

Japanese Knotweed Survey for Residential Properties

What is Japanese knotweed and what problems does it cause?

Japanese Knotweed is a major problem throughout the UK. Invasive and difficult to get rid of, if your home or land becomes infested with this plant it can damage and devalue property.

As a result the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) published an Information Paper IP27/2012 titled "*Japanese Knotweed and Residential Property*". This alerts surveyors to the problems that knotweed can cause and lays down a framework for evaluating and mitigating the risks. Although this paper has been withdrawn and is in the process of being updated, it still informs the basis risk assessment that surveyors and mortgage lenders currently use.



Disclosure of Japanese knotweed

The Law Society's Property Information Form (TA6) includes a section on Japanese knotweed. Failure to disclose material information can lead to legal claims for misrepresentation. Relevant information is obtained from the seller in order to get a better understanding of the history of the knotweed on site.

The majority of mortgage lenders have set policies relating to lending on knotweed affected property. They generally require a detailed Japanese Knotweed Management Plan and a 10-year insurance backed guarantee before lending can be agreed.

In most circumstances, a site survey will only be commissioned where the presence of knotweed on a property or in adjoining land has already been identified, in order to inform a Japanese knotweed Management Plan. It is not unusual however, for buyers to commission surveys to rule out the presence of knotweed, particularly in areas considered to be at a high risk of infestation, such as land bordering railway lines.

How Environet can help

Operating across the UK, Environet is a leading specialist in Japanese knotweed and other invasive plants. We provide consulting and contracting services on the treatment and removal of the more challenging and damaging invasive plants in both the residential and commercial sectors. All our work is offered with a 10-year insurance backed guarantee underwritten by an "AA-" rated insurer.

Well established with over twenty years of experience and thousands of successfully completed projects, our highly trained teams work swiftly and efficiently to tackle the problem at hand protecting the value of your property or land asset.



Producing an effective Japanese Knotweed Management Plan (JKMP)

Step 1 – The Site Survey

A survey of the property is carried out to look for any visible presence of Japanese knotweed. This includes visible growth, cut canes, dead canes and crowns on the surface of the ground. No intrusive investigation of the soil is undertaken unless specifically instructed. Where possible we also look at adjoining land outside of our client's ownership. The scope of the assessment is identified on a plan within the body of the accompanying report/JKMP.

Where no knotweed is identified, a survey report is drawn up to include the extent of the investigation, the RICS categorisation and other useful information regarding Japanese knotweed in general. The report will not state categorically that no knotweed is present, only that none could be identified at the time of the survey, taking into account any information given to us by the property owner.

Where knotweed is identified on the property, or in adjoining land where it is within 3m of the boundary or 7m of the subject building, the site survey will assess the following aspects which will be recorded in the JKMP and inform our recommendations:

- The full extent of the knotweed including its rhizome system
- The likely source or origin of the knotweed
- The status of the knotweed in relation to its maturity, whether active or dormant
- The location in relation to knotweed encroachment issues with adjoining land
- Whether the building has possibly been damaged by knotweed
- Site specific conditions that might influence the treatment methodology

We encourage you to be present during the on-site survey so that we can discuss the issues together.

Step 2 – The JKMP

Japanese knotweed infestations vary considerably from property to property for a multitude of reasons. On completion of the survey, we will prepare a full JKMP for your property.

Origin, maturity, extent, location, growth state and site conditions all play a part in determining the best course of action for treating Japanese knotweed. The JKMP will clearly highlight the required work to treat or remove the knotweed, and the costs involved. Our experienced team will ensure the very best solution for your situation.

Putting the Management Plan into action

Armed with the full facts you will now know which way to proceed. You should check that your lender is happy with the proposals. Instruct us to carry out the work and we'll do the rest. We will issue you with a guarantee; underwritten by an "AA-" rated insurer, so you can rest assured that the knotweed problem is under control.

