

The Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens for Medway



Eastgate House, Rochester



November 2013

Eastgate House

Rochester, Kent

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SITE DESCRIPTION

LIST OF FIGURES

- FIGURE 1: Boundary map
- FIGURE 2: Key vistas map
- FIGURE 3: Significant features map
- FIGURE 4: Aerial photograph
- FIGURE 5: Map of listed buildings at Eastgate House
- FIGURE 6: Listed buildings at Eastgate House
- FIGURE 7: Map of Rochester, John Speed, 1608-12
- FIGURE 8: Eastgate House and front garden, with view to River Medway (c1800) – painting or print, Couchman Collection
- FIGURE 9: Plan of Rochester, R. Sale, 1816
- FIGURE 10: Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25” map (1862-1875)
- FIGURE 11: Eastgate House and front garden (c1882) - photograph, Couchman Collection
- FIGURE 12: Eastgate House and front garden, showing boundary railings (c1900) – photograph, Couchman Collection
- FIGURE 13: Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25” map (1897-1900)
- FIGURE 14: Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 25” map (1907-1923)
- FIGURE 15: Dawber’s final garden plan, 1922

- FIGURE 16: View of Dawber's sunken garden from the north-west (c1928) – postcard photograph, Couchman Collection
- FIGURE 17: View of Dawber's garden towards the north-east, showing pond, lavender beds, circular steps, wall and shelter (late 1920s) – photograph, Medway Images
- FIGURE 18: Ordnance Survey 4th edition 25" map (1929-1952)
- FIGURE 19: Front garden of Eastgate House, showing path to Corporation Street, arched-walls and bollards. September 2013
- FIGURE 20: View of the former Dawber garden from the north-east, showing ponds, stone walls with lavender beds, and Dickens chalet. September 2013
- FIGURE 21: The Dawber arched-doorway showing dentilled and Flemish-bond brickwork. September 2013
- FIGURE 22: View of the former Dawber garden from the south-west, showing pond and Dawber's north-east wall and shelter. September 2013
- FIGURE 23: Part of the informal garden, showing Dawber's caretaker cottage, brick wall with buttresses, and shelter. September 2013

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INTRODUCTION

This site dossier and description has been prepared as part of the **Review of The Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens for Medway 2013**. This site is one of many sites that have been researched, visited and written about across Medway and as a consequence has been included in the revised list of Historic Parks and Gardens covered by the Unitary Authority's planning policies. The list is not conclusive and further gardens may be added over time as research continues or information comes to light

The research was carried out by volunteers of the Kent Gardens Trust with support and training from the project consultant Virginia Hinze. The project was supported by Medway Council and Kent County Council.

The extent of the area identified represents the remains of the designed landscape and does not necessarily cover all remaining elements or the historical extent of landscape changes and takes no account of current ownership. Further Information is available from the contacts listed below. The partnership would like to thank the volunteers and owners who have participated in this project and given so much of their time, effort and hospitality to complete this challenging and rewarding task.

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Kent Gardens Trust
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Eastgate House garden is recommended for inclusion on the local list of heritage assets for the following principal reasons:

Age, rarity and survival: The site exhibits important surviving features of an early C20 formal garden, providing a contemporary garden setting for the grade I listed C16 townhouse. Significant surviving architectural features of the main formal garden, designed by Sir (Edward) Guy Dawber, include the garden walls, a garden house, a shelter, some York-stone paving and some terracing. Dawber was an acclaimed Arts and Crafts architect who ranked alongside his contemporaries, Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944) and Sir Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942), all of whom were awarded the rare distinction of a royal gold medal for architecture. Dawber had only four commissions in Kent, including the Foord Alms-houses, in Priestlands, Rochester, but the Eastgate House commission for the Foord annexe and cottage was the only one specifically to include a designed garden and was therefore unique in Kent.

Aesthetic value: Dawber's garden design included signature architectural features and L-shaped flower-beds, typifying the Arts and Crafts style that he used elsewhere, particularly at Netherswell Manor in Gloucestershire and Hamptworth Lodge in Wiltshire. Dawber's formal garden was intended to form an integral part of the surrounding buildings: architectural details found in the buildings were reflected in the garden, providing a coherent whole. Although the garden was radically altered during the 1980s, Dawber's final designs survive in his fully detailed drawings, and to a significant extent, in surviving structures, and therefore it is perfectly feasible for his garden to be fully restored.

Evidential value: The history of Eastgate House is reasonably well supported by documentary and physical evidence dating from the C16, though there are some important gaps. The development of the garden itself from the mid-C19 onwards is supported by pictorial and documentary evidence but the creation of a new formal garden in the 1920s exhibits high evidential value through physical survival, primary documentary and pictorial evidence.

Historic association: The notable link between Sir Peter Buck, Eastgate House and the internationally important Royal Naval Dockyard during the late C16 and the early C17 has high associative value. In 1606, Buck's notable position as Clerk of the Ships allowed him to receive at Eastgate House: King James I, his wife Anne of Denmark, his brother-in-law King Christian IV of Denmark and Henry, Prince of Wales. The King of Denmark lodged overnight during their visit to inspect the Royal Dockyard.

During the C19, Eastgate House was immortalised by the celebrated author, Charles Dickens (1812-70), appearing as 'Westgate' in Dickens' novel *The Pickwick Papers* and the 'Nun's House' in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. In 1961, Dickens' Swiss-style chalet that he used for writing at his home at Gad's Hill, Higham, was finally relocated to the garden at Eastgate House. The

important links with the benefactor Thomas Hellyar Foord and the architect Sir Guy Dawber also provide high associative value.

Social, communal and economic value: Eastgate House is a highly distinctive Elizabethan building that provides a strong local identity within Rochester. Large areas of the garden which were given over to orchards and market gardens were well known to local residents. From the mid-C19, Eastgate House has been the subject of many illustrations and photographs, often reproduced and used locally as postcards, thus creating its status as a tourist venue. Its use for most of the C19 as a day and boarding school for young women, and later in the century a YMCA and Temperance Restaurant, provided high social and communal value. This value continued from the early C20 to the early C21 in the use of Eastgate House as a museum which brought large numbers of visitors to the site. Since the closure of the museum in 1979, and the Dickens Centre in 2004, visitors continue to enjoy the public gardens on an everyday basis.

Landmark status: the designed garden at Eastgate House is an integral part of the visually significant building which forms a landmark site within the Rochester townscape. Since the early C20, a clearly visible pedestrian pathway has provided an important route to and from the High Street with direct public access to all areas of the garden.

SITE DESCRIPTION

KENT
MEDWAY
ROCHESTER

EASTGATE HOUSE

TQ 7448 6833

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

A compartmentalised, interconnecting garden, part of which is laid out on the site of a late C18 to the early C19 (and probably earlier) garden surrounding a surviving late C16 townhouse. It incorporates a formal garden designed in the 1920s, as his sole garden commission in Kent, by the acclaimed Arts and Crafts architect Sir (Edward) Guy Dawber. The main features of Dawber's garden survive although some significant reconfiguration took place in the mid-1980s along with the creation of a new, informal garden in an adjacent compartment. The house and garden have significant historic associations with public, royal and literary figures, including Sir Peter Buck, King James I and Charles Dickens.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Eastgate House and its associated grounds, found within the ancient city of Rochester, owe their origin to Sir Peter Buck (or Bucke) (1550-1625) for whom the house was built between 1590 and 1591 as his private residence (English Heritage listing). This notable townhouse, together with its associated land, would have reflected his high-ranking status. Buck was an alderman of Rochester and in 1593 became mayor (Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2004 (CAT)). In 1582, he became Clerk of the Cheque at the Tudor Royal Dockyard, Chatham, and from 1596 was promoted to one of the Navy Board's four most senior positions, as Clerk of the Ships, a position he held until his death (Crawshaw).

In 1606, during a visit to Chatham to inspect the navy, King James I, his wife Anne of Denmark, his brother-in-law King Christian IV of Denmark and Henry, Prince of Wales all visited Sir Peter Buck at Eastgate House. The King of Denmark remained at Eastgate House to lodge overnight (Archaeologia Cantiana).

Evidence of a late Tudor, early Jacobean garden is speculative, but between 1608 and 1612 Eastgate House appears to be shown with a substantial enclosed garden immediately beyond which lies marshland and the river Medway (Fig.7 - John Speed map 1608-12).

Following Buck's death in 1625, Eastgate House, its associated land and outbuildings passed to succeeding generations of the Buck family until 1687, when it was mortgaged to a John Parker for £300 by way of an indenture of feoffment. Security for the loan included "the messuage, 5 cottages, 1 stable, 4

tofts, 9 gardens, 1 orchard, and one acre of marsh with the appurtenances.....” (Wheatley).

In 1696, ownership passed to the Bartholomew family and Eastgate House remained in their possession until the mid to late C18 (Wheatley). At this time, evidence suggests that the historic land boundary of the property was extensive, with close proximity to creek inlets and the riverside wharfs of the Medway, allowing easy access to travel by boat to Chatham Dockyard (Baker map, 1772).

In 1775, ownership passed to a Charles Whitehead, whose possession of Eastgate House included: “all that capital and messuages or mansion house wherein Sir Peter Buck did formerly inhabit and dwell with the yard, stables, gardens, outhouses, buildings and appurtenances thereto belonging....” (Title deeds 1775).

Between the late C18 and early C19, when it is believed that ownership had passed to a Michael Thompson (CAT and Land Tax Return of 1791), pictorial evidence shows a formal pleasure garden to the south-east of Eastgate House, immediately adjacent to the main entrance: fashionable figures are depicted standing on a broad pathway lined on both sides by post and chain fencing, surrounded by ornamentally- planted beds, shrubbery and specimen trees. Wooden fencing and hedging also appear to separate the garden from the river Medway and tall-masted sailing ships beyond (Fig.8 - Couchman 26L). Further evidence verifies extensive compartmentalised gardens, probably market gardens, to the north-east of the house, adjacent to Blue Boar Lane (Fig.9 - R Sale map, 1816). These are likely to be the same market gardens rented out to a John Denham by a William Clements during the mid-C19 (abstract of title 1829/1904 and tithe map and apportionment 1841).

Between 1824 and 1867, census returns and various directories show that Eastgate House had become a boarding school (Harris’ references to Pigot’s, Williams, Phippen, Chatham and Rochester directories 1824-67). During this period, documentary evidence shows two compartmentalised gardens: a front garden to the south-east depicting a winding path from the High Street entrance to the front door of the house; the other to the north-east depicting an enclosed garden with a tree-lined boundary and a large orchard beyond. The orchard extended for c125 metres as far as the London, Chatham and Dover railway line, built in 1858, thus truncating the former garden boundary. A small garden area immediately to the north-west of the house is also shown (Fig.10 - 1st edition OS map); and photographic evidence shows the same area planted with trees, situated behind a brick boundary wall into which a door is set (Couchman 23L and 25c).

In the 1870s, Eastgate House again became a private residence as the home of Samuel Shaw, a local coal merchant. Pictorial evidence from the 1880s clearly depicts a formal front garden to the south-east of the house with straight pathways, beds and borders, specimen trees and a boundary fence to the north-east enclosing the garden, and separating it from the orchard beyond (Fig.11 - Couchman 27). Documentary evidence also shows that part of the

orchard was used by a Thomas Prett, a local greengrocer, as a market garden known as 'Prett's Garden'. According to Harris: "this garden contained many venerable fruit trees" (Harris, and Wheatley sketch).

By 1890, the house was converted to a YMCA although the front garden appears little changed (Couchman 24L). In 1897 the house became a Temperance Restaurant before being purchased in the same year by Rochester Corporation for £2025. A further £1000 was set aside for the restoration and conversion of Eastgate House to a museum and municipal library, to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The museum was officially opened in 1903 by Earl Stanhope, Lord Lieutenant of Kent (Harris - Anecdotes).

During the conversion, the boundary wall to the garden area south-east of Eastgate House, adjacent to the High Street, was demolished to provide bricks for internal repairs (Harris - Anecdotes). The wall was replaced with low, arched, wrought-iron railings providing clear views of the house and its front garden, and the boundary line moved inwards so that a line of trees formerly within the garden now stood outside on the street; railings were also installed along the boundary to the south-east to enclose the garden from a passageway which ran below the north-west elevation of the neighbouring property (Technical Institute plans and Fig.12 - Couchman 32L). The garden was laid to lawn with a curved pathway leading directly to the front entrance of the house. A contemporary photograph shows high wire-fencing forming the north-east boundary of this part of the garden (Couchman 28u 32L 33L).

Also by the early 1900s, the construction of two buildings immediately to the north-east of the house (one of which was described as a gymnasium) and a series of buildings on the far north-east boundary (part of the Corporation Depot) reduced the size of the garden in these areas (Fig.13 - OS 2nd edition, Technical Institute plans and Couchman 28u). In 1905, the garden was further reduced by the building of Rochester Technical Institute, listed grade II, to the east of the house (Fig.14 - OS 3rd edition and English Heritage listing) and, from 1904, the construction of New Street (later to become Corporation Street). By 1912, the high wire-fencing on the north-east boundary of the front garden had been removed and partially replaced with an arched brick wall flanking a pathway leading to the Technical Institute (Technical Institute Plans and Couchman 34r). By this time, an ornamental garden laid out in c1905 with specimen trees and topiaried shrubs on the immediate north-west front of the Technical Institute had matured (Couchman 52 and 53).

By 1913, the low railings forming the boundary to the garden area south-east of the house had been replaced by tall, wrought-iron railings and a gate with elaborate newel posts, listed grade II, taken from a number of other buildings in Rochester, including the Guildhall; the boundary line remained unaltered (Harris - Anecdotes, Couchman 35L, and 36U).

In 1917, local philanthropist Thomas Hellyar Foord (1823-1917) bequeathed £10,000 to the city of Rochester. The sum was intended to re-imburse the Corporation for the purchase of Eastgate House and the purchase of land. Foord's bequest also provided funding for the construction of an extension to

the museum, building a caretaker's cottage and designing a formal garden immediately to the north-east of the house. The commission was given in 1922 to the architect Sir Guy Dawber (1861-1938); his designs were submitted later that year and work began in 1923 (Library and Museum Committee minutes).

Both the detailed plans of the garden, and the surviving structures, show architectural features that typify Dawber's Arts and Crafts style. These include: the use of abundant York-stone paving and the semi-circular steps; and the surviving decorative brickwork of the enclosing walls, garden house and shelter, which reflect the Flemish-bond brickwork and dentilled cornicing found in the Foord annex building and the cottage (Fig.15 - Dawber garden plans). Eastgate House was one of only four Dawber commissions in Kent, including the Foord alms houses in Rochester, and the only one specifically to include a garden (RIBA Journal, and Architects' Journal).

Dawber's final design included an octagonal-shaped sunken pond with moulded stone curb (although his first design shows a square pond) and dwarf brick-walls with stone coping containing lavender beds (Dawber garden plans). The planting designs for the formal garden were made by Dawber in consultation with the head gardener at Hampton Court Palace (Library and Museum Committee Minutes p.266). Pictorial evidence suggests that Dawber's 1922 final design was fully executed (Architects' drawings 1933-4, Fig.16 - Couchman 38L and Fig.17 - Medway images) and was formally opened on the 26th March 1924 together with the museum annexe and cottage. Further evidence shows the new buildings and garden, and a new footpath cutting through the garden to the south-east of the house leading to the former Rochester Technical Institute and Corporation Street. Annexes to the Institute are also depicted to the north-east, immediately beyond Dawber's garden, on the site of the former orchard (Fig.18 - OS map 4th edition).

By 1928, Dawber's formal garden had already suffered considerable neglect. In a letter to Rev. S.W. Wheatley, a member of the Council's Museum Committee, Dawber complained about the inappropriate siting of museum pieces and rubbish on the upper terrace. Similarly, shrubs and creepers had not been properly trained or pruned. He states: "I think it is a very great pity indeed to treat this garden, after the care I have taken over it, in the way it has been done...What I had looked forward to as a little quiet oasis behind the old and the new buildings is now a place one is ashamed to go into" (Letter 17th April 1928).

In 1932, the city surveyor gave instructions that the garden should "receive regular attention in such a manner as to preserve the architect's original instructions" (City of Rochester Society newsletter, August 2005, p.13).

In 1961, a C19 timber-framed Swiss-style chalet, formerly belonging to the writer Charles Dickens, was relocated from Cobham Hall into the north-west part of the garden between the Foord annexe and the house (Eastgate House features as 'Westgate' in Dickens' novel *The Pickwick Papers* and the 'Nun's House' in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Harris). Photographs show a white-painted picket fence, not part of Dawber's design, placed immediately in front of the chalet, although in other respects Dawber's sunken garden remained intact

with the planting now mature (Couchman 49). In January 1979, the museum at Eastgate House closed (Couchman 51) and in the same year the Charles Dickens Centre opened, but the overall structure of Dawber's garden appears to have remained unaltered (Couchman 50u).

In 1983, following Council proposals to enhance the Dickens connection, the Dawber garden was substantially altered: the sunken garden was raised, steps and terracing partly removed and the pond reconfigured (1982 Minutes). Some of Dawber's important architectural features survived, however, including the boundary brick walls, the arched entrance to the caretaker's cottage, the garden house, the wall shelter and some York-stone paving. New stone walls were erected and York-stone paving re-laid, but physical evidence suggests that abundant use was made of the 1920s stone, probably saved from the original 1923 construction.

Also in the early 1980s, the Technical Institute became an adult education centre and library (now, 2013, the Community Hub); one of the Institute annexe buildings was converted to a public lavatory and the others demolished. A newly-designed informal garden was created on the site, extending north-east to Corporation Street where a brick boundary wall incorporating two new bus shelters was built. An additional arched entrance was created through Dawber's far north-east boundary wall allowing access to the new garden (Technical Department files 1981-3).

In 2004, the Charles Dickens Centre closed and the Foord annexe was converted for use as offices.

Eastgate House remains in the ownership of Medway Council and is used occasionally as an education and exhibition centre. The gardens are open to the general public..

SITE DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM AND SETTING

Eastgate House and its garden lie towards the eastern end of Rochester High Street, 0.5km south-east of Rochester castle, in a dense urban area mainly defined by Georgian and Victorian buildings with some earlier, mainly C17, buildings. The river Medway forms a boundary to the city to the east and to the north.

The c0.3ha garden is bordered to the south-west by wrought-iron railings, the south-west elevation of Eastgate House and the south-west elevation of the Foord annexe building, together with a link building, all immediately adjacent to the High Street. To the north-west it is bordered by the north-west elevation of the Foord annexe building, a c2.5m brick wall and the panelled, brick-faced, south-east elevation of a casino. To the north-east it is bordered by a c2.5m brick wall enclosing it from the adjacent Corporation Street (A2) which incorporates two shelters on its street face. The south-east boundary is formed by the north-west elevation of Medway Community Hub, a brick wall, and a 2m

high beech hedge adjacent to the north-west elevation of a neighbouring, Victorian, property.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Eastgate House garden may be approached from either High Street or Corporation Street, the entrance from High Street being the main one. This comprises early C19 wrought-iron double gates set into the boundary wrought-iron railings (listed grade II); the uprights have palmette heads and cast-iron newels with pineapple finials (English Heritage listing). The second entrance, from Corporation Street, is formed by an opening in the brick wall flanked by 4m-high brick piers. The entrances are connected by a straight 70m path forming a public right of way for pedestrians.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING

Eastgate House (listed grade I) is a substantial C16 Elizabethan town house, built in a series of stages from the late C16 to the end of the C17, possibly on an earlier medieval site. It has an asymmetrical form and is mainly built of brick, with some rubble ragstone, and Kent tile roofs. The jettied south-west side elevation and rear wings are brick and timber-framed. Unusual features include an exterior brick stair turret which would have provided a vantage point towards the river and the ships moored on it (English Heritage listing and Griffiths).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

There are four main areas of the garden: the first and second occupy the south-eastern third of the site and form both an ornamental setting for the pedestrian path and front gardens for the house and the Community Hub building; the third and fourth form an enclosed garden and lie to the north and north-east.

The first area (0.07ha), which forms the front garden to Eastgate House, lies to the south-west immediately inside the High Street entrance. The pedestrian path, here c5m wide and laid to York-stone edged with terracotta tiles, runs in a north-easterly direction for 17m and is terminated by two c1m high, black-painted bollards set into the path and flanked on each side by decorative, arched brick walls. The walls form part of the late C19 to early C20 restorations and are c2.5m long and c1m high, each with seven arches. They are supported by 1.5m high brick piers, with concrete spheres placed above, and extend on the north side to the south-east elevation of Eastgate House, and on the south side to the north-west elevation of an adjacent Victorian property. To the north of the path, flanking the terracotta-paved entrance to Eastgate House, lie two ornamental, stone-edged, raised beds, c7x2.5m. To the south of the path, an ornamental bed bordered by a 2m high beech hedge extends for 17m from the High Street entrance (Fig.19).

The second area (0.09ha) lies to the immediate north-east of the Eastgate House front garden and forms the front gardens to the Community Hub building and to Dawber's caretaker's cottage. The c5m wide pedestrian path, here with tarmac surfacing, continues through the centre of the garden for 53m to the

Corporation Street entrance. To the south of the path, immediately in front of the north-west elevation of the Community Hub, lie four areas of rectangular-shaped lawn edged by a low (0.28m) stone wall with stone coping; the lawns are intersected by paths leading to the main and side entrances to the Community Hub. To the north of the path, opposite the Community Hub, lies a small car park and to the west of the car park two further areas of lawn, edged with a low stone wall, flank the front entrance to the caretaker's cottage. The brick-built cottage, which faces south-east, is two storeys high and two bays wide, with three-light, iron-framed leaded casements. The central door is six-panelled, with a rectangular four-paned fan light. Above the entrance, an oval plaque is displayed with the City arms. During the late 1920s, the front garden to the cottage was laid with ornamental plants and shrubs (Medway images). Within this second area of the garden, little of the early C20 ornamental planting survives apart from two specimen copper beech trees, c100 years old, situated to the east and west of the garden.

The third area (0.07ha), forming the garden originally designed by Dawber but significantly altered in the mid-1980s to the present layout, lies immediately to the north-east of the house. It is approached from the south-east via a c1m tarmac path lined with Sarsen stones (relics from the museum), and double wrought-iron gates set into palmette-head wrought-iron railings, listed grade II. The garden is laid out formally and defined by raised beds, box parterres, lavender hedges, fish ponds and York-stone paving.

Immediately inside the entrance to the garden, a York-stone path is flanked by two areas of rough ground, formerly lawns, 63 metres square, on which stand two former museum exhibits: a section of a medieval road and a well-pump, formerly owned by Charles Dickens.

Beyond the former lawns, to the north-west of the entrance, lies an area paved with c500 square metres of York stone surrounding two T-shaped ponds planted with water lilies and water iris. The ponds, connected by a water channel beneath a stone bridge, form the focal point of the garden. They replaced Dawber's original sunken octagonal pond. The first pond, to the north-east, is 54m square and is surrounded on three sides by a stone wall, c45cm high and varying in width, containing lavender beds. Open post and rail fencing forms a barrier on the fourth side. Two rectangular box parterres containing box topiary, lavender and pelargoniums flank this pond; the first to the south-east is 2.5m wide and 6m long and the second to the north-west 3.5m wide and 6m long.

The second pond, c34m square, lies to the south-west of the first, and is similarly surrounded on three sides by a stone wall containing lavender beds, with open post and rail fencing forming the fourth side to the north-east. The walls to the north-west and south-east are also c0.45m high: the wall immediately to the south-west is c0.83m high and forms a retaining wall to a terrace above. The terrace may be approached on either side of the wall (to the north and the south) via two sets of four stone steps flanked by plain iron railings which ascend to a platform of York-stone paving on which the Dickens chalet (listed grade I) stands. The chalet is timber-framed, two storeys high, and

has an overhanging roof with decorative barge boarding supported by shaped brackets (English Heritage listing).

Immediately to the front of the north-east elevation of the chalet, wrought-iron railings with palmette heads form a barrier across the terrace. These railings replace the white-painted picket fence erected during the 1960s. To the south-west of the chalet stands the link building to the Foord annexe; both buildings form the south-west boundary of the garden (Fig.20).

To the north-west of the ponds, the garden boundary is formed by Dawber's c2.5m-high brick wall built "in Flemish garden-wall bond, with steep brick ridges above a dentilled course" (Griffiths). In the centre of the wall and approached by three ascending York stone steps, an open-fronted garden house stands on a York-stone platform. It has a "hipped tiled roof with dentilled cornice, supported by round stone columns with simple moulded bases and capitals" (Griffiths). The platform with its garden house and two c2.5m-wide flanking shrub borders survive from the alteration in the 1980s of Dawber's original, much wider (c7.5m) upper terrace. The borders are planted with a variety of trees and shrubs including magnolia, viburnum and berberis; a specimen copper beech, c100 years old, stands in the north-east corner. The borders are retained by a 30cm-high stone wall (probably erected during the 1980s) and a narrow strip of open ground lies immediately to the south-east of the stone wall.

The north-east boundary of the garden is formed by a further surviving section of Dawber's c2.5m-high, Flemish-bond brick wall, with identical brick decoration to the north-west wall, including steep brick ridges laid above a dentilled course. To the far south-east, an oak door set into the arched wall provides an entrance to the fourth garden area beyond (Fig.21). Set into the centre of the wall stands Dawber's surviving open-fronted shelter, with a hipped, tiled roof (Fig.22). Between the oak door and the shelter, the wall is clothed in wisteria. To the far north-west of the wall a secondary, open, arched entrance also leads into the garden beyond. This entrance did not form part of Dawber's 1920s design but was created during the 1983 alterations and it appears that some bricks were removed from the 1920s wall to form the arch above.

This entrance gives access to the fourth area of the garden to the north-east of the house. Informal and sloping, its 0.11ha are mainly laid to lawn with surrounding and intersecting 3m-wide York-stone paths, some specimen trees and ornamental planting. The c40m-long boundary wall to the north-west is formed by the south-east, panelled-brick external wall of a Victorian building now (2013) used as a casino. Along the base of the wall is a 1m-wide ornamental border mainly planted with geranium and specimen trees including magnolia and *Garya eliptica*. The north-east boundary is formed by a c35m-long brick wall adjacent to Corporation Street along the base of which is a c2m-wide densely-planted shrub border including more *Garya eliptica*, hypericum and mahonia. Built into the centre of the wall and facing into Corporation Street stand two brick-built shelters c3m apart, the backs of which project into the garden. Each shelter has a hipped, tiled roof, echoing the design of Dawber's 1920s shelter in the formal garden. Between the shelters a wooden bench stands on a raised stone platform.

The south-east boundary is formed by the public lavatory building (now, 2013, closed) and the north-west elevation of Dawber's garden cottage, between which are wrought-iron railings with palmette heads; identical railings lie between the lavatory building and the Corporation Street boundary wall into which a locked wrought-iron gate is set, providing views into the garden beyond. Densely-planted herbaceous borders, including romnya, perovskia, lavender and geraniums, enclosed by box hedging, surround the public lavatory building; a York-stone path leads to a passageway which forms a tunnel through the centre of the building with wrought-iron gates at each end, allowing a further glimpse of the garden beyond. The single-storey lavatory building is constructed in red brick with a tiled roof; the projecting brickwork and dentilled cornicing, once again reflecting Dawber's work at the Foord annexe and the cottage.

The south-west boundary is formed by Dawber's brick wall supported by buttresses. A narrow ornamental border runs the length of the wall (Fig.23). Dawber's garden shed, as shown on his plans, no longer survives, but its imprint remains visible in the brick discolouration.

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3rd edition (1907-1923)

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Beverley and Paul Howarth
Virginia Hinze (Editor)

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Fig. 1 Boundary map



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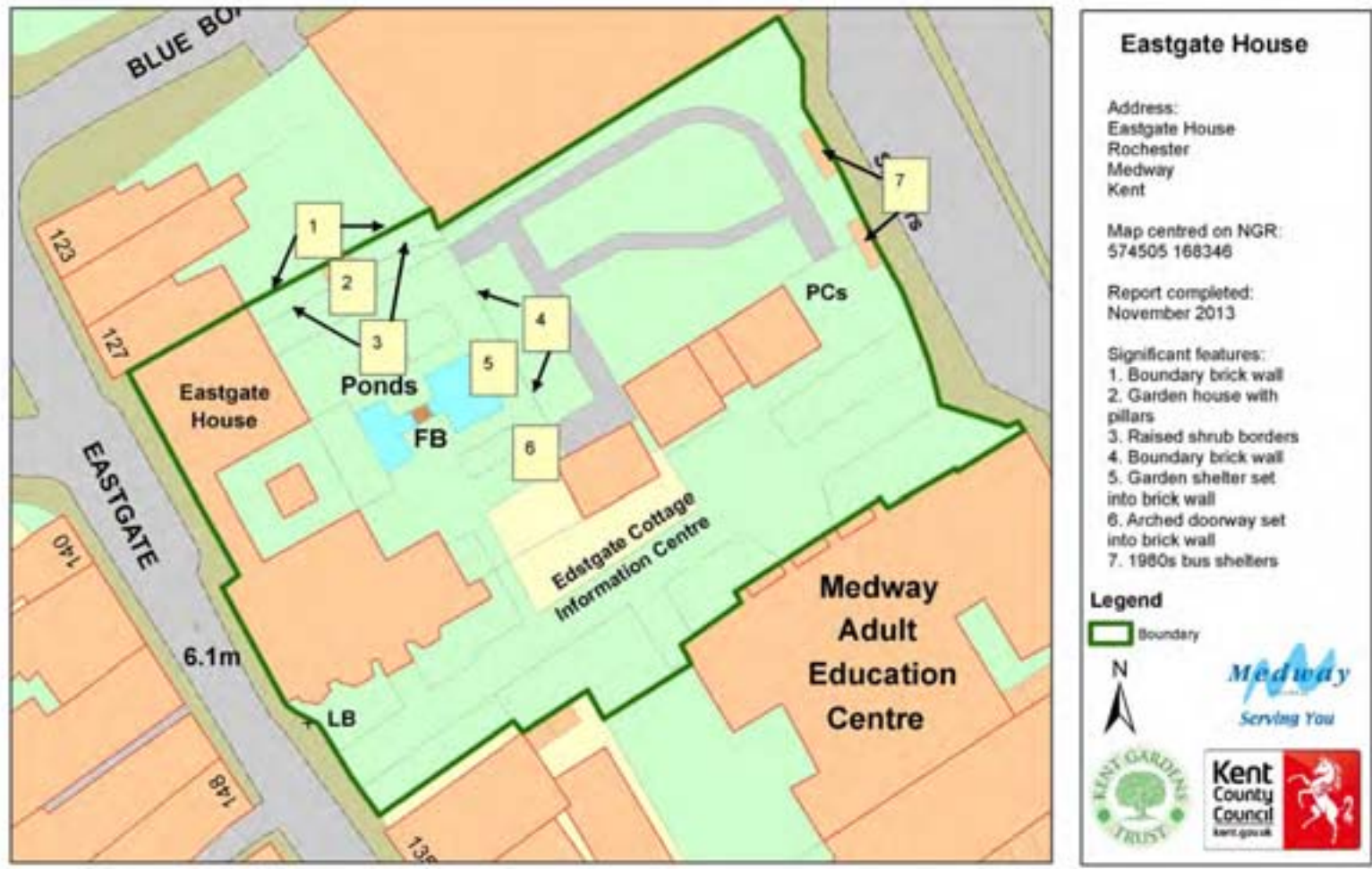
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Fig. 2 Key vistas map



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Fig. 3 Significant features map



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Fig. 4 Aerial photograph (2012)



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Fig. 5 Map of listed buildings at Eastgate House



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Fig. 6 Listed buildings at Eastgate House (from the Kent Historic Environment Record)

Kent Historic Environment Record Reference: TQ 76 NW 433

The following text is from the original listed building designation:

ROCHESTER HIGH STREET TQ 7468 SW
(Eastgate) 9/140 Eastgate House 24.10.50 GV I

Formerly a large private town house, now a museum. Substantially of 1590-1, built by Sir Peter Buck, Clerk of the Acts in the Navy Board, extended and refurbished in the C17; it is possible that the house incorporates some earlier work. Main range of brick; side elevation and rear wings brick and timber framed; some rubble ragstone. Kent tile roofs. Plan: the removal of internal partitions in the C19 and the likely demolition of a range to the E makes reconstruction of the original plan uncertain. Ground floor hall entered by a porch (S) probably into a through passage (opposing entries in situ, screen removed); one room to the left (W) with high status chambers above served by an S stair turret (which forms an important element in the main front) although both turret and W rooms appear to belong to a slightly different building programme to the main range (see change in plinth details). These rooms are largely timber-framed and the side elevation (W) with much jettying forms a secondary show front towards the street. To the right of the hall is another room. A long set of windows in the rear wall, along with a rubble plinth, extend beyond the line of the present end (E) wall into what is now a low lean-to, and this must indicate that the house originally extended to the E. Until the addition of the C17 stairs (situated to the rear of the former through-passage and contained within one of 3 separately gabled wings all of the same date), it is difficult to see how the upper floors of the E and of the house were adequately served and it is probable that the now demolished E part of the house contained a second S stair turret balancing that mentioned above and thereby forming a roughly symmetrical S front. Exterior: S front: 3 storeys and attic. Asymmetrical. 2 storeyed porch is flanked by a gabled bay. The porch has a hipped roof, 1st floor windows to S and E (2 lights with double-ovolo moulded brick surround, mullion and transom); pediment over doorway with pilasters on panelled plinths; stone 4-centred arch has shields in spandrels and large bar stops set high. Each bay has a tripartite window arrangement; 2-light windows to each floor connect with a central 3-storeyed projecting bay, polygonal to left, canted to right, giving continuous glazing across the wings. All windows with timber mullions, transoms and surrounds; most of the woodwork is renewed. To the left the polygonal stair turret with single-light windows under cambered arches, all-brick moulded, moulded string-courses between floors, and projecting gabled roof. To the left again, the plain end wall of the street front, plain brick, but containing a plaque with the heraldic device of the Bucj family and 2-light window under hood mould to ground. High Street

elevation: 3 storeys and attic, all jettied, with 2 gables. Brick end well corbelled and moulded with a decorative zig-zag vertical strip to 1st floor. Uninterrupted 14 light ground floor window with king mullion, set high under jetty. Similar to 1st and 2nd floors but here broken by - at 1st floor - a 7-light oriel on console brackets and - on 2nd floor - 2 3-light oriels. These long ranks of windows set very high to each floor are presumably intended to light the fine plaster ceilings: see interior. 2-light gable wall windows, decorated bargeboarding and apex and pendants. To the left the side wall of the W rear wing considerably later (see masonry joint and absence of plinth); brick, 2 storeys, with 4-light windows to each floor (that to the 1st floor slightly projecting). Diamond leading. String course. rear: 3 gabled wings, half-hipped upper storeys and attic; 2, 3 and 4-light windows to 1st floor (that to E wing with large mullions, lighting stairs), 2-light windows to gable walls. Interior: although considerable amounts of woodwork, including the porch inner door, are brought from elsewhere, there is some fine plasterwork, and the stone fireplaces appear to be in situ. Hall: wall panelling, fire-surround with pilasters, panelled overmantel with caryatids (not in situ) and inserted ceiling beams. Doorways with cyma moulded surrounds and bar stops set high. Right-hand room with ovolo-moulded ceiling beams; wall panelling, fireplace with stone surround with pulvinated frieze, and Jacobean overmantel not in situ. Open well stairs, C17, turned balusters, square-section newels with finials. 1st floor. Right-hand room with dentil cornice, some panelling and simple fire surround with fluted pilasters. Chamber above hall with fine fire surround (not in situ) with fluted term pilasters and elaborate panelled overmantel. Wall panelling. Between these two rooms is a pierced wooden panel designed to distribute borrowed light: evidence for others exist elsewhere. The most significant interiors are in the W rooms where good plaster ceilings survive to all floors. These are single-ribbed with a variety of geometric patterns (quatrefoils, diamonds, squares etc) with stylised foliage, and heraldic devices. The heraldry (and a rebus to 2nd floor) indicate that they date from Buck's time (ie the 1590s) and as such are a remarkable set of early plasterwork ceilings. Stone fireplaces with 4-centred arches, dated 1590 and 1591. In the attic is some simple line-drawn patternwork on plaster (much remains to be exposed). Side purlin roof; the High Street range is separately roofed.

Note: The single storeyed 3-window range to the rear of Eastgate House and the 2 storeyed 3-window range with which it connects (Charles Dickens Centre) are included in this listing for group value only.

Listing NGR: TQ7447368342

Kent Historic Environment Record Reference: TQ 76 NW 535

The following text is from the original listed building designation:

ROCHESTER HIGH STREET TQ 7468 SW and TQ 7468 SE (EASTGATE)
9/142;
10/142 Railings to North East of Eastgate
House

GV II

Railings. Early C19. Wrought-iron railings; uprights with palmette heads; newels with pineapples (cast). Double gates with double lock rails with saltire decoration, and segmental rails between lock and foot rail.

Listing NGR: TQ7448468334

Kent Historic Environment Record Reference: TQ 76 NW 586

The following text is from the original listed building designation:

ROCHESTER HIGH STREET TQ 7468 SW (Eastgate) 9/139
No 127

GV II

House with shop. Early-C19 front to early-C18 building. Brick, painted to front, with Kent tile hipped roof. 3 storeys; 2 tall internal lateral stacks. Front: regular 2 window range; parapet with cornice band and stone coping. Upper floors with 12-pane harnless sashes under flat brick arches with key blocks. Ground floor with late-C20 shop front; recessed doorway to left with half-glazed window under rectangular overlight. Interior: Contains some in situ ceiling beams, the upper flight of an early-C18 rear staircase and an early-C19 fire surround.

Listing NGR: TQ7446868362

Kent Historic Environment Record Reference: TQ 76 NW 636

The following text is from the original listed building designation:

ROCHESTER HIGH STREET TQ 7468 SW
(EASTGATE) 9/143
of Eastgate House

Gates and railings to South
GV II

Double gates and railings. Early C19. Railings of wrought iron, the uprights with palmette heads. gates with open-work piers and elaborate overthrow supporting glazed lantern.

Listing NGR: TQ7448568318

Kent Historic Environment Record Reference: TQ 76 NW 667

The following text is from the original listed building designation:

ROCHESTER CORPORATION STREET TQ 7468 10/20 Medway
Adult Education Centre

GV II

Formerly the Rochester Technical Institute, now an Adult Education Centre. 1905-6 by S B Russell and Edwin Cooper. 'Neo- English Baroque' style. Red brick with limestone ashlar dressings; welsh slate hipped roof. Plan: central entrance with rear centre Imperial stair and large 1st floor hall to centre front; classrooms and smaller offices with top-lit attic studios. Main block, 2½ storeys and attic. Front: (W), 2:3:2 bays all under prominent dentil cornice. Centre bays project; cornice brought out over 4 giant pilasters that are rusticated below a ground-floor lintel band (that continues around the rest of the building).

Entrance recessed, the pilasters associated with Tuscan columns to form a 3-bay portico. Late C20 glazed doors flanked by sash windows. 1st floor sashed windows with moulded architraves and cornices. Below the main cornice to each bay a blank panel flanked by garlands. Side bays with rusticated brick quoins, sashes with exposed frames in rubbed brick surrounds with keystone, and metal-framed oculi to upper half storey. 20 and 24-pane sashes to ground and 1st floor throughout. Continuous dormers form an attic storey. Central tall cupola. Corporation Street (N) wing of 3 storeys, with large sash windows (3 to W, 4 to N) and minimal stone dressings. 2 utilitarian 4 storey gault brick wings to rear. Interior: metal roof membring, concrete floors with parquet blocks. Note: This building is a good example of these important early-C20 architects' work. Listing NGR: TQ7453968330

Kent Historic Environment Record Reference: TQ 76 NW 691

The following text is from the original listed building designation:

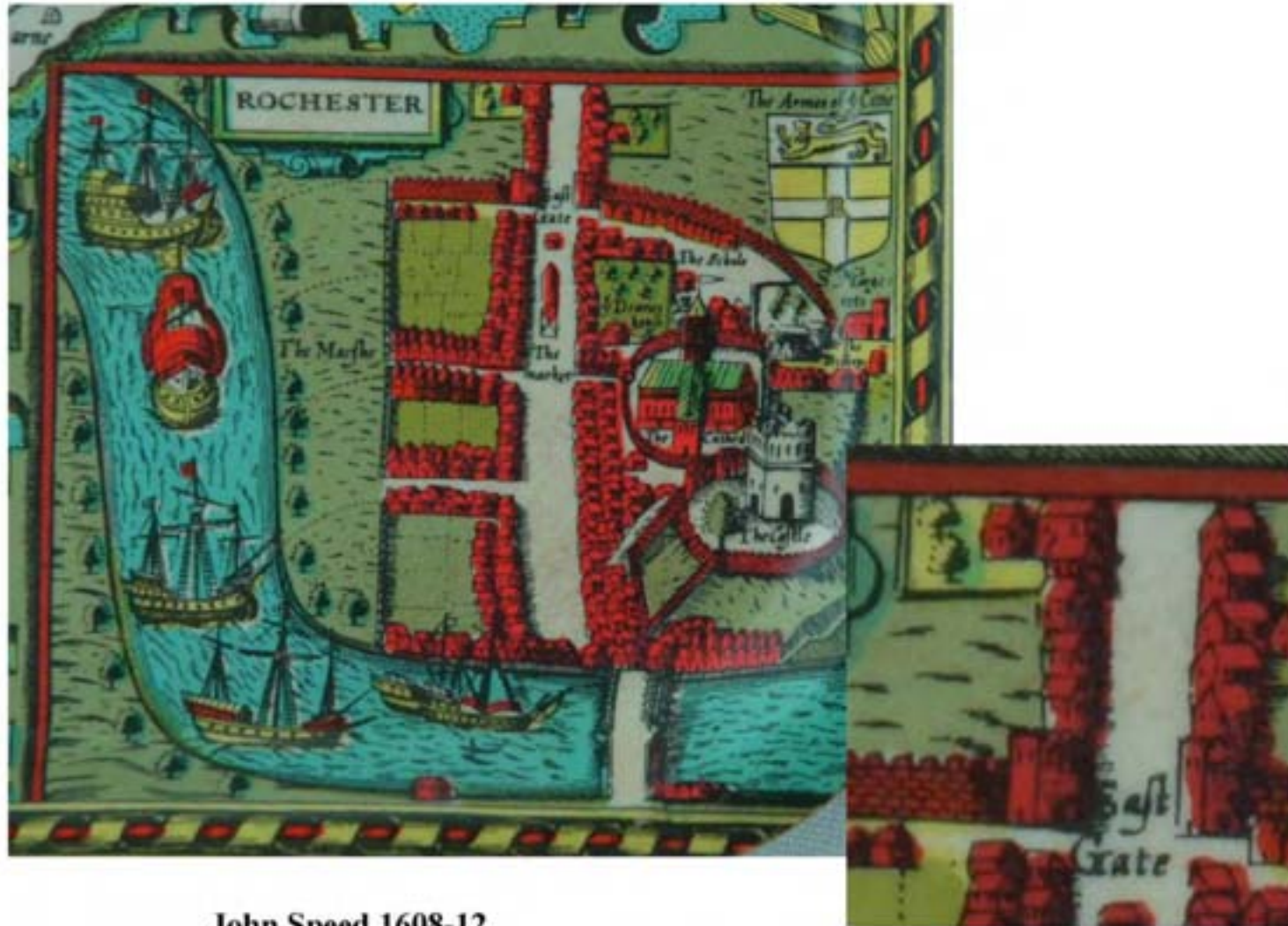
ROCHESTER HIGH STREET TQ 7468 (EASTGATE) 9/141

Dickens Chalet to rear of Eastgate 24.10.50 House

GV I

Wooden chalet. C19. Timber framed, of Swiss type. 2 storeys; overhanging roof with decorative bargeboarding supported by shaped brackets. Windows to 1st floor only with external shutters, with balcony to E, shaped splat balusters, decorative pendant frieze, shaped brackets. Panelled double door with shuttered side openings, the upper panel pierced. Given to Charles Dickens by Charles Fetcher, the actor, and erected in the grounds of Godshill in 1865. Dickens did much of his writing in it between 1865 and his death in 1870. Before its final re-erection behind Eastgate House, it stood at the Crystal Palace and Cobham Hall. Graded for its association with Charles Dickens. Listing NGR: TQ7447968345

Fig. 7 Map of Rochester, John Speed, 1608-12



John Speed 1608-12

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Fig. 8 Eastgate House and front garden, with view to River Medway (c1800) – painting or print, Couchman Collection (by kind permission of Medway Archives)



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Fig. 9 Plan of Rochester, R. Sale, 1816 (by kind permission of Medway Archives)

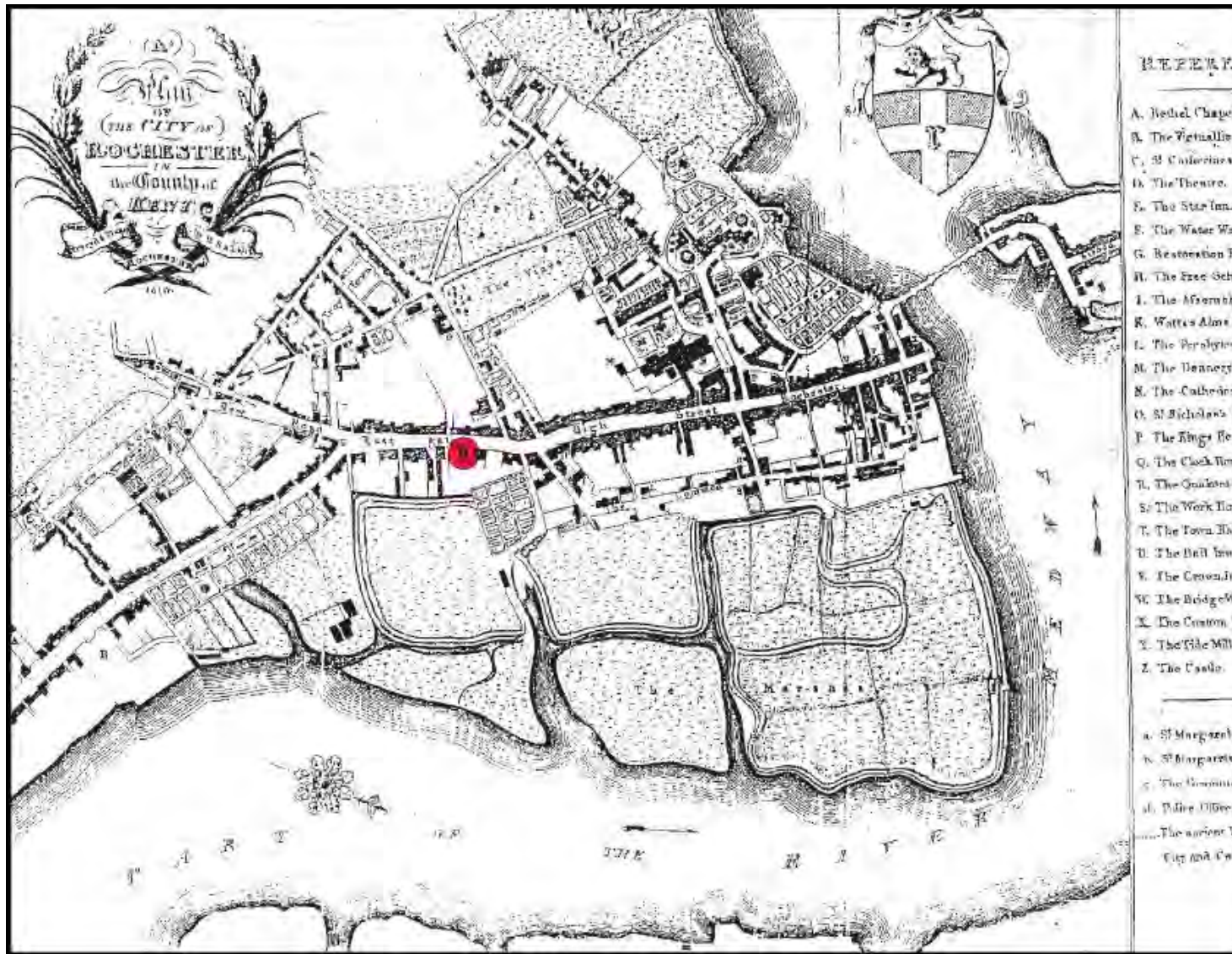


Fig. 10 Ordnance Survey 1st edn 25" map (1862-1875)



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Fig. 11 Eastgate House and front garden (c1882) - photograph, Couchman Collection (by kind permission of Medway Archives)

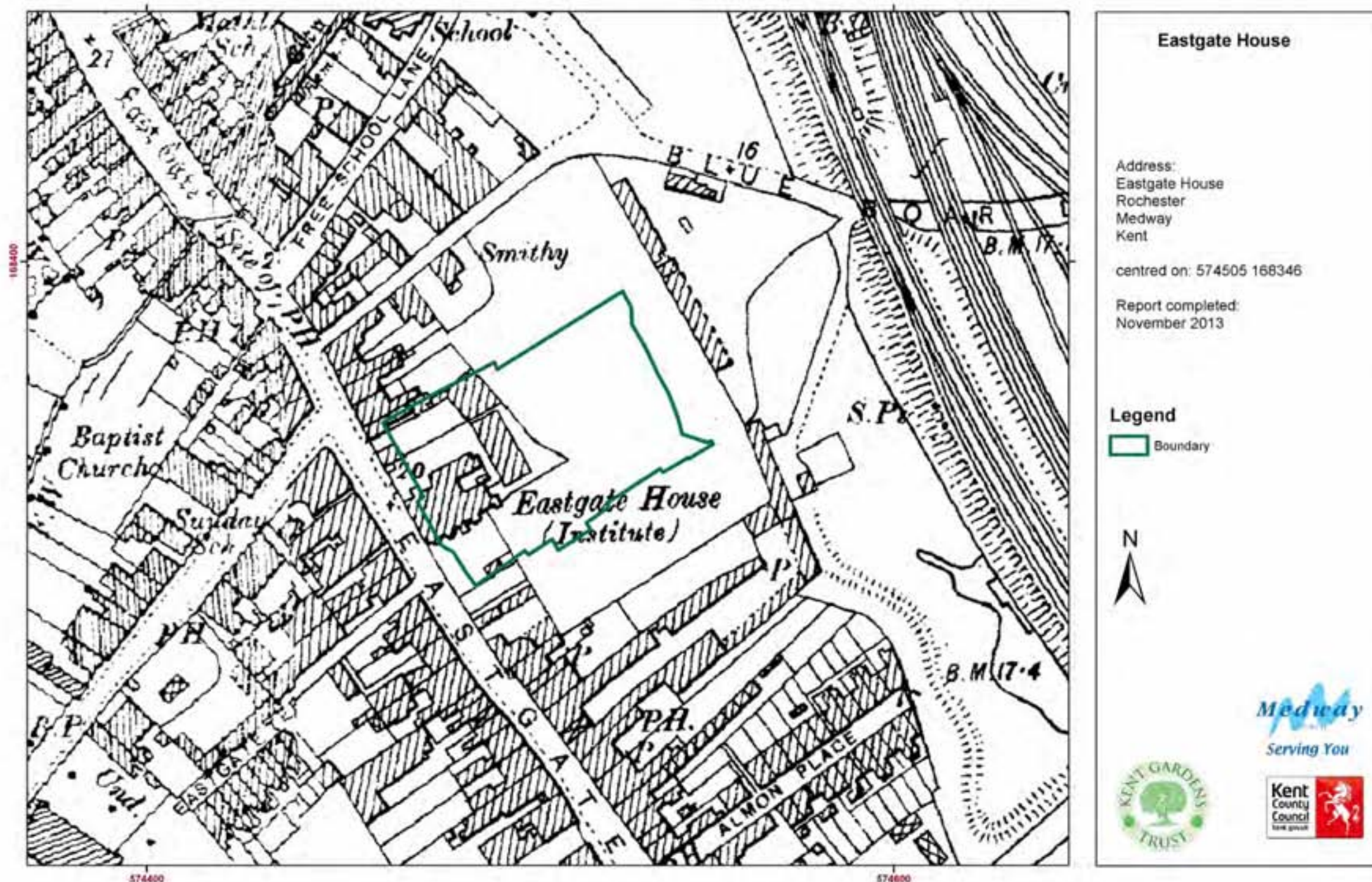


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Fig. 12 Eastgate House and front garden, showing boundary railings (c1900) – photograph, Couchman Collection (by kind permission of Medway Archives)



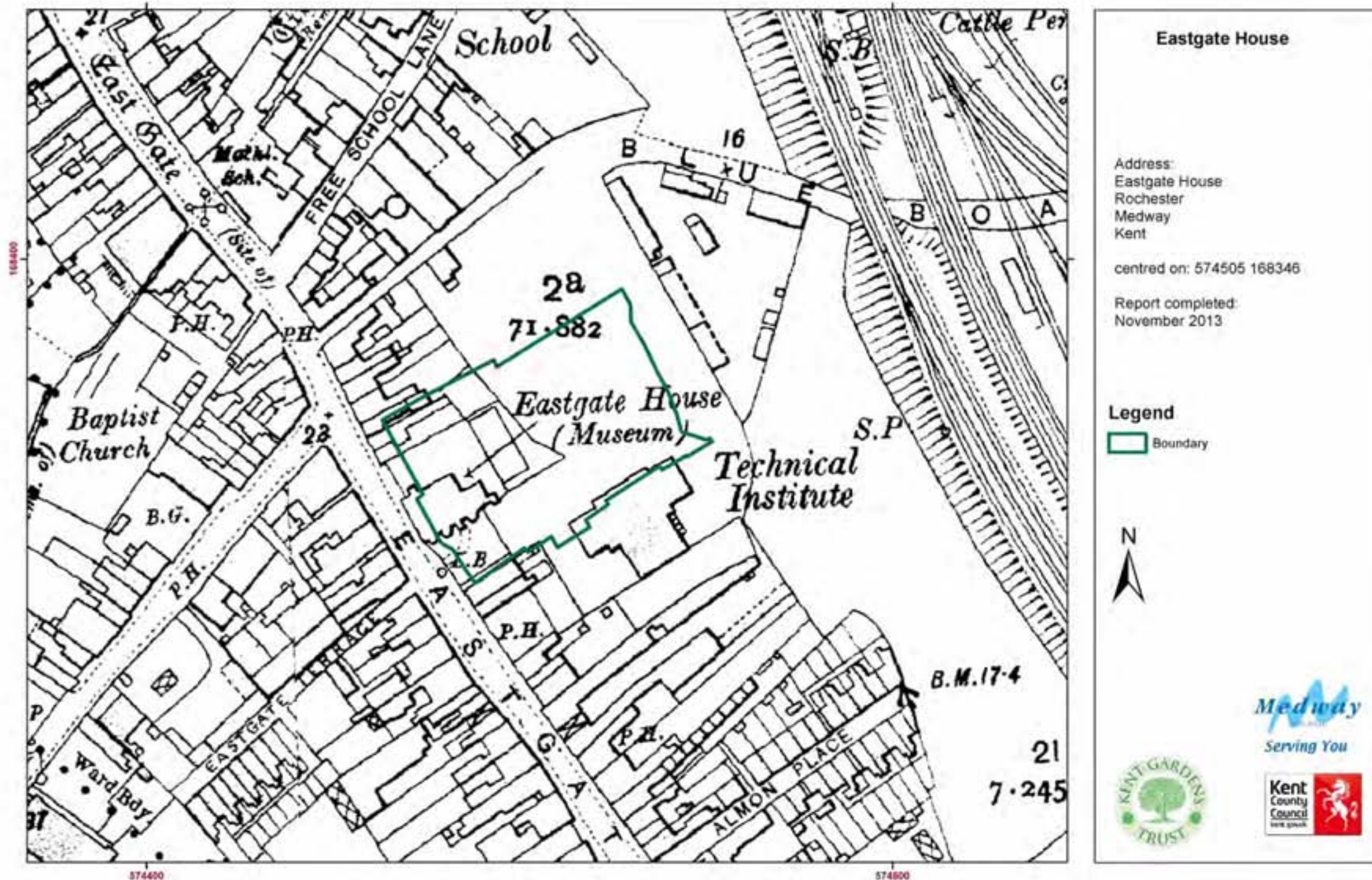
Fig. 13 Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" map (1897-1900)



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Fig. 14 Ordnance Survey 3rd edition 25" map (1907-1923)



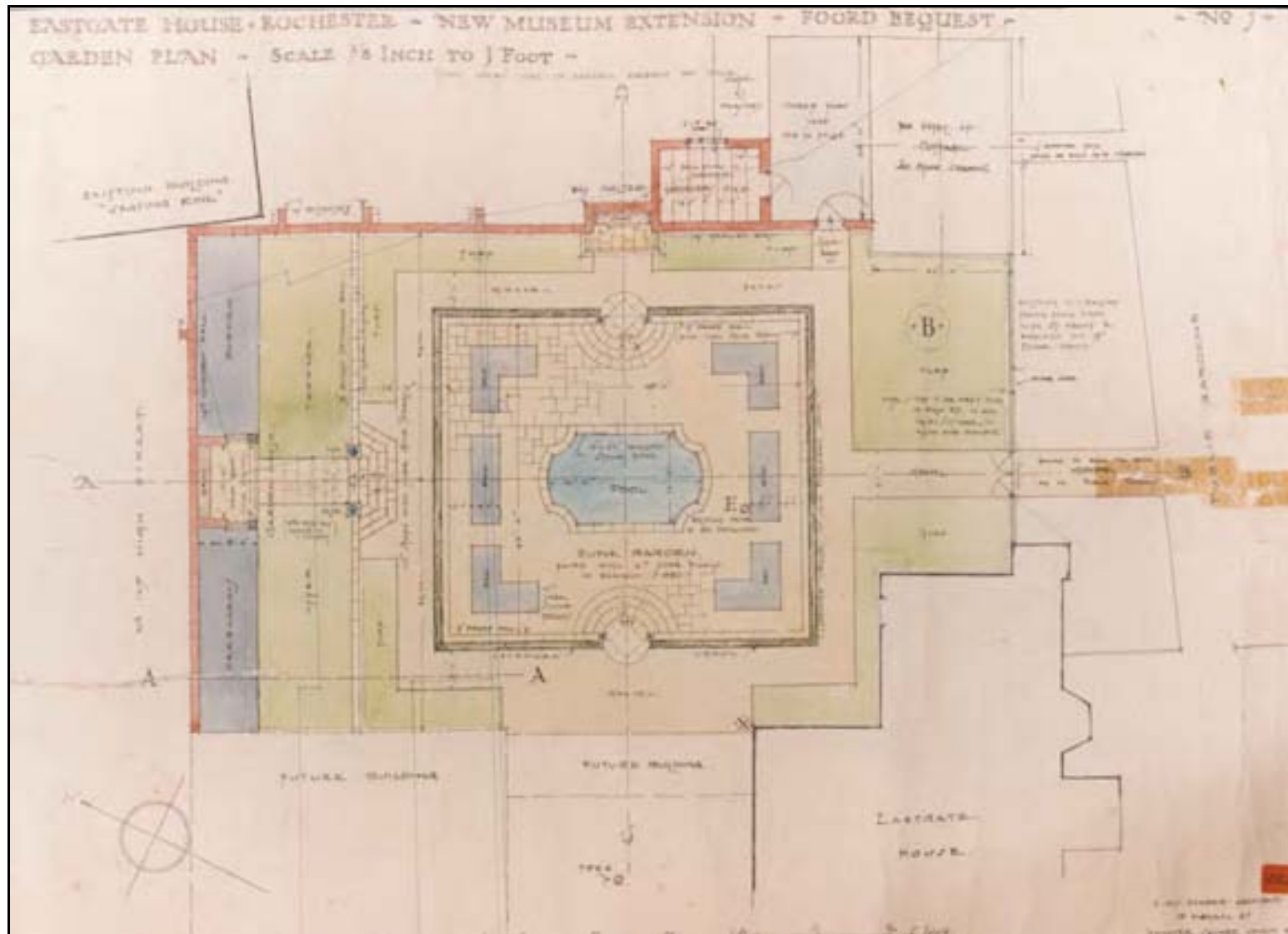
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Fig. 15 Dawber's final garden plan, 1922 (by kind permission of Medway Archives)



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Fig. 16 View of Dawber’s sunken garden from the north-west (c1928) – postcard photograph, Couchman Collection (by kind permission of Medway Archives)



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Fig. 17 View of Dawber's garden towards the north-east, showing pond, lavender beds, circular steps, wall and shelter (late 1920s) – photograph, Medway Images (by kind permission of Medway Archives)



Fig. 18 Ordnance Survey 4th edition 25" map (1929-1952)



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Fig. 19 Front garden of Eastgate House, showing path to Corporation Street, arched-walls and bollards. September 2013



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Fig. 20 View of the former Dawber garden from the north-east, showing ponds, stone walls with lavender beds, and Dickens chalet. September 2013



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Fig. 21 The Dawber arched-doorway showing dentilled and Flemish-bond brickwork. September 2013



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Fig. 22 View of the former Dawber garden from the south-west, showing pond and Dawber's north-east wall and shelter. September 2013



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Fig. 23 Part of informal garden, showing Dawber's caretaker cottage, brick wall with buttresses, and shelter. September 2013

