

Root barrier work protects knotweed threatened social housing development



Examples of typical root barrier work

The discovery of Japanese Knotweed on a construction site, and the potential implications in terms of treatment costs and project delay, can be headache enough for a developer. Where an infestation crosses land ownership boundaries or contamination comes from an adjacent site the problem is compounded.

Such was the situation facing Cheshire-based design and build contractor Lothlorian working on a development to build 16 new properties for Crewe housing association, Wulvern Housing.

The Bradfield Road site in Crewe had formerly housed a commercial workshop and car repair business which was demolished by Lothlorian to make way for the new social housing scheme. The discovery of Japanese Knotweed on the site, as well as an adjacent council-owned land, meant that prompt treatment was required in order to prevent project delay.

Treatment specialist, Japanese Knotweed Control (JKC) was approached with the problem and invited to prepare a site survey. It impressed the client with its prompt response - visiting the site the next day - and with its cost-competitive recommendation involving excavation and root barrier work.

Timescales were tight for the project and, after comprehensive initial consultations, JKC was able to move quickly to ensure the client was able to meet its build deadlines. Within a fortnight JKC was back on site to remove the knotweed, excavating and removing all contaminated soil before installing a root barrier along the boundary fence to protect against re-infestation from the neighbouring council land.

Lothlorian's quantity surveyor, Mat Wilkinson oversaw the work: "JKC provided an excellent service, responding immediately to our concerns and promptly scheduling in the treatment to minimise any delay and disruption to our tight construction programme.

"The company offered comprehensive advice on why excavation and root barrier work was necessary for this type of infestation and its team carried out all work safely and professionally in just a couple of days."

The treatment work was carried out in January and the housing development remains on schedule for completion by this July. With the approval of the local authority, JKC will also re-visit the Bradfield Road site this summer to follow up with some stem injection treatment of the knotweed still growing on the adjacent council land.

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