

BurruP rock art at risk: National Trust

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Ancient rock art in the Dampier Archipelago of northern Western Australia has made the National Trust's first list of threatened heritage sites.

The National Trust says the art on the Burrup peninsula will be included in its inaugural Our Heritage at Risk national top ten list to be announced on Saturday in Hobart.

Earlier this year, federal Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced National Heritage listing for 241 square kilometres of the Dampier Archipelago, which includes the Burrup peninsula.

The listing covers 99 per cent of land where ancient rock art is known to exist, but not the site of a proposed LNG plant site.

The rock art, found over a 45km area, was possibly the oldest and arguably most significant rock art assemblage in the world, a WA national trust spokeswoman said in a statement.

"The artwork is estimated to be at least 6,000 years old, but is being threatened by industrial development and is now listed on the World Monuments Fund list of 100 Most Endangered Monuments," she said.

"The national listing represents the most significant and positive step taken in the protection of the heritage values of this place since industrial development began in the region in the early 1960s."

Being named on heritage lists did not guarantee its survival due to ongoing pressures of industrial development, she said.

The National Trust wants a comprehensive management regime to be urgently developed to ensure the area's heritage values are conserved.