

Let us finish consultations on gas precinct: KLC

11th November 2008, 16:15 WST

The West Australian government has been warned to stop riding "roughshod" over indigenous interests near the Browse Basin, by the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), ahead of a meeting on a planned gas industry project.

The land council and the state are at loggerheads over plans for a government-owned Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) precinct in the Kimberley, with Premier Colin Barnett threatening to compulsorily acquire indigenous land.

Public submissions were to close today on the four possible sites identified by the state government last month.

KLC chief executive Wayne Burgmann, who will meet with Mr Barnett tonight, said consultation with 14 native title groups started 11 months ago and the government must let them finish.

"You can't bulldoze and ride roughshod over people," Mr Burgmann said.

"The proper way to do this is to commit to the process. He (Mr Barnett) won't deliver on any site without the full participation of indigenous people."

The KLC said Gourdon Bay, James Price Point, North Head and Anjo Peninsula were the most suitable sites, the same four Mr Barnett announced on his short list last month.

Mr Barnett has said North Head is the government's most likely choice for a shipping channel, workers' accommodation, a township and, power and water and road access for industry use.

The previous WA Labor government allocated \$7 million to the KLC to carry out consultations.

"There is no commitment from the state to have an informed process from this point on, which is outrageous," Mr Burgmann said.

"We've participated in good faith and identified four locations ... the companies and the state haven't provided us with any information.

"We don't even know what the layout of a project like this would look like at any of the locations."

The KLC said it "is in the process" of lodging a native title claim over North Head.

James Price Point and Anjo have registered claims over them and Aboriginal people have exclusive possession of the Gourdon Bay location.

Mr Barnett has been asked to respond to Mr Burgmann's comments.

PERTH
AAP