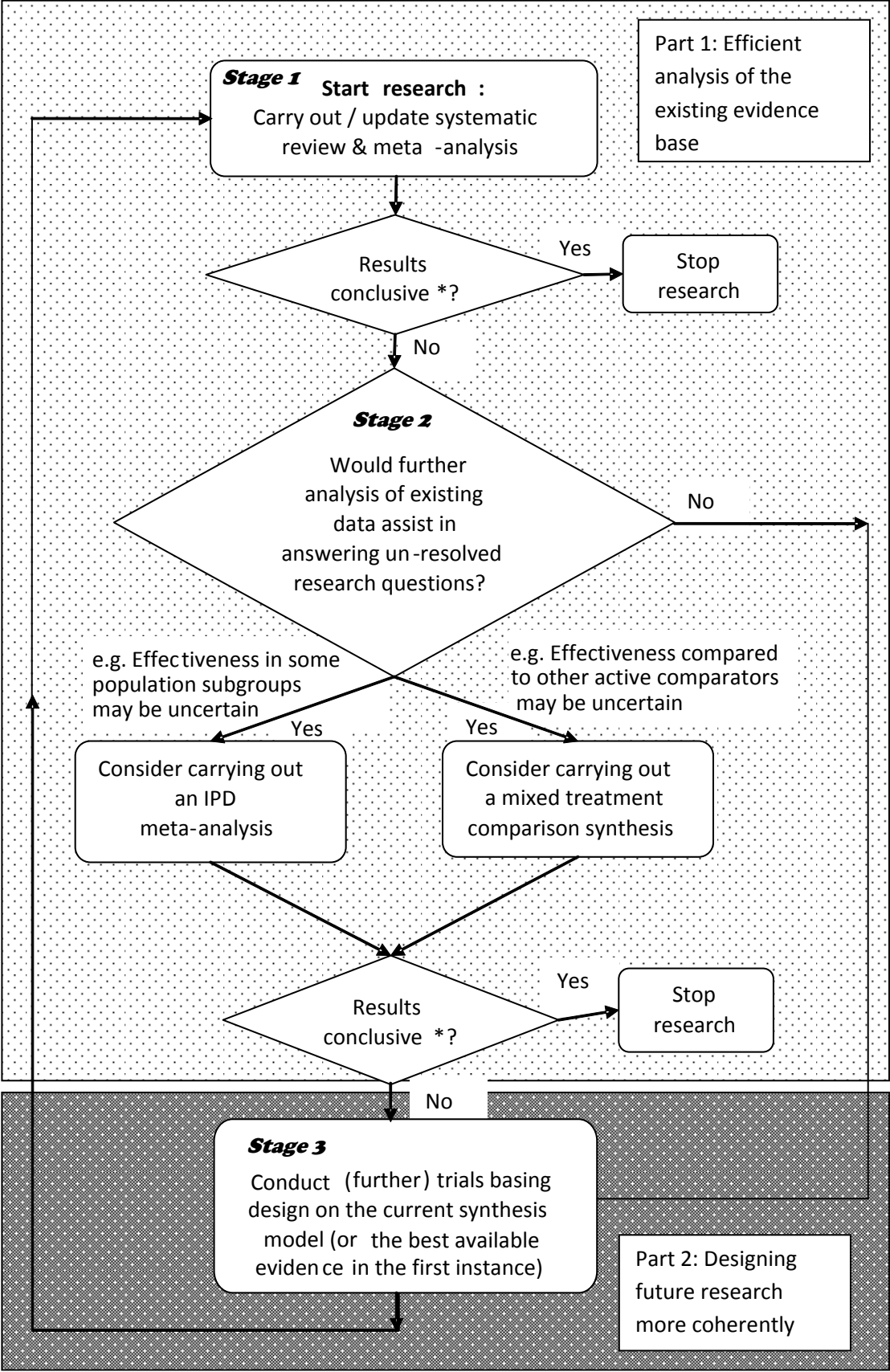
Part 1: Efficient analysis of the existing evidence base
Stage 1
Start research :
Carry out / update systematic review & meta -analysis
Results conclusive *?
Yes
Stop research
No
Stage 2
Would further analysis of existing data assist in answering un-resolved research questions?
No
e.g. Effectiveness in some population subgroups may be uncertain
Yes
Consider carrying out an IPD meta-analysis
e.g. Effectiveness compared to other active comparators may be uncertain
Yes
Consider carrying out a mixed treatment comparison synthesis
Results conclusive *?
Yes
Stop research
No
Stage 3
Conduct (further) trials basing design on the current synthesis model (or the best available evidence in the first instance)
Part 2: Designing future research more coherently