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36

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IT'S JERRY!**

Will Mick be there to see
ex-wife at New End?: p3



Rabbi Jeremy Conway
inspects the first
eruv pole, in Prospect
Place, East Finchley.
Picture by Nigel Sutton



First eruv poles go up amid joy and opposition

Jewish boundary is reality after 15-year fight

Carmen Lichi

THE first poles of the north-west London eruv – unique in the UK – have been put in place after nearly 15 years of fierce opposition.

Workmen from David Webster Lighting – the firm charged with building the controversial Jewish boundary – looked baffled as a media mêlée erupted on Tuesday around Prospect Place, a quiet residential street in East Finchley.

The installation of the two metallic poles was overseen by Rabbi Jeremy Conway and president of the United Synagogue, Peter Sheldon.

A delighted Rabbi Conway said: "It's wonderful that we have finally moved into the construction phase of the eruv."

The eruv will allow thousands of observant Jews to take part in activities usually banned on the Sabbath, including pushing prams and carrying keys.

Opponents of the boundary have protested against the United Synagogue Eruv Committee's (USEC) bid to win over Barnet Council's planning officers since the scheme was first put forward.

Long-time opponent Elizabeth Segall, who was present at the installation, attacked the council, claiming it failed to carry out adequate consultation when it moved poles from a dangerous location on the A1 trunk road.

She called for the poles to be taken down immediately. "I believe that the commencement of pole installation without full plan-

ning permission for the whole scheme is unlawful," she said.

Some of the 84 poles and more than 1,000 metres of fishwire that comprise the eruv will be situated in parts of Child's Hill, Golders Green and Hampstead Garden Suburb, in addition to "natural boundaries" comprised of the Northern Line and the M1.

The poles will vary between 3.5m (pictured) and 6.5m in height, depending on their location. The majority will stand at 5.5m.

Rabbi Conway said: "There has been opposition – that's the reason that the delays have been so long."

"And where there has been hysterical opposition that is where difficulties have come into play."

But he insisted that opponents' fears about the eruv – which range from vandalism to visual and ethical intrusion – were unfounded.

He claimed that up to 10,000 observant Jews would benefit from the boundary, whose condition will be checked weekly.

Observant Jews who want to confirm that the eruv is intact in time for use on the Sabbath will be able to call a telephone hotline or receive Internet and text message updates.

Despite the installation of the first poles, some opponents were unwilling to concede defeat.

Lorna Noble, a member of the Eruv Boundary Opponents Group, said: "One swallow does not make a summer. I have come along to see what's going on

today but I still maintain it is wrong within the context of the community."

Some neighbours, too, were unhappy about the poles.

Prospect Place resident Henry Evans, 78, said: "I'm disgusted about it. I know people have to have their religion, but I don't see why they have to have all this."

"But, as with most things in this world, I suppose there is nothing we can do to stop it."

But some Jewish families, who also turned out to witness the eruv taking shape, welcomed it.

To page 2

INSIDE

**How cuts will
affect you...**



Deputy council leader
looks at options to deal
with £25m shortfall: p4

**A-level results
break records**

Students across borough
excel in exams: p6&7

**Hospital cuts
waiting times**

Innovative scheme is
introduced at A&E: p25

Man shot at café in drive-by shooting

A MAN was gunned down in a drive-by shooting as he drank coffee at a pavement café in the heart of Camden on Wednesday evening.

The 25-year-old victim was sitting outside Cafe Nero, in Jamestown Road, Camden Town, just before 7pm when a gunman fired a hail of bullets

from a passing car.

The victim, who is black, is understood to have been shot in the chest and leg. Friends rushed him to the Whittington Hospital where he is in a serious but stable condition.

Officers from Camden's murder squad were first on the scene and cordoned off the sur-

rounding streets.

Jamestown Road was still blocked off yesterday morning as officers examined the scene.

Police have not yet released descriptions of the suspects and no arrests had been made at the time the Ham & High went to press on Thursday.

The incident is Camden's

second gangland shooting in 10 days. On August 11, a 23-year-old Jamaican man was shot four times by two men on a scooter in Cressy Road, Hampstead.

Anyone with information about the shooting should call 020-7321 9251 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

CAMDEN NETS MOST ROOKIE COPS p8

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