

JKC knotweed treatment passes stern college test

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The weed infestation problem was first identified three years ago by architects working on a major £20m new build and refurbishment programme to amalgamate all college sites onto one Nelson campus.

Located on an island within an oxbow lake, there was severe riverbank knotweed infestation on three sides of the development, from which growth had started to spread to footpath and driveway sections of the new campus. There was serious concern that the weeds could undermine the structural integrity of the new college buildings if left untreated.

Local Cheshire-based specialist, Japanese Knotweed Control was awarded the contract to treat the weeds using its stem injection treatment method. As well as treating the obvious growth areas along the riverbank, several trenches were excavated on the site to check on the knotweed's root structure and determine how it was likely to spread. Subsequent visits over the past three summers have achieved an eradication success rate in excess of

90%, extremely high given the scale of infestation on surrounding and upstream riverbanks. An ongoing maintenance programme will now ensure that any potential regrowth is successfully monitored and managed.

With its commitment to protect the local environment and to maintain good relationships with neighbouring residents, Nelson and Colne College was impressed with the stem injection method. Involving the injection of a given dose of glyphosate herbicide directly into the plant stem, it is widely recognised as achieving maximum control and considered the most ecologically-sound treatment.

The College's facilities manager, John Ellis said: "Japanese Knotweed Control has gone about its work with great care and discretion. It has been particularly mindful of the need to uphold our College's strong green credentials and complete the treatment without any adverse environmental impact on the vegetation and wildlife for which this site is well-known. "Regular progress reports keep us fully updated on treatment schedules and results and, with barely any disruption to the daily life of the College, Japanese Knotweed Control has virtually eliminated the knotweed threat on this campus."