

# **Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade Manchester**

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**Nu-Era Studio Ltd**



**JANUARY 2021**

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**HERITAGE STATEMENT**  
**Report EH100/01**

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# Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade Manchester

## Heritage Statement for Nu-Era Studio Ltd

|                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>DATE ISSUED:</b>     | January 2021     |
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Heritage Impact Assessment  
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment  
Historic Landscape Survey  
Written Scheme of Investigation

Geophysical Survey  
Trial Trench Evaluation  
Archaeological Excavation  
Archaeological Watching Briefs

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## Acknowledgements

Eden Heritage thanks Sarah Bolsover and Shima Azizy their assistance throughout the project.

The site visit was undertaken by Martin Railton and research was undertaken by Fiona Wooler. The report was written by Martin Railton, who also produced the figures and managed the project.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In January 2021 Eden Heritage was commissioned to compile a Heritage Statement for a proposed development at Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade, Manchester, M2 7EA. The Royal Exchange is a Grade II listed building (List Entry 1200826). The Heritage Statement was to inform an application for listed building consent for the proposed fit out of the unit including minor internal alterations.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of the Heritage Statement was to assess the heritage significance of the heritage asset, Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade, and the impact the proposals may have on the property and its setting, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## 1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The Royal Exchange building is located within Manchester city centre, to the south of Victoria Station and the Cathedral (Figure 1). The building as a whole is bounded to the north by Market Street, to the west by Exchange Street, to the south by Old Bank Street, and to the east by Cross Street.
- 1.2.2 Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade is located within the ground floor of the Royal Exchange building, on the south side of Royal Exchange Arcade near the east entrance onto Cross Street (Figure 2).

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## 2 Heritage Planning Policy Context

### 2.1 Heritage Assets

- 2.1.1 The term 'heritage asset' is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest' (DCLG 2019).
- 2.1.2 Designated heritage assets protected by statutory legislation comprise scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, listed buildings and conservation areas. Nationally significant archaeological sites, monuments and structures are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979). Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are protected under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act (1990).
- 2.1.3 Non-statutory designated heritage assets, comprising registered parks and gardens and registered battlefields, are protected under national and local planning policy only. This is also the case for the remainder of the archaeological resource, including entries into a Historic Environment Record (HER) or local listing, as well as previously unknown features which may be recorded during the course of data collection in respect to a given development proposal.

### 2.2 National Heritage Policy

- 2.2.1 The significance of a heritage asset is defined within the NPPF as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from the physical fabric of a heritage asset but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance' (DCLG 2019).
- 2.2.2 The setting of a heritage asset is defined as 'the surroundings within which it is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of setting can make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of a heritage asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral (MHCLG 2019).
- 2.2.3 Where heritage assets are to be affected by development, 'local authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance' (MHCLG 2019: 189).
- 2.2.4 In determining applications, the NPPF stipulates that 'great weight should be given to the assets conservation' and that 'substantial harm to or loss of grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered

parks or gardens should be exceptional’ whilst ‘substantial harm to or loss of assets of highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, and grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional’ (MHCLG 2019:194).

- 2.2.5 Developments which lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset will be refused unless they can deliver substantial public benefits which outweigh any loss or harm (MHCLG 2019:195). Less than substantial harm to a designated asset would require public benefits including the securement of an optimum viable use (MHCLG 2019:196). Impacts to the significance of non-designated assets will require a balanced judgement based on the level of significance and the scale of harm or loss (MHCLG 2019:197), although non-designated assets which are of equivalent significance to designated assets will be considered as such.
- 2.2.6 The NPPF also states that ‘Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner appropriate to their importance and impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted’ (MHCLG 2019: 199).

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Scope of the Work

- 3.1.1 In order to assess the heritage significance of the proposed development site, a rapid desk-based assessment of readily available sources was undertaken, in order to provide the historical context of the Royal Exchange. This assessment was undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) in *Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (CIfA 2014).
- 3.1.2 A site visit was also undertaken in order to assess the character, form and setting of Unit 16-18 and the surrounding area. The results of the rapid desk-based assessment and the site visit have been combined to provide a brief overview of the historical development of the site and a description of the buildings which will be impacted by the proposals.
- 3.1.3 In order to assess the heritage significance of the site, guidance provided by Historic England (2008) has been followed. Under the values presented within the NPPF this significance can be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. These values are broadly similar to the four principle values described in Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008). This provides a useful methodology for assessing the significance of heritage assets and has been utilised within this assessment. The four principle values which contribute to overall significance are:
- Evidential Value: Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity;
  - Historical Value: Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present;
  - Aesthetic Value: Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place;
  - Communal Value: Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or from whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.
- 3.1.4 The heritage significance of Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade is discussed detail in Section 5, along with an assessment of the possible impacts on heritage significance by the proposed development.

## 4 Baseline Assessment

### 4.1 Current Heritage Status

- 4.1.1 Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade, is located inside the Grade II listed Royal Exchange. The listed building description reads:

*“GV II Includes: Nos.4 to 20 ROYAL EXCHANGE ARCADE. Includes: Nos.1 to 19 ROYAL EXCHANGE ARCADE. Includes: Nos.1 to 17 OLD BANK STREET. Includes: Nos.1 to 7 Former Royal Exchange ST ANN’S SQUARE. Includes: Nos.2 to 20 Former Royal Exchange MARKET STREET. Includes: Nos.2 to 20 Former Royal Exchange CROSS STREET. Commercial exchange, now shops, theatre, etc. Rebuilt and enlarged (for the fourth time on this site) in 1914-21, by Bradshaw, Gass and Hope. Darley stone, slate roof with three glazed domes.*

*Very large approximately rectangular plan on island site penetrated by east-west arcade at ground floor and enclosing central atrium at first floor. Classical style. Four storeys with two attic storeys; ground floor treated as rustic, with channelled rusticated piers, giant Corinthian order to first, second and third floors with massive entablature and modillioned cornice; first attic storey with cornice and balustraded parapet, second attic storey in mansard roof, Baroque turret at north-west corner, domes over other corners. Giant round-headed entrance arch in west side with wide steps up; first and second floor windows set in giant round-headed arches; mullioned windows to third floor and first attic storey. Interior: very impressive trading hall (now containing modular theatre)” (Historic England List Entry 1200826)*

- 4.1.2 The site is located within the St Ann’s Square Conservation Area.

### 4.2 Historical Context

- 4.2.1 The first exchange building in Manchester was constructed by Sir Oswald Mosley, Lord of the Manor, in 1729 to the north of the present building. It was built “for chapmen to meet in and transact their business”, as a kind of indoor extension to the market. It was the only large assembly room in Manchester at the time and consequently became a venue for theatrical performances and meetings, including the Court Leet. It was replaced by a new Neoclassical building on the east side of Exchange Street by Thomas Harrison in 1806-09, enlarged by Alex Mills in 1847-49, then replaced by Mills and Murgatroyd in 1869-74 before the building was extended in the early 20th century (compare Figure 3a and Figure 3b). Trading was never restricted to textiles and cotton, although they always predominated. Initially business was transacted between the owners of the businesses, such as mill and warehouse proprietors, importers and finishers etc., but eventually trading was left to their representatives such as managers, agents and salesmen. Decline came not just through slumps in trade but also through the advent of new communications and the rationalization of many small

businesses into large conglomerates, although trading continued until 1968. The building remained empty after closure in 1968 until 1973 when it was used to house a temporary theatre by the Sixty-Nine Theatre Company. The permanent theatre structure within the Royal Exchange was completed in 1976 (Hartwell 2001, 155).

- 4.2.2 The current building is an extension of the 1869-74 building constructed by Mills and Murgatroyd; a representation of this building is shown in Plate 1 with the large portico being on the Cross Street frontage. This building was extended in the early 20th century to Old Bank Street, still in the Italianate style of the original structure. The portico was removed and replaced by a far less grand entrance (Plate 2). This enlargement by Bradshaw, Gass and Hope, which was started in 1914, occupied 1.7 acres and the exchange hall, lit by six domes and twice its present size, was the largest trading room in the country. Construction was delayed by World War I, but the new building was eventually opened by King George V in October 1921 (Parkinson-Bailey 2000, 141-142), although the Ordnance Survey map of 1922 still shows the earlier plan form (Figure 3b). Prior to the extension the proposed development area at Unit 16-18 was within a street running to the south of the building.



Plate 1: The Royal Exchange on the corner of Cross Street and Market Street; this is the building erected by Mills and Murgatroyd in 1869-74

- 4.2.3 The Ordnance Survey map of 1933 appears to show the current Royal Exchange building, including the divisions between the various units located around the edges of the building at ground floor level, including the arcade which runs through the structure in a west to east direction (Figure 3c). Although the part of the building containing Unit 16-18 to the south of the arcade was in existence by this date, no unit division is shown in the vicinity of Unit 16-18 suggesting the unit did not exist.



Plate 2: Royal Exchange building, corner of Cross Street and Market Street, 1931

- 4.2.4 During the Second World War, the northern part of the Royal Exchange building was damaged by German bombs (Figure 3d); the damage appears to have largely been confined to the roof structure, with the main elevations surviving. A comparison of the 1931 photograph (Plate 2) and modern photography show the principal elevations on Cross Street and Market Street are the same in form.
- 4.2.5 It is uncertain when retail units were first introduced to Royal Exchange Arcade, but they were certainly in existence in the late 20th century. A 1969 photograph held in the Manchester Archives (not reproduced here) depicts the arcade fitted out with units including those for travel companies Swissair and Air France (Manchester City Council 2021). The shopfronts of the individual units were separated by plain timber pilasters with fluted tops.

### 4.3 Site Description

- 4.3.1 A site visit was undertaken on 15th January 2021 to inspect the building and the surroundings (Figure 2). Photographs of the building are included in Appendix 1 for reference.
- 4.3.2 Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade, is located near the east end of Royal Exchange Arcade near the Cross Street entrance (Plates 3 and 4). Unit 16-18 is the second unit along the arcade on the south

side (Plates 5 and 6). At the time of the site visit the unit was not in use but had formerly been utilised as a jeweller's shop, known as Wave Jewellery (Plate 7).

- 4.3.3 All of the units in the arcade were defined to each side by timber pilasters with fluted tops (Plate 7); the pilasters had recently all been painted in pale grey providing a unified appearance to the arcade. The arcade had a modern false ceiling fitted with colored lighting which illuminated the arcade, with individual illuminated signs identifying each business (Plates 5 and 6). The unit had a timber-framed shopfront with a double doorway with wave-design door handles, large windows to each side and additional window above (Plate 7). The east side of the unit had two windows and no door (Plate 8). To the east the dividing wall was located between the external pilasters (see Figure 4).
- 4.3.4 Internally, Unit 16-18 measured approximately 85m<sup>2</sup> with a small offshoot to the southwest corner (Figure 4). Plaster board wall coverings covered the interior and a stud wall separated the retail area from the back of house (Plates 8 and 9). The unit was well-lit by several modern suspended light fittings (Plate 10). The ceiling and transverse beams were decorated with coving, but this did not extend into the back of house, which comprised a plain narrow L-shaped area (Plates 11 and 12).
- 4.3.5 No other historic features were identified within the unit which was painted throughout.

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## 5 Statement of Significance

### 5.1 Assessment of Significance

- 5.1.1 The significance of the Royal Exchange building (in which Unit 16-18 is located), in heritage terms, has already been established through its designation as a Grade II listed building. Whilst it is not of national significance, through its listing as a Grade II listed building, it has been recognised as being regionally important.
- 5.1.2 The significance of the Royal Exchange building is derived from its architectural, artistic and historic interest, being a fine example of an early 20th century commercial building, erected on the site of earlier examples which served the same function. The building is a dominant structure located within the centre of Manchester, and currently provides retail, theatre and commercial accommodation, and therefore has communal value. Its setting within the centre of the city, in close proximity to the historic and contemporary commercial zones, is an important factor in how the building is experienced; all sides of the structure are important and busy thoroughfares, whether for vehicles or pedestrians, with multi-storied built form surrounding the structure. St Ann's Square to the west side of the Royal Exchange building is a pedestrianised area which allows passersby to step back and appreciate the structure.
- 5.1.3 Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade forms one of several retail units along the Royal Exchange Arcade which bisects the building on the ground floor. The arcade is distinctly modern in appearance in comparison to the exterior of the building. It does not contribute to the significance of the building and appears to have been created relatively late in the life of the building in the late 20th century. Unit 16-18 is one of a number of units in the arcade, all with a unified style and colour scheme. The pilasters which separated the individual units are original to the creation of the arcade as a retail space and provide unifying element to the arcade, although the upper portions are currently hidden.
- 5.1.4 The interior of Unit 16-18 has no historic fixtures or fittings which add to its heritage significance, as the coving does not appear to be original to the building. The current shopfront is not of historic or architectural interest and currently does not contribute to the significance of the building as a whole.

### 5.2 Assessment of Impact

- 5.2.1 With regards the exterior of the unit, the proposals only involve the replacement of the existing door handles. It has already been noted that the current shop frontage does not contribute positively to the significance of the Royal Exchange building as a whole, therefore the removal and replacement with new handles would have no impact. The unit would continue to be similar in character to existing units Royal Exchange Arcade. It is considered that the changes to the existing shop frontage would not negatively impact on the significance of the Royal Exchange building, the heritage interest

of which is derived from its architectural, artistic and historic attributes, and its communal value.

- 5.2.2 The external works would not negatively impact on the setting of the Royal Exchange building as there are no works intended which extend beyond the shop frontage apart from alterations to the door handles. The setting of the building as a whole, which relates to the vehicular and pedestrian thoroughfares which surround it, and the built form which exists on the surrounding streets, would not be negatively impacted as the proposals relate to a small fraction of the building as a whole. There would also be no impact on important views within the St Ann's Square Conservation Area.
- 5.2.3 Internally the proposed changes relate to the replacement of lighting and security cameras and cosmetic changes to the appearance of the unit. The internal inspection of Unit 16-18 has noted that there are no apparent historic fixtures or fittings surviving which would be negatively impacted by the proposals. The works would allow a redundant unit to be brought back into use.

## 6 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 An assessment has been made of the historical development and the existing unit at the Royal Exchange. The rapid desk-based assessment has indicated that there has been an exchange building on the site of the current Royal Exchange since the early 19th century. The site was redeveloped in the middle of that century, only to be replaced by the Mills and Murgatroyd building of 1869-74. The current building dates to 1914-21. It appears from cartographic and photographic evidence that this later incarnation of the Royal Exchange was constructed to include arcades of retail units along its four street frontages on Cross Street, Market Street, Exchange Street and Old Bank Street. Units may have also existed within the building in Royal Exchange Arcade, but no unit is depicted on historic maps of the site and Unit 16-18 may not have come into existence until the late 20th century.
- 6.1.2 The site visit has identified Unit 16-18, located on the south side of Royal Exchange Arcade, to be an amalgamation of two small retail units defined by timber pilasters, which provide a unifying element to the arcade as a whole. The unit is located at the east end of the arcade near the Cross Street entrance but is not easily visible from Cross Street. The existing shop frontage is modern, constructed of timber and glazing with a double doorway. Externally the only changes proposed are to replace the door handles. Internally, no historic fixtures or fittings of significance were noted.
- 6.1.3 From the rapid desk-based assessment and the site visit, it is considered that the heritage significance of the Royal Exchange building as a whole is derived from architectural, artistic and historic interest, as well as its communal value. The setting of the property, i.e. within an urban environment and as part of a busy commercial area within the city centre, also contributes to the significance of the building. It is considered that the proposals would not negatively impact on this heritage significance, as Unit 16-18 forms only a small fraction of the building as a whole, the proposed changes would be minimal, and the heritage values would be maintained.
- 6.1.4 With regards to the St Ann's Square Conservation Area, it is considered that the proposals would not negatively impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the area, and the character would be preserved.

---

## 7 Bibliography

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## APPENDIX 1: PLATES



Plate 3: The Royal Exchange building on Cross Street

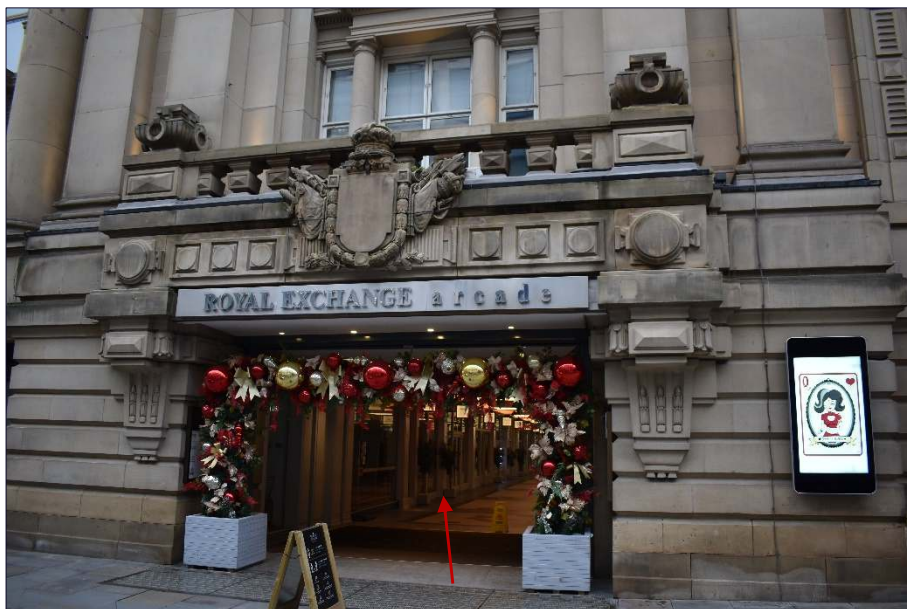


Plate 4: Entrance to Royal Exchange Arcade on Cross Street (unit indicated by the red arrow)



Plate 5: Royal Exchange Arcade (unit indicated by the red arrow)



Plate 6: Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade, looking south



Plate 7: Existing shop entrance to unit 16-18



Plate 8: Unit division to the east of Unit 16-18



Plate 9: East wall of unit 16-18 Royal Exchange Arcade



Plate 9: West wall of unit 16-18 Royal Exchange Arcade



Plate 10: Ceiling detail of Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade



Plate 11: Back of Unit 16-18, looking east



Plate 12: Back of Unit 16-18, looking west

## APPENDIX 2: FIGURES



Eden Heritage Ltd 2021

PROJECT: Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade  
Manchester  
CLIENT: Nu-Era Studio Ltd  
REPORT: EH100/01  
SCALE: 1:20,000 at A4  
DRAWN BY: MDR  
DATE: January 2021

KEY:



site location



Contains OS data © Crown  
copyright and database right (2018)

Figure 1: Site Location.



Figure 2: Detailed site location.

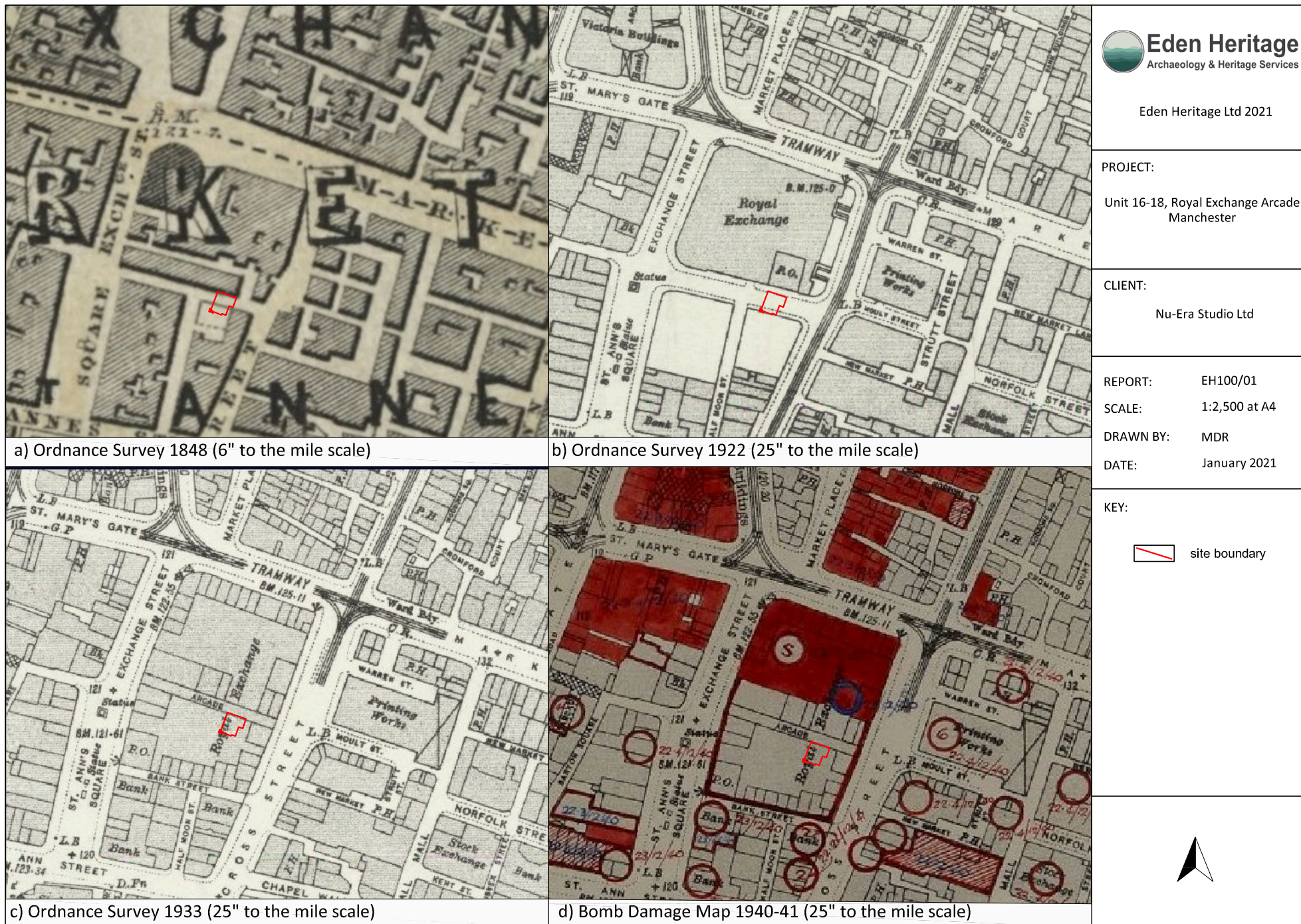
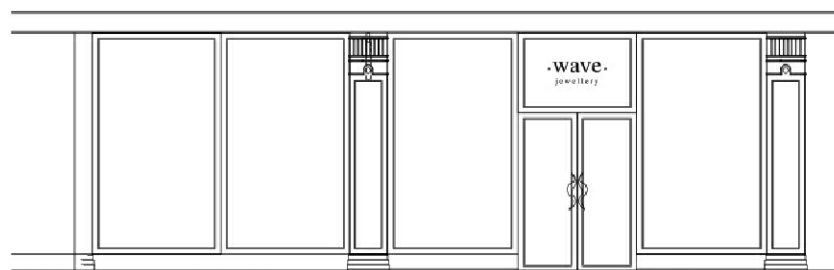
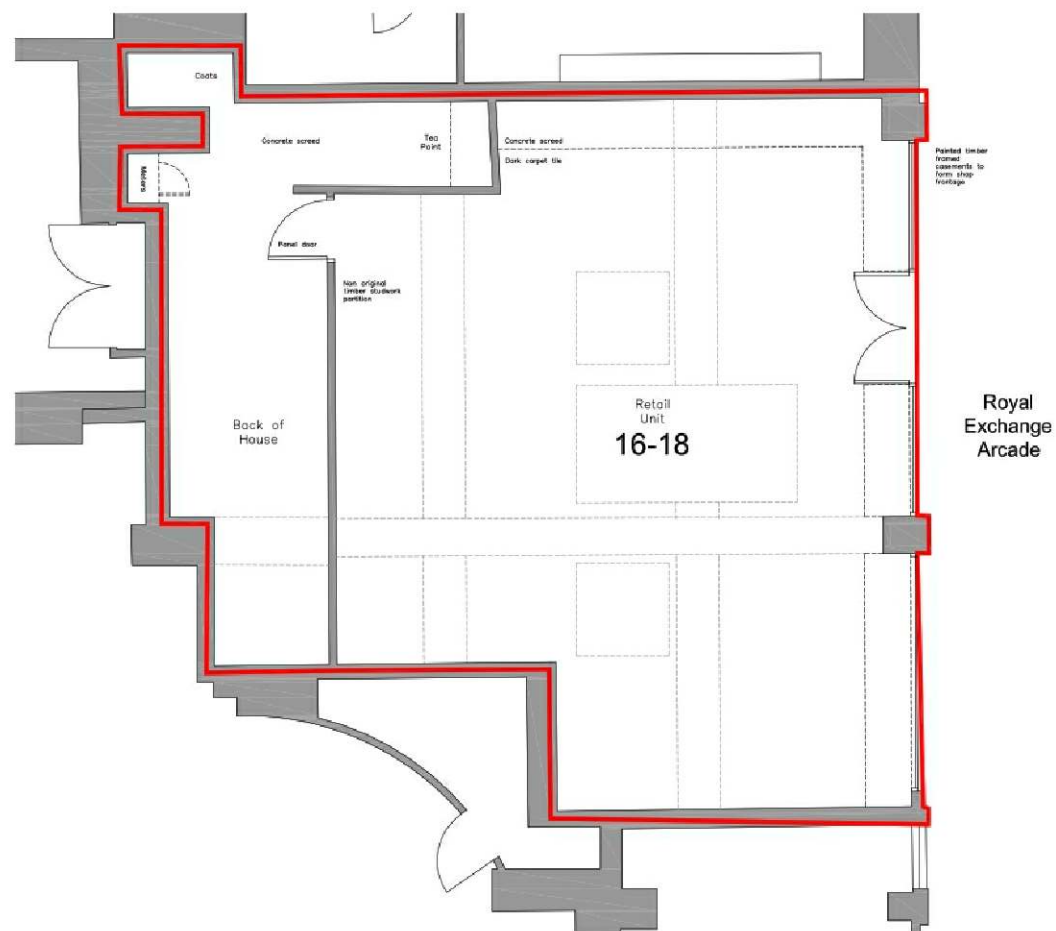


Figure 3: Extracts from historic mapping (1848-1941) depicting the Royal Exchange site.



**PROJECT:**

Unit 16-18, Royal Exchange Arcade  
Manchester

**CLIENT:**

Nu-Era Studio Ltd

REPORT: EH100/01

SCALE: 1:100 at A4

DRAWN BY: MDR

DATE: January 2021

**KEY:**

 site boundary



Contains data provided by  
Smashbox Architecture (2020)

Figure 4: Floor plan and elevation.

**Heritage Impact Assessment**  
**Archaeological Desk-Based**  
**Assessment**  
**Historic Landscape Survey**

**Geophysical Survey**  
**Trial Trench Evaluation**  
**Archaeological Excavation**  
**Archaeological Watching Briefs**

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