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MARINA SAILS AHEAD

By ANITA McINNES

ENVIRONMENT Minister Donna Faragher has given approval for the Port Rockingham Marina to go ahead.

On Monday, a spokesman for Ms Faragher said final approval for the project was subject to stringent environmental conditions aimed at protecting the waters and marine life of Cockburn Sound and Rockingham's beaches.

The spokesman said the Minister had set tough environmental conditions requiring the proponent, Rosewood Grove, to ensure that strict management protocols were in place during the construction phase to minimise impacts on cetaceans, particularly Cockburn Sound's resident dolphins.

"Another (stipulation) is that a marina waterways monitoring and management plan is developed and implemented to protect the ecological and (recreational) values of Cockburn Sound," the spokesman said.

Ms Faragher also stipulated that the construction and operation of the marina could not cause changes to Rockingham beaches.

Rosewood Grove spokesman Paul Ogilvie said the environmental approvals process had been exhaustive but would guarantee Port Rockingham was developed to world's best practice. He said the marina, which would include sheltered accommodation for about 475 public boat pens, a retail precinct, a breakwater open to the public for fishing activities, refuell-

ing, sullage and water supply facilities for commercial and private boats, super yacht berths and expansion of the Wanliss Street carpark, would transform the Rockingham foreshore.

In September 2009, Environmental Protection Authority chairman Paul Vogel said the marina satisfied a long-standing need for additional boating requirements and as it would be in an area devoid of seagrass, it would not significantly impact upon any marine plants and animals.

However, he said there would likely be some direct, localised temporary impacts on marine water quality during the construction phase.