

Carpenter in Burrup backflip

By Ben Cranston

A STATE Government backflip has seen Premier Alan Carpenter fall in line with his Federal counterparts and agree to National Heritage Listing of the Burrup Peninsula.

He now believes it possible to protect industry and conserve ancient petroglyphs on the peninsula.

"The State Government has long acknowledged the significant heritage values of the Dampier Archipelago," the Premier said.

"Nevertheless, we strongly believe that it is possible to protect these values of the Archipelago and that industry and heritage may co-exist in the area.

"So while protecting heritage, we need to ensure that it does not constrain current projects, the capacity of industry to expand within agreed boundaries or impact on transport corridors for the facilitation of these industries. "We are committed to effective management of the heritage values of the Dampier Archipelago and to identifying the most appropriate management regime by engaging with the Commonwealth and other stakeholders.

"It is also essential that industries operating in the Dampier Archipelago are given the

opportunity to play a role in the management of the heritage values."

But member for North West Coastal Fred Riebeling was at odds with the Premier saying he did not agree with the about turn.

He said the move could make the Burrup a leper in the eyes of the resources sector.

"Losing those future developments in the industrial estate has always been my fear," Mr Riebeling said.

He said the Burrup Rock Art Monitoring Management Committee had shown emissions were not doing significant damage to rock art proving the State Government system was working.

But National Heritage Listing could mean more emissions restrictions and likelihood of quarantining the site from further investment.

"You're talking about a resource (industrial land) that's not that scarce," Mr Riebeling said.

The Burrup had some economic advantages but was competing with plenty of other parcels of land to house fledgling resource projects just along the coast – with Onslow the clear front-runner.

The change of heart came on the same day Woodside dropped

its own opposition to the heritage listing.

Woodside still wants an area excised from the proposed listing to accommodate plans for its multi-billion dollar gas project.

The National Trust said the back flip was a sign of "absolute panic" and had left the State Government out in the cold over its continued opposition to heritage listing.

Woodside director Keith Spence said the company had changed its position after being influenced by public opinion and planned changes to heritage laws.

It wants 6.8sqkm excluded to create a gas precinct including the planned site for Pluto.

The Premier said the State Government was progressing an environment and heritage management strategy, which included the establishment of the Dampier Archipelago Council and overarching management plan, a Dampier Archipelago cultural heritage management plan, heritage surveys over six Burrup Agreement industrial areas, archaeological surveys over non-industrial land, a management plan for the Burrup non-industrial area, and a CSIRO rock art monitoring study.