

Two Rocks 'ticks all the boxes'

From page 1

He said it would trial surface and underwater systems, and test assumptions such as what kind of fish were able to grow in cages, the automated feeding of fish when poor weather did not allow it to be done manually and whether fish can be grown over the whole season.

Mr Jenkins said Two Rocks was best suited for the pilot project and any future permanent fish farms.

"The Aquaculture Development Council undertook a site survey for potential sites and Two Rocks came back as the best spot for the pilot program," he said.

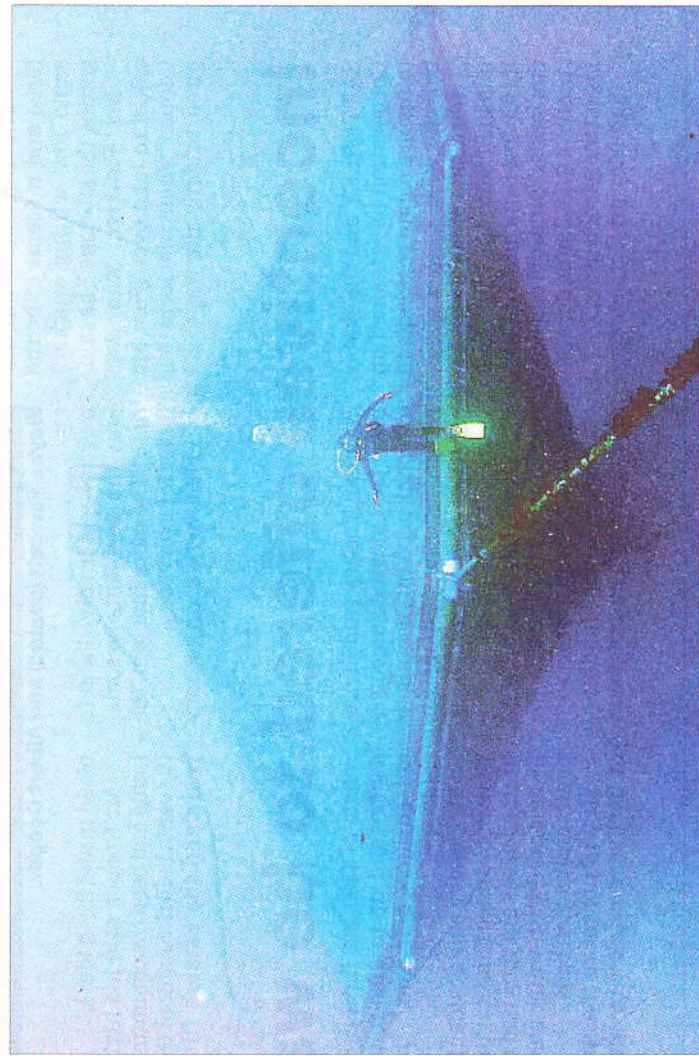
Mr Jenkins told the *Times* the location "ticked all the boxes". There is a marina in Two Rocks, good mobile coverage out to sea, a suitable water depth, is relatively close to Perth and likely to have little impact on commercial and recreational fishing.

He said the State Government had provided funding for project research and the commercial trial would involve a commercial partner coming on board and taking the bulk of the financial risk.

"The State Government hasn't spent money on what will help individual industries but what will benefit the whole industry," Mr Jenkins said.

"The Government will also implement environment monitoring to make sure there are no severe impacts and we have consulted conservation groups that are happy to see the trial proceed.

"The technology and the type of sea cages available in



Casting for the future... this is the kind of sea cage that may be used in the fish farm.

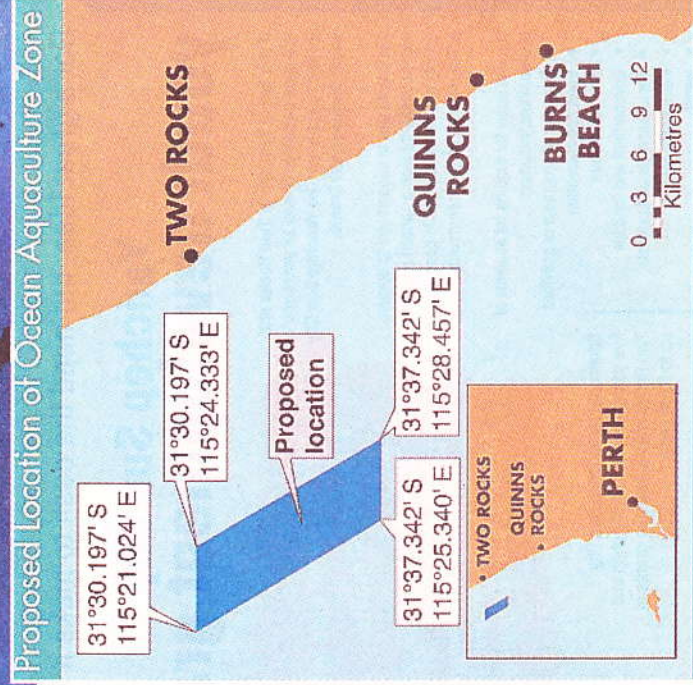
offshore areas should be able to withstand the environment. "Waves off Two Rocks are up to six metres and the cages are designed to withstand 11 metre storms."

Mr Jenkins said there was "no guarantee of success" but he thought there was "a reasonable chance" it would proceed past the pilot stage.

"A two-year trial is believed to be sufficient to get all the answers we need," he added.

"There is a large enough area for companies to locate a fish farm in Two Rocks."

The trial is expected to start at the end of 2009.



Developer support for farm trial

A FISH farm trial off Two Rocks has the support of the area's major developer, the Yancheep Beach Joint Venture, and City of Wanneroo.

The Aquaculture Development Council behind the two-year trial hopes the farm will produce 50,000 to 100,000 tonnes of fish and if successful, will be able to replenish dwindling fish stocks in WA.

Joint Venture economic development advisor Ian Martinus said the project fitted perfectly with the development strategy of Yancheep Two Rocks to build a sustainable green city and would be integrated into the redesign of the Two Rocks marina.

He said the Venture had worked with ADC over the past 12 months and believed the project, recognised globally as important to future aquaculture sustainability, had merit.

"We are acutely aware of depleted fish stocks and food security for the local market is vital," Dr Martinus said.

"YBJV is also looking to attract export oriented industries and companies and the overseas demand for healthy ocean fish from Australia is expected to be high."

Mayor Jon Kelly said the trial was a positive initiative for Two Rocks and would offer several economic benefits for the city in the future.

"With the significant population growth in the area and our current challenges of employment self-sufficiency, this type of project has the potential to support local businesses and to help provide local employment," he said.

"Whilst the project is only a trial at this stage, if successful, it is expected to bring long-term benefits to the region both in terms of employment opportunities and local business investment.

"This is expected in the direct jobs created by the aquaculture industry, as well as indirect jobs created as a result of related infrastructure and business services that would be required by the industry."

Dr Martinus said there would also be significant flow-on benefits to the community.

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