



Work starts on Woodside gas plant on Burrup Peninsula

8-January-07 by AAP

Construction has started on Woodside Energy's Pluto liquefied natural gas plant on the Burrup Peninsula in Western Australia's northwest.

Woodside said site preparation work for LNG storage tanks will include fencing, road access and relocating cultural heritage material over the first half of 2007.

The Woodside project has drawn criticism because the company plans to move 165 Aboriginal rock carvings, believed to be thousands of years old.

A Woodside spokeswoman said the rock art relocation would start within two or three weeks, depending on the progress of other work.

Australian Greens federal Senator Rachel Siewert said the federal government and Woodside would be remembered as vandals for allowing the destruction of rock art.

She said it was not too late to change the location of the plant to an already cleared adjacent site.

"Woodside have not even made the final decision to commit to the project ... yet they are still proceeding with initial site works," Senator Siewert said in a statement.

"We need to ask why they are rushing to clear the site now, is it simply because in the New Year period they think people won't be paying attention?"

Last month, federal Environment Minister Ian Campbell rejected an emergency heritage listing application for the Burrup Peninsula by Senator Siewert, Labor MP Carmen Lawrence and Independent MP Peter Andren.