
Invasive Species
Method Statement

Land at Stakehill,
Slattocks,
M24 2SH
Ref: P.1172.19

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P.1179.19

Land at Stakehill, Slattocks, M24 2SH

Invasive Species Method Statement

for

Redrow Homes Ltd, Valerie Drake, Robert Allen & John Thomas Allen, June Greenwood, Willie Green & Mark Greenwood, David Andrew Tetlow and Amanda Jane Tetlow

17 September 2024

Field Work by	Neil Everett BSc (Hons) Grad CIEEM, Tosha Allen BSc (Hons), Liz Kenyon BSc (Hons), Lizzie Atkinson MSc CIEEM and Jack Kay MSc
Document Author	Lizzie Atkinson and Liz Kenyon (Rev A, 2024)
Technical Review	Liz Kenyon
QA Review & Approval	Ciaran Power – Operations Manager

Contents

1.0	Introduction	- 3 -
2.0	Site Description and Legislation	- 4 -
3.0	Himalayan Balsam Method Statement	- 5 -
4.0	Rhododendron Method Statement	- 6 -
5.0	Cotoneaster Method Statement	- 8 -
6.0	Conclusions & Recommendations.....	- 9 -

Appendix 1	<i>Drawing P.1202.19.01B Phase One Habitat Survey</i>
Appendix 2	<i>Drawing P.1179.19.26A Invasive Species Location Plan</i>
Appendix 3	Timetable for Invasive Species Treatment

1.0 Introduction

Ascerta has been instructed by Redrow Homes Ltd, Valerie Drake, Robert Allen & John Thomas Allen, June Greenwood, Willie Green & Mark Greenwood, David Andrew Tetlow and Amanda Jane Tetlow to prepare an Invasive Species Method Statement for the Land at Stakehill, Slattocks, M24 2SH (hereafter referred to as the site). The site OS grid reference is SD 89167 09404.

Our client's objectives are to redevelop the site for residential purposes with the construction of residential dwellings, associated access roads, areas of parking and areas of public open space (POS).

The site was visited between May 2019 and November 2022, to determine the extent of invasive species cover at the site and provide a method statement for the control of the species identified.

Updated site visits were carried out on 10th June 2024 and 10th September 2024, to check if there had been any spread of the invasive species, and if there had been to determine the extent of the cover of each species.

This report sets out the details of the existing invasive species on-site rhododendron (*Rhododendron sp*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), and a cotoneaster species (*Cotoneaster sp.*) and provides a management plan for the control of the three species. Associated drawings can be found within the appendices of this report.

Prior groundworks or any earthworks within the site an updated survey for invasive species will be required to check if there has been any further spread of the species and to confirm the locations of the invasive species recorded between 2019 and 2024. If works have not commenced by September 2026, a full updated ecological survey to include the invasive species will be required. An updated check for invasive species will also be required prior to the start of each phase of the development.

2.0 Site Description and Legislation

The site lies south of junction 20 on the M62 carriageway, located south of Rochdale and is bound by Thornton New Road to the north, the A672 to the east, Manchester Road (A664) to the west and Slattocks Link Road (A664) to the south. Within the wider environment there is agricultural land, residential dwellings, Manchester Golf Course, industrial and retail units.

The site comprises an area of agricultural land and associated buildings (the majority of buildings lie outside the red line boundary). The habitats on site comprise semi-improved, improved and wet grassland, hardstanding, semi-natural broadleaved woodland, scattered trees, introduced shrubs, waterbodies, watercourses, hedgerows of varying species richness, scrub and tall ruderal vegetation of mixed species diversity. A garden centre with two buildings lies within the western section of the site and the buildings are surrounded by hardstanding with introduced shrubs and scattered trees. These habitats are presented on drawing P.1172.19.01B (*Appendix 1*).

Himalayan balsam has been identified on the banks of ditch D1 within the western section of the site, within the field margins of fields F20 and F22 as well as along the track the lines the eastern boundary of fields F13, F8 and F7. Rhododendron and cotoneaster have been identified within the formal landscaping within the All-in-One Garden Centre within the western section of the site. The location of the invasive species are presented on drawing P.1179.19.26A (*Appendix 2*).

It is an offence under Section 14(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to '*plant or otherwise cause to grow*' in the wild any plant in Schedule 9 Part II on which Rhododendron, Himalayan balsam and cotoneaster species are listed. These species will need control prior to the commencement of construction activities, including ground works and vegetation clearance on the site. An exclusion zone will be set up during treatment of these species to reduce risk of further spread.

3.0 Himalayan Balsam Method Statement

Himalayan Balsam has been identified on both the banks of ditch D1 within the western section of the site (Photographs 1 & 2), within the margins of fields F20 and F22 as well as along the track the lines the eastern boundary of fields F13, F8 and F7.

In 2024, a large bund of Himalayan balsam was also noted to the northeast of F13 and within the field margins of F21, within the field margin area adjacent to St John Thornham Church. Offsite Himalayan balsam was also recorded in the land parcel between Thornham Lane and the A627(M) to the east of F14 and within the adjacent offsite embankment to the north of Thornham Lane.

The ditch (D1) provides a corridor that can carry the seeds of the Himalayan Balsam and distribute variable seeds within surrounding habitats. It is recommended due to the sensitive locations of the Himalayan balsam that the plant within the vicinity of the ditch banks, is controlled through hand pulling and other non-chemical methods to reduce the damage to native species within the vicinity.



Photograph 1: Strands of Himalayan Balsam along the banks of ditch D1.

Himalayan balsam plants will be hand pulled in the first instance during late summer prior to seed pods developing in early August. Regular checks and the hand pulling of any new material will be required every 4 weeks between late March and October. To ensure that no plants are missed a further visit to remove any material my hand pulling will be required in early winter (following the first frost of the year) to ensure their eradication before they set seed. All removed material will be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or composted within a bunded area on the site until all viable material, including seeds, is fully composted.

For the areas of Himalayan Balsam identified within the margins of fields F20, F21 and F22 as well as along the track the lines the eastern boundary of fields F13, F8 and F7 and to the north-east of F13, the Himalayan Balsam should be isolated prior to site clearance. The Himalayan balsam should be fully excavated, to a depth of 3m to ensure all material is removed, including 3m of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all the rhizome root material has been removed. This can be done at any time of year. Alternatively, if timescales allow the Himalayan balsam can be controlled through stem injection of herbicide, by a suitably licenced contractor, to reduce the impact on native species within the vicinity. The area will be fenced off and no building works will occur in this exclusion zone until it is confirmed that Himalayan balsam has been successfully eradicated from this zone by excavation or by chemical treatment.

As the Himalayan Balsam has encroached the banks of the onsite ditch D1, regular checks for this species will be required following development, with an ongoing treatment programme agreed. This ongoing treatment programme would occur as part of the landscape management requirements for the site and would likely involve a check for and removal of Himalayan balsam between mid-May and Mid-July annually. If the no Himalayan balsam is found on the site within a two-year period following the hand pulling, the site can be considered cleared of Himalayan balsam for development purposes.

If Himalayan balsam is found on the site during subsequent monitoring, it should be controlled by hand pulling as it reduces the risk to non-target species. Pulling should occur in Autumn, March-June and during the winter months, following the first frosts before the plant has set seed and all removed material should be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or composted on site.

Once the exclusion zone has been declared free of Himalayan balsam and any other invasive species, it should be re-vegetated with grasses and wildflowers and managed to maintain a dense sward. This will limit the potential for re-invasion by Himalayan balsam and other undesirable plant species.

4.0 Rhododendron Method Statement

Rhododendron has been identified within the formal landscaping within the All-in-One Garden Centre within the western section of the site (Photograph 2).



Photograph 2: Rhododendron within the All-in-One Garden Centre carpark.

Rhododendron can colonise within an area very quickly via seed dispersal and out compete ground fauna. Each flower head can produce 3,000-7,000 seeds, that are dispersed by the wind and animals. Its large leaves block and reflect sunlight preventing the vegetation below it from being able to grow. The areas of rhododendron will be fenced off and no building works will occur in this exclusion zone until it is confirmed that rhododendron has been successfully eradicated from this zone by chemical treatment and excavation.

Rhododendron will be controlled within the woodland through cutting and then stem injection of herbicide into the trunk. Regrowth may happen within the trunk, any regrowth will be sprayed with a herbicide. All material will be removed by a licenced contractor to a licenced landfill site for invasive species. The areas of rhododendron within hedge H2 and tree group G4 can be removed by digging as the trees within the area are to be lost within the proposals. All plant and root material will be excavated with machinery and removed from site by a licenced contractor to a licenced land fill site.

The rhododendron will first be stem injected with glyphosate in July.

The site will be treated with stem injection glyphosate again in September to ensure all rhododendron is treated including any regrowth or any stands missed during the initial treatment.

The rhododendron to be removed by digging will be excavated in July, if any areas cannot be fully removed by excavation, they will require stem injection as above in sections 4.3 and 4.4.

As part of the landscape management requirements for the site a check for and treatment of rhododendron will be undertaken between April and July annually. If no rhododendron is found on the site within a two-year period following the herbicide treatment the site can be considered cleared of rhododendron for development purposes.

If any rhododendron is recorded during these checks it will be treated using appropriate methods (most likely stem injection of herbicides) and by suitably licensed contractors.

Once the exclusion zone has been declared free of rhododendron and any other invasive species, it should be re-vegetated appropriately to maintain a dense vegetation covering that will limit the potential for re-invasion by rhododendron and other undesirable plant species.

5.0 Cotoneaster Method Statement

Cotoneaster was identified within the formal landscaping of All-in-One Garden centre car park, within the western section on the site (Photograph 5).



Photograph 3: Cotoneaster within the All-in-One Garden Centre carpark.

All cotoneaster should be isolated prior to site clearance. The plant should be fully excavated, including 500cm of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all roots have been removed. This can be done at any time of year; however, it is recommended that the plant should be removed in spring or early summer (April-July) when the plant is in flower and does not have berries. The earth should be shaken off the roots and the entire plant mulched or burned. If berries are present on the plant, the stems should be covered with a strong paper bag to prevent berries falling to the ground during transfer and the plant should be burned to prevent the seeds sowing and establishing further individuals.

Once all cotoneaster has been cleared from the site, site clearance can begin, provided other ecological issues have been addressed, including the potential presence of breeding birds should the site be cleared between 1st March and 31st August inclusive.

Cotoneaster spreads by seeds carried by birds and there may be a seed bank on the site. Should new stands of cotoneaster be noted during works these should be removed following this method statement. Cotoneaster could return to the site at any time if other plants are nearby.

6.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

Himalayan balsam, rhododendron and cotoneaster are present on the site and need control prior to works commencing to avoid risk of spreading these invasive species in the wild.

The rhododendron and Himalayan balsam will be fenced off prior to treatment. The rhododendron will be excavated or treated in July and September with herbicide stem injection by a suitably experienced contractor licensed to control invasive species. Due to the sensitive location of the area of Himalayan balsam present along the banks of ditch D1, it will in the first instance hand pulled in late summer, prior to the seed pods developing in early August. Any new plant material will be hand pulled every 4 weeks between March and October and following the first frost of the winter before they are able to set seed. All removed material will be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or completely composted in a secure bunded area on-site. The timetable for treatment of these three species is presented in Appendix 3.

For the areas of Himalayan balsam present within the margins of fields F20 and F22 as well as along the track the lines the eastern boundary of fields F13, F8 & F7 and northeast of F13, the Himalayan balsam should be fully excavated to a depth of 3m to ensure all material is removed, including 3m of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all the rhizome root material has been removed. This can be done at any time of year. A check for and removal of Himalayan balsam between mid-May and Mid-July annually will be carried out as part of the landscape management requirements. If then no Himalayan balsam is found on the site within a two-year period following the hand pulling, the site can be considered cleared of Himalayan balsam for development purposes. The timetable for treatment of these three species is presented in Appendix 3.

The cotoneaster will be controlled by excavation, prior to setting seed (April-July). The timetable for treatment of this is presented in Appendix 3.

In 2024, Himalayan balsam was also recorded in the land parcel between Thornham Lane and the A627(M) to the east of F14 and within the adjacent offsite embankment to the north of Thornham Lane.

As stands of Himalayan balsam exist off-site, annual checks will be undertaken for these species, and any found within the site will be controlled as required by suitably qualified contractors. Full details of ongoing monitoring and management can be provided in a Landscape Management Plan for the site.

It is recommended that the surrounding land is checked for invasive species. If any are found the owners of the adjacent land should be advised to control any invasive species on their land at the same time and potentially placed on legal notice of liability. If an invasive species spreads from the adjacent land back onto the site, owners of the adjacent land could be liable for costs of controlling invasive species on the Land at Stakehill Site.

Appendix 1



Key

- Site boundary
- J1.3 - Disturbed land
- B4 - Improved grassland
- B6 - Semi-improved grassland
- B5 - Marsh/marshy grassland
- J4 - Bare ground
- A1.1.1 - Semi-natural Broadleaved woodland
- A2.1 - Scrub
- C3.1 - Tall ruderal
- J1.4 - Introduced shrub
- J3.6 - Buildings
- G1.1 - Standing water
- G2.1 - Running water
- J2.6 - Dry ditch
- J2.1.2 - Hedgerow
- Scattered trees
- Mammal tracks
- Target note

- TN1 - Outlier badger sett
- TN2 - Rabbit warren
- TN3 - Lapwing
- TN4 - Ephemeral waterbody
- TN5 - Geese droppings
- TN6 - Canadian Geese
- TN7 - Stone pile
- TN8 - Rabbit
- TN9 - Brown hare
- TN10 - Rubble pile
- TN11 - Manure pile
- TN12 - Equestrian exercise arena
- TN13 - Cotoneaster
- TN14 - Rhododendron
- TN15 - Garages
- TN16 - Himalayan Balsam

DO NOT SCALE.
ALL COORDINATES RELATED TO LOCAL GRID.
LOCATED TO NG BY BEST FIT TO DETAIL.
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Ascerta

Landscape | Trees | Ecology

t: 0845 463 4404
e: info@landscapetreesecology.com
www.landscapetreesecology.com

CLIENT:
Redrow Homes

PROJECT:
Manchester Road, Slattocks

DRAWING TITLE:
Phase one habitat survey

SCALE: NTS@A3	DRAWN BY: LA	DRAWING No: P.1172.19.01
DATE: 31/10/2022	CHKD BY: LK	REV: B

Appendix 2



Key

- Site boundary
- Location of Cotoneaster
- Location of Rhododendron
- Location of Himalyan balsam

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Ascerta

Landscape | Trees | Ecology

t: 0845 463 4404

e: Info@landscapetreeseecology.com

www.landscapetreeseecology.com

CLIENT:

Redrow Homes

PROJECT:

Manchester Road, Slattocks

DRAWING TITLE:

Invasive Species Location Plan

SCALE: NTS@A3	DRAWN BY: LA	DRAWING No: P.1172.19.26
DATE: 19/01/2023	CHKD BY: LK	REV: -

Appendix 3

Timetable for Invasive Species Treatment

Date	Rhododendron	Cotoneaster	Himalayan balsam
Every 4 weeks between March to October			For areas present along the banks of the onsite ditch, hand pull in the first instance before seeds have set. Continue to regularly hand pull any new stems until October. All removed material should be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or fully composted on the site in a secure bunded area. For areas present within the field margins, fully excavate to a depth of 3m to ensure all material is removed, including 3m of earth surrounding the plant to ensure all the rhizome root material has been removed (this can be carried out at any time of the year). if timescales allow the Himalayan balsam can be controlled through stem injection of herbicide.
July	Stem injection with chemical herbicide by a licenced contractor or excavate and remove the plant from the site between April and July.	Excavate and remove from the site (can occur any time of year but recommended between April and July).	
September	Stem injection with chemical herbicide as agreed by the Environment Agency.	Continue monitoring the site and remove any new growth.	
Following the first frost			Hand pull before seeds have set. All removed material should be disposed of at an appropriate landfill site as controlled waste or fully composted on the site in a secure bunded area.
From July (for 3-5 years)	Continue monitoring the site and treat any new growth. (Until a 12-month period in which no growth is observed). Due to a large amount of rhododendron being present within the woodland a longer period of checks will be required to ensure no plant material establishes.	Continue monitoring the site and treat any new growth. (Until a 12-month period in which no growth is observed).	Check for and removal of Himalayan balsam between mid-May and mid-July annually. If no Himalayan balsam is found on the site within a two-year period following initial hand pulling the site can be considered cleared of Himalayan balsam for development purposes.