

Appendix 4: . RHU BAY - Knotweed Status report – 14 June 2017

Introduction

There has rightly been considerable concern about the presence and spread of knotweed and its treatment throughout Rhu and Shandon, and the efforts of the Community Council to highlight and help reduce and/or eliminate the problem over recent years are very helpful.

This report refers to the current and historical and future position for knotweed in the Rhu Bay area. There have been two meetings in the past week on site to further focus on this issue and confirm both the current and future position with regards to any knotweed.

1. Friday 9 June 2017

Present	Jean Cook	Community Council (CC)	
	Peter Knox	Community Council	
	Alastair Moore	Rhu Bay Facebook page	
	Alan Dundas	Rhu Marina Developments Ltd	RMD)

2. Wednesday 14 June 2017

	Stuart McCracken	Argyll & Bute Council (ABC)
	Ailsa Cunningham	Argyll & Bute Council
	Alan Dundas	RMD

The background to the action taken in the past, currently and in the future is based on the responsibilities of the owners involved. In this respect, RMD owns the beach in Rhu Bay from the Marina round to the Rosslea Hotel.

With regards to areas of shoreline between the beach and the road, the basis of ownership is that the council either owns or is responsible for the verges, any embankments and any foundations up to 2 metres from the A814 road, and RMD own and are responsible for the balance outwith the ABC areas within Rhu Bay. As a result, there is a split responsibility between ABC and RMD for the areas that have been identified as having knotweed present.

Current and future status of affected areas

These areas are best split into 5 individual sections of the Rhu Bay shoreline.

1. From Rosslea Hotel to the end of Ferry Road at the start of A814 at the RNCYC corner.
2. Area from RNCYC corner on A814 along to Manse Brae burn in front of PO.
3. Area from Manse brae burn to start of wooded area at the corner of A814 before the marina. This is largely the section covering the toilet block and the cycle / footpath.
4. The wooded / shrub land area on the A814 corner short of the marina going east.
5. The Rhu Marina rock foreshore section round to the marina bridge out to the berths.

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The current position in each of these areas is as follows.

1. This relevant section of the bay here is the road out to the spit, which is known as Ferry Road. ABC state that It is a private road owned by the house owners, and who are responsible for verges and embankments. With respect to any knotweed in that section, there is next to none at present, as the owners there have dealt with any outbreaks. Neither ABC or RMD are therefore involved with this area.
2. The section along in front of the PO to the burn is a section where there has been a considerable outbreak for some time. The treatment of this was discussed between ABC and RMD some time ago, at which time ABC sprayed the area. Early this year, when it became apparent that the area had not been sprayed, both RMD and ABC immediately both sprayed the affected area in May. The knotweed is now largely dying off well and any knotweed not dying off will be treated when the area is sprayed again in August. The future treatment arrangements agreed between ABC and RMD from now on are that ABC will do a spray of the whole area in May each year and RMD will do a second spray of the whole area each August. There is a slight added complication by way of a large sump or tank in this area near the manse burn, which is almost certainly owned by Scottish Water. The actual ownership areas between RMD, ABC and Scottish Water will now also be clarified by ABC legal department (Lesley Montague). The knotweed in this area has now been treated and the future arrangements for treating this section are in place.
3. This section around the toilet block and along the rock face shoreline beside the cycle / footpath is owned by ABC as per the title which is available for that area. ABC will now spray anything that has not been done along the rock embankment.
4. This section covering the wooded area on the corner of A814 near the marina has had two reasonable sizes outbreaks of knotweed in the past few years and these have been treated by RMD on a regular basis over the past three years and now are largely eliminated, and are under control, but will be monitored. There are now a number of other new small outbreaks within the wooded undergrowth which cannot be seen from the road and are only accessible from the shore side. These are currently not large, and not out of control, but certainly require treating to ensure they do not grow or spread. It has been agreed with ABC that the best time to deal with these is for RMD to spray them in August now this year and monitor the position for next year with two sprays each year. The ownership of this overall wooded area is that ABC own the first two metres inside the cycle path fence and RMD owns the rest of the wooded area.
5. There is some knotweed within the marina on the outer rockface in the area between the wooded area 4 as above and the gangway of the marina, which is an area owned by RMD but on lease to The Crown Estate (TCE). TCE are responsible for any maintenance there and they have already been treating knotweed on their site accordingly, but will be reminded to attend to any new knotweed there.

Summary

This status report has been prepared to cover what was discussed at the two meetings in order to update the Community Council with respect to the current status of the knotweed in Rhu Bay area, and to confirm that both RMD and ABC will be continuing to treat any knotweed outbreaks in accordance with the recognised procedures in the future in accordance with the arrangements above.

A.R.D. 14 June 2017

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