FACT SHEET - Asbestos

Asbestos impacted soil is one of the most common types of soil contamination in Australia. A site can become contaminated by asbestos-containing material (ACM) through issues such as illegal dumping, landfilling or poor management practices during demolition or construction. In most cases, soil contaminated by bonded ACM (such as old fibro) is quite safe when properly managed.

Bonded asbestos found in soil normally presents a very low public health risk because, in this form, asbestos fibres cannot be released except in cases of extreme damage or severe weathering such as prolonged saturation or fire. Adoption of appropriate precautionary measures and compliance with Government regulations and Codes of Practice reduce the risks even further.

Asbestos found on the Albion Park Rail bypass

During early clearing activities for the Albion Park Rail bypass, ACM was found within the project site at Yallah. Work in the affected area stopped immediately and the area was isolated. An experienced occupational hygienist who specialises in asbestos management was engaged to inspect the site and confirmed that asbestos-contaminated fill was present in the area.

A detailed site investigation was carried out to determine how far the contamination was spread. The investigation identified bonded ACM in the vacant land west of the Yallah industrial estate and within the road reserve median located between the north and south bound lanes on the Princes Motorway at Yallah.

In response to the findings and in line with Project Approval conditions, we appointed an independent NSW EPA accredited Contaminated Site Auditor to carry out a statutory audit of the contamination assessment and to oversee the development and implementation of a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) in line with current guidelines.[1]

The RAP has been approved for implementation and ensures the remediated site is suitable for the proposed land use (road construction) and will pose a negligible risk to human health or the environment.

[1]Safe Work NSW (2016) *Code of Practice on How to Safely Remove Asbestos*; the WorkCover NSW (2014) *guidelines for Managing Asbestos in or on Soil*; the APRb project specific *Construction and Environment Management Plan* (CEMP); the NSW OEH (2011) *guidelines for Consultants Reporting on Contaminated Sites* and the NEPC (2013) National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) amended measure *'Schedule B(1) Guideline on the Investigation Levels for Soil and Groundwater'*.

A licenced, qualified team of specialists have been engaged to perform the remedial site works, which began on Wednesday 17 July 2019 and is expected to be complete by mid-August.

How are we managing it?

In order to appropriately manage the contaminated areas, a combination of controls has been employed in line with current industry best practice, including the removal of asbestos-containing material to an off-site licenced facility and on-site management of the asbestos-containing soil.

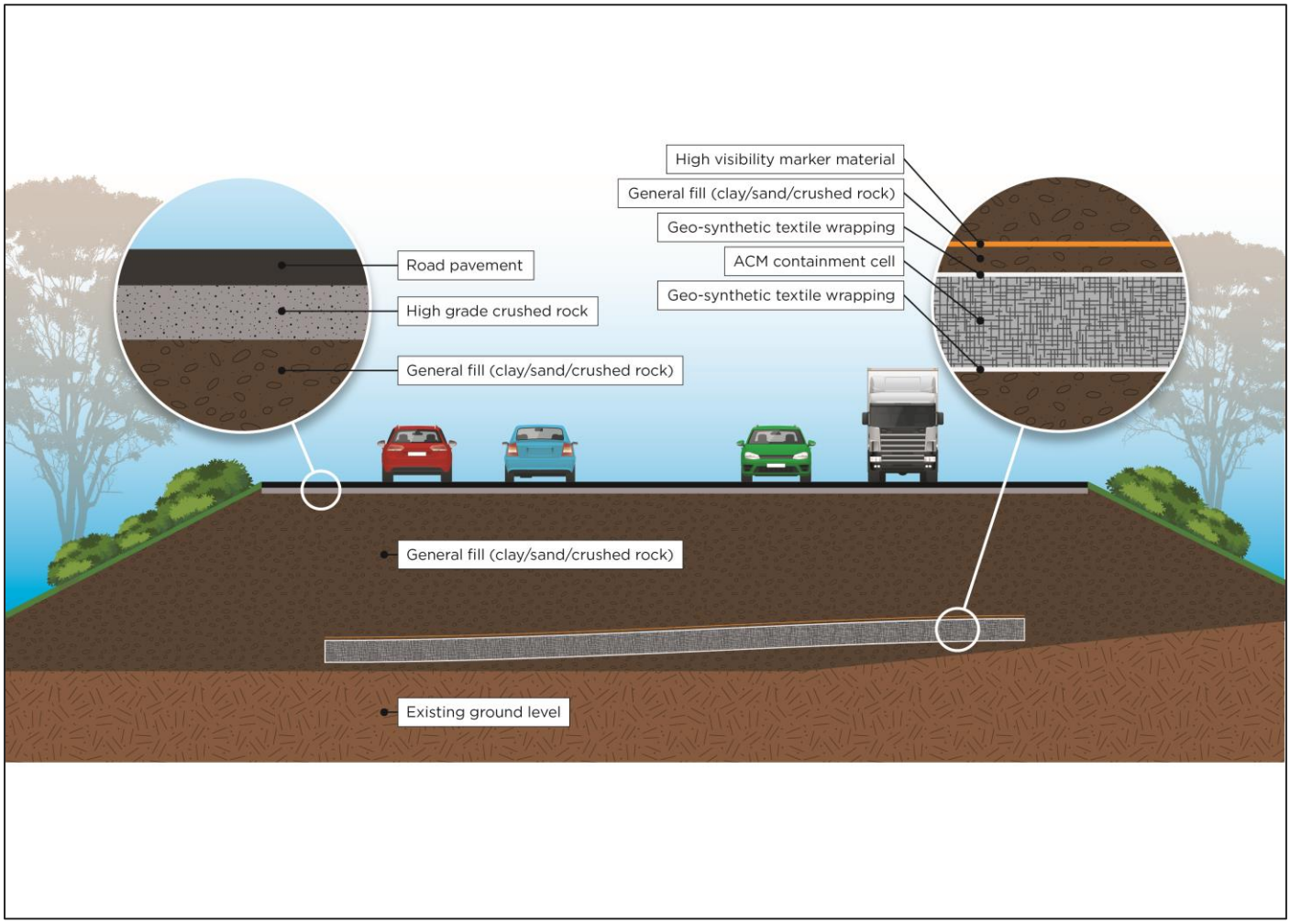
These controls were determined in consultation with an EPA accredited Contaminated Site Auditor through project-specific risk assessments and investigations which found on-site management of the asbestos-containing soil to be the most effective method of remediation. This is because it minimises environmental impacts of waste generation, is located in an area beneath the new road which avoids potential for disturbance in the future, and removes the risk of further contamination by transporting materials elsewhere.

Other asbestos-containing soil and waste which is not suitable for on-site management will be removed and disposed off-site to a licenced waste facility.

What is on-site management?

On-site management of ACM soil on the Albion Park Rail bypass project involves securing the material safely in a cell at an approved location within the road reserve under the new bypass and at a depth below the new road level where the materials will pose negligible environmental or human health risks.

The containment cell is fully lined to ensure the ACM soil secured inside is not disturbed or mobilised once surrounded by clean fill.



On-site management of ACM

How was the location for containment selected?

The location on site for the containment cell was selected in consultation with the EPA accredited Contaminated Site Auditor based on a number of factors including:

- minimal transportation of the ACM is required, avoiding further contamination
- the location avoids future disturbance as it will be contained beneath the new bypass and within the road reserve
- the location is positioned at a suitable depth below the new road level to ensure the material will not be in contact with groundwater
- the location presents a negligible risk to human health or the environment.

What controls are in place to ensure it is done safely?

We have engaged a licenced asbestos removal contractor (Class B licence for non-friable asbestos) to carry out site remediation works on the project. All remediation works are supervised by a Safe Work NSW accredited asbestos assessor in accordance with an approved Asbestos Removal Control Plan (ARCP).

During asbestos remediation work, an independent occupational hygienist is in attendance each day to monitor the effectiveness of the approved remediation measures and verify site safety at the end of each day.

Air quality monitoring is being carried out to confirm asbestos site controls are adequate. Air monitoring is conducted under the supervision of an accredited asbestos assessor and in accordance with the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission guidelines[2] and Guidance Note on the Membrane Filter Method (MFM) for Estimating Airborne Asbestos Fibres, 2nd Edition [NOHSC:3003 (2005)];

How is dust being managed during work?

During asbestos remediation works, the following methods are being used to minimise dust generation:

- dampening the surface of the site and work area with a water cart
- protecting any exposed materials by covering and/or wetting down the surface with water or soil binder spray
- reviewing and communicating weather forecasts including predicted wind direction and speed
- stopping work in strong winds
- employing controls to prevent the spread of loose material around the site.

Help prevent illegal dumping

The NSW Government is committed to reducing illegally dumped waste. Litter and illegal dumping are serious problems in NSW. When someone disposes of waste on your behalf, get proof it was disposed of legally. Know what is being brought onto your land.

By working together, we can:

- Reduce the problem, keeping our bushland, parks and public spaces clean
- Protect people and the environment from hazardous waste
- Spread the message that littering and illegal dumping are wrong
- Increase reporting of illegal dumping on 131 555

Found out more about ways of preventing illegal dumping on your land at:

https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/litter-and-illegal-dumping/illegal-dumping-dumpers

https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/litter-and-illegal-dumping/prevent-illegal-dumping/regional-illegal-dumping-squads

How can I find out more?

If you have any questions or concerns about asbestos remediation on the project please contact our community relations team on 1800 708 727 or email APRbypass@fultonhogan.com.au

[2] NOHSC Guidelines and and Guidance Note on the Membrane Filter Method (MFM) for Estimating Airborne Asbestos Fibres, 2nd Edition [NOHSC:3003 (2005)]