

**STATEMENT on the occasion of the Woodside AGM
Regarding the Proposed Burrup Peninsular Pluto LNG**

Full Document

by

Moderator Robert Watson

April 19 2007

Note - Because of time constraints the full background to the questions asked were not included in the questions to the floor of the AGM

As shareholders, The Uniting Church has become increasingly concerned over the threat posed to the ancient petroglyphs in the Dampier Archipelago. We are concerned to honour the traditional spiritual connections of the earliest peoples of this land. The rock carvings on Burrup Peninsular are not only part of our cultural heritage, they are part of the spiritual heritage of our nation. The opportunity to show that we, as Australian citizens, and as corporate citizens, value the cultural spiritual and artistic heritage of our indigenous brothers and sisters.

In a report prepared for the National Trust of Australia, Caroline Bird and Sylvia J Hallum state

“The Dampier Archipelago contains the largest concentration of rock art in the world, estimated at perhaps a million petroglyphs. The art is extraordinary in its range and diversity. Associated with the art is a rich archaeological record, including camp sites, quarries, shell middens and stone features. Many motifs and some stone features are connected to the beliefs and the ceremonial practices of Aboriginal people in the Pilbara today. The entire Archipelago is a continuous cultural landscape providing a detailed record of both sacred and secular life reaching from the present back into the past, perhaps to the first settlement of Australia.”

Earlier last year I had the privilege of visiting the Burrup Peninsular and that has confirmed me in the belief that protecting the rock carvings is critical for the cultural spiritual and artistic heritage of not only all Australians but for the people of the world.

When I wrote to you late last year I was unhappy with your response.

We the Uniting Church, as a shareholder and as concerned Australian citizens question the advisedness of proceeding with the Burrup Peninsular proposed Pluto liquefied natural gas plant.

Woodside as a responsible corporate citizen have an obligation to protect the rock carvings on the Burrup Peninsular for the spiritual and artistic heritage of not only all Western Australians but for the people of the world.

We do not need to choose between destruction and development; gas can still be extracted offshore and processed at a different location. Many will speak up to save the remaining rock art from further destruction. This will lead to challenges and delays.

Has the board given full consideration to other economically viable locations such as Onslow as a more appropriate site to locate the plant? Has the board taken into account the likely protests and action against the Burrup Peninsular and the adverse affect of delays? Further, has the board considered the damage to the reputation of Woodside internationally, when the effect on the gas plant on the earliest surviving rock carvings on this planet is fully understood?

The Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania as shareholders has asked me to express their support of our position in this matter.