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Protesters demand rock art explanation

- January 22, 2007

AUSTRALIAN oil and gas giant Woodside has yet to explain why it needs to move ancient rock art to develop a gas plant on Western Australia's Burrup Peninsula, protesters say.

About 40 people held a one-hour vigil outside Woodside's headquarters in Perth today, to highlight their concerns about the destruction of ancient petroglyphs.

Friends of Australian Rock Art spokesman Peter Schulz said the vigil was the start of what they hoped was an international campaign, aimed at saving the art at areas A and B where Woodside proposes to develop the Pluto liquefied natural gas plant.

"We are at a loss to know why they are moving the art on site A when there are other sites that have already had damage done to them on Burrup Peninsula they could easily do their development on," Mr Schultz said.

"No one has come out with a clear message on why they are so insistent on going for those sites."

Protest groups last month urged federal Heritage Minister Ian Campbell to make an emergency heritage listing of the peninsula to protect the thousands of rock carvings believed to date back to the Ice Age.

Mr Schulz said the group would hold another one-hour lunchtime vigil outside Woodside's office on St Georges Terrace on Thursday.

Comment was being sought from Woodside.

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