Fact–finding mission Botanischer Garten

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At the BÃ¼rgersprechstunde der Altonaer FDP–Fraktion one of the Probleme vor Ort brought up by this old fellow (so old his phone number has only 6 digits) concerned the mythical Botanischer Garten. Travelling by S–Bahn between Blankenese and Altona every time this place is mentioned as payoff for the name of the Klein Flottbek station, but I had never bothered to visit that garden. So now I decided to check it out, and having seen Moonraker recently might have had something to do with it as well.

The issue would be that it's not that straightforward to find the garden.

We arrive from the south side of the station Klein Flottbek. It's just a station on the Altona – Blankenese line, but the difference is that the tracks are on ground level.

Tracks on ground level means the passengers have to go below ground level to cross the tracks to get on the central platform, and this crossing can also be used by pedestrians to get to the other side of the tracks.

Passengers coming from the platform have to go down into the tunnel to exit the station on the north or the south side of the tracks. The elevator has been installed recently. For the Botanischer Garten we have to go to the north exit.

You don't need to be Colin Forbes to see what is confusing here at the north exit. If you wan't to go to the Botanischer Garten, which way to go?

If you're in a wheelchair it's easy. To the left are stairs.

To the right is a long slope for people in wheelchairs to reach the Biocentre and the Botanischer Garten. But since it's the preferred route to go to the Baron–Voght–StraÃˇe and the bus station for everybody it doesn't appear to be some wheelchair only special route.

At the top of the slope there is indeed the busy bus station. But where is the Botanischer Garten?

The Botanischer Garten is real close, but if you want to get there you would have to try to cross the cul de sac where the busses turn, and where you could get killed twice by the same bus.

Back on the left side of the end of the tunnel the stairs lead to the much cuter zebra crossing.

What the sign in the tunnel didn't make clear is that people who are able to use the stairs should go up the stairs and use the zebra crossing to get to the Biocenter and the Botanischer Garten, and only people who for some reason can't use the stairs should go right, up the slope, then do a U–turn at the top and go back along the length of the slope to reach the zebra crossing at the top of the stairs.

Having crossed the street safely we now have to find the Botanischer Garten. Which seems to be easy since there is a botanically shaped sign pointing us in the right direction.

Another sign is luring us in the wrong direction however.

Proud of their Botanischer Garten the university claims they are also the garden. Which is probably right if you're a professional botanic or botanic professor.

It seems that the university has it's own entrance to the Botanischer Garten, so people with the right badges can indeed follow these signs and get into the garden, so technically the signs are not wrong. But the

average garden visitor without a badge has to find the other entrance.

From the hiking track along the polo club there are also typically blending–in–with–the–background signs which might not be very optimal.

Back on track this sign makes sense. It’s the entrances we’re interested in, not the organizational units of the university. There is one place, but two seperate entrances.

And we finally made it to the entrance of the Botanischer Garten. To bad the garden closes one hour before sunset so we had to skip that after finding it.

Yes, the sign at the north end of the tunnel is confusing and after that the mix of flows doesn’t help.

by Roland van Ipenburg
http://www.xs4all.nl/~ipenburg/blog/posts/dull/2010/03/25/fact–finding–mission–botanischer–garten/