

WA landmarks on endangered list

By Minh Lam

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THE Burrup Peninsula and East Perth power station have been identified as being among the country's most endangered spots.

The sites feature on a list of endangered places released by the Australian Council of National Trusts.

Other WA places on the list are the Ludlow-Wonnerup tuart forest and wetlands in Busselton and mill workers' cottages in Pemberton.

It names 23 historic or culturally significant buildings and natural features it considers at risk of being lost through demolition, degradation, inappropriate redevelopment, environmental pollution or mining.

At the top of the list is the Murray-Darling River system, which stretches through New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland.

It is under threat from reduced flows through irrigation and salinity.

"Here is Australia's greatest river system and we have misused it and abused it for a long period of time," executive officer at the Australian Council of National Trusts, Alan Graham, said.

"If we can't get the Murray-Darling right, then you have to worry about the smaller water resources we have."

The Burrup Peninsula's natural beauty and Aboriginal rock art is at risk from planned multi-million-dollar industrial developments, while the East Perth power station is considered to be under threat of several proposed redevelopment options, including the relocation of Scitech into the building.

According to the trust council, a proposed mineral sands mine in the Ludlow-Wonnerup forest and wetlands places the area at risk, while there is uncertainty about the future of the historic Pemberton mill workers' cottages.

Trust chairman Simon Molesworth said the Burrup Peninsula contained some of the world's most important examples of rock art, while the power station was architecturally and historically significant.

He said the Ludlow-Wonnerup forest and wetlands held the world's last substantial stand of tuart forest and supported a diverse bird population.

The mill workers' cottages in Pemberton were examples of early 20th century workers' homes and were the last link to the milling industry.

National Trust WA chairman David Dolan called on West Australians to support the protection of important heritage places in the State by writing to their MPs.

Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan said the Government was working on acceptable development options for the East Perth power station that would respect its interior and exterior conservation values. She expected a decision to take at least six months.

Environment Minister Judy Edwards' spokesman John Carey said a management strategy was being developed on the Ludlow-Wonnerup tuart forest.

The mill cottages were being assessed by the Heritage Council.

Single Ningaloo body 'would cut confusion'

NINGALOO Reef should have a single management body with power over access and development, WA Labor Senator Peter Cook says.

In the Senate this week, Senator Cook said such an authority should have powers for all activities related to the reef and nearby land and operate as an enforcer of a clear set of management values.

He said it could be similar to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority in Queensland.

This would be preferable to the confusing system of control by local, State and Federal agencies.

A spokesman for Environment Minister Judy Edwards said the State Government would soon conduct a review of the Marine Park and Reserve Authority, which would include consideration of the Ningaloo issue.

The reef is 1200km north of Perth and stretches for 260km.

"Do we have an appropriate structure to protect the reef and manage the pressures . . . mounting for greater access and more development?" Senator Cook said.

Conservation Council spokeswoman Rachael Siewert said the proposal was not new and adding another layer of bureaucracy would not necessarily make for better management of Ningaloo.

Save Ningaloo campaign spokesman Paul Gamblin said any management authority would need to be open and responsive as well as powerful and accountable. - Yonnene Pearce

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