

THE AUSTRALIAN

Woodside has 50-year plan for Browse

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WOODSIDE Petroleum plans to operate its Browse offshore floating LNG project for 50 years, with the first production well due to be drilled in 2017.

The Perth-based energy giant says three floating LNG (FLNG) vessels, each almost half a kilometre long, will operate at two offshore locations during the life of the gas field.

Woodside recently reported a drop in earnings amid uncertainty around the timing of its two key growth projects at Browse in Western Australia and Leviathan in Israel.

In documents filed with the Federal Environment Department, Woodside said development drilling was scheduled to begin two years after a final investment decision.

The company and its joint venture partners — Japan's Mitsui, PetroChina, Shell and BP — recently said it would make a final investment on Browse in the third quarter of 2015.

It anticipates around 64 production wells will be drilled to between 3500 and 4500 metres below sea level.

“The final preparations to ready a well for production are expected to take approximately three months for each well,” Woodside said in a draft environment impact statement for the Browse FLNG development.

“Operations are expected to extend for approximately 50 years.”

All infrastructure will be located in Australian waters, with subsea infrastructure to be in water depths of 350 to 700 metres, the company said.

A floating hotel, or “flotel”, will service staff during the development phase, the company said.

The company is yet to decide on a preferred location for an onshore supply base which will be required to support the development.

Once it's up and running the FLNG project will have between 62 and 94 vessel movements per year to transport the gas.

Public comment submissions on the draft impact statement will close tomorrow.

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