

Response to Question 33

Water supply, wastewater and North Kilworth's connected water system

Question 33. Do you agree that understanding issues around water supply and wastewater capacity are important in preparing the Local Plan?

Answer: Yes. Water supply, wastewater, drainage and water quality must be assessed while the Local Plan is being prepared. They affect whether growth can be served safely, where it should go, when it can proceed and what infrastructure must be in place.

Executive summary

The council must honour and preserve the natural resources of the village for future generations. For North Kilworth, this means treating the recharge fields, gravel aquifer, spring line and The Bogs/Millennium Green as connected parts of a water system, while ensuring that growth has adequate water and wastewater capacity. HDC should publish evidence on supply, sewerage, drainage and hydrogeological effects, verify the historical mapping evidence, and phase development so necessary infrastructure is in place before occupation.

Why water capacity belongs in the Local Plan

A Local Plan distributes housing and other growth across an area. If water supply, sewerage or treatment capacity is inadequate, development can put pressure on existing users, overload networks, increase pollution risk or harm groundwater and wetlands. These issues cannot be assessed by counting proposed homes alone. The evidence needs to consider existing conditions, committed and proposed growth together, environmental limits, climate change and the timing of infrastructure.

The National Planning Policy Framework published in August 2026 treats water capacity as a plan-making matter. Policy W1 calls for early engagement with utility providers, regulators and network operators, and for capacity evidence to inform the location and phasing of growth and any additional infrastructure [1].

Government planning guidance likewise addresses wastewater infrastructure, treatment capacity, water quality, water-cycle studies and phasing [2].

North Kilworth's water system

North Kilworth's water environment should be considered as a connected system, rather than as isolated springs, fields or wetland sites. The North Kilworth Neighbourhood Plan records the village's locally important gravel aquifer, nearby springs, and the importance of The Bogs and Millennium Green [3]. The mapping and historical notes supplied alongside this response add a useful explanation of how the system may function and why development in one part of it can affect another.

Recharge, storage, springs and discharge

The supplied mapping describes surrounding higher land and fields as a recharge area: rainfall can infiltrate permeable sand and gravel and replenish groundwater. It identifies the aquifer as subsurface storage, the spring line near the village as the point where groundwater emerges, and The Bogs/Millennium Green as a discharge area where groundwater is visible at the surface. In simple terms, the proposed model is recharge → storage → emergence → discharge. The notes describe sand and gravel over or beside less permeable Lias

clay; if confirmed by geological and site-specific evidence, that arrangement can help explain why water moves through permeable deposits and emerges where the ground conditions change.

This is a planning-relevant relationship. Changes to land within a recharge area may affect the amount, quality or route of water reaching the aquifer and its discharge areas. Works that alter infiltration, groundwater levels or drainage could therefore have effects beyond the development site, including at springs, wet ground, The Bogs and Millennium Green. The scale and direction of any effects should be established through appropriate hydrogeological evidence, rather than assumed.

Historical management and local stewardship

The supplied historical notes refer to spring chambers dated 1755, land allocated for water management, and a reference in John Nichols' history of Leicestershire to "town land" and "fields thereof". They interpret these records as evidence that the community understood the relationship between land and water and managed them together. This history is relevant context for the village's long-standing dependence on local water. Before using the specific dates, land descriptions or interpretation as formal planning evidence, HDC should verify the original records, their location and what they establish.

What HDC should assess and publish

- **Water supply and resilience.** Confirm available supply, pressure and reliability for existing and planned users, future demand, drought resilience and climate-change implications.
- **Wastewater collection and treatment.** Obtain published advice from the relevant water and sewerage undertaker on network and treatment capacity, constraints, required upgrades, delivery dates and funding.
- **Groundwater and drainage.** Commission or require proportionate hydrogeological and drainage evidence covering recharge, groundwater levels and flow paths, springs, infiltration, runoff, flood risk and water quality, including potential effects on The Bogs and Millennium Green.
- **Cumulative effects.** Assess allocations and committed development together across the relevant groundwater, catchment and drainage areas; avoid treating each site as if it has no effect on the others.
- **Infrastructure and phasing.** Identify who will deliver and fund each necessary improvement, when it will be operational, and how development will be phased so occupation does not exceed the available capacity.
- **Monitoring and response.** Publish baseline information and measurable indicators, then explain what action HDC will take if water availability, network performance, water quality, spring flows or wetland conditions worsen.

Proposed response for Question 33

Yes. Understanding water supply, wastewater, drainage and water quality is essential to a sound Local Plan. HDC should publish early capacity evidence from water and sewerage undertakers, the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies, and use it to choose growth locations, set phasing and identify required infrastructure, funding and delivery dates. In North Kilworth, HDC should assess the connected recharge-field, gravel-aquifer, spring-line and Bogs/Millennium Green system alongside water and wastewater capacity and cumulative effects. Historical references supplied with this response should be checked against original records. Development should be phased so required infrastructure is operational before occupation, with clear arrangements to monitor and address impacts.

Questions for HDC

1. What water-cycle or equivalent assessment supports the proposed housing distribution and site allocations?
2. What written capacity advice has HDC received from the relevant water and sewerage undertaker, and will it be published?
3. How will HDC map and assess North Kilworth's recharge areas, aquifer, spring line and discharge areas, including The Bogs and Millennium Green, and verify the historical references against original records?
4. Which infrastructure works are needed, who is responsible for delivery and funding, and how will the Plan prevent occupation before adequate capacity is available?
5. How will HDC assess cumulative effects and monitor water supply, wastewater performance, drainage, groundwater, springs and water quality over the plan period?

Sources and supporting material

- [1] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework (17 August 2026), plan-making policy W1, "Planning for energy and water".
- [2] GOV.UK, Planning Practice Guidance, "Water supply, wastewater and water quality", especially paragraphs 002, 005–009, 013 and 019.
- [3] North Kilworth Neighbourhood Plan 2015–2031, Referendum Version (June 2017), section 1; sections 7.6.1–7.6.2; section 7.8, "Water Management and Aquifer".
- [4] User-supplied mapping and historical notes, "North Kilworth: A Village Defined by Water, Sustained by Stewardship, and Dependent on Protection" (undated). The geological and historical interpretations are presented here as matters for HDC to verify through appropriate records and technical evidence.

Issues and Options representation 12099 Question 11

I quote the Issues & Options representation 12099, Question 11

"a small development could be acceptable but next year there can be another "add-on" & so on until there are a hundred."

1. More add-ons have happened in North Kilworth building up to a large wetland nature reserve, which can seriously damage our Heritage Assets with a large footfall making a major impact.
2. Advice in an Independent Planning Report on how to integrate new building into its unusual village is ignored, so character is diminished.
3. Ever more "add-on"s bring many, many more cars and climate change increases.

Q35 Heritage Assets + the Historic Environment

1. Heritage Assets slowly evolve with the recognition that they are special and unique to each village community.
2. History has to be acknowledged and respected in all aspects of village life.
3. Our ancestors certainly knew nature inside out and have helped to see its value. Water, pure sparkling water cannot be replaced. In today's world planners are governed by national policies, but they also need to understand the ground on which to build.

4. Conservation Areas are highlighted because they offer something special to the whole of the district. In the most part because they are being downgraded. It might help for each Conservation Area to bring forward a “Conservation Society” to help to monitor and guide a better way forward.
5. It is not good enough to say that mature trees are protected in a Conservation Area. Trees with TPO’s on them are needlessly being felled. Extra protection for the street scene is necessary. I query why TPO’s are not given to protect the street scene.
6. History must be protected and preserved for future generations.
7. Permission for retirement homes should not end up as mansions, these taking away rural character.