



Wave power a step closer: MacTiernan

By WARREN HATELY

A MAJOR green energy project for the Gracetown region looks likely to go ahead, provided costs and other factors stack up.

Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan last week confirmed she was impressed by a recent Fremantle meeting with Renewable Energy Holdings.

The UK company has proposed building a wave energy converter and placing it in Cowaramup Bay.

The project would potentially meet all of Gracetown's electrical and clean water needs and is based on a similar model that has been in development in Fremantle for the past three years.

"This could be a positive way forward," Ms MacTiernan told *The Capes Herald*. "We would want to be

very certain about the impacts on the beach."

"They've put wave energy as a possible alternative and it can function as a de-sal plant as well."

The normal environmental approvals would still be required and Renewable Energy Holdings would have to show the project was cost-effective.

Ms MacTiernan acknowledged there was "a lot of power loss at remote points on the (South West's) power grid" and the wave project could fill that gap.

The Minister said she hoped to see some firmer developments within six months.

She also said she expected to visit the area in April as part of work on Gracetown's draft concept plan.