



METHOD STATEMENT:

Hand Dig (and Hand Screening) of Soils Contaminated with Japanese Knotweed

Client: Gillespie

Site Address: Rochdale Broadfield Park Slopes, Rochdale, OL16 1AZ

LAST REVIEW / UPDATE: 05/01/2024 **REVIEWED BY:** Simon Prato-Scarlett

NEXT REVIEW BEFORE: 01/05/2025

INTRODUCTION

In order to take samples, prepare working areas or clear small amounts of invasive species material (particularly Japanese knotweed rhizome) from a site, JKSL may carry out a hand-dig of contaminated soils, potentially including manual separation of plant material from the soils.

If invasive species are involved, biosecurity measures (aka "clean site policy") should be implemented. It is important to note that screened soils are not suitable for removal as "clean" or for re-use on site as clean soils. JKSL Project Manager can provide further advice on use of soils.

This method statement covers removal of small amounts of rhizome, root materials or other similar material from the soil and does not include works with giant hogweed. Separate RAMS are required for such works or screening of large amounts of soils.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

This document covers the task and should be read with JKSL's Health and Safety documents, including site-specific risk assessment and RAMS for other tasks involved with the project.

Where these works are to take place on a working site, JKSL personnel will attend a briefing or induction from the Principal Contractor and will follow all site procedures.

JKSL's Site Foreman should report any health and safety concerns on site to the client's Site Manager at the earliest opportunity, as well as reporting concerns to the JKSL office.

Manual handling risk associated with this task are expected to be significant, and this is addressed both in JKSL's Manual Handling Risk Assessment and the task-specific RA. Risks of twisting and bending can be minimised by an ergonomic layout for the screening area and mechanical aids (such as conveyors) where large amounts of soils are to be removed.

The potential to disturb asbestos containing materials during this operation is relatively high, and staff carrying out these works should have asbestos awareness training and works should stop if any suspected ACMs (asbestos containing materials) are identified.

Any significant or deep excavations on site must be investigated at the beginning of each working day by JKSL's Site Foreman, who must implement any additional measures required to secure the excavation.



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EQUIPMENT

The following equipment is required for the task:

- Gloves
- Hand tools – usually a trowel or small fork and a spade or shovel
- Decontamination equipment including footwash, spade, shovel and stiff brush

Depending on the job, temporary fencing and signage may be installed and root barrier membrane “screening area” may be put on the ground to prevent cross-contamination. This will be outlined in the Clean Site Policy and additional task-specific RAMS.

The site-specific RAMS (or client’s site manager) will specify what PPE is to be used, but the minimum PPE required for this task is:

- footwear with protective toe and mid-sole [EN ISO:20345],
- high-visibility vest, coat or tabard [EN ISO:20471]
- hard hat [EN397]
- eye protection [EN166]
- knee pads [EN 14404] if any tasks will be done kneeling down
- gloves [EN 388] (see below)

Gloves:

While carry out hand-sifting / screening / sorting operations, suitable EN 388 gloves must be worn (with adequate “cut” and “puncture” specification as outlined in the Risk Assessment). Replacements will be available from the site foreman, and damaged gloves should be replaced as soon as practically possible to ensure continual protection.

PREPARATION

JKSL’s Site Foreman will make sure all JKSL staff get an induction or site briefing from the client or contractor before starting works. JKSL will brief anyone working in the working area(s) about the Clean Site Policy, safety controls and any other related issues.

A permit to dig will be put in place prior to commencement of digging (using either the client’s or JKSL’s permit to dig system).

Before starting works, JKSL will CAT scan any area where ground is to be broken. This will be done by a trained, competent operative only and in line with the separate RAMS for this task. Service drawing(s) and UXO (unexploded ordnance) survey for the site should be requested from the client and checked before CAT scanning. If these are not available, proceed on the basis that there are active services in all excavation areas.

All suspected services will be appropriately marked before digging, and discussed with the machine operator, if this is not the person doing the CAT scanning.

Tools and other equipment should be inspected before starting works.

CLEAN SITE POLICY



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In order to minimise the potential for cross-contamination due to the works in contaminated areas, all works must be undertaken in line with JKSL's Clean Site Policy, the requirements of which will be specified in that document.

If required, a foot wash and signage will be placed at the entry point to the screening area; this must be used by any person when leaving the screening area.

HAND DIGGING

Before the commencement of any excavation works in the contaminated area, JKSL will implement a Clean Site Policy (as above), which may include establishing an exclusion zone around the contaminated area and a TWMA.

A spade will be used to first loosen, and then extract soils from the contaminated area, stockpiling on the TWMA if necessary. Care will be taken to ensure that all arising material is either put in on to the TWMA or into a suitable container.

When digging in any area on a slope, extra care should be taken to ensure that you have a stable footing at all times. Operatives should maintain an awareness of their surroundings, giving particular attention to the possibility of site traffic or unauthorised personnel.

Due care will be taken not to spill excavated materials outside the contaminated area, and any spillages will be cleaned up as soon as it is safe to do so. This will be carried out by JKSL Operatives using a combination of spades, shovels and brushes, as appropriate.

The excavation should proceed in roughly 100-300mm layers, using a "shock shovel" or suitable equivalent. The edges of the excavation should be graded or battered where possible, to remove any steep drops and reduce the chance of land slip. The area should be CAT-scanned at each 300mm of material excavated.

Once each area has been cleared to the satisfaction of JKSL's Site Foreman, this will be signed off as complete, and the machinery, tools and operatives decontaminated before moving to the next area (see below).

SCREENING OF CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

Contaminated materials will be searched for the material to be removed by hand, using fork, trowel, shovels and/or spades to spread the material out as required. Materials could be inspected on a piece of geotextile or in a wheelbarrow or trug if this makes the work easier. For relatively large amounts of material, inspection can proceed on a bucket-by-bucket or wheelbarrow-by-wheelbarrow basis, with the next barrow being supplied only once the first has been suitably checked and the materials safely deposited in a suitable receptor area (noting that screened materials are generally not considered "clean").

Operatives will separate out any contaminated material, depositing it in to buckets or ton bags located nearby for the purpose. Bags or buckets will be replaced at suitable intervals – normally when filled to a level suitable to be carried by the available team.

TRANSFERRING CONTAINERS / REMOVAL OF MATERIALS FROM SITE



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All transfer of containers must be carried out in a planned way, in line with manual handling best practice, including e.g. transferring these using vehicles or dumpers where this is appropriate and allowed within the Clean Site Policy. Do not over-fill containers, and unload some material into another container if required to make carrying safe.

Removal of materials can be carried out either on a rolling basis while other operations are on-going (where there is a large team), or periodically when containers are filled (with a small team). Containers should then be loaded or emptied into whatever is being used to remove the materials from site, whether this is a van, trailer or skip. Volumes to be removed via hand screening are not likely to require loading into wagons, so this is not considered here.

DECONTAMINATION

Decontamination will be carried out in line with the Clean Site Policy and separate RAMS for the process.

In brief:

- Any equipment or tool must be decontaminated before each time it leaves a contaminated area. Equipment should be visually checked and any soils or plant materials removed.
- Any person who has entered the contaminated area should use the foot wash as instructed, each time before they leave a contaminated area.
- On completion of the screening operation, JKSL Site Operative(s) will check all working areas for cross-contamination, including haul routes for containers.
- JKSL will decontaminate and remove foot wash, membranes and all JKSL equipment.