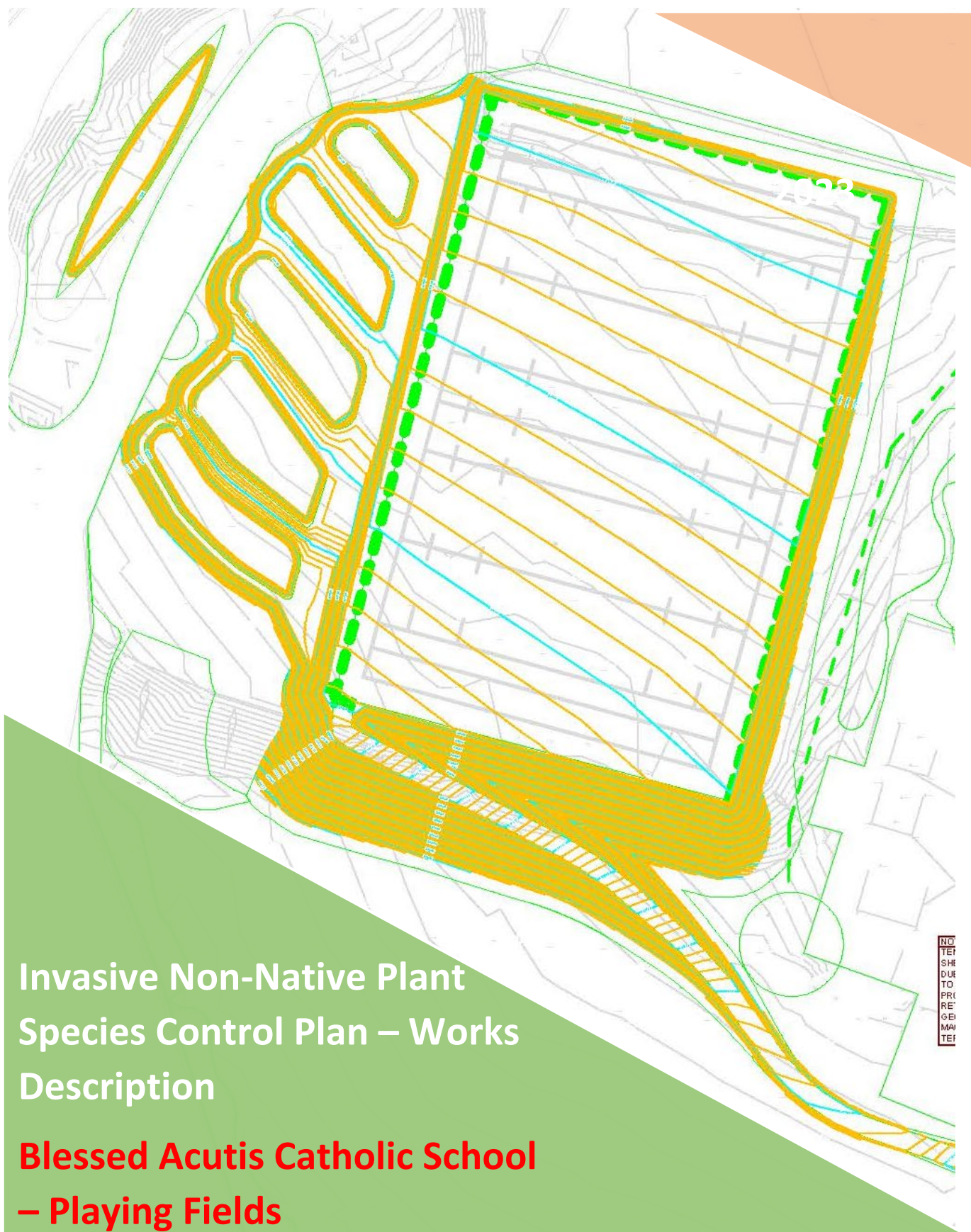
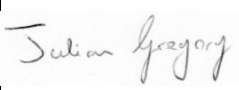
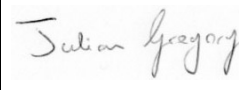




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1 INTRODUCTION

This Invasive Non-Native Species Control Plan has been prepared by EcoVigour Ltd on behalf of Willmott Dixon Construction Ltd for the construction of new playing fields as part of the redevelopment of the new Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic Secondary School.

There is extensive Japanese knotweed growth around the perimeter of the site and along an embankment at the site, across which it will be required to construct a new pedestrian access path. Sporadic Himalayan balsam growth has also been identified across the site.

This control plan details controls to be put in place to ensure that invasive non-native plant species are not spread as part of the works and that plants are controlled to prevent further infestation of the site and damage to the new sports facilities.

It should be noted that there is extensive Japanese knotweed growth along the sites south and west boundaries, within the woodland around Goitre Lane. It is not currently clear whether this land is in the ownership of the ultimate client Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. If these plants are not controlled, there is potential for them to spread back onto the site.

2 THE PROJECT:

The overall project is for the construction of new school buildings and refurbishment of existing buildings within the existing Blessed Carlo Acutis School campus. Additional to this, it is proposed to construct new sports pitches within Galon Uchaf Park on the opposite side of Galon Uchaf Road.

The site is located between Galon Uchaf Road and Goitre Lane.

The proposed playing fields site covers an area of approximately 4 hectares (ha).

The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SO 05191 07608.

The works include the construction of a new playing field for the school along with associated pedestrian access paths.

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2.1 WORKS TO BE UNDERTAKEN

The works include the construction of a multi-use sports pitch with adjacent SUDs swales along the western side of the site. A new pedestrian access will also be constructed leading onto Galon Uchaf Road.

From a review of the project drawings it appears that the construction of the new playing field will require fill to be placed across the area of the upper northern plateau of the site as this currently has a cross fall equating to an approximate 2.5m fall, north to south. This fill will extend beyond the top of the current batter between the upper and lower sections of the site, by approximately 10m, with much of this batter and Japanese Knotweed Areas 2 and 3 (Figures 5 and 6 and Appendix 1) being covered with 2.5m of clean fill. A ramp will then be constructed running diagonally across this batter in a west to east direction. This ramp will be in fill initially, within the knotweed areas and then in cut to tie into existing levels at Galon Uchaf Road.



Figure 3 – Proposed Project

3 LEGAL STATUS – RELATING TO INNS

Legislation covering the handling and disposal of knotweed includes the following:

The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 - require any person who uses a pesticide to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health of human beings, creatures and plants, safeguard the environment and in particular avoid the pollution of water. For application of pesticides in or near water approval from the Environment Agency should be sought before use.

Section 14(2) of the **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA 1981)** states that “if any person plants or otherwise causes to grow in the wild any plant which is included in Part II of Schedule 9, he shall be guilty of an offence.” Japanese knotweed is one of the plants listed in the Schedule. Anyone convicted of an offence under Section 14 of the WCA 1981 may face

a fine of £5,000 and/or 6 months imprisonment, or 2 years and/or an unlimited fine on indictment.

The **Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990)** contains a number of legal provisions concerning “controlled waste”, which are set out in Part II. Any Japanese knotweed contaminated soil or plant material that you discard, intend to discard or are required to discard is likely to be classified as controlled waste. The most relevant provisions are in:

- Section 33 (1a) and (1b) which create offences to do with the deposit, treating, keeping or disposing of controlled waste without a licence. Exemptions from licensing are available in some circumstances and are set out in Schedule 3 to the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994 as amended (the WMLR 1994) s.33 (1c) which makes it an offence to keep, treat or dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health.
- Section 34 places duties on any person who imports, produces, carries, keeps, treats or disposes of controlled waste. Waste must be handled responsibly and in accordance with the law at all stages between its production and final recovery or disposal. Waste must be transferred to an authorised person, in other words a person who is either a registered carrier or exempted from registration by the **Controlled Waste (Registration of Carriers and Seizure of Vehicles) Regulations 1991**. A waste transfer note must be completed and signed giving a written description of the waste, which is sufficient to enable the receiver of the waste to handle it in accordance with their own duty of care. The provisions concerning waste transfer notes are set out in the **Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991** (as amended). Failure to comply with these provisions is an offence.

The **Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005 (HWR 2005)** contain provisions about the handling and movement of hazardous waste. Consignment notes must be completed when any hazardous waste is transferred, which include details about the hazardous properties and any special handling requirements. If a consignment note is completed, a waste transfer note is not necessary. Untreated Japanese knotweed is not classed as hazardous waste, but material containing knotweed which has been treated with certain herbicides, may be classified as hazardous waste.

The **Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994** describe ‘waste relevant objectives’ in Paragraph 4 of Schedule 4. These objectives require that waste is recovered or disposed of “without

endangering human health and without using processes or methods which could harm the environment and in particular without – risk to water, air, soil, plants or animals; or causing nuisance though noise or odours; or adversely affecting the countryside or places of special interest”.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – Sets a framework for sustainable construction within Wales. Includes objectives for waste management.

Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 – Makes provision for legal action against anyone who causes loss of reasonable enjoyment of property. This can include Japanese knotweed being allowed to grow onto property.

The above legal provisions have consequences for a range of people, including anybody involved in the management or disposal of knotweed. For example knotweed which is cut down or excavated and removed from a development site must be transferred to an authorised person, and correctly described. It must be disposed of appropriately, as set out below in this Code. If you are going to bury knotweed on the development site you will need to consult the Environment Agency first to make sure that the material does not contain any other contaminant that may affect the quality of groundwater.

If you pollute the environment or cause harm to human health you may be prosecuted. Anyone who uses a herbicide must ensure that they do not pollute the water environment and the use of herbicides in or near water requires approval from the Environment Agency.

If any waste soil or knotweed is sent for landfill either before or after any treatment, it must go to a landfill that is authorised to receive it. It is not an offence to have Japanese knotweed on your land and it is not a notifiable weed. Allowing Japanese knotweed to grow onto other people’s property may be regarded as a private nuisance under common law, but this would be a civil matter.

The above is an excerpt from the Environment Agencies Japanese Knotweed Code of Practice (now withdrawn).

4 INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANT SPECIES WITHIN THE SITE:

A survey of the area was undertaken on the 26th June 2023 by EcoVigour Ltd, this identified extensive Japanese knotweed growth around the southern and western site boundaries and across the batter separating the two sections of the site. Sporadic Himalayan balsam was also noted in areas around the south and western site boundaries.

Species identified were:

- Japanese knotweed – *falopia japonica* – is a perennial plant which grows from a below ground rhizome system. The plant starts its growth cycle in May and grows rapidly achieving its full height of between 1.5m – 2.5m by July. Plants send out lateral leaders, up to 5m from the outermost plant within the stand. These then form new plants and this is how the plant spreads. New plants can also grow from rhizome fragments carried by water, human activity and earth

movements. New plants do not readily develop from stem material but can do if left in water. The rhizomes can extend to a depth of 3m but generally no more than 1m.

- Himalayan balsam – *impatiens glandulifera* – is an annual plant which regenerates from seeds. The growth cycle starts in May with the plants achieving full growth in early July. The plant then flowers, before setting seed in late July, early August. The seeds are contained in a seed pod, which once ripe, uncoils to eject the seeds up to 5m. The plant is shallow rooting with a fleshy stem. It can be easily pulled out of the ground.



Figure 4 – *Japanese Knotweed*



Site map

Site Boundary
 Blessed Carlo Field Knotweed extent
 Google Satellite Hybrid

Number	Area m2
1	6926.622
2	1464.141
3	727.689

Willmott Dixom
 Japanese Knotweed Survey
 Galon Uchaf Park, Blessed
 Carlo Catholic School

01020 m



Source: QGIS. Ordnance survey data Crown and database copyright 2023

EcoVigour Ltd, Hardwick Farm, Five Lanes, Caerwent, Monmouthshire NP26 5PH

Figure 5 – Locations of Japanese knotweed across the survey area.

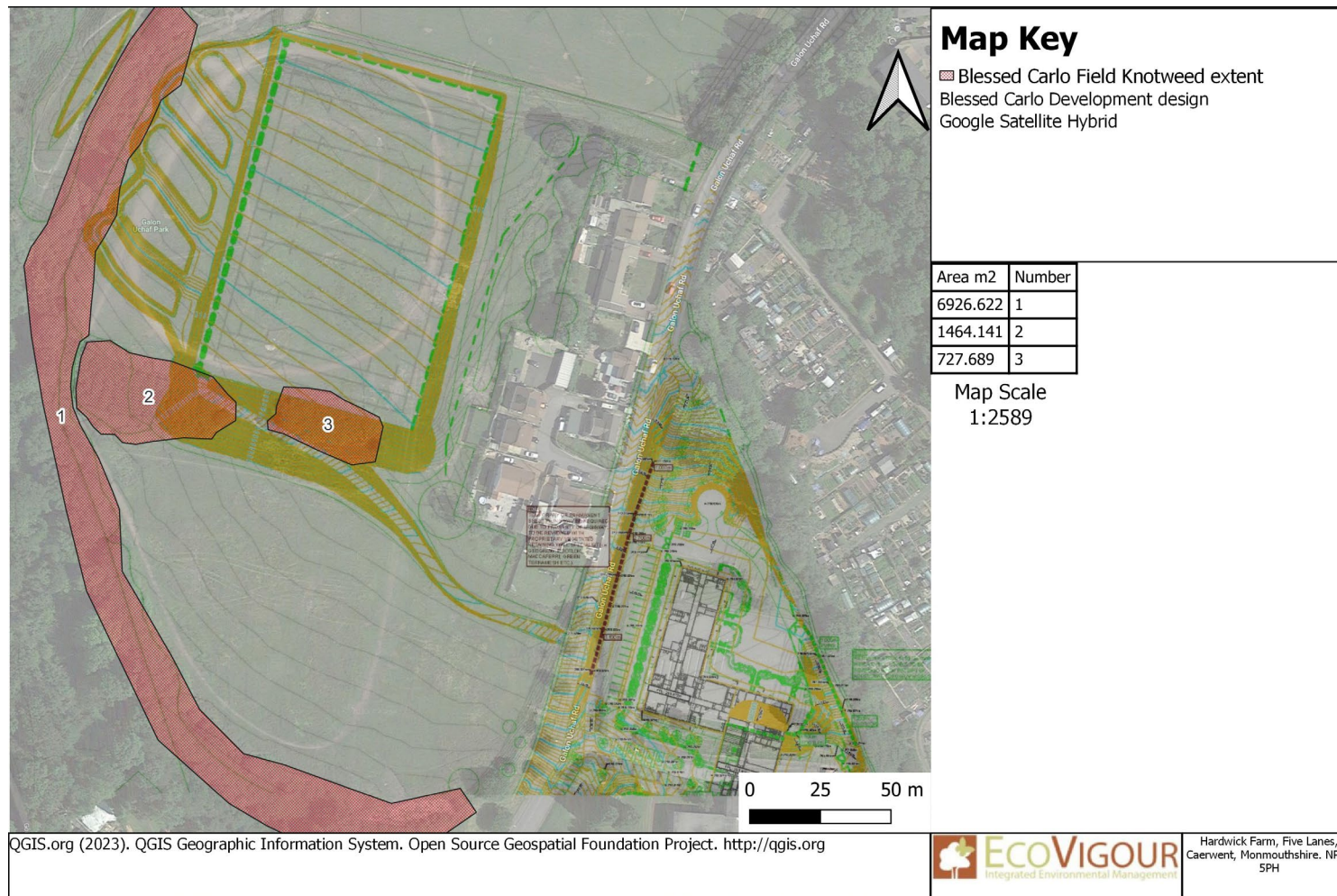


Figure 6 – Japanese Knotweed Areas overlain onto Construction Drawing.

5 LIMITATIONS AND THREATS TO OVERALL SITE MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Some of the areas of INNS catalogued will be disturbed during construction works at the site.

There are extensive areas of Japanese knotweed around the site boundary, which if not controlled have potential to spread back into the site. Treatment of these will require entry into third party land. This land may be owned by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council but this is currently not known. It is unlikely that the landowner would object to entry to their land to treat knotweed as it is likely to add additional value to their land. It is also likely that the knotweed originated within the adjoining land and it has grown onto the site. There is an argument that the owner of the land on which the knotweed originated has a responsibility to control subsequent growth.

There is sporadic Himalayan balsam plants across the site area, which should be controlled as part of the Japanese knotweed control process.

5.1 RISK APPRAISAL:

The key risks associated to the project are:

- The spreading of invasive plants onto previously un-contaminated areas of the site or onto other sites;
- Not fully eradicating the plant, which has potential to impact the biodiversity of the site;
- Increasing the environmental impact of the project by increasing resource usage during the treatment works.
- Impacts on communities due to the haulage of INNS contaminated material to offsite treatment / disposal facilities.
- Contamination and pollution through inappropriate use of herbicide.
- Placing a financial burden on the project through inefficient management of invasive plants.

6 BIOSECURITY AND INVASIVE NON-NATIVE PLANTS

Areas of growth within the working footprint will be fenced and signed using netlon, heras or pedestrian barriers. Signs should read 'Invasive Plant Species, Authorised Access Only' (Appendix 2).

Clean and dirty areas will be established and will include the plants growth area and seed / rhizome areas. All plant and personnel will, where possible, work from outside the contaminated area, with the bucket of the machine reaching into the area and clearing areas ahead of it. This will only require decontamination of the machine bucket.

Plant and personnel entering a clean area from a dirty area will be thoroughly cleaned of all site material, which could contain rhizome.

For areas where there is sporadic growth of Himalayan balsam, fencing is only required at access / egress points to form a gateway feature, which delineates where clean down operations should be undertaken.

Where it is required to operate plant in contaminated areas, strict clean down processes should be used, with all site material removed from the tracks of excavators or wheels of dumpers prior to them exiting the area. If this is not possible / desirable plant should work on geotextile sheeting to

form a barrier between the equipment and contaminated soils, care should be taken not to slew tracked plant, thus churning up the geotextile.

To prevent contaminated material falling from dumpers, they should only be 3/4 filled and the surface of the material be compacted within the dumper.

Prior to leaving site all plant and vehicles must be thoroughly cleaned of all site material.

Decontamination will involve but not be limited to the dry brushing of boots and tracks / wheels to remove plant matter. If soils are tacky and cannot be removed by dry brushing, boot washes and jet washing will be utilised. Cleaning down can be undertaken onto a sheet of geotextile to enable removed material to be captured but wash water to percolate away. Excavators can lift one track at a time, geotextile is then placed beneath the track and site material is cleared onto it. Soils and plant matter captured on the geotextile, should be either placed into the receptor site or back onto contaminated areas.

7 PROPOSED METHOD FOR THE TREATMENT OF JAPANESE KNOTWEED:

An options appraisal process has been undertaken and the following control options were appraised:

- Do nothing;
- Herbicidal treatment;
- Excavation and disposal to licensed landfill;
- Excavation and encapsulation in a cell on site;
- In-situ encapsulation;
- Placing contaminated material from within the construction footprint onto currently contaminated areas, preventing re-growth and ongoing herbicidal treatment;
- Use of vertical root barriers;
- A combination of some of the approaches above.

Many of the areas of Japanese knotweed fall outside of the works area, but consideration should be given to their control as part of the works, as long-term treatment is generally more cost effective than short term. Not treating them at this stage, increases the risk of further contamination of works areas and placing additional financial costs on the client.

The most sustainable, least cost option has been identified as In-Situ Encapsulation with an ongoing herbicide treatment programme to eradicate plants growing outside the earthworks footprint and prevent re-colonisation back onto the site.

Knotweed contaminated material is excavated to the extents of the root system but instead of soils being removed to a licensed landfill, they will be placed into areas of the site which are currently contaminated.

Biosecurity protocols will be used to ensure knotweed contaminated materials are not spread around the site.

For the plants which fall within Japanese Knotweed Areas 2 and 3 and the section of Area 1 within the footprint of the attenuation basins (approximately 2250m²). Allowing for a 1.5m buffer around the contaminated areas to allow for lateral rhizome growth, this takes the areas requiring excavation / encapsulation to approximately 3486m².

7.1 STRIPPING OF JAPANESE KNOTWEED CONTAMINATED TOPSOIL

Prior to In-Situ Encapsulation it will be required to remove the top 150mm of soil, as this will be topsoil and will contain the majority of the Japanese knotweed rhizome and other organic matter, which could decompose beneath the fill, resulting in settlement. Topsoil strip / excavation volumes are therefore likely to be:

Topsoil, containing the majority of the rhizome material: $3486\text{m}^2 \times 0.15\text{m} = 523\text{m}^3 \times 1.6 = 837\text{t}$.

It is proposed to retain this material on site and place it into areas around the perimeter of the site, which are currently contaminated with Japanese knotweed. Knotweed regrowth within deposition areas will then be subject to a programme of herbicide treatment.



Figure 7 – Area for deposition of topsoil containing Japanese knotweed rhizomes

During the INNS survey of the site it was found that the boundary fence was not complete and hence it was difficult to determine where the site boundary was. However there are areas of knotweed growth within the site, where an above ground cell can be constructed (See Figure 7).

It would be required to place up to 523m³ of topsoil contaminated with Japanese knotweed rhizomes into this area. The area measures approximately 2,800m² and hence if only this area were to be used, ground levels would be raised by 185mm across the area. It is likely that it would be possible to place knotweed contaminated material within other areas of the site or fill could be placed to a deeper level and hence the area required, could be smaller. This material would not be placed in any areas currently used by the public and would not be adjacent to any properties or infrastructure.

Following placement, of the stripped topsoil, an ongoing programme of herbicide treatment would be required as described in Section 7.1 below. This would be required for a minimum of five years to ensure there is no re-growth.

Knotweed would be treated with herbicide in late September each year until it has been eradicated.

7.2 INSTALLATION OF ROOT BARRIER

A 1m deep trench will be excavated around the periphery of each area, this should be as narrow as possible to minimise the volume of material excavated. This material should be considered to be contaminated with knotweed and placed into the deposition area. Root barrier will be dropped into this trench to prevent knotweed from growing around the edge of the barrier.

A heavy weight needle punched geosynthetic root barrier material such as Bontec SNW80 should be used for the root barrier. This will allow shallow ground water to pass through it but will not allow knotweed rhizomes to grow through it. The root barrier geotextile is laid and jointed using an adhesive double fold joint. The two edges of the fleece are butted up together and sealed using a contact spray adhesive. One side of the joint is then coated with spray adhesive and the materials are folded again. The remaining edge of the joint is then sprayed with adhesive and is folded flat to form a solid joint, which will hold the geotextile together and through which knotweed rhizomes cannot pass. This operation should be undertaken in dry conditions or with only light precipitation.

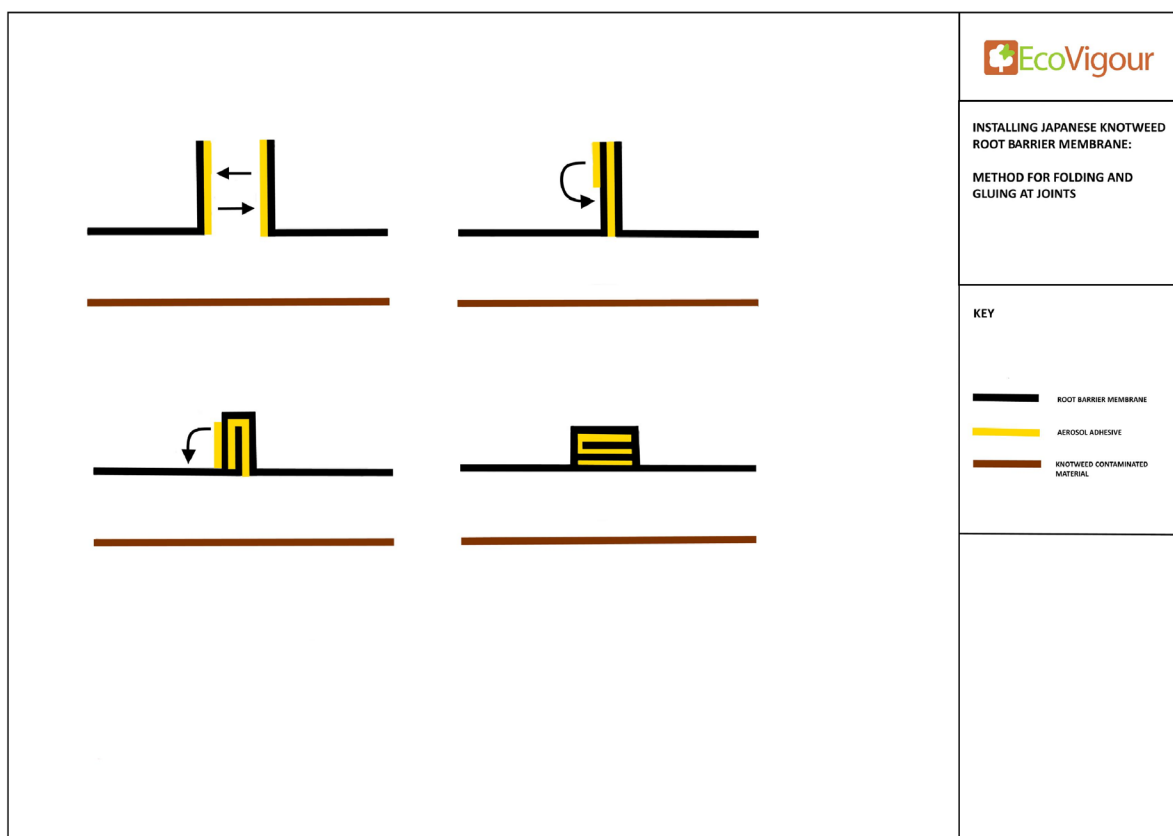


Figure 8 – Japanese Knotweed Areas overlain onto Construction Drawing.

Dependent of ground conditions, a protection fleece may be required beneath the root barrier to protect the main root barrier from puncture. This will be dependent on the nature of the soil

exposed beneath the topsoil and is only required if there are sharps within the underlying soil, which could damage the root barrier.

Care must be taken to ensure the joints in the protective fleece and in the membrane are staggered i.e. the joints do not coincide.

Earthworks can then be constructed directly on top of the root barrier, commencing with a well graded fill with no sharps which could penetrate the root barrier.

The drainage drawings have been reviewed and as far as EcoVigour can discern there are no clashes of deep drainage with the root barrier, however, this should be checked by Willmott Dixon.

The root barrier would need to cover an area of approximately 3486m² with a 1m return around the edges.

The remainder of the knotweed area would be treated using a herbicide treatment plan, with the knotweed treated until it is eradicated. If all knotweed surrounding the site cannot be eradicated and ongoing treatment programme should be built into the grounds maintenance programme to ensure it does not regrow back onto the site.

Table 1 – Recommended Control Measures:

Species	Recommended Treatment Measures
Biosecurity	Good biosecurity measures should be implemented as described in Section 6 – Segregation / Biosecurity.
Japanese knotweed Areas 2 and 3 and section of Area 1 beneath within the footprint of the attenuation ponds – In-situ Encapsulation	The upper 150mm of soil across the knotweed contaminated area within the earthworks footprint is excavated and then placed into a currently contaminated area of the site, as described above. Biosecurity protocols are required as described above. A 1m deep trench is excavated around the periphery of the area. Root barrier will be dropped into this to prevent knotweed from growing around the edge of the barrier. A permeable root barrier would then be installed across the area (approx. 3300m²), with a 1m vertical return around the perimeter to prevent the knotweed rhizomes growing around the barrier. Dependent of the ground conditions, a protection fleece may be required beneath the root barrier to protect the main root barrier from puncture. Care is taken to ensure the joints in the protective fleece and in the membrane do not coincide. This is only required if there are sharps within the underlying soil, which could damage the root barrier. The new pitch and ramp would then be constructed on top of the root barrier.

Species	Recommended Treatment Measures
	Pros: • Sustainable – no requirement to remove INNS from site; • Ongoing treatment would be required anyway, as part of the ongoing management of INNS at the site; • No requirement to import fill to replace excavated knotweed material, offers cost and CO2 savings. Cons: • Presence of root barrier needs to be considered within design of ramp, i.e. if drainage is required.
Japanese knotweed area 1 and section of Area 2	Ongoing treatment with herbicide as described in Section 7.1. This will be required until all knotweed within the vicinity of the park has been eradicated. If this cannot be achieved due to knotweed growth being on third party land outside the site boundary, this will need to be ongoing in perpetuity.
Himalayan Balsam	Sporadic plants were noted across the site. These will be controlled with the knotweed plants. A programme of cutting or pulling should be implemented prior to the plants flowering in late July. Cut or pulled plants can be left to rot on site. Where HB occurs within knotweed areas, it can be excavated with the knotweed and disposed of in the same way.

7.3 HERBICIDAL TREATMENT

Herbicidal treatment can be undertaken using a Glyphosate based herbicide i.e. Roundup ProBiactive. This is a Translocated Herbicide, which means it is absorbed through the plants foliage and then transferred to the roots where it destroys the cells of the root, killing the plant.

Herbicide can be applied using a range of application methods, including:

- Foliar sprays – applied using backpack and vehicle mounted sprayers;
- Weed wiping – herbicide mixture is wiped / painted onto the leaves of the plant, this allows a more concentrated mixture to be used with more accurate application. It does however take considerably longer to apply and is difficult to achieve in dense areas;
- Direct injection – the herbicide mix is injected directly into the rhizome of the plant. This method is particularly applicable for areas where it is not safe to spray herbicides i.e. next to biologically sensitive areas and watercourses.

Application of herbicide is most effective in September following flowering of the plant, as at this point in its lifecycle it is drawing nutrients from the stem and leaf system back into the rhizomes for the winter period and it takes the herbicide down with it. Herbicide can also be applied in late May, once the plant is approximately 1.5m tall, although there is no definitive evidence to suggest that two applications per year are more effective in long term control than one in September.



Figure 9 – Application of herbicide backsprayer



Figure 10 – Application using Direct Injection

Only personnel who have undergone the National Proficiency Test Council's (NPTC) PA1 and PA6 Certificate of Competence assessment. Under the Food and Environment Protection Act (FEPA) 1985, Control of Pesticides Regulations shall be allowed to handle and use herbicides.

All herbicides should be used as per the manufacturer's instructions and stored in a secure contained location.

The period taken for herbicide treatment to fully eradicate JKW is dependent on the health of the plant and the medium in which it is growing. Monsanto, who manufacture Roundup Pro-biactive, claim that this product will eradicate 98% of JKW growth in the first treatment. For a well-established plant growing in a good soil it is our experience that this is not the case, the general pattern of response to treatment is:

- Year 1 – plant growth and vigour is greatly reduced with fewer plants appearing during the following season. Plants which re-grow are generally stunted and discoloured;
- Year 2 – Limited growth, often JKW will sprout 'bonsai' (miniature version of the usual plant). Any full-size plants which sprout will be stunted and discoloured.
- Year 3 – There is usually little / no growth. Often growth appears on the periphery, where the JKW has put out rhizomes which did not sprout the previous season but which now sprout.
- Year 4 – small areas of growth on large rhizomes.
- Year 5 – eradication.

Japanese knotweed growth across all areas can be controlled through a programme of herbicide treatment. However, there is not enough time on the project programme to eradicate the plants using herbicide alone, within earthworks areas (also see Note below).

We recommend that a five year treatment and monitoring plan is implemented to ensure the plant has been fully eradicated. If possible this will need to include the plants within the land adjoining the site. If this is not possible an ongoing treatment regime will be required to keep pushing the knotweed growth back from the site boundary.

We recommend cultivation of JKW areas following the second season of herbicide application, to break up the rhizome, stimulate the plant to regenerate and make it more susceptible to treatment.

Important Note – Herbicide applications alone can render JKW unable to produce new growth (deemed as eradication) but are unlikely to remove viability from 100% of the underground rhizome system. The Environment Agency deem any ground containing dead JKW (even after a specialist has declared eradication following herbicide treatment or even sifting) to be classified as a controlled waste (Difficult Waste) if removed from site. This is the same waste classification given to living healthy knotweed material and soils containing live knotweed.

8 REPORTING

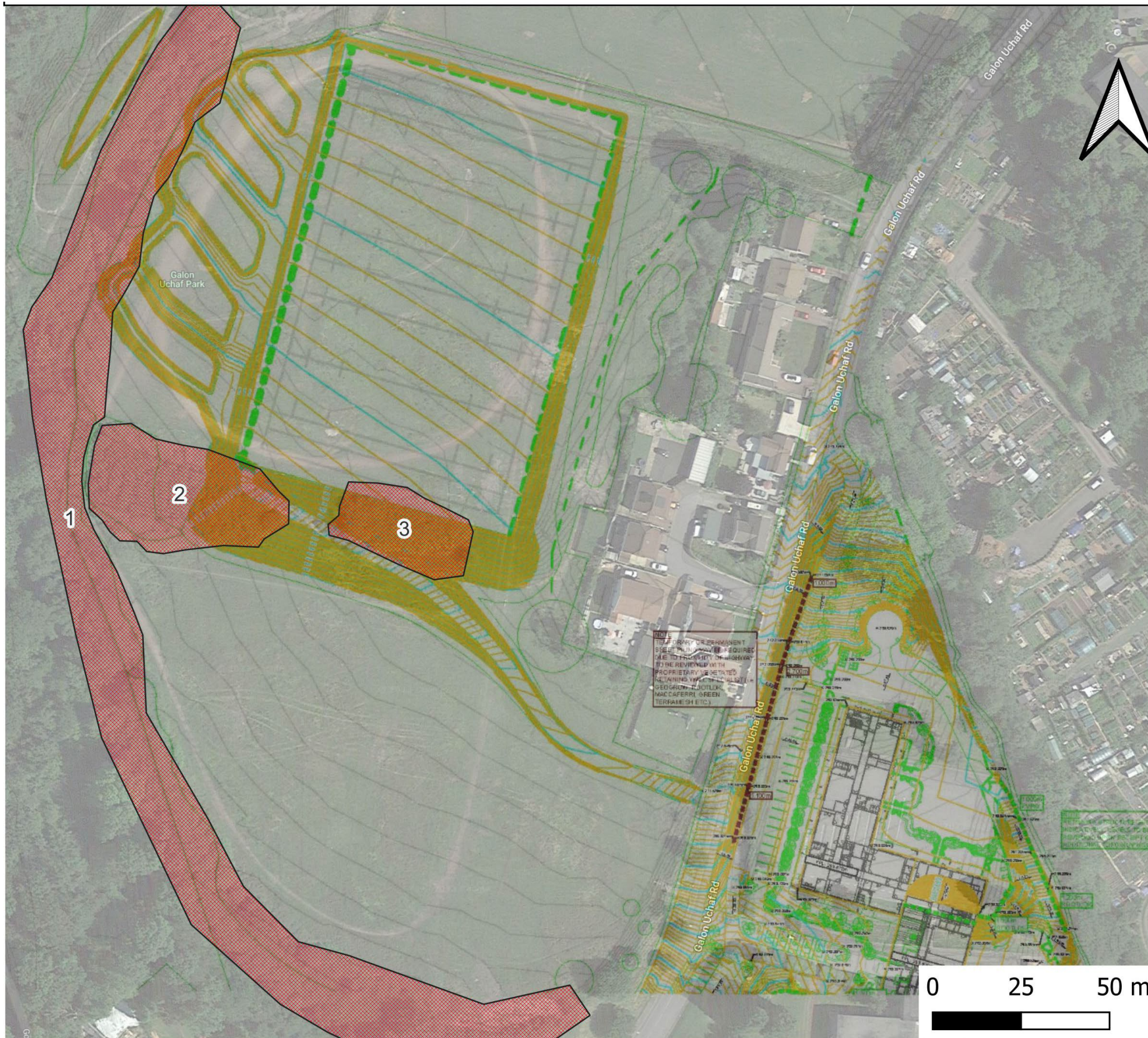
On completion of the works a verification report will be required detailing the following:

- Description of works, for example site diary supported by photographs.
- Description of any works that were not implemented in line with this management plan, reasoning for the variation and residual risk..
- Detailed as-built drawings, specifically highlighting locations of root barrier / stockpiles and reuse of INNS impacted arisings.
- Duty of Care appended to the report for all material removed off-site.

9 REFERENCES:

Environment Agency (2006). *The knotweed code of practice – Managing Japanese knotweed on development sites.*

APPENDIX 1 – JAPANESE KNOTWEED LOCATION DRAWINGS



Map Key

- Blessed Carlo Field Knotweed extent
- Blessed Carlo Development design
- Google Satellite Hybrid

Area m2	Number
6926.622	1
1464.141	2
727.689	3

Map Scale
1:2589

APPENDIX 2 – JAPANESE KNOTWEED WARNING SIGNS



Restricted Access

The soil in this area contains Japanese Knotweed
and is being treated.

Do not enter unless authorised.

Do not remove soil from this area without
authorisation.