

Site Assessment Survey

PROJECT TITLE: Creation of a 9 Unit Apartment Scheme, Access Road, 10 Car Parking Spaces, Bin Store and SUDS Basin

SITE ADDRESS: Heol Y Glo, Tonna, Neath, SA11 3NJ.

DATE: 14th August 2025

The applicant is seeking planning consent to develop a parcel of land off Heol Y Glo, Tonna, Neath, SA11 3NJ. The development proposals include the building of a 9 unit apartment scheme with associated entrance road, car parking and SUDS basin. The site is centred at approximately SS 78166 99236.

The site consists mainly of an area of concrete hardstanding with areas of semi-improved grassland, bramble scrub, woody scrub, marshy grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, short perennial vegetation, bare earth, tree and Japanese Knotweed patches.

An aerial image showing the development site within the context of the wider complex is provided in Appendix 1 at the end of this report. This report focuses on the land and habitats within the site boundary only.

Site Location

The proposed development site is irregular in shape, roughly being two adjacent almost rectangular areas of land. The site sits at the south east end of Heol Y Glo and immediately to the north of an industrial unit and storage yard under the ownership or former ownership of Tonna Luxury Coaches. Aerial photos of unknown date show coaches parked on the eastern concrete hardstanding area of the site.

The area to the west and north west of the site is crisscrossed by roads in an area of mainly residential housing. An area of allotments is located to the east of Heol Y Glo and to the north of the eastern concrete hardstanding area of the site. Housing stock in the immediate area is generally made up of semi detached properties. Immediately to the east of the proposed site is several livestock grazing and hay meadows bounded by tree lines and hedgerows, the fields follow the B4434 minor road.

Heol Y Glo residential street is located on the south eastern outskirts of Tonna village. The A465 trunk road which sits on a east to west axis is located approximately 300m away to the north of the site boundary at its closest point. To the south of the A465 is the riparian

corridor of the River Neath and south of the river the Neath Canal. Further areas of broad-leaved woodland are located approximately 26m away to the south of the site boundary.

The Neath River is the closest area of moving water apparent on an OS map and flows roughly north east to south west across the wider landscape. The closest section of the river is located approximately 245m away to the north. The Neath Canal runs parallel to the south of the River Neath and the closest section of the canal is located approximately 195m away to the north.

There is just one pond apparent on an OS map within the 1km data search radius, the pond is located approximately 300m away to the south east at Wenallt Farm. The presence of ponds in nearby gardens and woodland areas cannot be discounted.

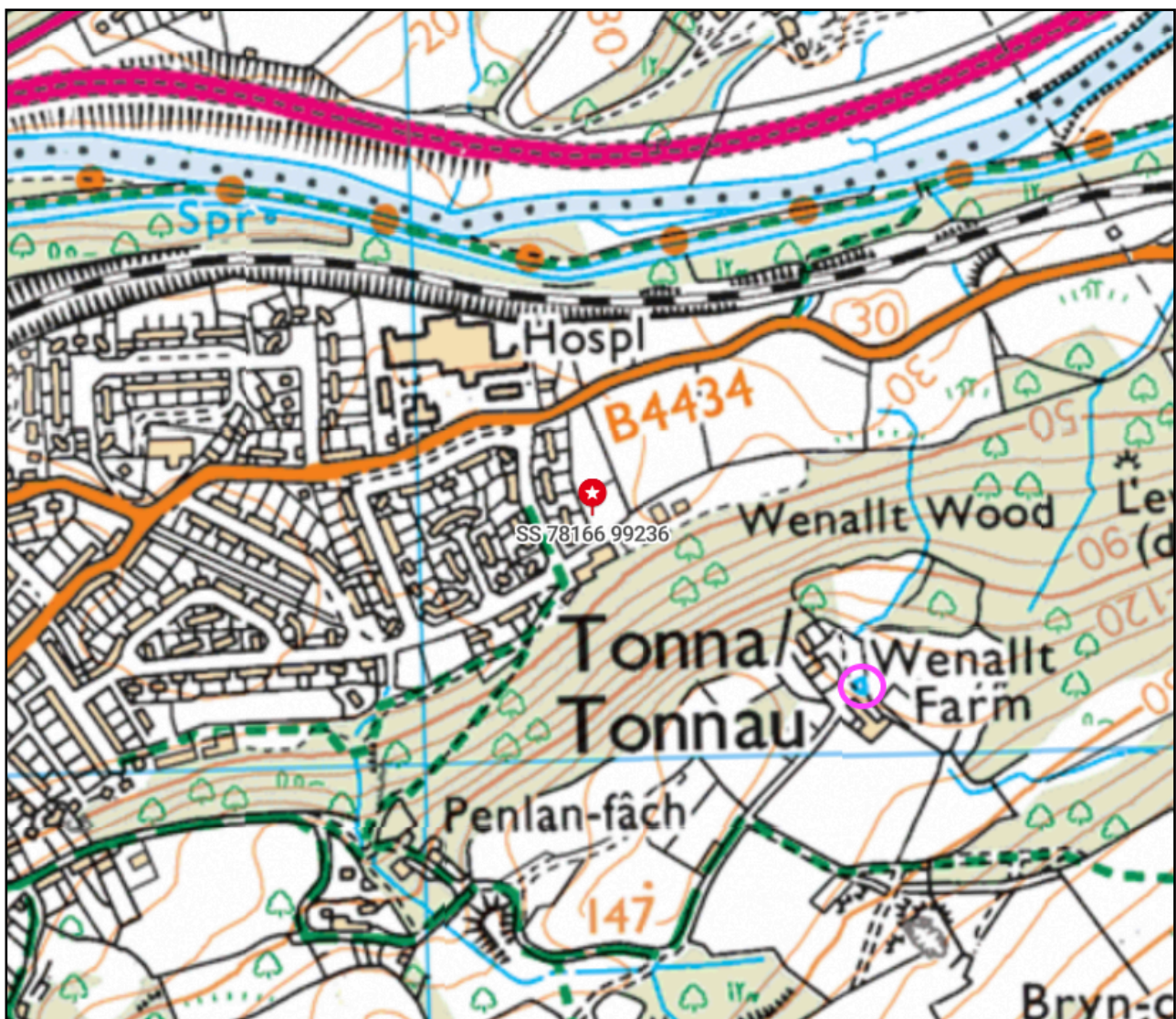


Figure 1. Location of one pond within 500m of the site at Wenallt Farm.

Desktop Study

A data search was requested from SEWBReC. The data search (LERC Reference: 0256-334) took a 1km buffer around a central point of the proposed development site. The site does not lie within or directly adjacent to a statutory protected site. Protected sites returned as part of the data search include:

- There are six Local - Non-statutory designated Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) within 1km of the proposed development site. NPT Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland SINC is the closest such site and is located approximately 23m away to the south east at its closest boundary.
- Aberdulais Falls is the only Regionally Important Geodiversity Site (RIGS) located within 1km of the site and is located approximately 923m away to the north west. This designation is due to the site's geological features, specifically the impressive Pennant Sandstones of the Brithdir age, which are displayed at the waterfalls and crags.
- There are 14 sites of Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) within 1km of the site. These are broadleaf woodlands comprising mainly native tree and shrub species which are believed to have been in existence for over 400 years. The ground vegetation will reflect the naturalness of these woodlands and will frequently feature species which provide clear indication of long and continued woodland cover. They will have been woodland for centuries and contribute substantially to our natural and cultural heritage. The closest such area of woodland lies approximately 355m away to the north east at its closest boundary.
- There are 27 sites of Restored Ancient Woodland Site within 1km of the site. These are woodlands which are predominately broadleaved now and are believed to have been continually wooded for over 400 years. They will have gone through a phase when canopy cover will have been more than 50% non-native conifer tree species and now have a canopy cover of more than 50% broadleaf. The closest such area of woodland lies approximately 23m away to the south east at its closest boundary.
- There are 10 sites of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site within 1km of the site. These are sites which are believed to have been continuously wooded for over 400 years. They have been replanted with native or non-native species, most commonly with conifers. They currently have a canopy cover of more than 50% non-native conifer tree species. They will have varying levels of remnant features of ASNW. The closest such area of woodland lies approximately 81m away to the south east at its closest boundary.
- There is one site of Ancient Woodland Site of Unknown Category within 1km of the site. These woodlands which may be ASNW, RAWs or PAWS. These areas are predominantly in transition where the existing tree cover is described as shrubs,

young trees, felled or ground prepared for planting. The area of woodland lies approximately 282m away to the north at its closest boundary.

- There are 10 NRW Priority Area (Woodland - PAWS) within 1km of the proposed development site. NRW Priority habitat areas are large scale areas which were prioritised for targeted conservation work, based on factors including the habitats within them. The closest such area of NRW Priority Area (Woodland - PAWS) is located approximately 81m away to the south east at its closest boundary.
- Approximately 48.79% of the 1km search area is designated as a B-Line. B-Lines are non-statutory protected sites which aim to restore and create wildflower habitats forming stepping stones that link existing wildlife areas together creating a network of habitats across the landscape benefiting not only pollinators but a host of other wildlife. The closest such area is located approximately 282m away to the south west at its closest boundary.

Given the localised and small scale nature of the development proposals it is highly unlikely any protected sites will be impacted as part of the proposed works.

Protected species records of note returned within 500m of the site include:

- Unidentified Pipistrelle sp. (*Pipistrellus sp.*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search and is located approximately 140m away to the north west and involved a bat roost.
- Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search recorded to 1km resolution and is located approximately 400m away to the north east.
- Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) - Four nest records all associated with the A465 trunk road were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 304m away to the north east and involved a summer nest.
- Otter (*Lutra lutra*) - 21 records were returned from the 1km data search with all closely associated with the River Neath, the closest record is located approximately 331m away to the north west and involved a spraint found inside a resting place in a tree root plate.
- Badger (*Meles meles*) - Five records were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 367m away to the north west and involved a road mortality.
- Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) - Nine records were returned from the 1km data search, the closest record is located approximately 385m away to the north west and involved a field record.

- Polecat (*Mustela putorius*) - Two records were returned from the 1km data search both recorded to 1km resolution, the closest record is located approximately 390m away to the north east.
- Birds - Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (WCA1.1) include; Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*).
- Birds - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) and Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*).
- Moths - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; White Ermine (*Spilosoma lubricipeda*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search and is located approximately 398m away to the north west. Another further 13 historical species were recorded between 1860 and 1920.
- Hymenoptera - Brown-banded Carder Bee (*Bombus humilis*) - Two records were returned from the 1km data search both recorded to 1km resolution, the closest record is located approximately 390m away to the north east.
- Coleoptera - Black Oil Beetle (*Meloe proscarabaeus*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search and is located approximately 95m away to the south west. Zircon Reed Beetle (*Donacia aquatica*) - One record was returned from the 1km data search recorded to 1km resolution and is located approximately 290m away to the north east.

Protected species records of note returned beyond 500m and within the 1km data search include:

- Bat roosts - Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*) and Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*).
- Bats foraging/commuting - Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)
- Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)
- Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*)
- Birds - Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (WCA1.1) include; Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*), Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) and Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*).
- Birds - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*), Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), Linnet (*Linaria*

cannabina), Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*), Pintail (*Anas acuta*), Redpoll (*Acanthis flammea*), Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*), Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).

- Moths - Species listed under Section 7 (S7) of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (EWA 2016) include; Buff Ermine (*Spilarctia luteum*).
- Plants - Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and Cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*).
- Fish - European Eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*) and Brown/ Sea Trout (*Salmo trutta*).

Site Visit

Lee Gregory from Ecological Services attended site on 6th August 2025 to assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed works. The site visit was completed during early August which is within the optimal timeframe for undertaking such surveys. Photographs of the site can be found in Appendix 2. A habitat map is provided within Appendix 3.

The proposed western site boundary along the east side of Heol Y Glo is mostly an approximate 1m high **brick wall** with two open pedestrian entrances. The remaining approximate 8m of the southern end of the western boundary is open. The southern boundary of the site is mostly open with the approximate last 25m of the eastern end of the boundary being fenced, with an approximate 1.8m high triple point **palisade fencing**. The eastern site boundary is a **post and wire fence** with **Bramble** (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) **scrub** and **Japanese Knotweed** (*Reynoutria japonica*) **scrub** growing inside of the boundary. An approximate 3m high Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) **tree** is located near the north east corner of the site.

The northern boundary of the eastern concrete hardstanding area of the site is approximately 2m high dense **Bramble scrub**. The western boundary of the eastern concrete hardstanding area and the northern boundary of the western vegetated area is an approximate 2m high vertical lap **wooden fence**. The fence follows the boundary of the rear gardens of no's 18 - 24 Heol Y Glo and the southern garden boundary of No. 24.

The western heavily vegetated roughly rectangular area of the site is a mixture of different habitats which merge into each other. In the north west corner is an area of **woody scrub** approximately 3m high and consists mainly of small Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), Grey Willow (*Salix cinerea*) and Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*). Several scattered approximately 3m high Grey Willows are located near the south west corner of the site. Between the woody scrub and western boundary brick wall is an area of low growing **scrub** including Bramble and Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*).

To the south east of and growing under the woody scrub is an area of **marshy grassland** with the following species recorded; Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*), Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus pedunculatus*), Hairy Sedge (*Carex hirta*), Hard Rush (*Juncus inflexus*) - dominant, Hemp Agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*), Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*), Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*), Reed Canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Sharp-flowered Rush (*Juncus acutiflorus*), Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Square-stemmed St John's-wort (*Hypericum tetrapterum*) and Tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*). At the time of the survey the marshy grassland was dry but owing to the species present this area is likely to be seasonally damp.

Around the southern and eastern boundary of the western end of the site is an amphitheatre of tall and dense **scrub** mainly consisting of **bramble scrub** and patches of **Japanese Knotweed**. Growing over this scrub is a blanket of Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*) which extends north and west smothering the south eastern end of the marshy grassland. Growing along the southern edge of the southern boundary scrub and the edge of the concrete road to the south is a more diverse range of species with an **ecotone edge** influence including; Cleavers (*Galium aparine*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*), False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and Wild Radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*).

Near the north east corner of the western area of the site is an approximate 7m high multi-stemmed Silver Birch tree. Immediate to the west of the Silver Birch is a shrubby approximately 2.5m high Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), over which was growing Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and at the base of the Hazel was a lone **Himalayan Balsam** (*Impatiens glandulifera*) plant. Along the southern garden boundary fence of 24 Heol Y Glo is a path which starts off as concrete hardstanding path for approximately 12m then is a sparsely vegetated path leading to a small **bare earth** clearing at the south east corner of the garden and at the base of the Silver Birch. Plant species growing along the path included species typical of **disturbed land** including; Black Medick (*Medicago lupulina*), Black Nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*), Broad-leaved Willowherb (*Epilobium montanum*), Common Field Speedwell (*Veronica persica*), Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), Thale Cress (*Arabidopsis thaliana*), Knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), Lesser Swinecress (*Lepidium coronopus*) and Wavy Bittercress (*Cardamine flexuosa*).

The larger eastern concrete hardstanding area of the site is being colonised by vegetation through cracks, joints and across the surface of the concrete and is quite species rich. Vegetation colonising the hardstanding appears to start off as **short perennial vegetation** then **semi-improved grassland** as the thatch and moss layer builds up and then **tall ruderal vegetation** especially around the edges of the hardstanding. Plant species recorded here includes; Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus coniculatus*), Buddleia (*Buddleia davidii*), Black Medick, Black Nightshade, Broad-leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), Cat's-ear

(*Hypochaeris radicata*), Common Field Speedwell, Common Figwort (*Scrophularia nodosa*), Common Mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*), Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Creeping Cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale agg.*), Dove's-foot Crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*), Evening Primrose Sp. (*Oenothera*), Field Horsetail, Fleabane sp (*Erigeron sp.*), Fox and Cubs (*Pilosella aurantiaca*), Garlic Mustard, Goat Willow - sapling, Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*), Grey Willow - sapling, Hard Rush, Hedge Bindweed, Hedge Woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), Hemp Agrimony, Hoary Willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*), Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), Herb Robert, Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Knotgrass, Meadow Vetchling, Nettle, Perforate St John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), Petty Spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), Prickly Sow-thistle (*Sonchus asper*), Procumbent Pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Rosebay Willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*), Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Tall Melilot (*Melilotus altissimus*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*) and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*).

The proposed entrance road for the site, close to the south end of the western boundary, will likely cut through a tarmac foot path and a regularly mown strip of **semi-improved grassland** along the eastern side of Heol Y Glo. Species recorded from the mown grassland includes; Annual Meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), Black Medick, Cat's-ear, Creeping Buttercup, Daisy, Fox and Cubs, Greater Plantain, Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), Herb Robert, Hogweed, Knotgrass, Ragwort, Red Clover, Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Pineappleweed (*Matricaria discoidea*), Ribwort Plantain, Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*) and Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*).

Bird species recorded calling and foraging from within the site especially from the dense Bramble scrub included; Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*), Blackbird (*Turdus merula*), Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*), Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) and Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*).

Good numbers of butterflies were observed within the site and were mostly nectaring from the Buddleia bush located approximately midway along the southern site boundary including the following species; Common Blue Butterfly (*Polyommatus icarus*), Gatekeeper (*Pyromania tithonus*), Large White (*Pieris brassicae*), Meadow Browns (*Maniola jurtina*), Peacock (*Aglaia io*) and Small White (*Pieris rapae*).

A male Long-winged Conehead (*Conocephalus fuscus*) a species of Bush-cricket was recorded from the marshy grassland.

Legislation

Birds

All breeding birds are protected under schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended. Under this Act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

Enhanced protection is afforded to species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, this additional protection makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Reptiles & Amphibians

Reptiles such as Slow Worm (*Angus fragilis*), Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), Adder (*Vipera berus*) and Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix*) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from killing injury and sale. All four common reptiles are also listed as 'Section 7' species in Wales. In Wales Sand Lizard (*Lacerta agilis*), Smooth Snake (*Coronella austriaca*), Adder, Grass Snake, Slow Worm and Common Lizard are listed in section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which makes them a key species to sustain and improve biodiversity.

The four widespread species of amphibian i.e. the Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), Palmate Newts (*Lissotriton helveticus*), Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) and Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*), are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) by Section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This section prohibits sale of these species. Common Toad is listed in section 6 of The Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

Potential Development Impacts

The proposed development will likely result in the loss of areas of concrete hardstanding and its associated colonising vegetation, Bramble scrub, trees, woody scrub, semi-improved grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, short perennial vegetation, and marshy grassland. The habitats within the site are considered to have biodiversity value at a local level only.

- The bramble scrub and woody scrub within and around the site boundary are considered likely to be suitable for use by **nesting birds**. Any vegetation removal or work immediately adjacent to such features has potential to disturb nesting birds during the bird nesting season of March to August inclusive. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- No evidence of well used mammal paths through the site were noted during the site visit. The site is fenced around the majority of its boundaries, however the site is open to the south west and will likely allow mammal access. The site is likely to be used by mammals such as Hedgehog and Badger for foraging purposes on occasion only.
- The semi improved grassland, short perennial vegetation, tall ruderal vegetation, bramble scrub and marshy grassland interface within the site boundary has potential to support low numbers of reptiles during the summer months and the bramble scrub for hibernation. The clearance of vegetation prior to and to facilitate the proposed development could impact on common reptile species such as Common Lizard and Slow Worm.
- Amphibians could use the site during the terrestrial stage of their life, however the site is quite isolated from known areas of still water. Only one pond was apparent on an OS map within 500m of the site, the pond is located approximately 300m away to the south east at Wenallt Farm. Care will need to be taken during the construction stage of the build and any amphibians found will need to be relocated to a safe location
- Any additional external lighting, may impact on nocturnal species, such as bats and invertebrates using the site for feeding and commuting. Light spill from glazing and or security lighting could cause disturbance to such species, however the site is in a urbanised area and already likely to be well illuminated by street lighting.

Biodiversity Enhancements & Green Infrastructure Considerations

Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales (version 12), paragraph 6.2.5 requires Green Infrastructure considerations to be included with all planning applications. Development proposals must detail how green infrastructure considerations which are proportionate to the scale and nature of the plans are being provided.

The site in its current state contains concrete hardstanding with areas of short perennial vegetation, semi-improved grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, marshy grassland, woody scrub, tree and areas of bramble scrub around the site boundary.

Green infrastructure features currently found within the site boundary are limited to; bramble scrub, semi-improved grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, short perennial vegetation, bramble scrub, woody scrub, tree and concrete hardstanding. The site sits between a row of houses and an industrial unit and is fenced around most of its site boundary except the south western corner and road entrance. Beyond the site boundaries to the north, south and west are busy roads and buildings. Habitat connectivity to the east is considered to be good. The current biodiversity value of the site is considered to be of local value only.

The proposed plans although at an early stage of design indicate that the majority of current natural and man-made habitats on site will be lost to development. It is clear that the site has been built upon in the past and the current vegetation is starting to colonise due to a lack of site use. Direct habitat loss implications within the development site can be limited if compensatory planting and suitable management of retained green spaces can be incorporated within the site plans.

The proposals must seek to improve the remaining habitat as part of the development proposals to increase the quality of green infrastructure and overall biodiversity value within the site. The proposed site layout indicates that soft landscaping can be achieved within the site layout. It is recommended that the soft landscaping incorporates tree planting, native hedgerow creation around the site boundary and wildflower grassland areas.

To demonstrate a biodiversity enhancement and improvement to green infrastructure a provision of a range of bird and bat boxes on the proposed buildings could provide additional habitat for such species not currently found at site. A reptile hibernacula could be created in the north west corner of the site adjacent to the allotment boundary to the north.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Planning permission is sought to cover the building of a 9 unit apartment scheme with associated entrance road, car parking and SUDS basin. Given the potential impacts of the proposed development the below mitigation measures are proposed:

- All excavations within the site will be securely covered over if left unattended. Any excavations that have a depth in excess of 0.5m and that are left open overnight will have a means of escape left for any mammals (e.g. hedgehog) that may fall into them. A wooden board or equivalent will be left from the bottom to the top of the hole at an angle no steeper than 45°. This will allow any mammal to escape and avoid increased stress from being trapped.

- The bramble scrub within and around the site boundaries has the potential for nesting birds. If an active nest is identified a buffer zone of at least 5m around the nest must be observed until the chicks have fledged. Greater buffer zones around nests may be required depending on the species and habitat the nest is within.
- The bramble scrub, marshy grassland, semi-improved grassland and tall ruderal vegetation, short perennial vegetation interface on site are considered suitable for very small numbers of common reptile species. A reptile mitigation strategy will be required to inform the development. **Vegetation clearance must be undertaken in two stages as below and during the summer months of April to September inclusive to ensure reptiles are active.**
 - o First Stage Cut - All vegetation including grasses and flowers are to be cut no shorter than 150mm. Once the cuttings have been collected and removed from site the site must then be left for 24hrs.
 - o Second Stage Cut - Once all steps within the first stage cut have been undertaken the remaining vegetation can be cut to 50mm high or shorter. Cutting will look to push any resident reptiles north into adjacent habitats beyond the site boundary. All cuttings must be collected and removed from site.
 - o The machinery to be used for cutting vegetation depends on the ground conditions and contractors. Owing to the small scale of the site ideally hand held trimmers and or brush cutters may be suitable and the tailings hand raked and removed from site.

The Environment Act (Wales) 2016 places a duty on competent authorities such as Neath Port Talbot Council to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The below bullet points are some simple measures that could be achieved to enhance the biodiversity of the site. It is recommended at least 2 of the below measures are implemented :

- The provision of an at least two bird boxes within the development would be welcomed. **The bird box must be located as high as possible on the buildings and avoid south facing elevations to prevent overheating.**
- The provision of an at least two bat boxes within the development would be welcomed. **The bat box must be located as high as possible on the buildings and be placed south facing elevations to take full advantage of the heat of the sun and be placed at least 2m away from lighting or windows to prevent light spill.**
- The north west corner of the site adjacent to the allotment boundary to the north would make an ideal site for a reptile hibernacula being south facing and would catch the sun for the majority of the day. With some small improvements, a reptile

hibernacula would also benefit invertebrates. Being adjacent to an allotment this could also help attract pollinators, the proposed site already appears to have a healthy butterfly population. Details of how to create and maintain a butterfly bank can be found here - https://butterfly-conservation.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Butterfly Bank Factsheet_FINAL.pdf

- A SUDS basin has been proposed for the site in the current location of the marshy grassland. The marshy grassland is currently being overtaken by woody scrub and being encroached on by bramble scrub/bindweed. The marshy grassland could be enhanced and increased in size if the scrub is managed.
- Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam was recorded within the site, a plan to eradicate the two species from the site could be classed as an enhancement. An approximate location of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam is provided on the habitat map in Appendix 3. A factsheet for Japanese Knotweed is provided in Appendix 4 and a factsheet for Himalayan Balsam is provided in Appendix 5 of this report.
- The use of native species within the soft landscaping works on the site. Suitable long term management of soft landscaping also helps ensure spaces are useful to wildlife.

Best Wishes

Lee Gregory
Ecologist
Ecological Services Ltd

Signed: Lee Gregory Date: August 2025

Appendix 1 - Aerial Image of Development Site



Appendix 2 - Site Photographs



View north east across site from the south end of Heol Y Glo



View north east with western boundary brick wall and semi-improved grassland



View south east with western boundary brick wall and semi-improved grassland



View north west along southern boundary area of bramble scrub and Japanese Knotweed



View south east into south east corner of the site and concrete hardstanding



View north across concrete hardstanding of eastern end of site



Multi-stemmed Silver Birch near east corner of garden of 24 Heol Y Glo



View north west with colonising vegetation growing over concrete hardstanding



View north east with colonising vegetation growing over concrete hardstanding



View south east with colonising vegetation growing over concrete hardstanding



Northern boundary bramble scrub boundary with allotments beyond, viewing north west



Eastern rear garden boundary fence of Heol Y Glo, viewing north



Bare earth area at south east corner of garden fence of 24 Heol Y Glo, viewing east



Sparsely vegetated path along south side of 22 Heol Y Glo, viewing west



Area of woody scrub in north west corner of site, viewing east



Marshy grassland growing between woody scrub, viewing south



Marshy grassland growing south of woody scrub, viewing west



Marshy grassland being covered in Hedge Bindweed, viewing east



Low growing Bramble and Snowberry scrub to the east of the western boundary wall, viewing north



Marshy grassland growing up to western boundary brick wall, viewing south



South west corner of site, viewing north east



View north west along southern boundary area of bramble scrub and Japanese Knotweed



Area of Japanese Knotweed along edge of southern boundary, viewing north



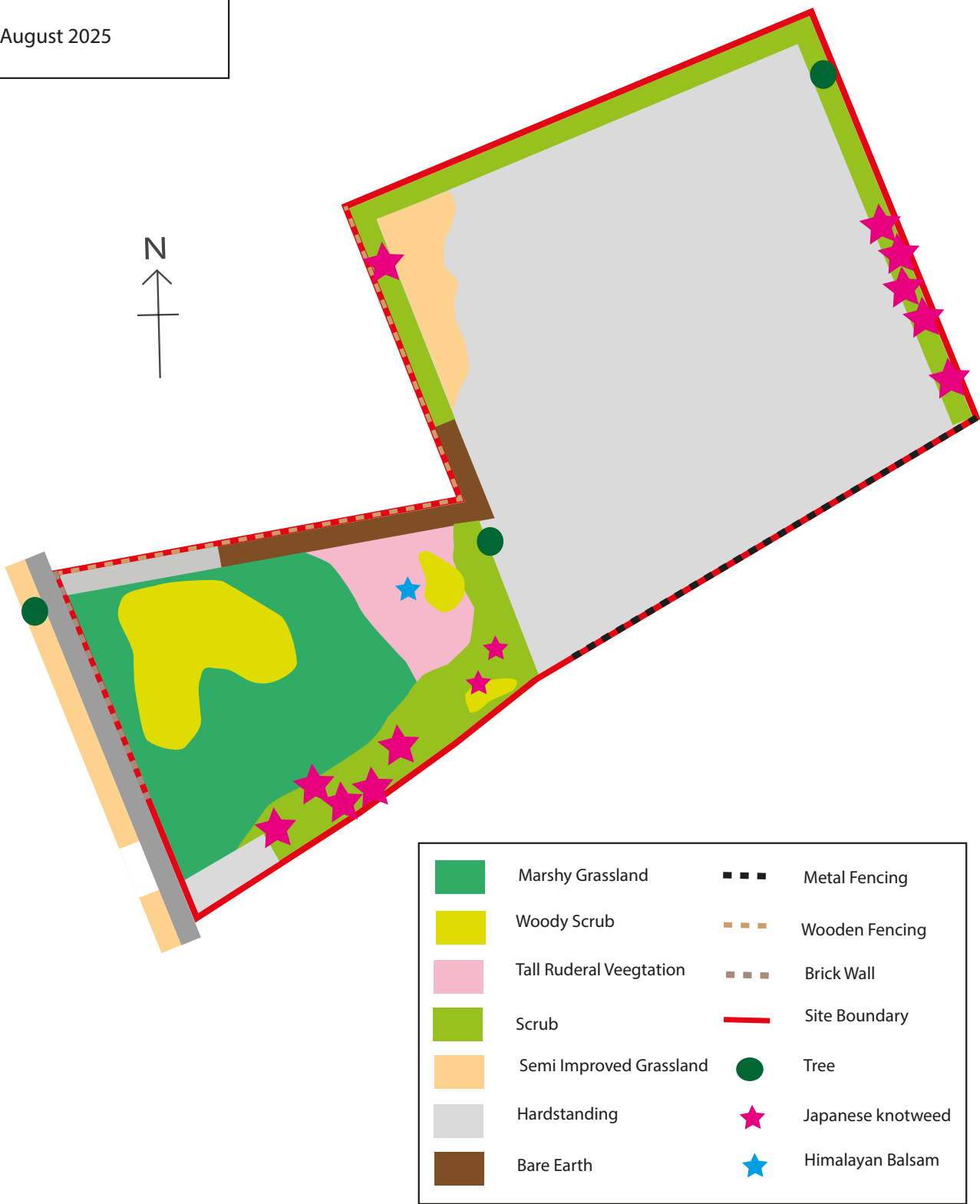
Area of Japanese Knotweed along eastern boundary, viewing north

Appendix 3 - Habitat Map

HEOL Y GLO, TONNA

Habitat Map

August 2025



Japanese Knotweed

Species Description

Scientific name: *Fallopia japonica*

AKA: Japanese Bamboo, Pysen saethwr (Welsh), *Polygonum cuspidatum*, *Reynoutria japonica*

Native to: Japan, Taiwan, northern China

Habitat: Common in urban areas, particularly on waste land, railways, road sides and river banks

Tall herbaceous perennial with bamboo like stems. Often grows into dense thickets. Characteristic leaves and stems, persistence of last year's dead canes and distinctive rhizome (underground root-like stems) enables year round identification.

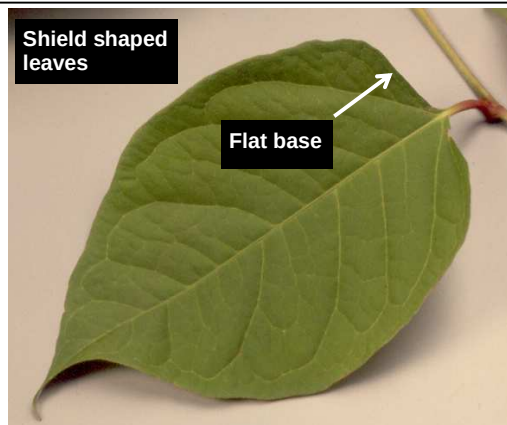
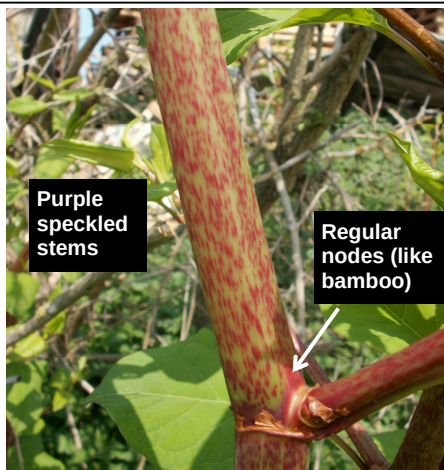
Introduced in the early 19th century as an ornamental plant. Now common and wide-spread across the UK. Spreads rapidly in the wild by natural means and as a result of spread by humans. Spread is solely by vegetative means, either fragments of rhizome or stem. Does not produce seed in the UK. Negative impacts include outcompeting native flora, contributing to river bank erosion and increasing the likelihood of flooding. Can also cause significant delays and cost to development as well as structural damage (it can grow through asphalt and some other surfaces).

Japanese Knotweed is listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with respect to England, Wales and Scotland. As such it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause Japanese knotweed to grow in the wild. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Japanese Knotweed is classified as controlled waste.

For details of legislation go to www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation.



Key ID Features



Identification throughout the year

Spring



Summer

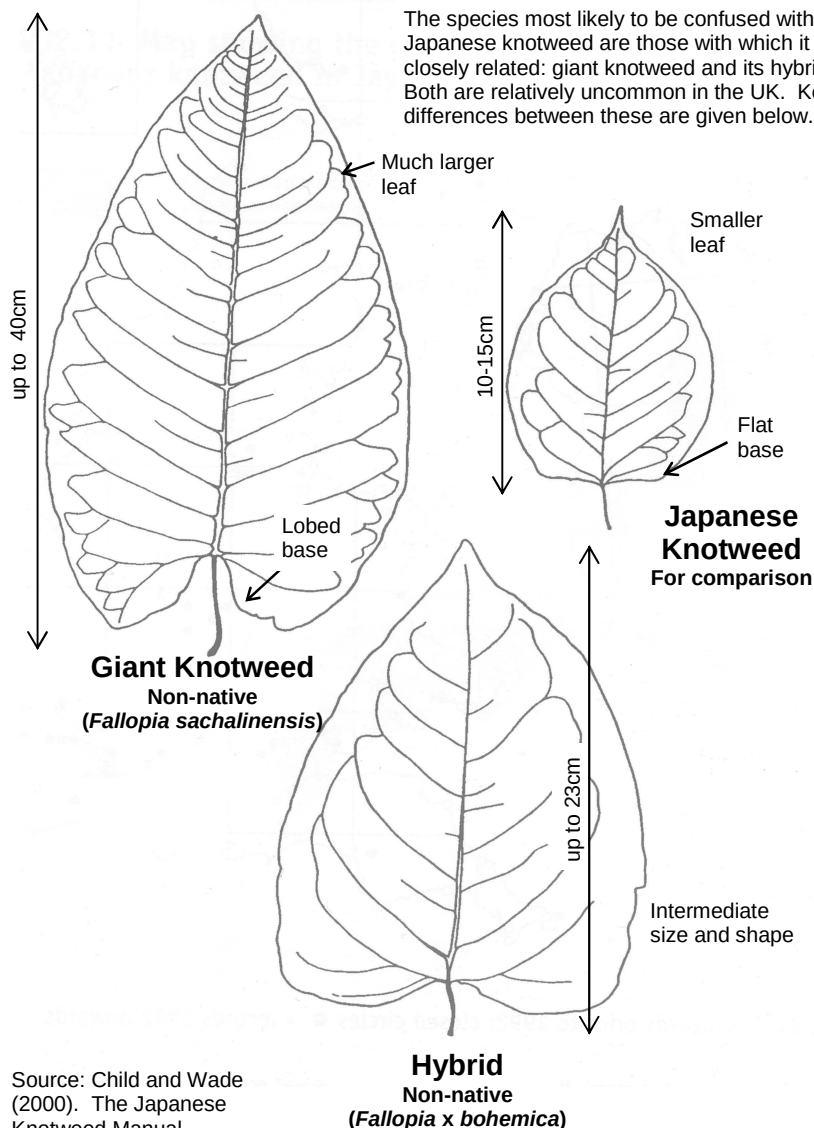


Winter



Similar Species

The species most likely to be confused with Japanese knotweed are those with which it is closely related: giant knotweed and its hybrid. Both are relatively uncommon in the UK. Key differences between these are given below.

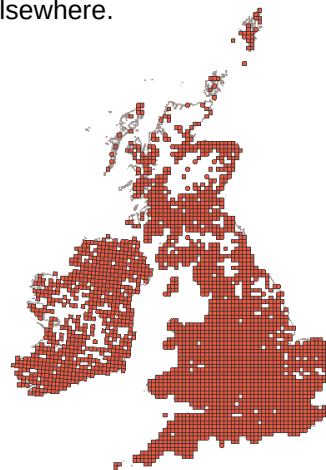


Source: Child and Wade (2000). The Japanese Knotweed Manual

Distribution

Widespread and common across the UK. Notably extensive infestations are found in the south-west of England, south Wales and Greater London, however similarly extensive populations can also be found elsewhere.

Source: NBN Gateway. Check website for current distribution



References and further reading:

- Blamey, M, Fitter, R and Fitter, A (2003) "The Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland. The Complete Guide to the British and Irish Flora." A & C Black
- Child, L E and Wade, P M (2000) "The Japanese Knotweed Manual". Packard
- Environment Agency (2006) "The Japanese Knotweed Code of Practice". Environment Agency
- Preston, C D, Pearman, D A and Dines, T A (editors) (2002) "New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora". Oxford University Press
- Stace, C (1999) "Field Flora of the British Isles". Cambridge University Press

Himalayan Balsam

Species Description

Scientific name: *Impatiens glandulifera*

AKA: Policeman's Helmet, Indian Balsam, Jac y Neidiwr (Welsh)

Native to: West and central Himalayas

Habitat: Found mostly on river banks and in damp woodland, can grow in other damp habitat

A tall, attractive, annual herb with explosive seed heads. Although easy to identify as a mature plant with its pink-purple flowers, fleshy stem and characteristic leaves, the seedlings and last year's dead stems of this annual are more difficult to spot.

Introduced as a garden plant in the early 19th century and first recorded in the wild in 1855. Often favoured by the general public for its aesthetic appeal and is still deliberately planted on occasion. Now widespread in the UK, especially along urban rivers. Spreads solely by seeds, which are small and easily carried by wind or water.

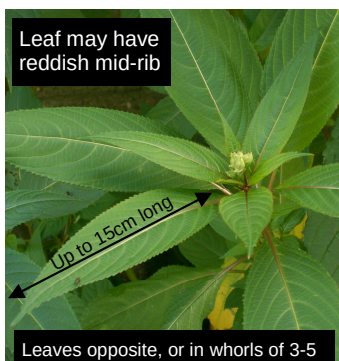
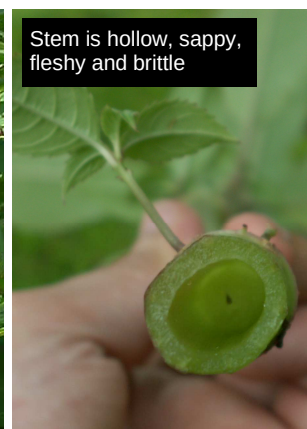
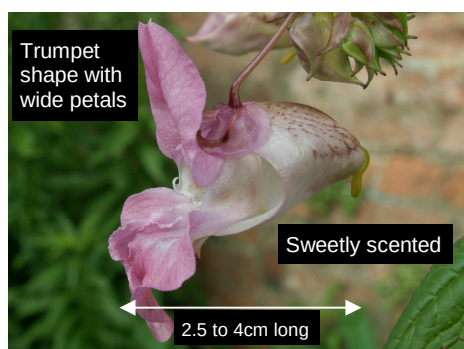
Out-competes native species in ecologically sensitive areas, particularly river banks. Where it grows in dense stands along river banks it can impede flow at times of high rainfall, increasing the likelihood of flooding. Die back of extensive stands over winter can leave river banks bare and exposed to erosion.

Himalayan balsam is listed under Schedule 9 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 with respect to England and Wales. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise allow this species to grow in the wild.

For details of legislation go to www.nonnativespecies.org/legislation.



Key ID Features



Identification throughout the year

Can be identified at most times of the year: March-June by its seedlings, stem and leaf shape, from July to September by its stem, leaf shape and flowers. More difficult to identify over winter (October to February), look for hay like remains and distinctive root structure.



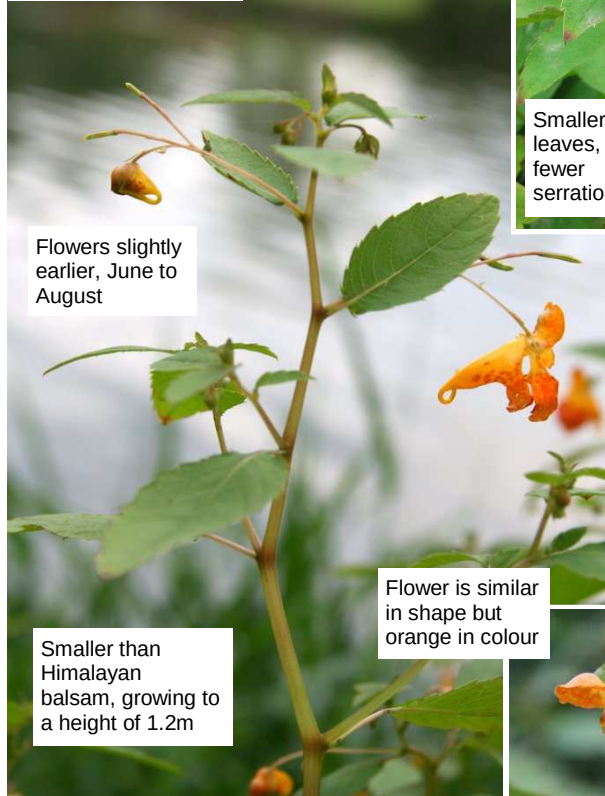
Hay like remains in winter



Root structure in winter

Similar Species

Orange Balsam
Non-Native
(*Impatiens capensis*)



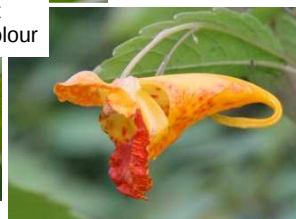
Smaller leaves, with fewer serrations

Flowers slightly earlier, June to August

Orange balsam is much less aggressive than Himalayan balsam, forming smaller less dense stands

Flower is similar in shape but orange in colour

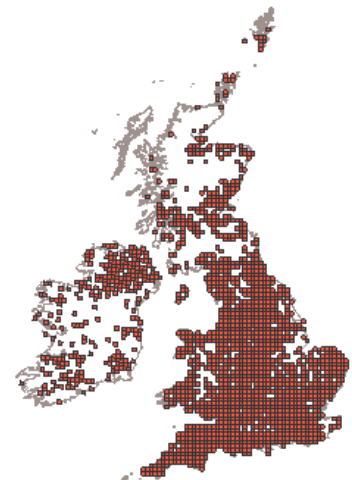
Smaller than Himalayan balsam, growing to a height of 1.2m



Distribution

Widespread and common across the whole of the UK. Primarily on riverbanks and in other damp areas.

Source: NBN Gateway. Check website for current distribution



References and further reading:

- Blamey, M, Fitter, R and Fitter, A (2003) "The Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland. The Complete Guide to the British and Irish Flora". A & C Black
- Preston, C D, Pearman, D A and Dines, T A (editors) (2002) "New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora". Oxford University Press
- Stace, C (1999) "Field Flora of the British Isles". Cambridge University Press