



A local indigenous group has applied to have Pluto stopped in its tracks.

# Trying to stop Pluto from going ahead

By Ben Cranston

AN ABORIGINAL group seeking Commonwealth Declaration to prevent Woodside's Pluto development on Site B may have halted works in the interim.

The Wong-Goo-Tt-Oo native title group has lodged an application under Sections 9 and 10 of the Commonwealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act seeking a Ministerial Declaration that, if successful, would effectively prevent gas giant Woodside from sitting an LNG plant on Site B.

Greens Senator Rachel Siewert last week lashed out at Senator Eric Abetz, representing Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Mal

Brough, after a less than satisfactory response in Parliamentary question time.

"The Wong-Goo-Tt-Oo native title group have applied to have this area declared a Significant Aboriginal Area. Today in the Senate the Government was unable to tell me when the assessment of the application would be completed. Nor would they say if the area would be protected while the assessment process was underway," she said.

"When does the Minister intend to make a decision relating to the application?" asked Senator Siewert in the Senate.

"Will the area be protected while the Minister is making a decision?"

A Greens spokesman said there was nothing to stop Woodside from clearing Site B while an independent inquiry was underway.

Wong-Goo-Tt-Oo elder Wilfred Hicks said Woodside and the WA Government had left the group no alternative.

"The intrusion of Woodside's planned development on Area B on the Burrup must rank as one of the worst incidents of the destruction of aboriginal heritage and world-class rock art in Australia," Mr Hicks said.

"Woodside spokeswoman Hannah Fitzhardinge said the company did not expect the application to impact on its Pluto schedule.