

ET Planning

Client:

EU Plants Ltd.

Barns B & C Manor Farm

Manor Farm, Longwater Road,
Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3TS

**Support of Prior Approval under Schedule 2,
Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO for Barns B & C**

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1. Introduction

1.1 This statement is produced to support an application for prior approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO for buildings (Barns B & C) at Manor Farm, Longwater Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3TS.

1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.

1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents:

- 25-S38-020A_Proposed Barn B Floor Plans
- 25-S38-021B_Proposed Barn B Elevations
- 25-S38-030B_Proposed Barn C Floor Plans
- 25-S38-031B_Proposed Barn C Elevations
- 25-S38-040_Proposed Bicycle Storage Details
- 2453-001 Location and Site Plans
- 87485 100 P02 Drainage Layout
- 87485 F2 Manor Farm
- .smbdeleteAAAc8fbd

- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises two barns within Manor Farm (referred to as 'Barn B' and 'Barn C').
- 2.2 The barns are no longer in use but previously were formed as part of the operations of the adjacent soft fruit farm (agricultural use).
- 2.3 The application site is located within the countryside and within Flood Zone 1.
- 2.4 The site is accessed via Manor Barns Road to the west.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 The most recent planning history relates to Application Ref 250404: *Prior approval submission for the proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to 2no. residential dwellings (Use Class C3).* Prior approval was granted by Wokingham Borough Council on 16 May 2025, subject to conditions relating to timescale, approved plans, contamination, bicycle storage, and foul drainage. This application is a resubmission of 250404, with amendments.
- 3.2 Application Ref 201428: *'Application to remove condition 4 of planning consent 191112 for the erection of 25 no. polytunnels. Condition 4 refers to the annual removal of the polythene sheeting from the polytunnels and its storage between 1st July and 31st December.'* Application approved 11/09/2020.

- 3.3 Application Ref 191112: '*Full planning application for the erection of 25No polytunnels (retrospective)*'. Application approved 10/10/2019.
- 3.4 Application Ref 171182: '*Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 160655 (Dated 19/01/2017) 3. External materials 4. Landscaping 5. Wildlife enhancements*'. Application approved 25/05/2017.
- 3.5 Application Ref 161926: '*Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 161194 (dated 15/06/2016) 2. Landscaping*'. Application approved 20/07/2016.
- 3.6 Application Ref 161589: '*Application for submission of details to comply with the following condition of planning consent 160643 (25/5/2016). 2. Landscaping.*'. application approved 12/07/2016.
- 3.7 Application Ref 200719: '*Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 191112 dated 10/10/2019 RETROSPECTIVE. Conditions 2 Proposed landscaping scheme. 3 Materials.*'. application approved 16/04/2020.
- 3.8 Application Ref 161194: '*Full application for the erection of polytunnels (retrospective).*'. application approved 15/06/2016.
- 3.9 Application Ref 160770: '*Application for submission of details to comply with the following conditions of planning consent 153434 (dated 3/3/16)- 4. Landscaping 5. External lighting*'. Application approved 12/05/2016.
- 3.10 Application Ref 160643: '*Full application for the erection of polytunnels. (Retrospective)*'. Application approved 25/05/2016.
- 3.11 Application Ref 160655: '*Full application for the proposed erection of an agricultural worker's dwelling.*'. Application approved 19/01/2017.

- 3.12 Application Ref 153434: '*Full application for the proposed erection of 3no agricultural cold store buildings.*' Application approved 03/03/2016.
- 3.13 Application Ref 152683: '*Application to vary conditions 1 and 2 of planning permission F/2012/0039 for the use of a barn for the stationing of 2 caravans to provide accommodation for seasonal agricultural workers and installation of sewage treatment plant (part retrospective). Condition 1 requires the use to cease on 2 October 2015. It is proposed to remove this condition. Condition 2 restricts the permission to three years and only whilst the premises are occupied by EU Plants. It is proposed to vary this condition to read: The use hereby permitted shall be carried on only by EU Plants Ltd whilst the premises are occupied by EU Plants Ltd.*'. Application approved 26/11/2015.
- 3.14 Application Ref 130475: '*Erection of framing for plant irrigation/protection with associated infrastructure (Retrospective).*'. Application approved 11/12/2013.
- 3.15 Application Ref 130479: '*Application to remove condition 9 of planning consent F/2011/2620 for the erection of polytunnels which states that they shall only be covered between January to June.*'. Application approved 11/12/2013.
- 3.16 Application Ref 220967: '*Prior approval submission for the proposed Barn A, subdivided to form 3no. dwellings and Barn B, a single dwelling.*' Prior approval refused 27/05/2022.
- 3.17 Application Ref 220967 pertained to Blocks A and B (**the former is not being assessed in this submission**). The reason for refusal for 220967 was as follows:

“The proposed conversion of Barn A to form 3 dwelling houses and Barn B to form one dwelling house constitutes development and requires planning permission. However, the proposal is not in accordance with Class Q of Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015:

- a) It fails to accord with Part 3(Q) and sub paragraph (a) of Class Q.1 because Block A is not in agricultural use*
- b) It fails to accord with sub paragraph (a) of Class Q.1 because the curtilage for Block A has not association with the building and exceeds the size of the building being converted*
- c) It fails to accord with sub paragraph (a) of Class Q.1 because the curtilage for Block B includes the whole demolition of a separate building*
- d) It fails to accord with sub paragraph (1)(a) of Class Q.2 because there is a lack of information about waste collection, and more specifically, the ability of a refuse vehicle to access the site and safely manoeuvre within the site*
- e) It fails to accord with sub paragraph (1)(c) of Class Q.2 because there is a lack of information relating to contamination risks within Block B and the Council cannot be satisfied that the establishment of residential dwellings would not pose a health risk to residential occupants”.*

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The proposal is the conversion of Barn B and C which were last used for agricultural purposes into 2 x C3 Dwellinghouses under provision of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GDPO 2015.
- 4.2 Barn B is to be converted to form a 3 bedroom single family dwellinghouse with an open plan living/dining/kitchen area, a bathroom, a W.C and storage cupboard. The conversion would install new openings to provide a front door and two windows in the front elevation and two windows and floor to ceiling height doors in the rear elevation. There is no development (including demolition) of other buildings within the curtilage of the building as was with the previously refused application.
- 4.3 Barn C is to be converted to form a 2 bedroom single family dwellinghouse with an open plan living/dining/kitchen area, a bathroom and a storage cupboard. The conversion would install new openings and walls to form a front elevation with a door and three windows and a rear elevation with floor to ceiling height doors in the rear elevation with two windows.
- 4.4 The proposed development will be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and drawings, which detail the external materials, fenestration and rooflights for Barns B and C. The agricultural character of the design will be retained.
- 4.5 Foul drainage details are shown on plan 87485 100 P02.
- 4.6 Secure and covered bicycle storage will be provided for the occupants of the development as shown in plan 25 S38 040.

5. Policy Assessment

5.1 The following section has been structured to individually examine each of the limitations for the Class Q conversion and demonstrate how the proposed development will comply with each.

5.2 **Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q:** this part of the GPDO gives planning permission for:

Development consisting of—

(a) a change of use of—

(i) a building that is part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, or

(ii) a former agricultural building that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit and any land within that building's curtilage, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order,

(b) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with the extension of the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a), or

(c) development referred to in sub-paragraph (a) together with building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building referred to in sub-paragraph (a) to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule or to extend that building."

5.3 The proposed development would comprise a material change of use from former agricultural buildings to C3 dwellinghouses, with building operations being reasonably necessary to facilitate the conversion. As such subject to compliance with limitations Q.1 and the conditions Q.2 of the class – the development would be Permitted Development

5.4 **Limitations (Q.1) of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q:** The proposed development does not conflict with the limitations of Class Q as follows.

5.5 ***In the case of a site that is part of an established agricultural unit on 24th July 2023, or where the site became for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins.***

In the case of a site that was (but is no longer) part of an established agricultural unit – the site was part of an established agricultural unit on 24th July 2023, where the site ceased to be part of an established agricultural unit after 24th July 2023, the site has not been part of the established agricultural unit for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins, or since ceasing to be part of an established agricultural unit, the site has been used for any non-agricultural purpose.

The site was part of an agricultural unit prior to 24/07/2023, the previous submission and Officer's Report (220967) confirmed this. This has not changed since submission of the previous application. For clarity as Barn C was not assessed under 220967 this building was also part of the agricultural unit on 24/07/2023. No intervening non-agricultural uses or purposes have taken place in the buildings since this date. As such, the proposal is not contrary to the limitations of Q.1(a) and (b).

5.6 ***The floor space of any dwellinghouse developed under Class Q having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeds 150 square metres,***

The floor space of each respective dwellinghouse does not exceed 150 square metres, therefore the development complies with limitations Q.1(C). The floor plans confirm that the total floor space of Barn B proposed is 77 square metres and Barn C proposed is 66 square metres.

- 5.7 ***The development under class Q, together with any previous development under Class Q, within the original limits of an established agricultural unit (see paragraph Q.3(2) of this Part) would result in the cumulative number of separate dwellinghouse having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order exceeding 10, or the cumulative floor space of dwellinghouses having a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 of the Use Classes Order exceeding 1,000 square metres,***

The proposed development involves a conversion of the agricultural buildings into two dwellinghouses would not exceed the limit of 10 dwellinghouses. As per the site history there are no other dwellings approved via *Class Q*. The cumulative floorspace of the dwellings would not exceed 1000m². Therefore, the proposal meets the requirements of Q.1(d).

- 5.8 ***The site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained,***

The site previously formed part of the operation of the adjacent soft fruit farm which confirms the previous agricultural tenancy of the site, since the submission of the previous application 220967 this has not changed and as such the site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy, and therefore the proposal does not fail limitation Q.1(e).

- 5.9 ***Less than 1 year before the date development being an agricultural tenancy over the site has been terminate, and the termination was for the purposes of carrying out development under Class Q, unless both the landlord and the tenant have agreed in writing that the site is no longer required for agricultural use,***

As has been previously stated the site has not been in agricultural tenancy since the 2022 submission (over 1 year). The site remains no longer used for its previous agricultural tenancy therefore the requirements of Q.1(f) have been met.

- 5.10 ***Development under Class A(a) or Class B(a) of Part 6 of this Schedule (agricultural buildings and operations) has been carried out on the established agricultural unit during the period which is 10 years before the date development under Class Q begins;***

Both of the buildings were approved prior to 20 March 2013. There have been no other prior approvals on the established agricultural units under any part of the GPDO (including Part 6) since then. Therefore, the proposal does not fail limitation Q.1(g).

- 5.11 ***The development would result in the external dimensions of the building extending beyond the external dimensions of the existing building at any given point, other than extension of the building allowed by paragraph Q.1(i); protrusions of up to 0.2 metres to accommodate building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i),***

Existing and proposed floor plans have been provided and show that the conversion does not coincide with an extension to both buildings. As such, the proposal is not contrary to limitation Q.1(h).

- 5.12 ***The development under Class Q(b) would result in an extension that has more than one storey, is sited anywhere other than to the rear of the existing building, extends beyond the rear wall of the existing building by more than 4 metres, has eaves the height of which exceed the height of the eaves of the existing building, is higher than whichever is the lower of the highest part of the roof of the existing building or the height of 4 metres above the ground, extends beyond a wall that forms a side or principal elevation of the existing building, or would be sited on that, before the development under Class Q(b), is not covered by a hard surface that was provided on the land by virtue of any development, and the hard surface was not provided on the land on or before 24th July 2023 or where the hard surface was provided on the land after 24th July 2023, the hard surface has not been situated on the land for a period of at least 10 years before the date development under Class Q(b) begins,***

The developments do not coincide with the extension of either building and as such is not contrary to the requirements of Q.1(i).

- 5.13 ***The development under Class Q(c) would consist of building operations other than the installation or replacement of windows, doors, roofs, or exterior walls, or water, drainage, electricity, gas or other services, to the extent reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse, and partial demolition to the extent reasonably necessary to carry out building operations allowed by paragraph Q.1(j)(i),***

The facilitative works would all consist windows, doors, exterior walls and services reasonably necessary for the building to function as a dwellinghouse, as such it would not consist of operations outside of the limitations Q.1(j).

5.14 ***The site is on Article 2(3) land,***

The site is not located on article 2(3) land and therefore is not contrary to the limitations of Q.1(k).

5.15 ***The is, forms part of a site of special scientific interest, a safety hazard area, a military explosives storage area,***

The site does not form part of - (i)a site of special scientific interest; (ii)a safety hazard area; (iii)a military explosives storage area. The site is not contrary to limitation Q.1(l).

5.16 ***The site is, or contains, a scheduled monument,***

The site of manor is not within and does not contain a scheduled monument, the site is not contrary to limitation Q.1(m).

5.17 ***The building is a listed building,***

Neither of the buildings have a listed building status and are not contrary to limitation Q.1(n).

5.18 ***The existing building, excluding any proposed extension under Class Q(b) but including any proposed building operations under Class Q(c), would not be capable of complying with the nationally described space standard issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 27th March 2015 as read with the notes dated 19th May 2016 which apply to it,***

Barn B would provide a 3 bedroom 77m² unit whilst Barn C would square metres and Barn C would provide a 2 bedroom 66m² unit both

complying with the Nationally Described Space Standards. The proposal would therefore not be contrary to limitation Q.1(o).

5.19 ***The building does not have suitable existing access to a public highway.***

The building has a suitable access to the highway as demonstrated on the access and egress plans. The proposal is not contrary to limitation Q.1(p).

5.20 **Conditions (Q.2) of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q:**

5.21 Condition Q.2 requires the developer to apply to the Local Planning Authority on the following matters:

5.22 **Transport and Highway Impacts of the Development:** The site has sufficient space for cars to manoeuvre and park private motor vehicles in accordance with WBC parking standards and has pedestrian access. As per the previous refusal (also for two dwellings albeit with one being in a different building) the likely conflicts are low and unreasonable the proposed development would not result in any highway safety issue.

5.23 The applicant has provided an overview access and egress plan for the site to confirm that refuse collection is able to access and egress the site safely and conveniently.

5.24 As such, it is considered the previous reason for refusal regarding transport has been overcome. This was accepted in application 250404 and has not changed since that decision.

5.25 **Noise Impacts of the Development:** The facilitative works to the buildings would provide internal insulation to provide adequate noise mitigation.

- 5.26 It should be noted in the previous application the EH Officer did not object subject to internal insulation and Building Regulations being complied with – this will remain the case with the current submission.
- 5.27 As such, it is considered the development is acceptable in terms of its noise impact.
- 5.28 **Contamination Risks on the Site:** A phase 1 contaminated land assessment has been provided and concludes that the site has low to moderate/low risk of contamination.
- 5.29 The report recommends that a proportionate programme of site investigation works and an asbestos survey be undertaken. Should it be required this can be conditioned.
- 5.30 This was also previously accepted. As such, it is considered the development is acceptable in terms of contamination risk.
- 5.31 **Flooding Risks on the Site:** The site is located within flood zone 1 therefore has the lowest risk of flooding and no flood risk assessment is necessary to be carried out.
- 5.32 There is no change in the amount of built form on site and therefore surface water impacts are considered to be neutral.
- 5.33 **Whether the location or siting of the buildings makes it otherwise impractical or undesirable for the building to change from agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order:** The site nor individual buildings are sited to so that their conversion is impractical nor undesirable.
- 5.34 The previous Officer Report explicitly stated: *“The existing access to the buildings is well maintained and the aspect, orientation and outlook of both buildings is reasonable...the building is a sufficient*

standard to accommodate residential conversion and habitation and connection to utilities can be achieved”.

- 5.35 This remains the same for the current proposal and as such there is no obvious reason why the conversions would be impractical nor undesirable.
- 5.36 **The Design or External Appearance of the Building:** The proposed development retains the character and appearance of the barns, and the immediate context so is in keeping with the sites current appearance. Timber cladding is proposed.
- 5.37 The additional fenestration is considered to be appropriate for the design of the dwellings.
- 5.38 **The Provision of Adequate Natural Light in all Habitable Rooms of the Dwellings:** Modest and reasonable interventions are proposed to alter the form of the windows.
- 5.39 This results in all habitable rooms having an adequate amount of natural light.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development would comply with the limitations and requirement of a Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the GPDO. Therefore, prior approval should be granted
- 6.2 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that prior approval is granted.

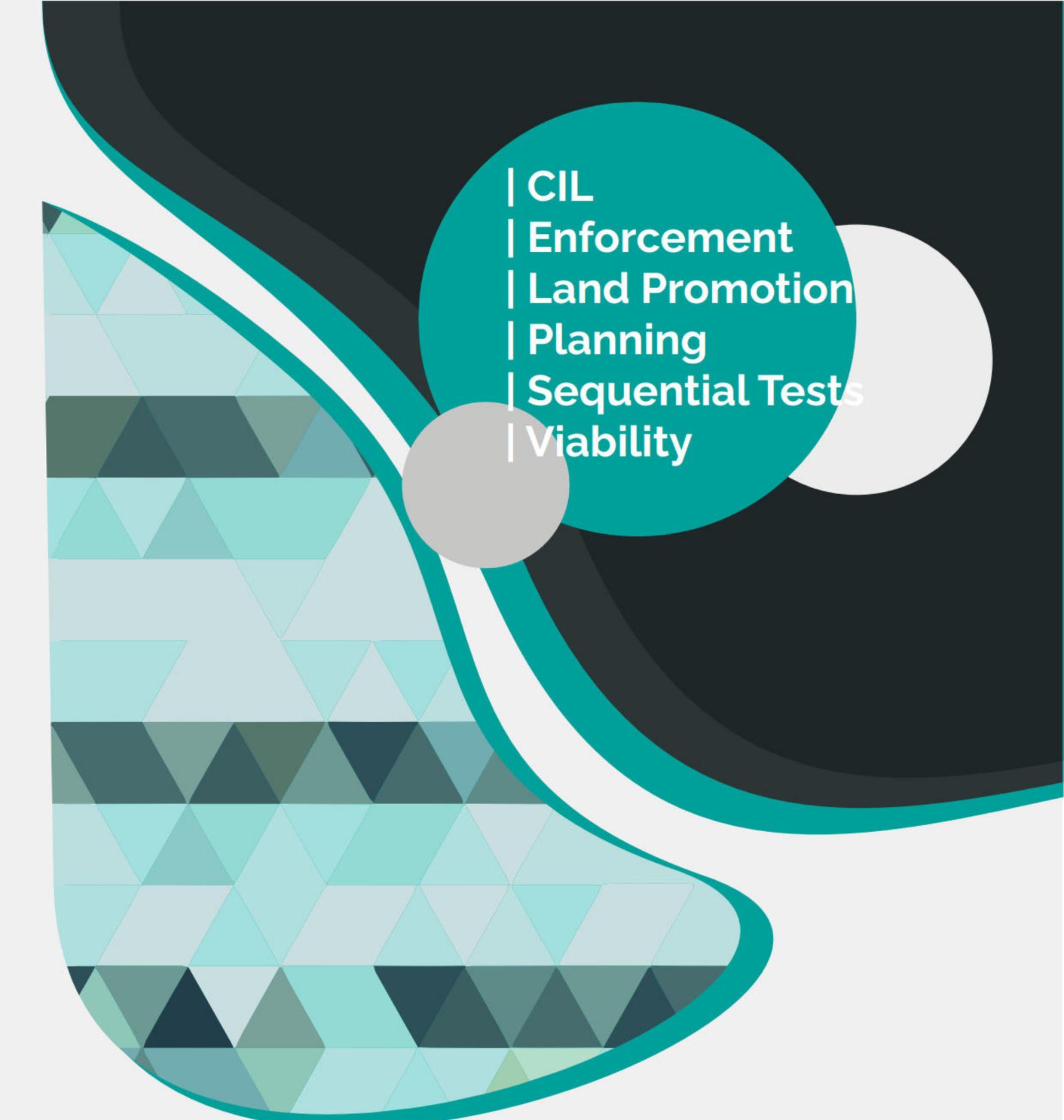


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