

## Response to the Schedule of Issues raised on the Proposed Pasmaenco and Incitec Consolidated Remediation

– Lake Macquarie City Council Submission (20 October 2012)

### Visual Impact

The ameliorative measures proposed in the CM+ September 2012 *Visual Impact Assessment* of landscaping the slopes/ embankments of the containment cell with grasses and low indigenous shrubs (including native grasses) instead of dense shrubs (as stated in the CM+ *Visual Assessment Report*, 2005) provides a more physically and visually similar treatment to the appearance of the landscape of Munibung Hill. The landscape of Munibung Hill (prior to its current state of being scraped back of its vegetation and contaminated soils) is that of low grasses and shrubs (refer to Photo 1 below). The grasses and shrubs will provide the containment cell with an appearance similar to that of Munibung Hill.



Photo 1: View of Munibung Hill (source: CM+ *Visual Assessment Report*, 2005)

These landscape measures will enable the appearance of the containment cell to more sympathetically blend into the backdrop of the slopes of Munibung Hill, which will visually create a consistent and integrated landscape character. The planting of natural grasses to minimise the landscape maintenance of the embankments will be further explored. It is acknowledged that there will be an on-going maintenance and management requirement to ensure a permanent vegetation cover on the cell.

Ground level views of the cell will be dominated by the vegetated embankments of the cell. At ground level, planting at the top of the cell will not be noticeable. From distant viewpoints, the cell will be seen as to merge into the background view of the landscaped hills beyond. It is only with views from the north to the south, which will not have a landscaped backdrop that the top of the cell and shrubs bordering the top level playing

field become a dominant element. In this instance, the planting of varying heights of shrubs will provide a more natural landscape cover.

In all instances, the increase in height is ameliorated by the battered slopes, such that the viewer will not be able to discern whether the cell is at its presently approved height or at its new height as per the s.75W modification application.

Due to the subsoil conditions of the containment cell and the limited depth of clean fill to enable significant trees to successfully grow, indigenous grasses and large shrubs are proposed to be planted along the perimeter of the top of the cell. Deep rooted trees are to be avoided to reduce the possibility of adverse impact on the cell cap. This is an integral part of the cell capping and storage.

Informal groves of trees will be planted at the base of the cell with avenue planting along the cell's perimeter roads as the base of the cell has greater opportunity for deep soil planting to occur. This will ameliorate the impact of the containment cell at ground level. The landscape treatment of the developed site will be subject to a separate Landscape Masterplan.

Any loss of tree planting as originally envisaged in the 2005 *Visual Impact Assessment* will be more than offset by the reduction of the number of cells on the combined sites to one rather than two.