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Directing a Symphonic Orchestra – Plant Politics in Riem and Fornebu

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ABSTRACT

Two major projects in München-Riem and Fornebu, Oslo emerged in the start of the millennium with a sharp sustainable profile. Strong sustainable efforts included landscape architecture aside with energy, waste and water. The effort was closely linked to political ambitions. The public planning and environmental planning documents aimed at controlling the process, especially sustainable matters and remarkably also plantings. Being two airports, closing down the decision caught public attention combined with newly attention to sustainable action due to the Rio-declaration. The objective of this paper is to discuss landscape architecture and uncover important sequences of the planning and further to pursue the means and the design of plants down to the moment when the sites were constructed and taken into use. The method is a case study with two information rich cases. Stated environmental politics, citations from planning and environmental documents are held up against scientific description of referred forest types and all this is compared with visits to the two sites and reading of landscape design plans and documents. The conclusion is that efforts to keep up with other environmental subjects, made the plant design tied up to two ecological forest types, which were too fragile to reconstructed landscapes with a short construction period. Two strong landscape architectural designs, however diverted from the devoted politics, due to the risky choices at the policy level and unfortunate incidents in the design and construction period. The significance for future efforts bringing plants into the core of environmental planning should be assisted by choosing broader and better frameworks than delicate, mature ecological forest types, which already decline in the two regions. On the other hand landscape architecture should be ready to formulate narrative and valuable information for plantings used in the initial sustainable policy building.