



Market Place: what lies underneath?



Market Place, East Finchley 7 C.



Above: Dig site: The spot in Market Place where the archaeological teams will be investigating this month.

Heart of the village: A thriving Market Place around the year 1900 when it was at the centre of East Finchley life. Photo courtesy of the East Finchley History Project.

Layers of the past could be uncovered when an archaeological dig comes to Market Place in East Finchley on the weekend of 17 and 18 July.

Several test pits will be excavated close to the Market Place playground, an area once densely occupied by buildings, as part of a festival run by the Council for British Archaeology.

The digs will operate between 10.30am and 4.30pm each day, and there will be opportunities to be involved in washing and cleaning finds, identifying what is dug up and discovering more about the fascinating history of this part of East Finchley.

Roger Chapman, treasurer of the Hendon and District Archae-

ological Society (HADAS), said: "We would love to hear the memories of local people who knew the site and to introduce others to the extraordinarily rich local history of this area. Do drop in at some stage on the weekend.

"The 1893 Ordnance Survey map overlaid on a modern satellite photograph clearly indicates that a range of buildings used to lie under the site. The question is 'How far back was this site first developed?' We hope these test pits will give us clearer evidence to begin to answer this question."

A photograph, believed to be taken at the turn of the 20th century, indicates a post office and shops with homes above occupying part of the site.

This little pig went to market

The Market Place takes its name from a large pig market which started around the 1660s. By the end of the 18th century Finchley's pig market was the largest in Middlesex, with market days on Wednesday and Thursday.

The Walks, which abut this site, is an historic series of footways running parallel to the High Road and originally denoting the boundary between Finchley Wood/Common and the early settlement known as East End.

On 15 November 1940 the area was heavily bombed during the Blitz. Many of the houses were destroyed.



Ghosts of the past: Market Place as it is today, with the old street plan superimposed on top

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