



Map title

Breech Moss
Management Recommendations
March 2014

Legend

-  **Betula pubescens - Molinia caerulea woodland over basin mire**
-  **Scrub on site of old tip**
-  **Mature plantation woodland**
-  **Tall ruderal**
-  **Drainage ditch**
-  **Mature tree**
-  **Target notes**
-  **Target notes**

Target notes

- TN1** Area of polluted water with Japanese knotweed
- TN2** Area of polluted water
- TN3** Old tip area dominated by Japanese knotweed
- TN4** Garden invasives on old tip area
- TN5** Rhododendron
- TN6** Japanese knotweed
- TN7** Rubbish dumped
- TN8** Extensive holly
- TN9** Garden invasives
- TN10** Protected species
- TN11** Past sewage contamination area
- TN12** Sphagnum moss (very small area)
- TN13** Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam
- TN14** Rhododendron

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Garden invasives Priority 3

TN4, TN9

Garden invasives on site (periwinkle, creeping comfrey, daffodil, snowdrop, Spanish bluebell, hybrid bluebell, Jew's mallow and variegated yellow archangel - a schedule 9 species) should be removed from the site. Removal will require digging out each plant or alternatively weed wiping larger areas with a contact herbicide. Do not blanket spray as this will damage the underlying flora. Advice should be sought from the environment agency before using herbicide close to running water. Neighbouring properties should be made aware of the damaging nature of garden waste being deposited on the site.

Mossland restoration – Priority 4

TN12 (initial area that should be targeted)

Mossland restoration will require an on-going commitment to manage the site as a mossland rather than a woodland. If this is agreed it will require regular clearance of trees and shrubs (particularly the rhododendron at TN5 and TN14; also the holly at TN8) to prevent localised drying of the peat and to prevent enrichment of the soils by rotting leaves. Tree removal should be initially focussed on the area where sphagnum moss is still present (TN12) as this is the area where restoration potential is greatest. Cut tree stumps should be treated with herbicide to prevent re-growth. Removal should be timed to avoid the bird nesting season 1st March to 31st August.

Japanese knotweed control - Priority 1

TN1, TN3, TN6, TN13

Japanese knotweed is listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which means it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild. Eradication of this species should be undertaken as a matter of urgency as the plant spreads rapidly by underground rhizomes and broken pieces of stem. It may cause irreversible damage to the site if contaminated soils have to be removed. Due to its highly invasive nature, Japanese knotweed requires specialist treatment for eradication and disposal. Contact the Environment Agency for more information. It is advised that all areas are temporarily fenced before and during treatment to prevent accidental spread.

Pollution – Priority 2

TN1, TN2

The diverse pollution issue should be addressed as a matter of urgency. This will require speaking to landowners in the catchment area upstream of the site. Inputs of NPK fertiliser should be minimised and a buffer zone of 6m established adjacent to any drainage ditches. No chemical inputs should occur within the buffer zone. Runoff from the adjacent road, gardens and septic tanks should be directed away from the site so that pollutants have the opportunity to be filtered out before entering the water table. Currently runoff is being diverted directly onto the site.

Himalayan balsam control – Priority 2

TN13

Himalayan balsam is listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which means it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild. Control of this species should be done by either hand pulling or cutting (scything) at ground level (below the lower node of the stem). It will require at least two treatments between the start of May and mid-July and further treatments in subsequent years (for at least 2 years after site clearance). Do not cut after the 14th July as the plant may have produced seeds by this date which will be scattered by control methods. Dead material should be removed from the site. Himalayan balsam seedlings were identified at TN13 however the species is likely to be more widespread if surveyed during the growing season. All affected areas should be treated.

Rhododendron control – Priority 2

TN5, TN14

Rhododendron is an aggressive coloniser which spreads rapidly by producing thousands of seeds. Vegetative spread is slower but still highly invasive. Prioritise removal of mature bushes that produce flowers (TN5). Control may be achieved by manual cutting followed by herbicide treatment of the stumps. Alternatively mature stands may be treated by stem injection. Any small seedlings can be removed by hand. The Environment Agency can provide advice on stem treatments and waste disposal. The Forestry Commission website also provides detailed advice on control methods. Removal should be timed to avoid the bird nesting season 1st March to 31st August.