RESPONSE GIVEN TO ABC NEWCASTLE RE SUBSIDENCE IMPACTS IN THE SUGARLOAF SCA

29 August 2013

The Department of Planning and Infrastructure is one of a number of Government agencies working closely together and with the company to investigate these concerning impacts.

In fact, the Government is already taking action and representatives from the department and other agencies will visit the site tomorrow to investigate the impacts first hand.

The grouting mishap is particularly concerning and the company will be held fully responsible for the damage caused.

The company will also be required to remediate any other areas that have been impacted in unacceptable ways by its activities.

It should be noted, however, that the department’s assessment of the project did acknowledge the risk of some subsidence impacts. The assessment of this issue considered a range of important factors, including the slope of the land, and the company’s Subsidence Impact Assessment was independently peer reviewed.

Because it’s not possible to forecast precisely how these impacts will present on the surface, the approval puts in place important measures to deal with impacts as they arise, including the need to report on, remediate and/or offset affected areas.

It is these measures that the Government is now enforcing.

The important thing is to determine how the impacts that have been observed in the Sugarloaf SCA compare with the expected level of impact, what actions are required in response and to confirm that the company is operating within its conditions of approval.