

Xtract™ - the eco alternative for the immediate eradication of Japanese Knotweed

Environet was recently featured on the BBC The One Show, talking about the nightmare scenarios faced by owners of land infested with the dreaded Japanese Knotweed. We spoke to Nic Seal of Environet to find out more about Xtract™, their ground breaking eco method for rapid and complete eradication of knotweed.

Alarms should be ringing loudly if you own or occupy land infested with Japanese Knotweed. Notwithstanding the possible damage caused to property by this highly invasive weed, now all leading banks refuse to offer mortgages on land infested with Knotweed. This makes any future sale of your property very difficult, undoubtedly affecting the value of your property investment.

Japanese Knotweed is not constrained by property boundaries so spreads into adjoining land causing disputes between neighbours, sometimes ending in costly litigation.

The plant is supported by an extensive underground rhizome system of roots and stems. The system extends deep into the ground, typically 2m, sometimes deeper. In order to eradicate Japanese Knotweed, you either need to kill or remove the entire rhizome system, and there lies the difficulty. If any viable rhizome remains, new shoots will return and gradually spread to re-infest further. It's easy to make the above ground part of the plant look dead but what is important is what lurks below the surface. Don't be fooled into thinking the Knotweed problem has simply disappeared just because you can't see any growth. Knotweed rhizome can remain dormant in the ground for many years, ready to strike when you least expect it.

It is difficult to kill all rhizome using herbicides, so if you are serious about achieving eradication rather than simple control, treatment is best left to specialists, who may be able to eradicate Knotweed in one growing season if conditions are right, otherwise it could take two years or more.

Delaying development whilst one waits for eradication using herbicides is clearly not an option any developer would happily choose, and now with the advent of Xtract™ an attractive alternative exists, that is considerably less costly to the wallet and environment than "dig & dump" or other physical methods.

The area of infestation is mapped out, and excavated using a 360 tracked excavator under expert supervision, usually to a depth of 2m or more. The excavated infested soils are loaded into the Xtract™ machine, a mobile piece of plant designed by Environet, specifically for removing Japanese Knotweed rhizome from soil.

Processed soils, now with all viable Knotweed rhizome removed, are stockpiled by two sets of conveyors ready for re-use on site. The collected rhizome is bagged up and removed from site, for off site energy recovery or disposal.

Having now operated Xtract™ for 3 years, the company is so confident of its results that it offers a market leading 20 year guarantee on this method as standard.

The advantages that this method provides are numerous.

For the developer, immediate eradication can be achieved at a highly competitive price, without delays to the construction programme and with peace of mind backed by guarantee.

For the eco-minded, Knotweed is cleared with negligible environmental impact, no harmful herbicides are required, and no infested soils are consigned as waste to landfill.

Being an on-site remediation method, all costs are eligible for tax relief under the Land Remediation Tax Relief scheme introduced by the Government to encourage the clean up of contaminated land using sustainable methods.

Xtract™ is not suited to every Knotweed situation, for example where time permits eradication by herbicide treatment, but is a superb alternative to any other physical removal or containment method, such as "Dig & Dump" and "On site burial".

To watch the BBC One Show feature see Useful Links at www.environet-uk.co.uk/japanese-knotweed.php ■

