

RAMPANT WEED BLOCKS MORTGAGE LENDING

Homes infested with the highly invasive weed, Japanese Knotweed, will be worth less following a controversial decision by the main banks to refuse mortgages on affected properties.

Japanese Knotweed was imported by our Victorian ancestors and grown as an ornamental plant in gardens throughout the UK as it was fast growing and attractive. Little did they realise the havoc they were unleashing.

The decision by the banks is another hurdle for sellers and buyers, many of whom probably have never heard of Japanese Knotweed, let alone know what it looks like. But help is at hand from local Japanese Knotweed experts, Environet, based in Cobham, Surrey.

Nic Seal comments: "Japanese Knotweed is a major problem due to its voracious capacity

to spread and its ability to cause damage to property. However, to refuse a mortgage simply because some knotweed is present on the land seems to me to be a complete over-reaction.

Despite reports to the contrary, it is possible to completely eradicate the plant – we wouldn't offer 20 year guarantees if we had any doubts. You should act fast to prevent its spread, to protect the value of your property and to avoid potential disputes and litigation with your neighbours."

Japanese Knotweed shoots appear in the spring, growing an incredible 3m tall by June/July. Pretty white flowers appear in September. Leaves fall in the autumn leaving brittle dead looking canes in winter. But the plant is far from dead, the underground root system having been replenished ready to strike the following spring.

Knotweed is a huge problem, at last now getting

the attention it deserves. The Government has recently approved plans to release into the environment a tiny sap sucking insect from Japan, hoping it will help control, but accepting it won't eradicate, the plant.

Nic Seal says: "If you have Japanese Knotweed on your land you need to act fast to eradicate it, I doubt the sap sucker could provide an effective solution within residential gardens in the foreseeable future. I would certainly not rely solely on an insect to make my property eligible for a mortgage. There are several well established and proven methods we use in the fight against knotweed, which we have used successfully on over 500 sites from private gardens to large development projects."

To help you positively identify this alien invader and to discover the treatment options visit www.environet-uk.co.uk

