Response to the Singleton Argus re Warkworth Extension Project

Response given to the Singleton Argus on 15 September 2011 in response to reported claims from a local progress association that the Department was acting “as an agent” of the mining company in meetings with Singleton Council:

The Department completely rejects the allegation.

The Department is currently undertaking an independent, merit-based assessment of the Warkworth Extension Project. In fulfilling this statutory function, on 31 August Departmental officers attended two meetings with Singleton Council staff to discuss Council’s objection to the project and attempt to address Council’s concerns.

Departmental officers maintained their independence at all times during these meetings.

During the assessment process, Departmental officers have also spent a whole day consulting with the Progress Association to ensure the Association had an opportunity to outline its objections in detail.

Once the Department’s assessment is complete, it will be made publicly available and referred to the independent Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) which is the final decision-making authority for this project.