

Church rocks Woodside gas site plans

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THE Uniting Church has joined the battle to stop energy giant Woodside building a gas plant among sites containing 30,000-year-old Aboriginal rock art on the Burrup Peninsula in the Pilbara.

As a small group of protesters campaigned outside Woodside's annual general meeting at Perth Convention Centre yesterday, Robert Watson, moderator of the Uniting Church in Western Australia, was challenging the company's directors inside.

During question time, Mr Watson said the Uniting Church, both as a shareholder in the company and as a collection of concerned citizens, questioned the wisdom behind the location of the proposed Pluto LNG plant.

He said Uniting Church synods in Victoria and Tasmania were supporting the protest.

The West Australian Government has granted Woodside leases in the northern part of the Burrup Peninsula, just south of the existing North West Shelf LNG plant, to build a facility with a capacity of about 12 million tonnes a year and costing up to \$10 billion.

The peninsula is estimated to contain about a million examples of Aboriginal rock art, which campaigners say are significantly older than Stonehenge or the Lascaux caves in France.

A final investment decision on the development is expected later this year.