

At about the same time as the new settlement project was launched, the Walajah checkpoint was established (it was later, on 19 Feb. 2006, transformed into a **Border Passage** by an Israeli military order according to which some 40 dunums of Walajah land was confiscated to make way for the construction of a new terminal). In addition, the revised route of the **separation barrier**, approved by the Israeli Cabinet on 30 April 2006, included the encirclement of Walajah, leaving it completely fenced in and with only one access road, passing through the Israeli controlled Har Gilo terminal.

◆ **Jabal Abu Ghneim**

Jabal Abu Ghneim was a tree-covered hill located within the southern municipal boundaries of Jerusalem that was privately owned by Palestinian families from Beit Sahour, Bethlehem, Sur Baher, and Um Tuba. In 1968, the West Jerusalem Municipality classified it as a 'green area' - an area in which development is restricted to as to preserve its ecological diversity. Nevertheless, Israel went ahead and confiscated the mountain in 1991 in order to build a new settlement. After the Israeli Government's Feb. 1997 announcement that 6,500 Jewish homes for some 30,000-40,000 Israelis would be constructed there and the beginning of construction work the following month, Palestinian protests led to a breakdown in the peace talks. Following these events and heavy international pressure, construction was eventually frozen. A few months later, the Israeli Government tried to calm things down by offering to build 3,000 new apartments and 400 government-financed housing units in the nearby Arab neighborhood of Sur Baher. In Nov. 1998, however, Israel began leveling the hill and advertising for tenders, with the actual construction of apartments beginning in Aug. 1999. In Nov. 2000, the West Jerusalem Municipality started planning for the construction of an additional 4,000 units (**'Har Homa B'**). The first settlers moved into Har Homa in Jan. 2002, and by Sept. 2005, some 2,500 housing units had been built.

Ongoing construction at Har Homa



In the same area, west of Har Homa and south of the Mar Elias Monastery, Israel's Ministry of Housing and Construction subsequently began planning a new settlement (**'Har Homa C'**), the first 983 units of which were approved in Jan. 2007 by the Municipal Building and Planning Committee. In addition, a new residential area (**'Hirbat Mazmura'** - **'Har Homa D'**) was planned southeast of Har Homa, the plan being to extend Har Homa up to the municipal border, but it is doubtful whether the aforementioned plans will actually materialize following the decision made by Attorney General Menachem Mazuz who determined that it is forbidden to apply the Absentee Owners Property Law within the boundaries of Jerusalem.

The West Jerusalem Municipality's Master Plan, Jerusalem 2000, points to the expansion of Har Homa by 28% (1,410 dunums) so that it eventually comprises some 2,500 dunums of land (ARIJ, *The Geopolitical Status of the Jerusalem Governorate*, Dec. 2006).

◆ **Geva**

The **Geva Binyamin** settlement (also referred to as **Adam**) was established in 1984, 2 km north of the municipal boundary of Jerusalem, 7 km from the Green Line. It is situated outside (east of) the separation barrier, but a substantial part of its jurisdictional area to the west of the built-up area is included on the 'Israeli' side of the barrier, in complete contiguity with the **Neve Ya'akov** settlement, which lies within the municipal boundaries in East Jerusalem. Expanding the settlement with 1,200 housing units (known as Plan 240/3 or 'Geva') is in effect an expansion of Neve Ya'akov, to which the new neighborhood will be attached, the aim being to connect Geva Binyamin to the east. Most of the land covered by the plan has been declared State land - at the expense of land belonging to the Palestinian village of **Hizma**.

◆ **Agan Ha'Ayalot**

The new neighborhood of Agan Ha'Ayalot ('Gazelle Basin') is located in western **Givat Ze'ev** and is still under construction.

In the late 1990s, the Israel Land Administration sold plots for 546 housing units. Some of the 11 contractors who won tenders started construction work, but interest was low because the site was too far removed from Givat Ze'ev, lacked infrastructure, and was accessible only via Route 443, which, apart from facing attacks, also led to Modi'in, at the time competing for potential buyers. Today, the complex stands empty, with the abandoned structures serving as silent testimony to the great debacle (Arik Mirovsky, "It was exclusive on paper", *Ha'aretz*, 28 November 2005).

The planning process pertaining to the establishment of Agan Ha'Ayalot, approval for which was obtained in October 2003, ended long before the planning of the separation barrier began. The Palestinians of nearby Beit Surik, who opposed the route of the barrier as it would separate them from their farmland, filed a petition, but the State justified the route by referring to the need to protect an area where a new settlement - Agan Ha'Ayalot - was being built.

◆ **Beit Safafa**

In **Beit Safafa**, the **Givat Hamatos** settlement caravans are to be replaced by high-rise buildings and a new bypass road to connect the settlement with the nearby settlements of Gilo and Har Homa (www.stophthewall.org, Save Jerusalem from the Apartheid Wall and Ethnic Cleansing, 2006).



Temporary settler housing at Givat Hamatos settlement