

ET Planning

Statement Title

Client:

Jeremy Simmons

151 Peppard Road,

Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8TR

Erection of annexe (retrospective).

Holly Goulding **BSc (Hons)**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a retrospective planning application for the erection of an annexe at 151 Peppard Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8TR.
- 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 prepared by Bonney Architecture:
 - 1:1250 Site Location Plan
 - 1:200 Site Plan
 - 1:100 Floor Plan
 - 1:100 Roof Plan
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site comprises a large detached dwelling on a long, thin plot within the Reading settlement boundary.
- 2.2 Peppard Road comprises a mixed residential character comprising predominantly large detached dwellings benefitting from large driveways and long rear gardens.
- 2.3 The area is predominantly residential, The Hill Primary School is located to the east of the site, Grace Church to the south and Highdown Secondary School to the west.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 PL/08/0491 - Two storey rear extension with new roof over existing flat roof and new chimney - Approved - 15/05/2008.
- 3.2 PL/20/1149 - Erection of a single storey outbuilding for home office, gym and garden store - Withdrawn - 21/10/2020.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The proposal seeks permission for a residential annexe to the rear garden of 151 Peppard Road.
- 4.4 **Layout and Scale:** The annexe is of a single storey and comprises a bedroom, bathroom, living space and home office/gym.
- 4.5 **Scale Height & Mass:** The annexe has been designed to be sympathetic to the host dwelling and neighbouring dwellings by virtue of its single storey and building materials.



Figure 1 – Photo looking towards the site from the alley way



Figure 2 – Photo looking towards the site from the alley way

- 4.6 **Landscaping:** The annexe benefits from mature boundary screening on all sides which is to be retained as a result of the proposal. This can be further enhanced by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.

- 4.7 **Access & Parking:** The annexe is accessed from the rear garden of 151 Peppard Road which provides parking for the annexe.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states that “Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way” and “at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.
- 5.3 Paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 131 identifies that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”
- 5.5 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that “well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing

needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use” (para 109).

5.6 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (‘NPPF’) is a material planning consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents are:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (‘**RLP**’) (Adopted November 2019)

5.7 The site is located within the defined settlement boundary where the principle of new development is acceptable subject to accordance with other policies.

5.8 When considering the proposal, RLP Policy H9 is of relevance to the application. The policy states that that an extension to a house or other householder development will be acceptable where it:

- *Respects the character and appearance of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design;*
- *Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and appearance of the street as a whole in terms of its scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and any important existing building line;*
- *Does not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or a large blank façade to public areas; and*
- *Does not result in a loss of biodiversity within gardens.*

In addition to the above, ancillary accommodation, such as granny annexes, will be acceptable where it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately.

- 5.9 The proposal seeks planning permission for an annexe to be used by a family member of the host dwelling 151 Peppard Road. The annexe has been designed in order to re-enforce the dependent nature of the annexe in its relationship with the main dwelling. Within this relationship, the son eats with the family in the main dwelling. The annexe itself also contains a small home gym/home office used by all members of the family further re-enforcing the ancillary relationship between the main property and the annexe.
- 5.10 The annexe is considered to remain subordinate to the host dwelling, being proportionate in size and scale to the overall plot and the main dwelling itself.
- 5.11 It is also important to consider supporting Paragraph 4.4.74 for RLP Policy H9 which goes on to that that *'Reading is a dense urban area, and there is limited land for new housing development. When households need change, particularly through growing families, the ability to extend a house can give an alternative to moving to a larger property, often in a less accessible location, or out of the Borough. Such a movement of families can act against creating mixed communities. Therefore, it is important to ensure that, where a household wishes to stay in an existing house, there is as much flexibility as possible to do so.'*
- 5.12 Paragraph 4.4.76 further notes that *'a number of demographic trends are also at work in Reading, including an ageing population, as well as less traditional household arrangements. The provision of ancillary accommodation, such as granny annexes, can be one housing solution to some of the trends. However, this ancillary*

accommodation should not be a way of introducing new dwellings by stealth. Therefore, planning conditions and, where necessary, obligations will ensure that extra accommodation remains ancillary to the main dwelling. Ancillary accommodation could be considered a separate dwelling where it:

- *Is self sufficient in terms of facilities eg kitchens and bathrooms;*
- *Has its own front door without internal links to the main house; and/or*
- *Has its own external facilities eg access, drive, garden; or has scope for these external facilities to be easily created.*

5.13 As demonstrated through this statement, the annexe is dependent on the main dwelling. The family member eats meals with the other family members in the main house and the annexe building itself is dependent on the main property for other factors such as water, sewerage, electricity supply all falling under the main property.

5.14 The annexe is intended to be used by the applicant's son only until they are able to move out of the property. As the applicant moves through their life, it could then be used by applicant themselves or family carers when they get older.

5.15 The annexe has therefore been designed in order to meet both provide their son with a sense of independence until he is able to afford to move out whilst also 'futureproofing' the site for the long term should their health decline.

5.16 Alongside this, the space is co-used by the applicant themselves as a home office/personal gym.

5.17 The applicant is agreeable to this ancillary relationship being secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.

- 5.18 The annexe allows for the privacy of its intended user whilst also allowing for the close proximity to family. The main site would continue to be the primary point of receipt of mail and parking provision for example.
- 5.19 Case law arising from the judgement in *Emin v SSE & Mid Sussex DC* [1989] JPL 909 sets out the test to be applied in this regard as *'...whether the uses of the proposed buildings, when considered in the context of the planning unit, are intended and will remain ancillary or subordinate to the main use of the property as a dwellinghouse.'*
- 5.20 In applying that test, regard should be had to *'...the use to which it is proposed to put a building and to considering the nature and scale of that use in the context of whether it is a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.'*
- 5.21 It was held that the physical size of the building in comparison to the dwellinghouse might be an important consideration but was not by itself conclusive. It was necessary to identify the purpose and incidental quality in relation to the enjoyment of the dwelling and answer the question as to whether the proposed building was genuinely and reasonably required or necessary in order to accommodate the proposed use or activity and thus achieve that purpose.
- 5.22 Linked to this, is appeal decision ref: APP/U2235/X/12/2177741 (**Appendix 1**). The Inspector in this case was satisfied that facilities included within the outbuilding may sometimes be required for incidental purposes and all are facilities that residential occupiers might aspire to in seeking to improve their quality of life and none could be regarded as being for the provision of a primary dwellinghouse purpose. It was also found to be feasible that, having regard to *Wallington v SSW* [1991] 1 PLR 87 and associated case law,

the proposed facilities would not exceed what might reasonably be required by a single household occupying a large property. The case of *Holding v First Secretary of State* 2003 EWHC 3138 (Admin) which concerned what might be regarded as a very large incidental building within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, confirmed that this is indeed the correct approach.

- 5.23 Facilities within the proposed development comprise a significantly scaled back approach to that of the contents of the outbuilding as described within appeal ref: APP/U2235/X/12/2177741 (**Appendix 1**) namely a kitchen diner, lounge, ensuite bedroom, bathroom, games/cinema room, gym, music room and home office and as such can similarly be described as incidental to the host dwelling.
- 5.24 Furthermore, in the case of *Emin v SSE & Mid Sussex DC* 1989 JPL 909 it was held that it is wrong to conclude that an outbuilding could not be said to be incidental as such because it would provide more accommodation for secondary activities than the dwellinghouse provides for primary purposes, for example a home gym or office space. Appeal decision ref: APP/P1805/X/18/3202923 (**Appendix 2**) supports this further and states that there are a number of factors relating to whether an outbuilding is incidental and whilst the physical size of the building is of some relevance, this should not be determinative.
- 5.25 The relevance of size lies in the indication it may provide of the scale of activities and whether they would be subordinate to the main use of the dwellinghouse and in the case of *Emin* a building being incidental should turn to some extent on the size of the proposed building and the size of the dwellinghouse itself.

- 5.26 Reflective of the above in light of case law and precedents, it is considered that the annexe is ancillary to the host dwelling and as such constitutes an acceptable form of development.
- 5.27 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** RLP Policy CC7 states that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. Proposals will be assessed to ensure that they make a positive contribution to the character of the area by way of responding positively to local context and reinforcing local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.28 RLP Policy H9 states that householder development will be acceptable where it respects the character and appearance of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design as well as the pattern of neighbouring properties and appearance of the street as a whole.
- 5.29 Peppard Road comprises a residential road with predominantly large detached dwellings set in generous plots, like many dwellings along Peppard Road, the dwelling benefits from independent access and has driveway parking for several vehicles.
- 5.30 Given the siting of the annexe within the rear garden of the host dwelling, the annexe does not front Peppard Road itself and as such is not found to have any impacts upon the active street frontage. The annexe replaced an existing swimming pool and as such the presence of a building within this location has been established previously. In any case, it should be noted that the building does not extend beyond the existing built line to the rear of the dwellinghouses within Harmont Gate and as such the pattern of development in this location extends beyond the dwellings fronting Peppard Road as demonstrated in **Figure 3**.



Figure 3 – Indicative site plan showing the application site in red, and the established built line of Harmont Gate in green

- 5.31 In any case, images of the annexe demonstrate that the building has been designed sensitively to be sympathetic to both the host dwelling and neighbouring dwellings as well as views from the footpath.
- 5.32 Mature boundary screening surrounding the annexe prevents any views of the annexe when viewed from the footpath or from neighbouring gardens by virtue of existing screening on site. Through its limited height, the annexe does not project upwards at the rear of the site and is therefore found to remain in keeping with the generally open arrangement of back gardens next to and further beyond either side of the site, as was similarly established in appeal ref: APP/E0345/W/23/3328372 (**Appendix 3**) when discussing back land development.

- 5.33 **Residential Amenity:** Policy CC8 states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions in terms of privacy and overlooking and access to sunlight and daylight amongst other things.
- 5.34 Policy H9 – House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation states that an extension to a house or other householder development will be acceptable where it:
- *Does not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or a large blank façade to public areas; and*
- 5.35 Whereby the annexe is of a single storey and is bound by mature boundary planting, the annexe has no overbearing impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and by virtue of its flat roof design, the annexe cannot be seen by users of the adjacent footpath. Figures 1 & 2 confirm this point. The proposal also utilises the existing sizeable residential garden to provide amenity space for both the host dwelling and the annexe.
- 5.36 Given the ancillary nature of the proposal, this is considered to be acceptable and it is thus presented to be no different than adding an additional bedroom via an extension to the host dwelling.
- 5.37 With regards to the residential amenity of the occupiers, the annexe provides the occupant with a degree of independence for the applicant's son whilst ensuring that their family remain close by. As was been outlined by the COVID-19 Pandemic, social connections and being close to family members and friends is a key factor within quality of life considerations and as such the proposal allows for these connections to be maintained and develop further.

- 5.38 The annexe also benefits from ample daylight and sunlight by virtue of its design, offering a bright and enjoyable space to occupy.
- 5.39 The gym/home office element of the annexe which is used by the family members at the property allows them to keep fit and healthy with positive impacts on overall physical and mental health. Given the flexibility of this space, this also allows the applicant a distinct space in order to work from home. With the rise in hybrid working following the COVID-19 Pandemic – the importance of this should not be understated as it provides the applicant with a distinct spatial detachment from work and leisure.
- 5.40 As such, the proposal is demonstrated to accord with RLP Policy CC8 and H9 and provides for residential amenity within the annexe as well as safeguarding the amenity of residential neighbours.
- 5.41 **Trees and Landscaping:** The proposal does not have any impacts upon existing landscaping on site and whereby the annexe is sited within a residential garden, extensive landscaping measures are not considered necessary given the mature planting within the site as existing. Should the Council deem it necessary, additional landscaping measures can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.42 **Transport and Parking:** The host dwelling benefits from a large driveway with space for more than 3 cars, the application does not seek to alter existing parking arrangements.
- 5.43 **Cycle Provision:** Cycle parking will continue to be retained within the host property of 151 Peppard Road, reflecting the co-dependent nature of the annexe to the host dwelling.

- 5.44 **Refuse Provision:** The annexe will continue to use the refuse provision associated with the host dwelling and is not found to have any significant impact upon the existing arrangements in any case.
- 5.45 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and under 1Ha in area, at the lowest risk of flooding. As such, a Floor Risk Assessment is not necessary.
- 5.46 **Contamination:** The site is not known to be contaminated, and this is unlikely given the existing residential use of the land as a garden.
- 5.47 **Archaeology:** The site is not known to be in an area of archaeological potential, and this is unlikely given the existing residential use of the land as a garden.
- 5.48 **Ecology:** As the application is retrospective, impact upon ecological matters is a known quantity. Ecological enhancements can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission if the Council deem it necessary.
- 5.49 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant forms are to be submitted in support of this application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would provide for an annexe to promote a sustainable family household living set up, without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 6.3 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 planning permission is granted.

Holly Goulding BSc (Hons)

Planner | ET Planning

200 Dukes Ride Crowthorne RG45 6DS

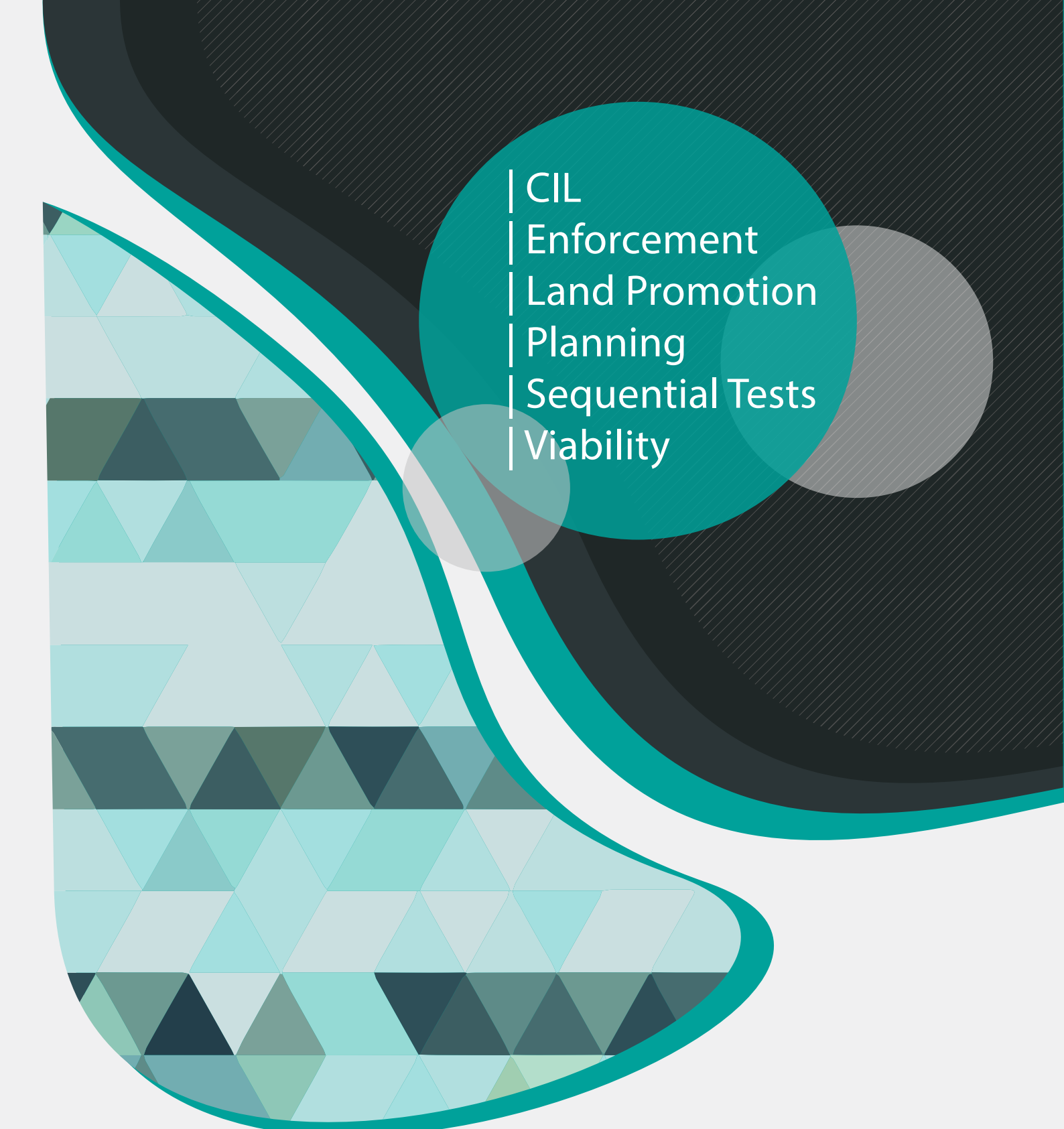
holly.goulding@etplanning.co.uk | 01344 508048

Gareth Jones BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Principal Planner | ET Planning

200 Dukes Ride Crowthorne RG45 6DS

gareth.jones@etplanning.co.uk | 01344 508048



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Contact

Address

200 Dukes Ride RG45 6DS

Phone

01344 508048
01865 507265
01483 363950
01743 612043
01392 691384

Web & Mail

Email: office@etplanning.co.uk
ET Planning Ltd | 10646740

Web: www.etplanning.co.uk