

Ascerta

Landscape, Arboricultural & Ecological Solutions
for the Built Environment

Invasive Species Method Statement

Former Mondi Site
(Site 1)
Holcombe Mill
Bridge Street
Ramsbottom
BL0 0BS
Ref: P.1202.19

October 2023

Rev	Date	Details
A	25 th January 2021	Updates following council feedback
B	29 th March 2021	Updates following council feedback
C	11 th October 2023	Updates following site visit

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Holcombe Mill
Bridge Street
Ramsbottom
BL0 0BS**

Invasive Species Method Statement

For

Ecclestone Homes Ltd

11 October 2023

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QA Review & Approval	Danielle Wood - Office Manager and Ciaran Power – Operations Manager

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Ascerta has been instructed by Eccleston Homes to prepare an Invasive Species Method Statement for the Former Mondi Site, Holcombe Hill, Bridge Street, Ramsbottom, BL0 0BS (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SD 793 616.
- 1.2 Our client seeks to construct residential buildings, with associated parking.
- 1.3 The site was visited between 1st July 2019 and 4th October 2019, to determine the extent of invasive species cover at the site and provide a method statement for the control of the species identified. An updated site visit was carried out on 7th September 2023. This report sets out the details of the existing invasive species on-site (Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), cotoneaster species (*Cotoneaster* sp.) and Montbretia (*Crocasmia*)) and provides a management plan for the control of the three species. Associated drawings can be found within the appendices of this report.
- 1.4 Prior groundworks or any earthworks within the site an updated survey for invasive species will be required to check if there has been any further spread of the species and to confirm the locations of the invasive species recorded in 2019. If works have not commenced by May 2025, a full updated ecological survey to include the invasive species will be required.

2.0 Site Description and Legislation

- 2.1 The site lies adjacent to the local high street with shops and industrial mills lying to the north and west. A railway line borders the site to the west. The river Irwell meanders around the site boundary to the east, with a cricket and football ground located south of the site. Habitats present within the site include dense scrub, broadleaved scattered trees, scattered scrub, tall ruderal, semi-natural broadleaved woodland, introduced scrub, and a water course. These habitats are presented on drawing P.1202.19.03A (*Appendix 1*). The areas of invasive species are presented on drawing P.1202.19.04A (*Appendix 2*).
- 2.2 Stands of Himalayan balsam, and Japanese knotweed are located on the banks of the River Irwell, running along the entirety of the eastern site boundary. Japanese knotweed has begun to spread from the riverbank and has started to encroach upon the areas of scrub on the site (photograph 1). The Japanese knotweed 7m root zone extends further into the site and also needs to be taken into consideration as marked on drawing P.1202.19.04A.



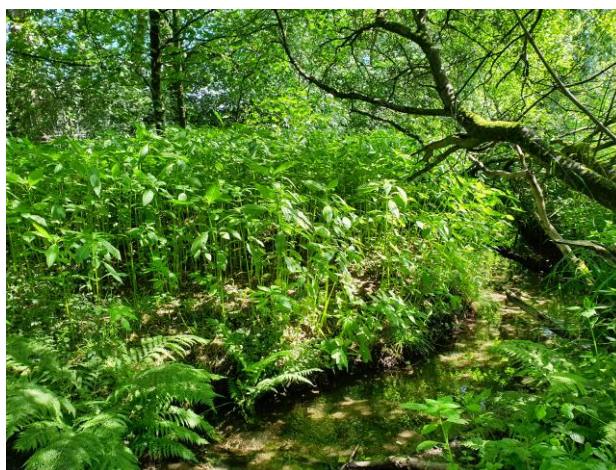
Photograph 1: Stand of Japanese Knotweed within scrub vegetation.

- 2.3 It is an offence under Section 14(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to '*plant or otherwise cause to grow*' in the wild any plant in Schedule 9 Part II on which Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam, montbretia and cotoneaster species are listed. These species will need control prior to the commencement of construction activities, including ground works and vegetation clearance on the site. An exclusion zone will be set up during treatment of these species to reduce risk of further spread.

3.0 Himalayan Balsam Method Statement

- 3.1 Himalayan balsam is present on the site, along the banks of the River Irwell and along a stream which runs along a section of the western boundary of the site (Photograph 2). Himalayan Balsam is highly invasive, spreading rapidly via seed dispersal and reducing biodiversity where it is present. The River Irwell and the stream both provide corridors that can carry the seeds of the Himalayan Balsam and distribute variable seeds within surrounding habitats. It is recommended due to the sensitive locations of the Himalayan balsam that the plant is controlled through hand pulling and other non-chemical methods to reduce the damage to native species within the vicinity.
- 3.2 Himalayan balsam plants will be hand pulled in the first instance during late summer prior to seed pods developing in early August. Regular checks and the hand pulling of any new material will be required every 4 weeks between late March and October. To ensure that no plants are missed a further visit to remove any material by hand pulling will be required in early winter (following the first frost of the year) to ensure their eradication before they set seed. All removed material will be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or composted within a bunded area on the site until all viable material, including seeds, is fully composted.

- 3.3 As the site lies on the banks of a river and off-site habitats have Himalayan balsam infestation, regular checks for this species will be required following development, with an ongoing treatment programme agreed. This ongoing treatment programme would occur as part of the landscape management requirements for the site and would likely involve a check for and removal of Himalayan balsam between mid-May and Mid-July annually. If the no Himalayan balsam is found on the site within a two-year period following the hand pulling, the site can be considered cleared of Himalayan balsam for development purposes.
- 3.4 If Himalayan balsam is found on the site during subsequent monitoring, it should be controlled by hand pulling as it reduces the risk to non-target species. Pulling should occur in Autumn, March-June and during the winter months, following the first frosts before the plant has set seed and all removed material should be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or composted on site.
- 3.5 Once the exclusion zone has been declared free of Himalayan balsam and any other invasive species, it should be re-vegetated with grasses and wildflowers and managed to maintain a dense sward. This will limit the potential for re-invasion by Himalayan balsam and other undesirable plant species.



Photograph 2: Stands of Himalayan balsam on the banks of the stream on the western boundary of the site.

4.0 Japanese Knotweed Method Statement

- 4.1 The riverbank and areas within the site are infested with Japanese knotweed. All Japanese knotweed should be isolated prior to site clearance. The Japanese knotweed should be fully excavated, to a depth of 3m to ensure all material is removed, including 3m of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all the rhizome root material has been removed. This can be done at any time of year. Alternatively, if timescales allow the Japanese knotweed can be controlled through stem injection of herbicide to reduce the impact on native species within the vicinity. The areas will be fenced off and no building works will occur in this exclusion zone until it is confirmed that Japanese knotweed has been successfully eradicated from this zone by chemical treatment. An appropriate notice will be placed on the fence informing the workforce that a Japanese knotweed exclusion zone lies within the fenced area (see appendix 4 for notice example).
- 4.2 As the Japanese knotweed lies within 8m of the River Irwell (designated as a 'Main River'), the Environment Agency will be contacted to confirm that the proposed methods are acceptable for the treatment of Japanese knotweed in this location. This is because treatment options for Japanese knotweed are limited when it is present adjacent to water courses.

- 4.3 If the Japanese knotweed is to be controlled by herbicide injection, the plants will first be stem injected with glyphosate in July.
- 4.4 The site will be treated with stem injection glyphosate again in September to ensure all Japanese knotweed is treated including any regrowth or any stands missed during the initial treatment.
- 4.5 As the site lies on the banks of a river and off-site habitats are likely to have Japanese Knotweed infestation, regular checks for this species will be required, with an ongoing treatment programme. This would occur as part of the landscape management requirements for the site and would most likely involve a check for and treatment of Japanese knotweed between April and July annually. If no Japanese knotweed is found on the site within a two-year period following the herbicide treatment the site can be considered cleared of Japanese knotweed for development purposes.
- 4.6 If any Japanese knotweed is recorded during these checks it will be treated by excavation or using stem injection of herbicides by suitably licensed contractors.
- 4.7 Once the exclusion zone has been declared free of Japanese knotweed and any other invasive species, it should be re-vegetated appropriately to maintain a dense vegetation covering that will limit the potential for re-invasion by Japanese knotweed and other undesirable plant species.

5.0 Cotoneaster Method Statement

- 5.1 Multiple stands of cotoneaster were noted on the site on the western boundary and spreading further into the site (Photograph 3).



Photograph 3: Cotoneaster spreading into the site from the western boundary.

- 5.2 All cotoneaster should be isolated prior to site clearance. The plant should be fully excavated, including 500cm of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all roots have been removed. This can be done at any time of year; however, it is recommended that the plant should be removed in spring or early summer (April-July) when the plant is in flower and does not have berries. The earth should be shaken off the roots and the entire plant mulched or burned. If berries are present on the plant, the stems should be covered with a strong paper bag to prevent berries falling to the ground during transfer and the plant should be burned to prevent the seeds sowing and establishing further individuals.

- 5.3 Once all cotoneaster has been cleared from the site, site clearance can begin, provided other ecological issues have been addressed, including the potential presence of breeding birds should the site be cleared between 1 March and 31st August inclusive.
- 5.4 Cotoneaster spreads by seeds carried by birds and there may be a seed bank on the site. Should new stands of cotoneaster be noted during works these should be removed following this method statement. Cotoneaster could return to the site at any time if other plants are nearby.

6.0 Montbretia Method Statement

- 6.1 All montbretia should be isolated prior to site clearance. The plant should be fully excavated, including 500cm of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all roots have been removed. This can be done at any time of year; however, it is recommended that the plant should be removed in spring or early summer (April-July) when the plant is in flower. The earth should be shaken off the roots and the entire plant removed from site by a licenced contractor.
- 6.2 Once all montbretia has been cleared from the site, site clearance can begin, provided other ecological issues have been addressed, including the potential presence of breeding birds should the site be cleared between 1st March and 31st August inclusive.

7.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

- 7.1 Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and cotoneaster are present on the site and need control prior to works commencing to avoid risk of spreading these invasive species in the wild.
- 7.2 The Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam will be fenced off prior to treatment. The Japanese knotweed will be excavated or treated in July and September with herbicide stem injection by a suitably experienced contractor licensed to control invasive species near water. Approval should be granted from the Environment Agency as the stand lies on the banks of the River Irwell, which is classified as a 'Main River'. The Himalayan balsam will in the first instance hand pulled in late summer, prior to the seed pods developing in early August. Any new plant material will be hand pulled every 4 weeks between March and October and following the first frost of the winter before they are able to set seed. All removed material will be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or completely composted in a secure bunded area on-site. The timetable for treatment of these three species is presented in Appendix 3.
- 7.3 The cotoneaster and montbretia will be controlled by excavation, prior to setting seed (April-July). The timetable for treatment of this is presented in Appendix 3.
- 7.4 As stands of Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam are likely to exist off-site, annual checks will be undertaken for these species and any found within the site will be controlled as required by suitably qualified contractors. Full details of ongoing monitoring and management can be provided in a Landscape Management Plan for the site.
- 7.5 It is recommended that the surrounding land is checked for invasive species. If any are found the owners of the adjacent land should be advised to control any invasive species on their land at the same time and potentially placed on legal notice of liability. If an invasive species spreads from the adjacent land back onto the site, owners of the adjacent land could be liable for costs of controlling invasive species on the Former Mondi site.

Appendix 1



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Landscape | Trees | Ecology

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CLIENT:
Eccleston Homes

PROJECT:
Former Mondri Site, (site 1) Holcombe Mill,
Bridge Street, Rammsbottom BL0 0BS

DRAWING TITLE:
Phase One Habitat Survey

SCALE:
1:500 @A1

DATE:
01/07/2019

DRAWN BY:
CP

CHRD BY:
TA

DRAWING No:
P.1202.19.03

REV:
A

KEY

Hard standing

Building

Bare ground

Fence

Wall

Dense scrub

Broad leaved scattered trees

Introduced shrub

Water course

Scattered scrub

Tall ruderal

Semi-natural broad-leaved woodland

Tree with low bat roost potential

Tree with moderate bat roost potential

Not accessible

60m buffer (from chimney)

Amenity grassland

Target note

1 - Rubble pile

2 - Japanese Knotweed

3 - Metal container full of rubbish

4 - Himalayan Balsam

5 - Signal crayfish claw

6 - Montbretia

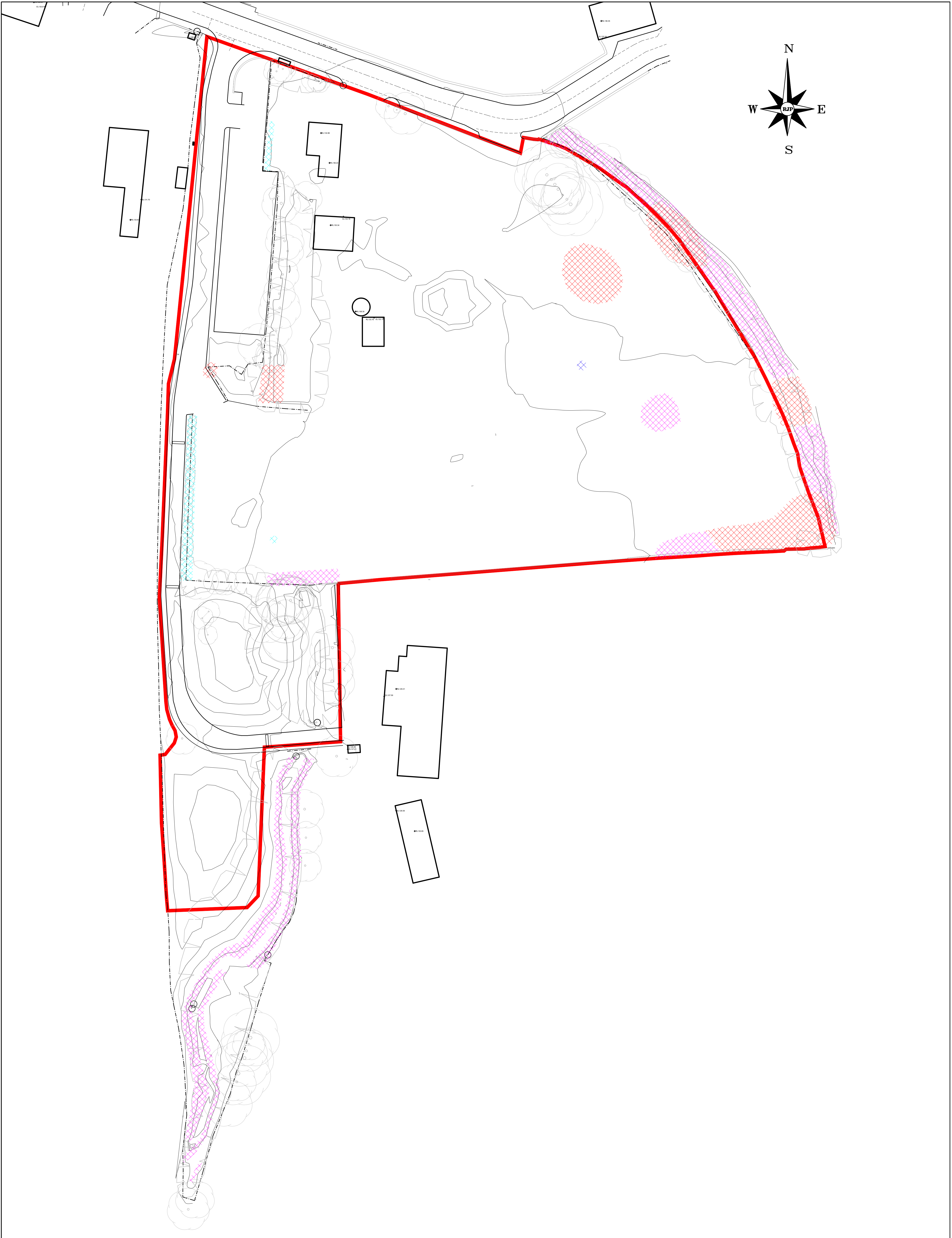
DO NOT SCALE

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REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
A	General updates	06/10/23

Appendix 2



Appendix 3

Timetable for Invasive Species Treatment

Date	Japanese Knotweed	Cotoneaster and Montbretia	Himalayan balsam
Every 4 weeks between March to October			Hand pull in the first instance before seeds have set. Continue to regularly hand pull any new stems until October. All removed material should be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or fully composted on the site in a secure bunded area.
July	Excavation of all plant and root material by digging (can be carried out at any time of the year). Stem injection with chemical herbicide can be used as an alternative as agreed by the Environment Agency.	Excavate and remove from the site (can occur any time of year but recommended between April and July).	
September	Stem injection with chemical herbicide as agreed by the Environment Agency.	Continue monitoring the site and remove any new growth.	
Following the first frost			Hand pull before seeds have set. All removed material should be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or fully composted on the site in a secure bunded area.
From July (for 3-5 years)	Continue monitoring the site and treat any new growth. (Until a 12-month period in which no growth is observed).		Check for and removal of Himalayan balsam between mid-May and mid-July annually. If no Himalayan balsam is found on the site within a two-year period following initial hand pulling the site can be considered cleared of Himalayan balsam for development purposes.

Appendix 4

Himalayan Balsam

If found or suspected please report to site manager



Japanese Knotweed

If found or suspected please report to site manager & Ascerta (0845 463 4404) immediately



Cotoneaster

If found or suspected please report to site manager

