

The Garden City

A city will arise as superior in its beauty and magnificence to our first crude attempt as the finished canvas of a great artist to the rough and untaught attempts of a schoolboy

according to Ebenezer 'The Garden City Geyser' Howard, and the land he acquired for this included some of the old Cowper estate, which had been inherited by the Desboroughs of Taplow Court, and then Panshanger.

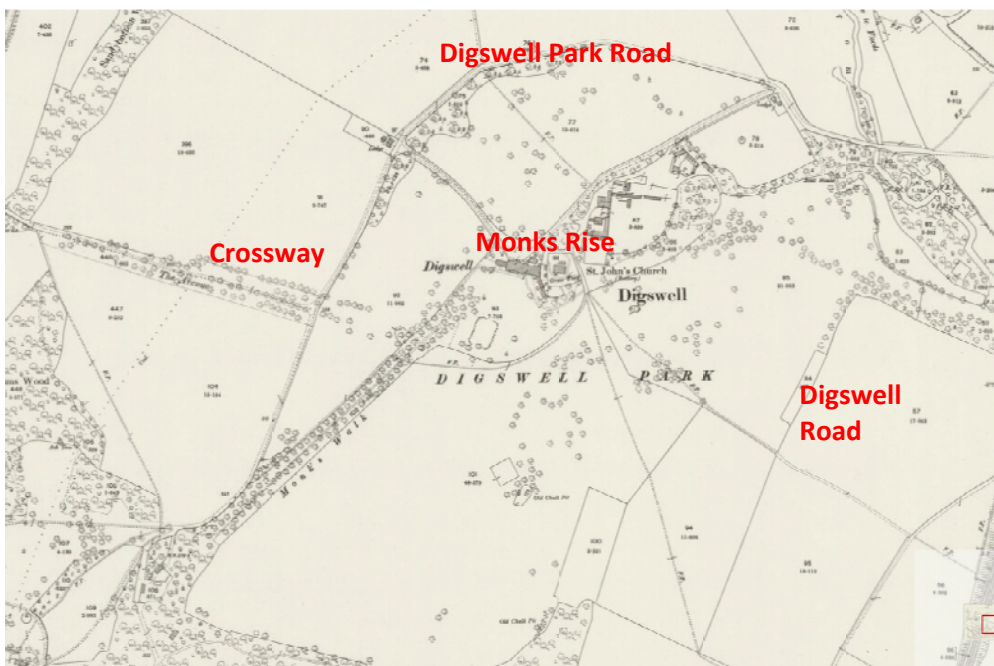
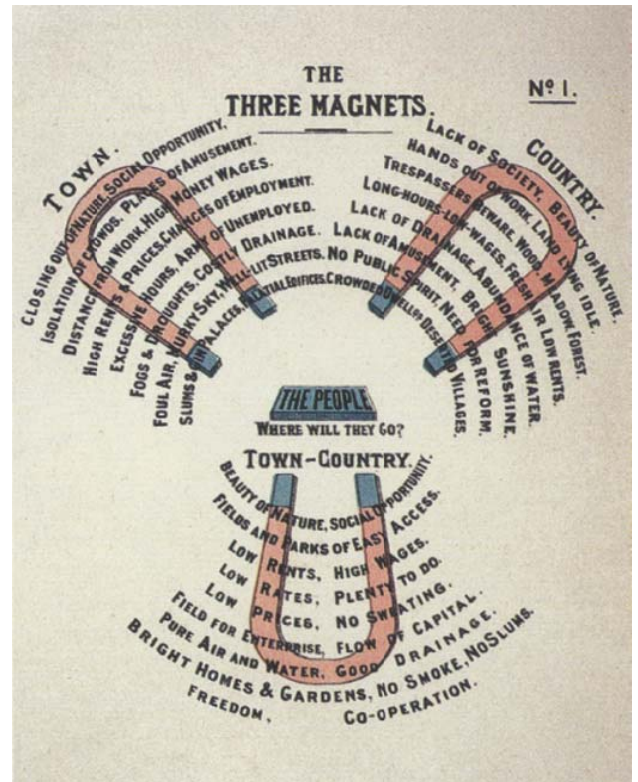
In 1919, Lord Desborough had to sell land to pay death duties. These included Upper and Lower Handside Farms with cottages, Brickwall Farm, Digswellwater Farm, Digswell Lodge Farm as well as Digswell House and 100 acre park, Temple Wood, New Wood and Conduit Wood. Lord Salisbury also sold land at Ludwick and Hatfield Hyde

Howard bought 1900 acres and set to work to provide his zoned ideal city as shown in the Three Magnets balancing the attractions and drawbacks of country and town living to provide the ideal habitat for people.

As development progressed, much of the old landscape disappeared. Sherrards Park Wood, which had extended over the Campus area was reduced in size, though much of the Digswell landscape was not developed.

Farmland to the south of the town was built over but the garden city ethos ensured much green space was left open. By 1939 Welwyn Garden City reached from Lemsford Lane in the south to Coneydale, Mandeville Road and Sherrardspark Road in the north; and eastwards as far as Salisbury Road down to Wheatley Road

Some old boundaries and old drives can still be seen today around the church and Digswell House, and blocks of woodland through the area.



Crossway September 1963 with Knightsfield behind.

Crossway follows the line of The Avenue, running from Digswell Hill on the Great North Road to then bottom of Monks Walk. This seems to be part of the late 18th century landscape giving a direct route to the house from the main road.

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