Urban Renewal

Case 21/22 Urban Forestry

Case 1 Leipzig, Germany: Urban Forestry
Case 2 Halle, Germany: Forest City Halle Silberhöhe[1,2,3]

Problem to resolve

Ongoing Urbanization not only pushes the countryside and its forest further away from the city, but scarcity of building land conducts to ever higher concentration of buildings within the city limits. The remaining open and green spaces need a lot of care implying high costs that impoverishing local authorities cannot cover easily. Generous urban woods, like the Bois de Boulogne in Paris, or the Tiergarten in Berlin are also known as 'Urban Lungs', but are not planted any more in the younger cities.

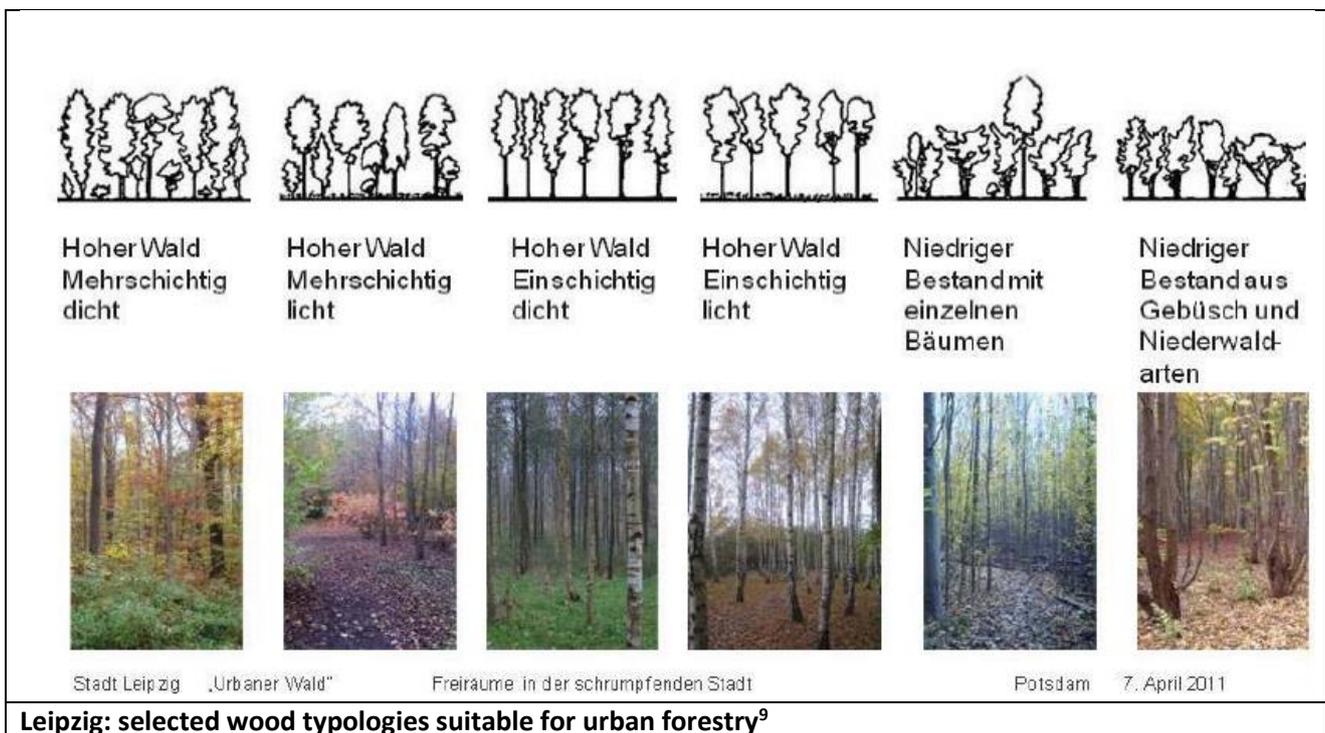| The Bois de Boulogne in Paris painted by *Georges Stein* | The Tiergarten (Former royal hunting grounds) in Berlin 2017 |

Urban Forestry [4]

Forests usually provoke the association with wilderness and incompatible with urban civilisation. Nevertheless for many urbanites, hiking through the forest ranks among the most exciting Sunday afternoon occupations. For some 20 years there already exists an initiative to complement the urban gardening movement by advocating the alternative of urban forestry – even some M.Sc. programs on the topic have opened recently in European Universities. It must be remembered though that urban forest already existed centuries ago when they were attached to Baroque Palaces (Versailles in France, Tiergarten in Berlin Germany) and functioned as hunting grounds for the nobles while not being open to the public. Only with the French revolution this exclusiveness changed: the Paris Bois de Boulogne was arranged for public use of citizens and in Northern Europe (Scandinavia, Netherlands, Britain) they used to be commons. →**Tool URR 1**

Case Study 21 Leipzig, Germany: Urban Forestry[5,6,7,8]

After German reunification, the former socialist part of the country was quickly depopulated because of the better income opportunities in the West. The second biggest Eastern German city, Leipzig, lost more than a third of its former population and many houses fell into decay and had to be demolished. A new land use was to be found for the empty sites and for that reason the interest for urban forestry started there in the 1990s. One argumentation in favour of urban forestry were significantly less maintenance costs compared to conventional urban green areas. The proposal was to generally introduce urban forestry as a new and additional the land use category in Germany. Initially three urban plots were to be prepared for urban forestry and the feedback from the users collected and evaluated. →**Tool URR 1**

Leipzig: selected wood typologies suitable for urban forestry[9]

The the **pilot project "Urban Forest"** in the city of Leipzig was started in cooperation with the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. As part of this project forests will be planted on three brownfields in the inner-city area. This aims to achieve several goals: the forests should contribute to an improvement in the urban climate and air quality, they should increase the value of neighbouring areas, and they should also create recreational possibilities as well as contribute to an increase in biodiversity. Furthermore a new open space category should be created in urban restructuring and in planning. Whether and how the urban forest achieves these goals is the subject

of an inter-disciplinary accompanying research. The social-science part of this research deals with the perception of inner-city brownfields and the acceptance and possible forms of use of urban forest on these through differing social groups.

In addition the perceived effects of the transition of brownfields into forests for the residential areas, with respect to the increase in attractiveness through the creation of new recreational areas. For this, a quantitative survey in the areas selected for the afforestation was carried out; the focal point here was the survey of households. As part of the investigation photo methods were used in all phases: for documentation of the changes of the urban areas and the urban landscape, household surveys themselves through the use of photo montage. .

Case 3 Halle, Germany: Forest City Halle Silberhöhe[10,11,12,13]

Halle is an industrial city in Eastern Germany. For the industry workers a huge mass housing district was built for some 40,000 inhabitants. After reunification the local industries closed down and the population declined to less than half. Part of the depopulated housing blocks were pulled down and the recovered space was transformed into a forest with many different kind of trees, following the new concept of a 'forest city'. In fact, for each remaining resident two new trees were planted.

→Tool URR 1

| *Partial demolition of mass housing in Halle Silberhöhe after reunification[14]* | *Implementation of Forest City Siberhöhe[15]* |

Credentials

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References

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