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## Don't Let Your Development Be Uprooted

By Dr Paul Beckett, Director of  
environmental consultancy, Phlorum.

Introduced from Asia in the mid-nineteenth century as an ornamental plant, Japanese knotweed is today one of the biggest threats to commercial and domestic developments in the UK.

Typically this invasive weed is found in wasteland and brownfield sites. The government has conservatively placed the total cost of controlling Japanese knotweed at £1.56 billion.

This insidious weed typically springs up in April. New shoots emerge early in the month and can grow up to three-to-four inches per day.

Knotweed can damage foundations, drains and even walls, adding hundreds of thousands, or even millions of pounds to site costs. The danger of Japanese knotweed is that it grows anywhere, from field edges to sand dunes, through asphalt and out of lamp-posts; it's such a keen coloniser of marginal and harsh sites that one of its native habitats is the volcanic, gravelly desert of Mount Fuji.

Japanese knotweed is a recurring expense if the site remains infected even by small fragments of the weed. If it is left un-tackled, the land harbouring it can ultimately become devalued.

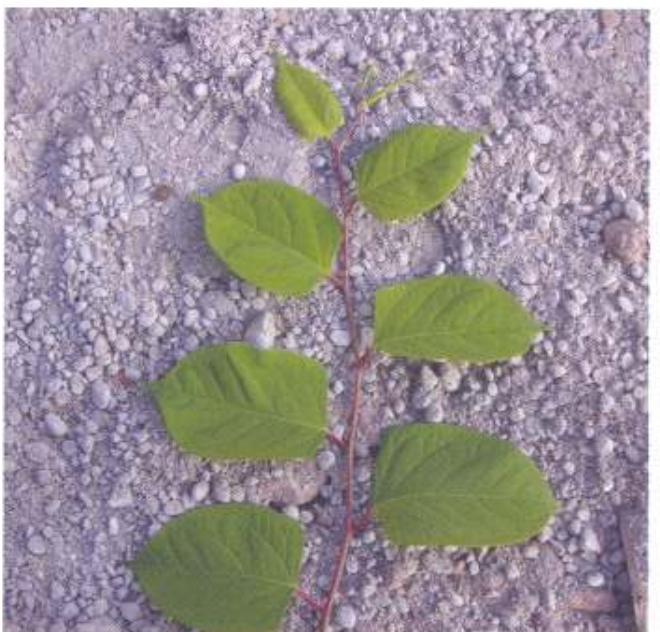
At present, across the UK, an area roughly the size of London is at risk from Japanese knotweed, leaving thousands of sites across the country that are potentially at risk.

In the UK it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause the species to grow in the wild under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Material containing Japanese knotweed is also classified as 'controlled waste' under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and as such must be disposed of safely at an appropriately licensed facility in accordance with the Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991.

Numerous attempts have been made to control Japanese knotweed, but there are few options available. Phlorum is an environmental consultancy and the UK's leading experts on Japanese knotweed eradication who specialise in contamination, ecology and wider environmental management of new developments.

For more information about how to deal with Japanese knotweed contact [info@phlorum.com](mailto:info@phlorum.com) or call 01273 704449 for a free factsheet.

Japanese Knotweed  
leaves and Red Shoot  
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