JKC

Japanese Knotweed Control Limited

Treating the environment responsibly



ENGIE

GORTON LANE, GORTON, MANCHESTER, M12 5DH

METHOD STATEMENT CONTROL MEASURES FOR COTONEASTER

Japanese Knotweed Control Ltd
Office Address: **Houldsworth Mill, Houldsworth Street, Reddish, Stockport, SK5 6DA**
Contact Tel: **0161 850 1604**
Contact Email: **info@japaneseknotweedcontrol.com**

CLIENT DETAILS

Company Name: Engie
Client Contact: Rob Lynch – Contracts Manager
Contact Tel: 07887 816 897
Contact Email: robert.lynch@engie.com
Clients Site: Gorton Lane
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Richard Podmore	Rob Gibbs	David Layland
Joint Managing Director	Project Administration Manager	Joint Managing Director
		Health & Safety Manager

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document has been prepared by Japanese Knotweed Control Ltd on behalf of Engie and provides a strategy for controlling the non-native invasive Cotoneaster, at the clients site in Gorton Lane.

1.2 This Cotoneaster method statement is to be provided to Engie to specifically discharge planning condition 18.

1.3 Condition 18 of the planning permission (ref: 06/2018/0700) states: Prior to the commencement of any development, details of a scheme for the eradication and/or control of Cotoneaster and other invasive species on this site will be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

1.4 Cotoneaster is a non-native invasive species which is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and as such, under Section 14 of the Act it is illegal to plant or otherwise cause the plant to grow in the wild. The plant has been identified as present onsite and the client has requested a method statement for dealing with this non-native invasive species.

1.5 The plant has been identified as occurring within two separate areas at this location and will have established a wide base of mature vegetation and root system, which will have aided the build-up of a seed bank within the soil.

1.6 Pre-development site clearance activities could result in the spread of Cotoneaster both within and outside of the site. This method statement therefore provides details of measures to be adopted during site clearance to prevent further spread into the wild and management prescriptions to control the plant within the open spaces of the completed development.

2.0 ECOLOGY OF COTONEASTER

2.1 Cotoneaster is an herbaceous annual plant. Meaning that it completes its life cycle, from germination to the production of seeds, within one growing season, and then dies. Simply, it has a life span of one year.

2.2 The plant produces hundreds of seeds in this one-year cycle. The seeds, once they have dispersed from the plant and scattered on the surrounding ground, can remain viable for germination for up to two years.

2.3 The seeds can float on water and therefore watercourses are particularly vulnerable to the dispersal of Cotoneaster seeds. It is no surprise then that the plant is often associated with damp habitats such as watercourses and their banks, often extending into associated damp woodland and meadows.

2.4 The plant is quick growing and will form dense stands between March and October. Flowers typically appears in June and July, with seed dispersal occurring from July into October depending on local conditions.

2.5 These species can be relatively shallow rooting; however, Cotoneaster has a more extensive rhizome structure which would need to be excavated from the ground rather than hand pulled.

Cotoneaster plants have a waxy leaf which also reduces herbicide uptake and therefore this is not appropriate for controlling this INNS.

The preferred management option is to excavate the seed bank by removing the vegetation and sub soil to a minimum of 30cm, which will ensure root removal and 50cm to capture the seed bank, which will effectively remove the infestation and leaves the area clear and free for development works to continue without restriction.

Species: Cotoneaster/Other Shallow Rooting Weeds.

Depths: 30cm will remove all root capable of re-growth/50cm will remove the stored seed bank within the subsoil.

Inspection by the Invasive Weed Specialist of the area being excavated for plant material that might persist in the soil should take place regularly at the face of the excavation activities. All reasonable precautions should be taken not to facilitate the spread of the species during control action. Tracked vehicles are more likely to facilitate the spread of INNS than tyred vehicles and extra precautions must be taken when they are used in the infestation area (regular inspection of tracks for plant material and cleaning).

Where excavations take place inside Root Protection Areas (RPAs) on Site, all appropriate steps must be taken not to damage the root system. Any works in such areas must be undertaken following the guidance provided in British Standard BS 5837:2012: Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction (British Standards Institution, 2012), which outlines the regulations regarding RPAs. If excavations are required within an RPA, extra precautions are required, i.e., hand tools should be used to remove the soil around roots and the primary roots should not be damaged.

3.0 PATHWAYS TO SPREAD

3.1 It should be noted that any site clearance activities could result in the spread of Cotoneaster both within and outside of the site.

3.2 Cotoneaster is spread exclusively through the germination of its seeds. Each plant produces hundreds of seeds, which will disperse from each parent plant.

3.3 Seeds may be further dispersed by transportation through water, via contaminated soil and through passage on muddy boots, vehicles, and work equipment.

3.4 During the plants active growing period (March to October), disturbed or severed plants have the potential to re-root. This can be a concern where people, livestock, or machinery accidentally up-root the plants and discard it outside the initial infestation footprint.

4.0 CONTROL MEASURES

4.1 The effect is immediate and has the added benefit that all the seedbanks will be removed at the same time, therefore resulting no further plants emerging in the following years.

4.2 Excavation works will require care and vigilance when operating close to a watercourse.

4.3 Wheel washing should be undertaken to prevent plant and machinery that is being used in the excavation of Cotoneaster, from picking up soil contaminated with its seeds and spreading the plant into the wild when they leave the site.

5.0 EXCAVATION PROCESS

• On arrive to site the area of infestation is assessed to verify the area to be removed.

• The area is cordoned off to restrict access and a clear/clean approach to the area is established for the excavator to operate with the minimal impact to the contaminated area/s. Only the bucket should meet the target area. All movements and bucket lifts are supervised and monitored so no loss of controlled removal is lost. A designated area is identified for waiting/loaded for removal & clean down. The clean down is completed manually, scraping off all soil from the tires/tracks and washed off prior to leaving the area.

• Once the excavation has commenced, the Cotoneaster is removed by systematically by stripping the soil to the required depth and lifting one bucket at a time and the load assessed prior to continuing with the next bucket. This ensures that an understanding of the volume of roots and vegetation is monitored as the works progress.

• Based on the material removed, a better understanding of the make-up of the sub soil will be evident and it will become clearer to the JKC operative exactly how much will need to be removed. It is at this stage that the exact depth required will be assessed and confirmed.

• The excavation/stripping will continue until the JKC operative is satisfied that all Cotoneaster viable plant material and seed bank is completely removed, and the area is clear of any contamination.

6.0 SITE CLEARANCE

6.1 To avoid the spread of soil contaminated with the seeds of Cotoneaster, no soil is to be moved within the site unless under supervision. The material to be removed from site should be held in a suitable designated area ready to be loaded onto tipper wagons and taken to a licenced landfill tip for controlled and authorised disposal. If this process is followed the will be no offence occurred under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

6.2 For more information visit www.nonnativespecies.org

7.0 REFERENCE AND FURTHER READING

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Under the Wildlife and Countryside act 1981, the law states that it is the legal responsibility of the landowners and or developers to ensure that all identified Japanese knotweed is safely treated or removed from contaminated land. Failure to do so in a controlled manner by a competent specialist may result in prosecution.

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Japanese knotweed is classified as a ‘controlled waste’ and as such is required to be treated under the ‘duty of care’ requirements stipulated under the Environmental Protection Act of 1990. This act states that ‘controlled waste’ should be disposed of by qualified contractors within licensed disposal sites.

UKAS NHSS 18

All provisions within this contract for work on or near highways are covered in appendix C of this document. All traffic management for the works undertaken will only be conducted by a registered TTM contactor 12a and/or 12b as appropriate and traffic management report in accordance with NHSS 12D submitted by the traffic management technical officer.

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