Planning, Sites, Racism and the Census

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Will cover

- Progress by Councils in meeting PPFTS requirements
- Needs assessments
- Site provision
- Some implications

Background - Four Wasted Years

- Between 2008 & 2012 Councils did nothing to address the accommodation crisis
- Believed that they would not have to make progress
- Coalition initially cancelled site funding

Planning policy for traveller sites, March 2012

- Much more like C 1/06 than expected
- Requires a robust up to date assessment of needs, targets, & five year supply of deliverable sites
- And if a Council does not have a 5 year supply from 27 March a material consideration in temporary applications
- C1/06 spread provision

Planning policy for traveller sites

- Puts the burden of responsibility on the local planning authorities – no one to blame
- But with so many councils, Traveller organisations can’t engage

What progress is being made?

- Traveller Law Reform Project study
- Lots of Surveys – of 115 districts in East & South East 25 (22%) complete, 64 (56%) in progress, 26 (23%) none / haven't updated
- Development Plan Inspectors requiring assessments
- Little evidence of duty to co-operate

But

- Many less have set pitch targets covering the whole plan period – 27 (24%)
- And only 4 of 115 have identified sites to meet targets, and they tend to be relatively low need areas, which have identified a single site
- Councils find it extremely difficult to promote sites

How Robust are the Assessments?

- The 2006 – 9 GTAAs were benchmarked & tested – or would have been
- Variable quality
- Even after benchmarking & testing almost certainly undercounts
- Housed Travellers, New Travellers, Migration
- Plus pressures from London, unwillingness to be identified

2011 Census

- England & Wales 57,680 Gypsies & Travellers
- Against 300-350,000?
- New assessments should expect increased numbers
- But some Councils are assuming will go the other way
- Eg Cambridgeshire - 2006 study 469 for existing need & 5 years, 2011 171 for need & 10 years

Public Site Provision

- Housing Associations wary
- Councils unable to plan new sites , so over-emphasis on extending existing sites
- Many English Romany dominated

Implications

- Most new provision will be private sites, not necessarily for the most needy
- Conflict in Green Belts, particularly around London
- Councils unhappy
- Time for appeal decisions, Secretary of State taking decisions

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