy separate State and Federal environmental approvals processes, examines issues including impacts on marine life such as turtles and coral, effects on flora and fauna, seabed disturbance and Aboriginal heritage sites.

It confirms previous estimates that the project will require 150 pieces of

rock art to be moved, leaving close to 3000 engravings within the two plants untouched.

It also provides details of the economic benefits of the project, which

is expected to boost gross domestic product over the life of the project by up to \$17.6 billion in net present value terms.

It also is forecast to generate more than 3000 extra jobs each year during construction and 200 jobs a year during operations.

Former Greens MP Robin Chapple and WA Conservation Council director Chris Tallentire said the report reinforced the need to shift the project to cleared land next to the North-West Shelf project.

Former Opposition leader and Liberal MP Colin Barnett also repeated his calls for the State Government to take the lead and ensure the project was moved to the cleared adjacent site.