

Site name: **Site reference 32 – Former Norsk Hydro & Part Hog Highland**

IBC ref: IP143/W67
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 17085 42503
Area: 6.18 hectares
Date: 31st August 2012
Recorder: M Wright
Weather conditions: Dry, bright sunny, 50% cloud, fresh westerly wind
Ranking: 3
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View westward across acid grassland to Hog Highland



Gorse and birch scrub looking westward

Habitat type(s):

Acid grassland, birch and gorse scrub, mixed species scrub, woodland.

Subsidiary habitats:

-

Site description:

This site has been abandoned for many years and is situated on high ground, adjacent to Sandy Hill Lane and overlooks Cliff Reach. Due to sandy soils the site is being colonized slowly and gives the distinct impression of being heathland. Bare ground, lichens, moss and common bent dominate the grassland. Large areas are a mosaic of gorse and broom with silver birch. In some areas silver birch is dominant. A small woodland links to the woodland in site 122 (Sandy Hill Lane). Almost a third of the site could not be surveyed due to a very high fence, much of this terrain sloped down into the dockland. This area was very good for wildlife being dominated by scrub, silver birch and oak.

Protected Species:

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Protected species potential:

Bats, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard

BAP habitats present:

Lowland acid grassland

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

Bats, dunnoek, yellowhammer, linnet, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard

Connectivity:

This large area of scrub is an important link in the wildlife corridor that skirts southeast Ipswich.

Structural diversity:

The structural diversity of the site is excellent due to the mosaic and species diversity of the scrub areas in conjunction with the grassland and bare ground areas.

Flora:

The whole site is in a mosaic of broom, gorse, silver birch, bare soil, lichens and the grassland areas are dominated by common bent. Other species include biting stonecrop, birds-foot trefoil, black knapweed, broad-leaved dock, Canadian fleabane, cats ear, cocksfoot, common centaury, dittander (nationally scarce), evening primrose, haresfoot clover, hawthorn, hop trefoil, horse radish, mouse-ear hawkweed, mullein, narrow-leaved ragwort, oxeye daisy, perforate St. John's wort, smooth sow-thistle, spear thistle, ragwort, red clover, ribwort plantain, rosebay, tansy, valerian, white clover, wood small weed, wild parsnip and yarrow. Non native species such as pampas grass and buddleia are present.

Avifauna:

There were not many observations made due to the timing of the survey, however the following birds were recorded blackbird, carrion crow, green woodpecker, chiffchaff, robin, long-tailed tit, blue tit, great tit and wood pigeon. The site has the potential to support a wider range of species, including the BAP bird species listed above. A breeding bird survey is recommended.

Invertebrates:

Observations of butterflies included small white, red admiral and speckled wood. The following dragonflies observed migrant hawkler and common darter.

Other species include meadow grasshopper, common field grasshopper and a very good colony of wasp spiders. There were also lots of ant's nests and solitary wasps nesting in the sandy ground. The aculeate hymenoptera can include a number of rare species and this should be investigated further.

Herpetofauna:

No species were seen during the site visit, however grass snake, slowworm and common lizard are highly likely to occur and a reptile survey is considered essential if this site is to be affected by development.

Mammals:

Rabbit was the only species seen but it is likely that muntjac deer and fox may inhabit and pass through the site.

Comments and recommendations:

This site represents valuable acid grassland habitat, which unfortunately is succumbing to birch scrub in places. Consideration should be given to retaining this habitat and managing it to limit scrub invasion. Consideration should be given to whether this site meets County Wildlife Site (CWS) value, so we recommend that it is reviewed by the CWS panel.

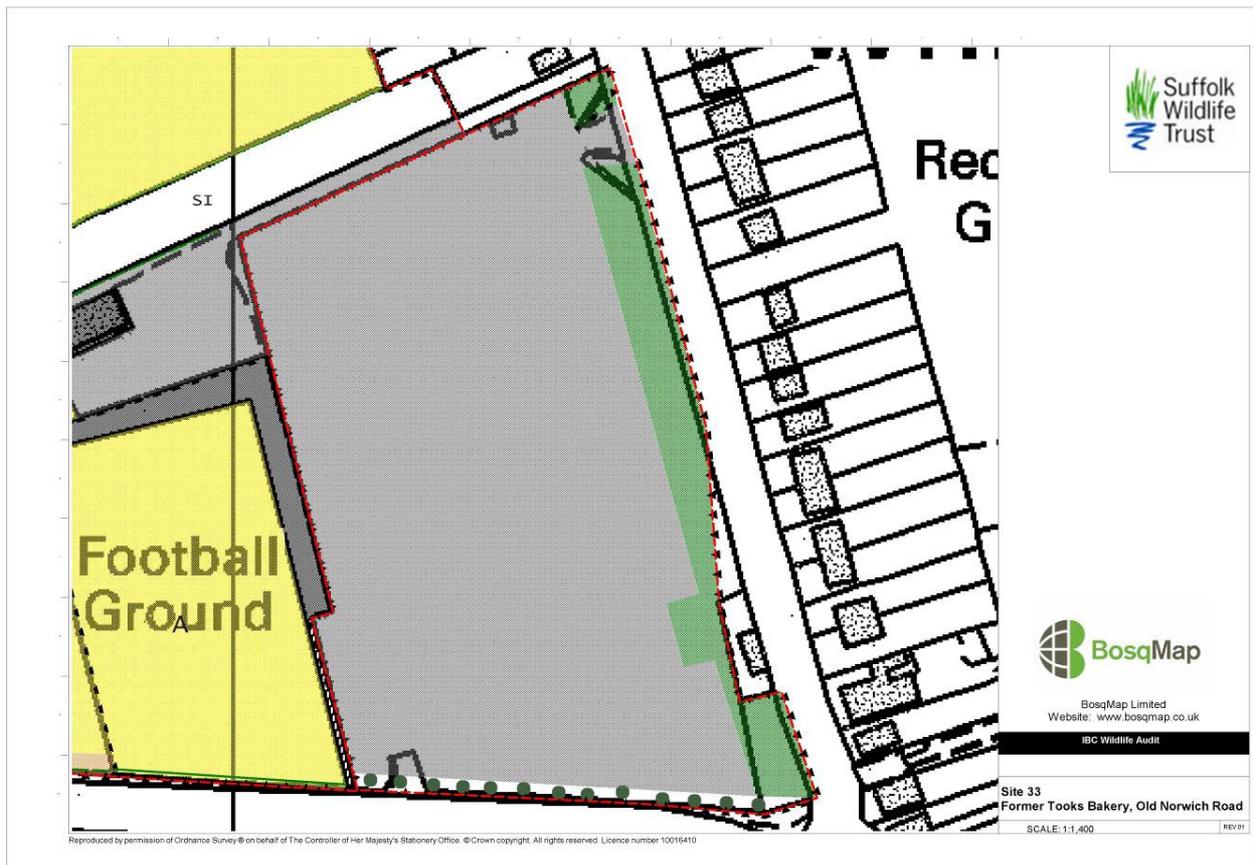
Before any development is consented on this site a reptile survey must be carried out, due to the high likelihood that they will be present. No clearance of vegetation should take place until the presence of reptiles is properly assessed and mitigated, in order to ensure compliance with the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended).

A breeding bird survey and invertebrate survey to include ground nesting hymenoptera is recommended to assess the value of this habitat for this group.

Site name: **Site reference 33 - Former Tooks Bakery, Old Norwich Road**

IBC ref: UC005/IP05
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 14089 47281
Area: 2.79 hectares
Date: 16th August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Hot, sunshine with cloud, 22° C, slight breeze
Ranking: 6
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



View from northern boundary looking southwards

Habitat type(s):

Trees and bushes on site margins

Subsidiary habitats:

Crevices between concreted areas

Site description:

This former industrial site lies on the corner of the Old Norwich Road and A1156. All the buildings have now been demolished leaving the concrete foundations in situ, but plants are now colonising the cracks in the concrete. The site is surrounded by a metal fence apart from the entrance which is blocked by heaped-up rubble. Earlier landscape planting still remains along the road frontages.

Protected species:

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Protected species potential:

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BAP habitats present:

-

BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

-

BAP species potential:

-

Connectivity:

Connectivity is poor. The site is bordered by roads to the south and east and playing fields to the west and north. Apart from a very small linear area of rough grassland and a hedge to the north, beyond the track to the sports fields, the site is completely isolated.

Structural diversity:

Structural diversity is poor. The site is dominated by areas of hardstanding.

Flora:

Flowering plants and scrub are colonising the cracks in the concrete, as well as being present beneath planting along the road margins. The species are typical of common scrubby invasive species, such as buddleia, elder, bramble and birch seedlings. Many of the flowering plants are also common ruderals reflecting the local seed source: wild carrot, ragwort, yarrow, prickly ox-tongue, Canadian fleabane, prickly lettuce, hairy willowherb, rosebay willowherb, wall barley, spear thistle, creeping thistle, mugwort, common mallow, ribwort plantain, black horehound, teasel and Yorkshire fog.

A row of tall poplar trees lines the Bury Road frontage. Cherry trees have been planted in a landscaping strip along the Old Norwich Road frontage.

Avifauna:

No birds were recorded but this was an unsuitable time of year for surveying this group. This site provides little habitat for this group.

Invertebrates:

A small white butterfly was seen taking nectar, but overall this site provides poor habitat for this group.

Herpetofauna:

Slow worms and toads have been recorded to the north, but currently the site is not suitable for this group. If it remains undeveloped for a number of years, then the continuing development of plant growth will result in this site becoming suitable for species such as slow worm as the combination of foraging and basking areas improves.

Mammals:

The site is unsuitable for this group.

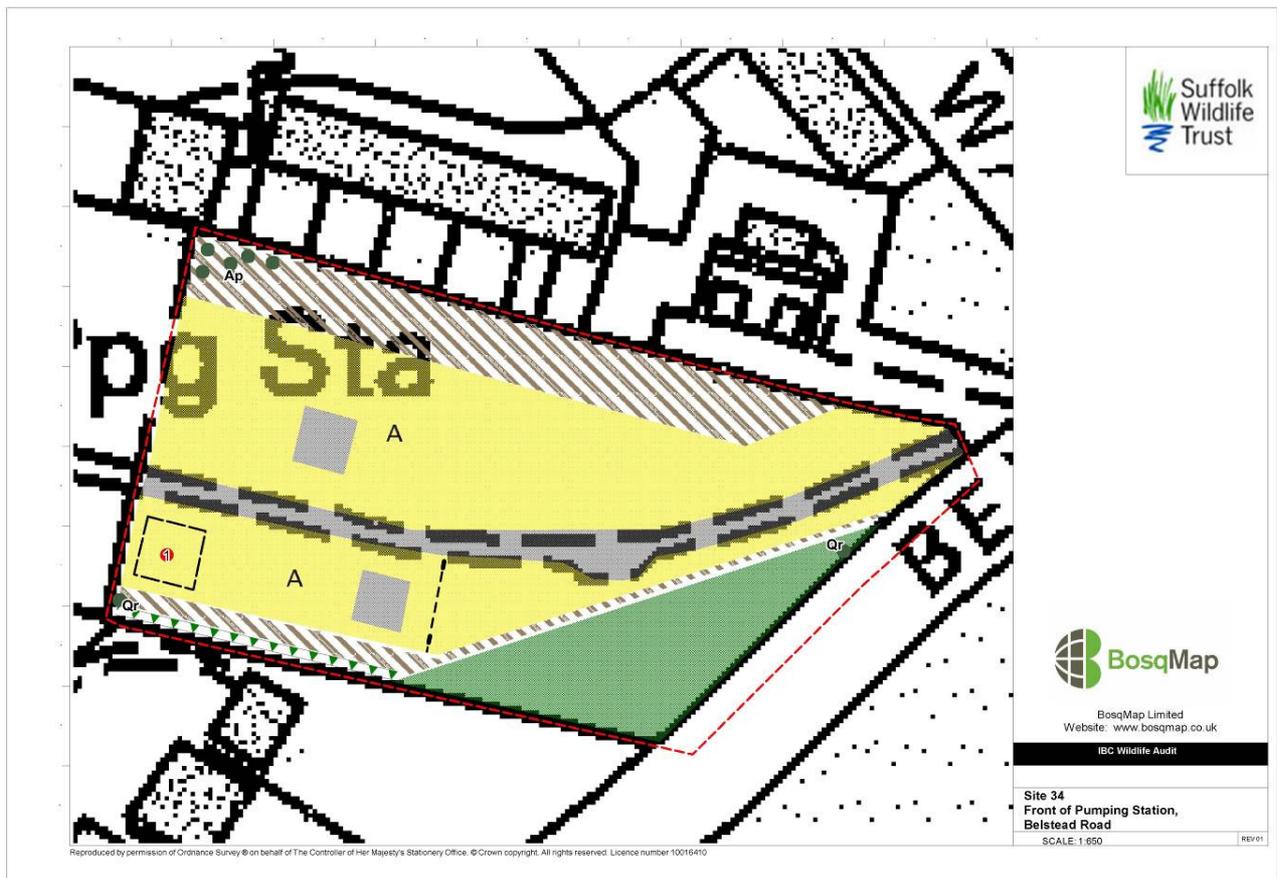
Comments and recommendations:

This site was surveyed from the boundaries only. Due to the presence of the metal fence the only access point was across the rubble at the front entrance. However, this rubble appeared to contain pieces of broken asbestos cement sheeting so this area was avoided. The site is currently of low wildlife value, but if it remains undeveloped for some years it will be colonised by various species, including possibly reptiles.

Site name: **Site reference 34 - Front of Pumping Station, Belstead Road**

IBC ref: UC209/IP121
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 14600 42230
Area: 0.6 hectares
Date: 7th September 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool, clear and still, 16°C but rising
Ranking: 4 (higher if bats roosting on site)
Biodiversity value: Medium

Map:



Photos:



View westwards on access track



Woodpecker holes in oak adjacent to road



View eastwards showing wooded margin

Habitat type(s):

Woodland, short mown grass, nettle and bramble scrub

Subsidiary habitats:

Mature oak trees with standing deadwood

Site description:

This small site lies to the east of an Anglian Water pumping station within their site compound. Most is primarily short mown grass but along the southern and eastern edges there is mixed broadleaf woodland. Mature oaks are notable on the eastern edge. A group of sycamores are situated in the north-western corner. The northern edge of the site is left unmown and is dominated by nettles and some bramble. Three fenced off compounds were present within the grassland, used for site operation and storage. Target Note 1 relates to a temporary storage area.

Protected species:

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Protected species potential:

Bat species

BAP habitats present:

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BAP species seen:

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BAP species known:

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BAP species potential:

Bat species, stag beetle

Connectivity:

The site is bordered by Belstead Road to the east and housing to the north and south, with the Anglian Water pumping station to the west. However, Belstead Road is bordered by a thick, linear tree belt (Belstead Road Tree Belt) and the woodland on this site provides additional habitat of this type, thus providing local connectivity either side of the road. Also linked to this site is the Poorhill Shelterbelt.

Structural diversity:

Most of the site is short mown, but woodland on the southern and eastern edges provides good structural diversity. A large mature oak with woodpecker holes was showing signs of die-back and provides excellent standing deadwood.

Flora:

Within the grassland are common species such as rye grass, red and white clovers, ribwort plantain, black medick, yarrow, creeping buttercup, creeping thistle, creeping cinquefoil, cat's ear. Within one of the compounds the grass was unmown and additional species were noted (hop trefoil, bristly oxtongue and Yorkshire fog). On the unknown northern edge is nettle, bramble, hedge bindweed, cock's foot and false oat grass.

The woodland contained mature oaks, sycamore, holly, with blackthorn scrub, suckering elm, and some bramble with a ground layer of ivy. Towards the south-western corner the woodland narrows to

becoming a hedgeline, but this was quite diverse with elm, field maple, elder, sycamore, dogwood and hazel.

Avifauna:

The time of year was unsuitable for recording this group, but the woodland provides roosting, nesting and foraging habitat for a range of locally common species. Blue tit, great tit, blackbird, robin and wood pigeon were recorded within the site. Woodpeckers have been nesting within the mature oak on the eastern edge.

Invertebrates:

The woodland edge provides the best opportunities for this group. Only a large white butterfly was seen flying, but this may be due to the cool temperatures early in the morning. Other species are likely to be present as well as a range of other groups associated with woodland habitat. The woodland habitat is highly likely to contain subterranean deadwood and support larval stag beetles, which are often seen in this part of Ipswich. The nearest documented record is within 100m (Wigmore Close) but dates from 1995.

Herpetofauna:

The short mown grass is unsuitable for this group. The woodland along the southern and eastern boundaries is likely to be too shaded for reptiles, although may provide habitat for toads.

Mammals:

The mature trees, particularly on the eastern edge, may provide roosting opportunities for bats, within splits, cracks and peeling bark. There are a number of records of bats in the area (4 records within 500 metres). A large oak in this location contained a number of woodpecker holes which can also support roosting bats. The site may support hedgehog, although this is dependent upon access through the fence. Common small mammal species will be present within the woodland and grey squirrels were seen here.

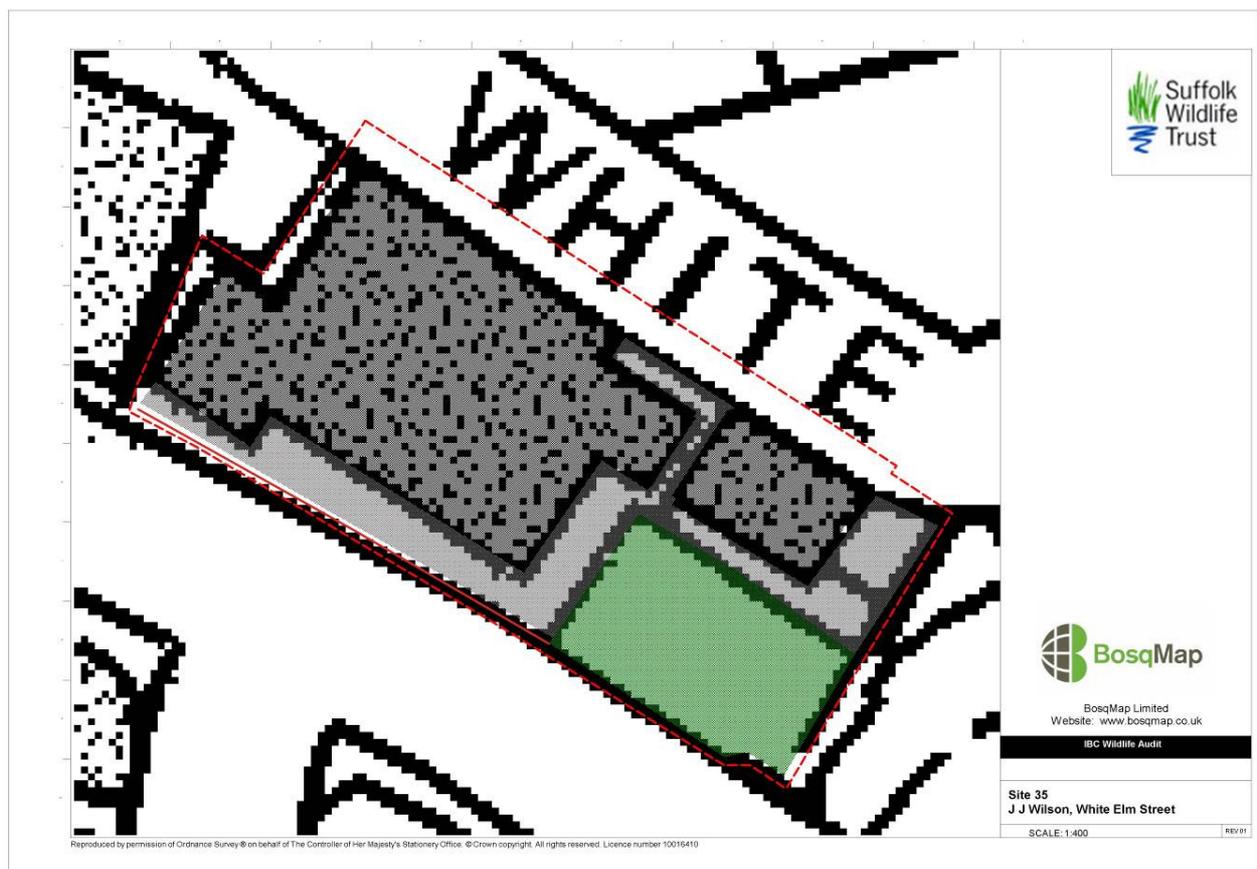
Comments and recommendations:

The woodland is of ecological importance and should be retained in any development proposal. If any mature trees are to be felled then a bat survey is required. Consideration must be given in the design of any development to limiting light spillage away from boundary trees. Clearance of any woodland should also take into consideration the likely presence of stag beetle.

Site name: **Site reference 35 - JJ Wilson, White Elm Street**

IBC ref: UC069/IP066
Site status: No wildlife designation
Grid ref: TM 17410 43900
Area: 0.22 hectares
Date: 24th August 2012
Recorder: S Bullion
Weather conditions: Cool, cloudy 20°C
Ranking: 5
Biodiversity value: Low

Map:



Photos:



Coppiced woodland area in south-east corner

Habitat type(s):

Small area of scrub (recently coppiced)

Subsidiary habitats:

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Site description:

The majority of the site is occupied by brick buildings dating from approximately 1974. A small area of scrub is present in the south-eastern part of the plot. This had been recently coppiced and all brash removed and the site owner explained that this is undertaken on an annual basis to reduce unsociable activities taking place. The land to the north of White Elm Street is also owned by this company, but is of very low wildlife value, consisting of tarmac, pea shingle and a small triangle of short mown grass. A public footpath runs alongside the eastern edge of the site.

Protected species:

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Protected species potential:

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BAP habitats present:

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BAP species seen:

-

BAP species known:

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BAP species potential:

Stag Beetle

Connectivity:

Connectivity is extremely poor. The site is surrounded by roads, although there are some mature trees along the eastern boundary.

Structural diversity:

Extremely poor. The rectangle of scrub is the only semi-natural habitat on site, but this had been coppiced to leave no vegetation.

Flora:

The rectangle of scrub contains stumps of sycamore and ash, with ivy, bramble, nettle, black horehound and hedge bindweed as a field layer. On the northern edge there was yew and bracken. Japanese knotweed was observed to be growing within this area.

Avifauna:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Invertebrates:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group with the exception of stag beetle larvae if there is any underground deadwood.

Herpetofauna:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Mammals:

There is no habitat on site currently suitable for this group.

Comments and recommendations:

Japanese knotweed is an ornamental plant which has escaped from cultivated to be a serious pest of urban and countryside areas. It spreads via its rhizomes and only a tiny fragment can result in a new plant. It is an offence to plant or cause Japanese knotweed to spread in the wild under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and all waste containing Japanese knotweed comes under the control of Part II of the Environmental Protection Act (1990). It is therefore important that if this site is cleared by machinery, safeguards are put in place to prevent spread of this plant. Useful guidance is provided by the Environment Agency website:

Reference: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/Knotweed_CoP.pdf
Accessed 03/08/12.