



Down Plan 2015



For the management of DARD forests in:

Narrow Water, Rostrevor, Mourne, Annalong, Donard, Tollymore, Castlewellan, Drumkeeragh, Bohill, Hollymount, Castleward, Mount Stewart, Clandeboye, Ballysallagh, Hillsborough, Belvoir.



An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

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The mark of
responsible forestry.



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1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: The Policy context for Forestry in Northern Ireland

From a base of only 1.4% of land area at the end of the First World War, forest and woodlands have expanded to cover 8% of the land area of Northern Ireland. This is still less than the 10% cover in the Republic of Ireland, 12% cover in Great Britain and 33% cover in Europe.

Historically, the restoration of forestry was first driven by a need to develop a strategic reserve of timber for use in a time of national emergency. Later the drive was the need to promote economic development through the supply of raw material to sawmills and other industrial applications. During the 1950's, 60's and 70's, these policies resulted in the planting of conifers within large areas of uplands considered too poor for agriculture.

By the 1980's, an improved awareness and understanding of the environmental impacts of planting and felling large upland areas led to Forest Service publishing our own environmental guidelines. During this same period, global research had heightened international concerns regarding the destruction of irreplaceable natural resources and pollution of the planet. This growing international awareness resulted in the Earth Summit in 1992 where the international community adopted Agenda 21, an unprecedented global plan of action for sustainable development.

Today, the policy approach Forest Service takes in managing our forests is based on our publication "*NI Forestry – A Strategy for Sustainability and Growth*", published in March 2006. This takes forward the sustainable management of existing woods and forests, coupled with a steady expansion of forest cover to increase the many diverse benefits that forests provide. It includes a specific aim to maintain access arrangements and to realise the outdoor recreation potential of public forests.

Of the 106,500 hectares of forests in Northern Ireland today, slightly less than 60% are publicly owned and managed by the Forest Service, an executive Agency of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. It is forest policy to increase the area of forest in Northern Ireland by offering incentives to private landowners to plant their land.

We are proud to state that since May 2000 all our public forests have been externally certified as being sustainably managed.

1.2 Sustainable Forest Management

As part of the implementation of Agenda 21, in 1998 European Ministers jointly adopted a common framework of recommendations to promote sustainable forest management at field level in European forests. Under this framework, the UK Government requirements are expressed in the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS). The UKFS, supported by its series of Guidelines, outlines the context for forestry in the UK, sets out the approach of the UK governments to sustainable forest management, defines standards and requirements, and provides a basis for regulation and monitoring.

Practising sustainable forestry means managing our forests in a way that meets our needs at present but that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. They will rightly expect that their forests and woodlands offer at least the same benefits and opportunities as we enjoy today.

At the heart of the UKFS approach is the importance of balancing the environmental, economic and social benefits of forests and the recognition that our forests serve a wide range of objectives.

While the statutory requirements for the sustainable management of our forests are set out in the UKFS. Forest Service is committed to maintaining compliance under the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS). This is the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) endorsed forest management standard for the UK and places an obligation on us to manage our lands in a sustainable way.

The advantage to Forest Service from holding the FSC and PEFC certificates is that it enables us to certify the timber we produce as coming from responsibly managed forests. Our certified status retention of internationally recognised certification schemes remains vital to our timber buyers, who are competing to sell their products within an international market.

As the endorsed FSC-UK and PEFC-UK forest management standard, it is currently the UKWAS which guides our forest management decisions, and against which an annual surveillance takes place by external independent auditors to ensure our compliance.

The meeting of the UKWAS standard requirements are demonstrated in our Forest Management Plans.

1.3 Forest Management Plans

Forest Management Plans set out the management objectives for the forests and woodlands we look after. They aim to fulfil a number of requirements:

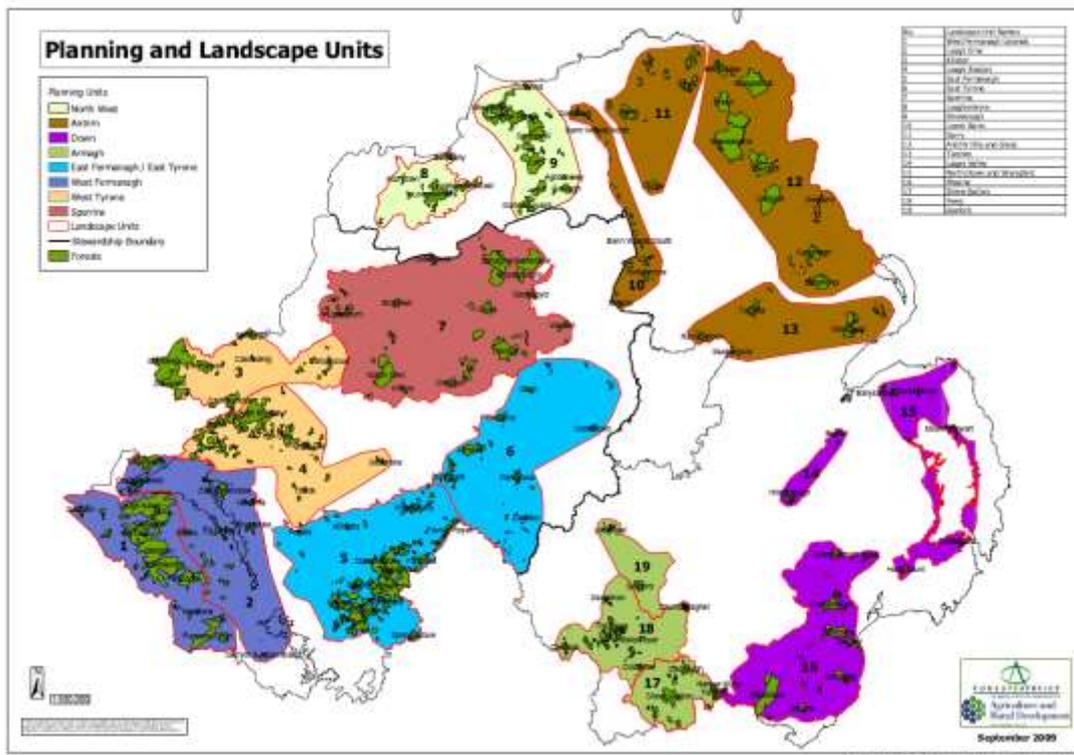
- They provide descriptions of our forests to show what they are like now
- They enable us to allocate management objectives for each part of the forest thus ensuring strategic goals are met
- They show our management intentions, in some detail for the first five years and in outline for the longer term
- They provide a means of assessing if our objectives are being met
- They show what we would like the forests to look like in many years time

Forest management plans are reviewed periodically (currently every 5 years) to ensure they continue to meet Forest Service objectives.

The review of these plans provides an opportunity for those outside Forest Service to get involved in the reassessment of the plan, whether as a user, a neighbour or a member of one of the many statutory agencies that has an interest in the woodlands.

Our aim is to produce forest management plans that sustainably meet society's needs for a particular forest area and meets the needs of the plants and animals that live there. Sometimes there are compromises to be made but we hope that these are explained within the plan or have been explained during the planning review consultation process.

The map below illustrates how the public forests in Northern Ireland are divided into eight forest planning units and their associated landscapes. Each of these forest planning units has a Forest Plan.



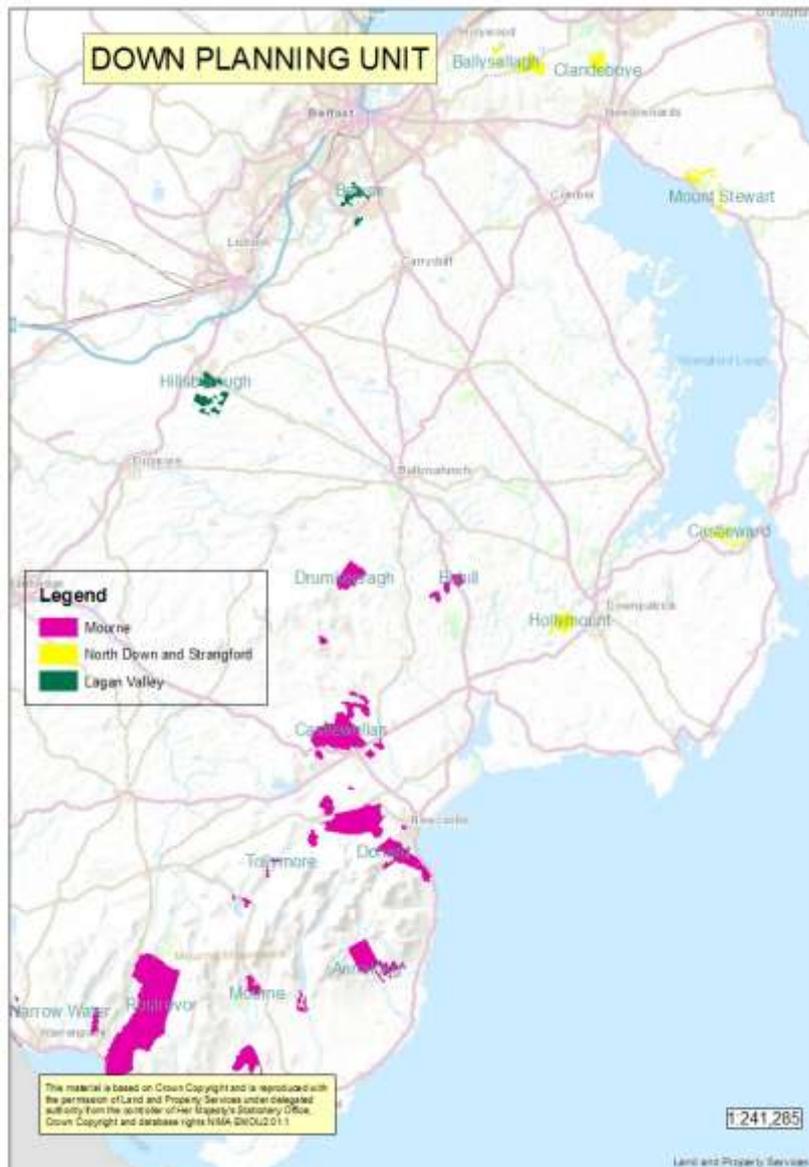
Forest Plans do not set out the detailed yearly management operations for each small piece of a forest, known as a compartment. These detailed site plans are prepared for each operation and their timing and scale is taken from the Plan. It is not always possible to say which year every operation will take place, but we can say in which five-year period it will happen. Further details on timing can be obtained from the local Forest Service office.

The following pages will consider some of the issues arising from the review of the Forest Plan for forests within the **Down Planning Unit**.

2: DOWN PLANNING UNIT

2.1 General Description of Area

Down Planning Unit encompasses 5,090 hectares of tree cover and open land. All forests fall within County Down. This planning unit comprises of 16 forests which are divided into three Landscape Units (LUs), Mourne, North Down & Strangford and Lagan Valley.



The Mourne mountains dominate the southern part of the county with Slieve Donard the highest point at 850m. The forests are widely used by people for recreation primarily for walking.

Within North Down & Lagan Valley the forests are small in scale but are extensively used with Belvoir and Hillsborough each attracting more than 200,000 visits per annum.

County Down covers an area of 2,448 km², with a population of approximately 531,665. Residents are administered by the following councils:

- [Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council](#)
- [Ards and North Down Borough Council](#)
- [Belfast City Council](#)
- [Newry, Mourne and Down District Council](#)

2.2 Key Objectives for Down Forests

In reviewing the Forest Plan for Down we considered what contribution these forests make and should continue to make in promoting Forest Service business objectives. In no particular order of rank, these are as follows:

1. To help identify opportunities to develop partnerships with operational providers to improve the quality and range of services and visitor experiences, consistent with our Recreation and Social Use Strategy and our aim to improve forestry performance in the marketplace
2. To support and enhance biological diversity within the woodlands and protect / enhance special sites for conservation within the forests
3. To utilise forests for timber production and optimise the return from timber sales
4. To demonstrate sustainable use of the woodlands and manage them in accordance with the UK Forest Standard (UKFS) and maintain compliance under the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS)

Before finalising our considerations we consulted with a wide range of stakeholders and members of the public. This process consisted of providing information and facilitating feedback via: individual meetings with stakeholders focused on single issues or locations; a group meeting with previously identified stakeholders interested in all aspects of forest management and, two public consultations where we invited members of the public to find out more and discuss their views with us.

During this consultation process we engaged with more than 30 people representing the views of a wide range of organisations and individuals.

A summary of these views and our response to them is given in the next section.

2.3 Summary of Issues arising from the Down Forest Plan Consultation Process and the Responses Given

Subject Raised	Response Given
<p data-bbox="188 371 703 477">Consultation Meeting at Cloughmor Centre Rostrevor 25th November 2015</p> <p data-bbox="188 517 719 622">MHT enquired was the Ancient Woodland survey available and what work has been identified from it.</p> <p data-bbox="188 808 715 913">Sport NI enquired how the number and commercial worth of forest visits were calculated</p> <p data-bbox="188 992 699 1061">ORNI enquired will any more forest be surveyed in relation to visitors.</p> <p data-bbox="188 1173 655 1243">NI Orienteering enquired was P. Ramorum affecting timber sales.</p> <p data-bbox="188 1397 710 1503">ORNI enquired are license agreements required for all activities in FS land</p> <p data-bbox="188 1581 699 1686">NIEA are currently revising the management plan for the Rostrevor oakwood.</p> <p data-bbox="188 1727 707 1832">NI Deer Society asked what FS was doing about newspaper reports of poaching.</p>	<p data-bbox="754 517 1382 768">The survey carried out in 2013 is available within a layer on the FS GIS system. This is not publicly available but can be viewed by arrangement. The information held includes widescale and localised threats to the AW habitat as well as the presence of indicator species.</p> <p data-bbox="754 808 1393 949">FS explained the survey method, forest surveyed and assumptions used to calculate the economic worth to the local economy from forest visits.</p> <p data-bbox="754 992 1390 1133">FS explained that for the survey was complete at this point in time but did not rule additional information being gather in the future.</p> <p data-bbox="754 1173 1393 1357">FS explained that all commercially recoverable timber was being sold at market value but as result FS of the infections were reassessing felling plans within areas where P Ramorum has had a major impact.</p> <p data-bbox="754 1397 1377 1538">FS explained the though process behind all legal agreements and explained the difference between commercial and non-commercial agreements.</p> <p data-bbox="754 1581 1270 1610">FS will meet at later date with NIEA.</p> <p data-bbox="754 1727 1361 1796">There has been no reports of poaching incidents within Tollymore in the last 3 yrs.</p>

Consultation Day at Newcastle
Centre 3rd December 2015 15.00 –
20.00

A stakeholder enquired about access for horse riding and expressed her concerns for the amount of mountain bikers in forests and related safety issues.

Two stakeholders wanted to enquire about forestry operations within Tipperary.

One stakeholder wanted to know if the wooden seat would be replaced along the river bank

A stakeholder who lives beside Tipperary Wood wanted to know any plans for change.

Consultation Day at Hillsborough
Forest held 3rd December 2015 at
11.00am – 3.00pm

One stakeholder, a runner, raised the issue of dog fouling. They also noted that there was a reduction in the number of rats within the forest.

Two first time visitors arrived who were unfamiliar with the Forest and sought information about Hillsborough and also information on Forests in Co Fermanagh their home County.

Two people wanted to report the problem of green algae and the issue of dead fish on the lake.

FS explained that forests were used for a wide range of activities and not exclusively for horse riding. There are designated horse riding trails in other local forests.

FS explained that there was no plans to clearfell any part of Tipperary and that litter collection and other maintenance would be carried out when needed

FS removed the seat because when the river flooded it eroded the ground below it causing holes and exposing rocks. It was agreed that a new seating area would be made away from the immediate river bank

Within the next 5 years there were no immediate plans to have any major changes.

FS explained that they work closely with Council Dog Wardens and other agency's to educate the dog owners for the need to clean up after their dogs. A pest control contract is also in place to reduce the number of rats around the lake and car park area.

Information was provided for Hillsborough Forest. They were also given details of their local Forester Officer in Fermanagh to discuss their issues at a local level.

FS explained that they do not manage the lake but are aware of the problems stated. Contact numbers for DCAL were passed on.

3. KEY OUTCOMES OF REVIEW OF DOWN FORESTS

3.1 Overview

These forests continue to make significant contributions to the well being of our citizens and economy. They also contain a wide variety of priority species & habitats and cultural heritage features. They are being sustainably managed and are UKWAS compliant.

In addition to issues raised by those outside Forest Service, in reviewing the management of these forests, we identified a number of key areas that required an amendment to the existing Forest Plan. The following pages provide a summary of this information, most of which is provided by Landscape Unit. This is the forest level that many UKWAS compliances are measured against.

This summary uses some 'forestry' words and phrases in the text because they best describe what we are doing. There is a glossary at the back that will help you to understand these.

3.2 Outcomes for Environment and Timber Objectives

2015 Outcome of Review – Mourne Landscape Unit				
Land Use	No significant change in Land Use			
Production	2015 - 19 Clearfell 189ha to be felled with an estimated volume of 95,850m ³ This is reduced from previously approved 469ha All coupes UKWAS compliant with the exception of a coupe in Rostrevor which will be felled in response to fire damage. Thinning 820ha identified as the potential to be thinned with an associated estimated volume 28,000m ³ of timber			
Continuous Cover	Additional areas of LISS have been identified in Castlewellan, Tollymore, Donard, Rostrevor and Narrow Water forests.			
Regeneration	To re-generate 220ha of conifer species on clearfell sites by planting. To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration.			
Site Designation	Forest	Area (ha)	% Area of LU % Planted Area	Relevant details
SAC	Annalong	77.37	} 2.26 % 2.86%	Eastern Mourne SAC Rostrevor Wood SAC
	Donard	1.88		
	Rostrevor	<u>16.63</u> 95.88		
ASSI	Castlewellan	47.07	} 9.08% 11.54%	Castlewellan Lake ASSI White Water River ASSI Western Mournes and Kilfeaghan Upper ASSI Shimma River ASSI
	Mourne	0.45		
	Rostrevor	335.4		
	Tollymore	<u>3.42</u> 386.34		
Natural Reserve	Annalong	13.92	} 0.78% 1.01%	
	Castlewellan	9.34		
	Drumkeeragh	4.86		
	Rostrevor	<u>5.17</u> 33.29		
LTR	Annalong	4.48	} 1.45% 1.85%	Cpts 305/306 Cpt 103 Cpt 3 Cpt 6 Cpts 6/7 Cpts 83
	Annalong	10.31		
	Mourne	6.45		
	Rostrevor	7.31		
	Rostrevor	9.77		
	Rostrevor	8.78		

	Tollymore	3.31		Cpt 84
	Tollymore	3.86		Cpt 71
	Tollymore	<u>7.65</u>		Cpt 97
		61.92		
Native, Semi Natural Woodland & PAWS Restoration	Tollymore	2.95	}	5.73% 7.31%
	Annalong	2.31		
	Bohill	93.40		
	Castlewellan	18.26		
	Donard	7.46		
	Drumkeeragh	6.01		
	Mourne	13.84		
	Narrow Water	51.19		
	Rostrevor	<u>49.38</u>		
	Tollymore	244.78		
				6.32% 7.96%
OG Semi Natural Habitat	Annalong	80.76	}	
	Donard	14.61		
	Rostrevor	<u>173.49</u>		
		268.86		
Deadwood	All forests			The requirement for deadwood is met by 425 hectare of forest identified in Table 1 of the Provision of Deadwood Habitat and an additional 900 hectares of TP 1 plantation. No major changes are planned within the period.
Totals	4256.45 ha 3347.82 ha	1091.07ha		25.63% 32.59%

2015		Outcome of Review – Lagan Valley Landscape Unit		
Land Use	No significant change in Land Use			
Production	2015 - 19			
	Clearfell No areas have been identified for clearfelling within the period.			
	Thinning 33ha identified as the potential to be thinned with an associated estimated volume 1,500m ³ of timber			
Continuous Cover	Additional areas Belvoir forest have a LISS classification proposed..			
Regeneration	To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration in Belvoir. Supplementary planting may be required. There are no areas of conifer regeneration planned within the period			
<i>Site Designation</i>	Forest	Area (ha)	% Area of LU % Planted Area	Relevant details
ASSI	Belvoir	74.19	25.89% 28.70%	Belvoir ASSI
Natural Reserve	Hillsborough	4.57	1.18% 1.28%	
LTR	Belvoir Hillsborough	7.11 3.17 10.28	3.60% 3.98%	Cpt 107 Cpt 4
Native, Semi Natural Woodland & PAWS Restoration	Belvoir Hillsborough	23.81 32.40 56.21	19.61% 21.75%	
OG Semi Natural Habitat	Belvoir	4.19	1.22% 1.62%	Belvoir Meadow
Water	Hillsborough	14.68	5.12% 5.68%	
Deadwood				The requirement for deadwood is met by 67 hectares of forest identified in Table 1 of the Provision of Deadwood Habitat.
Totals	286.56 ha 258.46 ha	85.36ha	29.90% 33.25%	

2015		Outcome of Review – North Down & Strangford Landscape Unit		
Land Use	No significant change in Land Use			
Production	2014 - 18			
	Clearfell No areas have been identified for clearfelling within the period.			
	Thinning 193ha identified as the potential to be thinned with an associated estimated volume 8,000m ³ of timber			
Continuous Cover	An additional area of 60.39ha to have a LISS classification.			
Regeneration	To re-generate 8ha of conifer species on clearfell sites by planting. To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration.			
Site Designation	Forest	Area (ha)	% Area of LU % Planted Area	Relevant details
SAC	Hollymount	49.49	9.05% 9.80%	Hollymount SAC
Natural Reserve	Hollymount	6.54	1.20% 1.30%	Part of Hollymount SAC
LTR	Castleward Ballysallagh	13.98 3.47 17.45	3.19% 3.47%	Cpts 301 & 302 Cpt 203
Native, Semi Natural Woodland & PAWS Restoration	Ballysallagh Castleward Clandeboye Hollymount Mount Stewart	37.45 11.41 31.87 6.03 20.60 107.36	19.63% 21.26%	
Deadwood				The requirement for deadwood is met by 173 hectare of forest identified in Table 1 of the Provision of Deadwood Habitat.
Totals	546.79 ha 504.98 ha	174.30 ha	31.61% 34.23%	

3.3 Outcomes for Recreation & Social Objectives

Management Intentions

<p>Recreation Services and Facilities</p>	<p>To manage existing recreation services in an affordable way, meeting the expenditure and income requirements of FS 'Memorandum Trading Account' AND To agree long term arrangements with Councils and others to enhance, create & maintain recreation forest based facilities within the planning review period.</p>
<p>Maintain and improve built Infrastructure, Access and Interpretation</p>	<p>Commercial Recreation</p> <p>Explore opportunities with operational partners to provide the basis for capital investment to improve management & provision of caravan / camping services.</p> <p>Non Commercial Recreation</p> <p>Explore opportunities with operational partners to develop outdoor recreation facilities and enhanced walking and cycling opportunities; particularly where these tie in with other objectives, e.g. Mourne Access Plan.</p> <p>The active involvement of community associations, including volunteers, should be encouraged to improve 'local ownership' of forests and to enhance the social and public health benefits this can deliver.</p> <p>Developing Access and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Local Authorities and community groups to develop partnership arrangements for the improvement, management and maintenance of trails and associated recreation facilities at forests. • Develop specified recreation facilities subject to funding opportunities and formal agreement of operating partnerships covering use, maintenance and public liability. <p>Interpretation and Community Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop alternative means of delivering educational services and facilities, through partnerships with youth training organisations.

4. Social Provision in Forests

4.1 Current Status	
Strategic overview	<p>Tourism is a significant economic driver for Northern Ireland. Over 3 million domestic and international visitors generate more than £530 million for the local economy here each year. Eight percent of the local workforce is employed in the tourism and leisure sector in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The DETI produced '<i>Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020</i>' has recognised that our forests can play a significant role in helping to increase tourist numbers, both out of state and domestic visitors. This Strategy identifies a number of Action Plan targets linking closely to the recreational & social use of our forests and which are embodied in our management proposals – these are;</p> <p>People:</p> <p>C1 – Councils to actively involve the community in developing and sharing interpretative material.</p> <p>Product and Places:</p> <p>C2 – Government agencies to commit to access to lands, including forests, for leisure purposes.</p> <p>C3 – Introduction of high quality recreation products in forests.</p> <p>These targets are also reflected in our own publication '<i>A Strategy to Develop the Recreational and Social Use of Our Forests</i>' and which has been used to shape our management planning in this part of the review of Down Forests.</p>
Existing Use and facilities	<p>Formal recreation provision, with charges set for vehicle access, is maintained at Tollymore Forest Park and Castlewellan Forest Park. Latterly this has seen the increased use of contract labour, particularly for grass cutting and routine maintenance of the Annesley Gardens. Informal access on foot only is maintained at most other Down forests, except for Narrow Water and Clandeboye. Management of public access there retains to the main landowner. At Castlewellan Forest Park and Rostrevor Forest, 21-year Operating Licences are in place with Newry Mourne & Down District Council for the management of cycling trails, walking trails and interactive play structures.</p> <p>Shooting rights at Mourne Forest and Crocknafeola Wood are licensed to private clubs. These licences are offered through public tender on 5-year terms.</p>
Type of visit	<p>Elsewhere in Down forests, recreation provision is informal and generally free; exceptions being motor sports events where charges are set to recover the additional management costs incurred by Forest Service.</p>
Main activities	<p>Down forests are used principally for cycling, leisure walking and running, fishing and some one-off specialist events; e.g. QUB Boat Club Rowing Regatta.</p> <p>Walking, dog walking and running on way-marked trails and forest roads, horse riding, leisure cycling on forest roads and orienteering</p> <p>On average more than 200,000 <u>paying visits</u> are made each year to Tollymore and Castlewellan Forest Parks combined; however, the total number visits to Down forests is estimated at over 1million – principally for leisure walking and running; plus some one-off special events. Detailed information about visits to forests is available in our report '<i>Northern Ireland Forests Visitor Survey 2014</i>'.</p>

<p>Infrastructure</p>	<p>Touring caravan / camping sites and Touring in the Trees are located at Tollymore Forest Park, Castlewellan Forest Park and Rostrevor Forest. The main stay site at the latter is managed by Newry Mourne & Down District Council. The core recreation areas at Tollymore and Castlewellan contain several buildings, most of which are integral to the delivery of recreation services in these forests.</p> <p><i>(Current recreation infrastructure is detailed in the table at 4.2 below)</i></p>
<p>Other considerations</p>	<p>Mourne Landscape Unit Long established woodland demesnes at Castlewellan, Tollymore and Rostrevor were purchased outright or long term leased from their previous owners. The first Forest Park to be created in Northern Ireland was opened in 1955 at Tollymore, formerly owned by the Earl of Roden. At Castlewellan Forest Park the Castle and walled gardens were purchased from Gerald Annesley in 1967, bringing to an end some 350 years of private estate management. These forests are recognised as being important assets, both for local outdoor recreation and as tourism venues. Within the last five years significant investment has been made at all three forests, and purpose made cycling trails at Castlewellan and Rostrevor have resulted in South Down becoming a widely recognised venue for mountain bikers. There are ongoing discussions with Newry Mourne and Down District Council to consider further developments and a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the Council for this. Post 2000 AD a series of recreational developments at Silent Valley has been progressed by the landowner, NI Water, working with Mourne Heritage Trust who are now co-located there with water catchment infrastructure staff. Drumkeeragh Forest remains a popular destination for regular day visitors coming from the surrounding town-lands of Dromara, Ballynahinch and Spa.</p> <p>North Down and Strangford Landscape Unit This Landscape Unit comprises five forests plus some outlying woodland blocks. Castleward, Mount Stewart and Clandeboye were previously private demesnes with long established woodlands and retain many of the built features that gave each one its distinctive character. The first two named forests are owned by the National Trust and have been leased for long terms to Forest Service. Public access at both is managed by NT and these are very popular with day visitors and tourists alike. Investment in trails and associated recreation facilities during the last five years has led to both forests becoming much better used and plans to further improve public access at Mount Stewart demesne are well developed. Clandeboye forest is located wholly within the privately owned estate of the same name. A way-marked trail managed by the Council in agreement with the estate passes through the FS managed area; however, Lease conditions restrict off track public access into the woodlands.</p> <p>Lagan Valley Landscape Unit Two forests, Belvoir Park and Hillsborough Large Park, both formerly private estates now account for well over 450,000 non paying visits annually. Situated within the greater Belfast City and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council areas these forests rate very highly with the public especially for walking, dog walking, running and orienteering. There is easy access at both locations with several well used pedestrian access points, car parking and good public transport links. The Lagan Canal towpath runs adjacent to Belvoir Park Forest and is heavily used by walkers and cyclists, with two bridge crossing points into the forest. Some considerable interest has been expressed in recent years about the possibility of reopening the Lagan Navigation system from Stranmillis Weir at least to Edenderry Village and possibly even further upstream to Union Locks at Lisburn. The position of Belvoir Park Forest, being adjacent to two of the canal locks, would raise its significance as a stopping off point for water based tourism.</p>

<p>Current arrangements and legal agreements</p>	<p>Shooting licenses let for the following forests:</p> <p>Mourne (xxx ha)</p> <p>Sporting rights are owned by Forest Service but not exercised at Hillsborough, Castlewellan, Tollymore, Drumkeeragh and Rostrevor forests.</p> <p>Sporting rights at Hollymount are retained and exercised by previous owner.</p> <p>Licence Agreements and other legal arrangements</p> <p>Operating Licences for 21 years are signed with Newry Mourne & Down District Council for trails and associated recreational facilities at Castlewellan Forest Park and Rostrevor Forest.</p> <p>A tri-partite 20-year Licence agreement has been signed with The National Trust NI and the former Down District Council for operation of multipurpose trails at Castleward Forest.</p> <p>Lease for 25 years signed with Highpoint Adventure Ltd for a building at the Grange in Castlewellan Forest Park. This is used as an outdoor recreation base.</p>
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4.2 Current Facilities

Forest	Camp sites	Trails	Car park	Picnic site	Litter bins	Dog bins	Comments
Belvoir		X	X	X	X	X	Direct links on foot to Lagan Canal Towpath.
Hillsborough		X	X	X	X	X	DCAL managed public fishery (Feb – Nov)
Cairn Wood (Ballysallagh)		X	X		X		Car park adjacent to forest is managed by Council
Castleward		X	X	X	X	X	Public access to the demesne is managed by The National Trust. Multi-purpose trails are operated through a tri-partite legal agreement between Forest Service / Council and The National Trust (NI)
Hollymount							No facilities - public access on foot only. Sporting rights retained by the former owner and are actively managed.
Bohill							No facilities - public access on foot only.
Castlewellan	X	X	X	X	X	X	Forest trails managed by Council under Licence. Core recreation area and car park retained by FS. DCAL managed public fishery (Feb – Nov)
Tollymore	X	X	X	X	X	X	All facilities directly managed by FS.
Mourne							No facilities - public access on foot only.
Drumkeeragh			X				Informal gravel car park for local users.
Rostrevor	X	X	X	X	X	X	Forest trails managed by Council under Licence. Scenic drive and car park retained by FS.
Annalong & Silent Valley		X	X	X	X	X	All public access is managed by NI Water.

Donard		X					Public access on foot only. Glen River Trail is asserted R-O-W leading to Slieve Donard Mtn.
Mount Stewart		X	X	X	X	X	Public access to the demesne is managed by The National Trust (NI).
Narrow Water							No recreation facilities. Right to manage public access in forest retained by The Hall Estate.
Clandeboyne		X					Clandeboyne Way is managed by the Council through agreement with landowner, Clandeboyne Estate Co. <u>No public access</u> into forest areas.

4.3 Management Intentions

Recreation services and facilities	<p>To manage existing recreation services in an affordable way, meeting the expenditure and income requirements of FS 'Memorandum Trading Account'</p> <p>AND</p> <p>To agree longer term arrangements with Councils and others to enhance, create and maintain recreation forest based facilities within the planning review period</p>
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Maintain and improve built Infrastructure	<p>Commercial Recreation</p> <p>Explore opportunities with operational partners to provide the basis for capital investment to improve management & provision of caravan / camping services at Tollymore and Castlewellan Forest Parks and at Rostrevor Forest.</p> <p>Non Commercial Recreation</p> <p>Explore opportunities for operational partnerships to develop outdoor recreation facilities, for example walking and cycling; particularly where these tie in with other objectives, such as the Mourne Access Plan.</p> <p>The active involvement of community associations, including volunteers, will be encouraged to improve 'local ownership' of forests and to enhance the social and public health benefits this can deliver.</p> <p>Developing Access and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Newry Mourne & Down District Council and The National Trust to develop further partnership arrangements for the improvement, management and maintenance of trails and associated recreation facilities at Mount Stewart, Drumkeeragh, Castlewellan, Tollymore, Donard, Mourne and Rostrevor forests. • Seek suitable partners to secure long term use of built infrastructure that has been substantially improved through the Forestry Fund at Tollymore and Castlewellan Forest Parks. • Work with Belfast City Council and Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council to consider public access trails and other recreational developments that can be sustainably delivered at Belvoir Park and Hillsborough forests. <p>Interpretation and Community Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify alternative methods of delivering forest based education at Down forests making best use of existing built infrastructure.
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5.1 WOODLAND MANAGEMENT

Long Term Policy for the Mourne Landscape Unit																																																																															
Woodland	<p>Mourne LU must meet the requirements of at least two species site under UKWAS 3.3.2.</p> <p>We propose that the future make up of the forest should be as follows.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Total Area</th> <th style="text-align: right;">4256.43</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Area</th> <th style="text-align: left;">%</th> <th></th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Primary Species</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1155.05</td> <td>27.14%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Species</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1765.46</td> <td>41.48%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Native Woodland</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">278.58</td> <td>6.54%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open Space</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">971.03</td> <td>22.81%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">777.03</td> <td style="text-align: right;">80.02%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">21.18</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2.18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">136.64</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14.07%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">36.16</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.72%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natural Reserve</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">33.25</td> <td>0.78%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.01%</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">58.36</td> <td>1.37%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting Replant</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td>0.00%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting New Regeneration</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td>0.00%</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This represents no significant change from the current status.</p>	Total Area	4256.43	Area	%			Primary Species		1155.05	27.14%			Secondary Species		1765.46	41.48%			Native Woodland		278.58	6.54%			Open Space		971.03	22.81%							777.03	80.02%					21.18	2.18%					136.64	14.07%					36.16	3.72%	Natural Reserve		33.25	0.78%	1.01%		Water		58.36	1.37%			Awaiting Replant		0	0.00%			Awaiting New Regeneration		0	0.00%		
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Silviculture	<p>Timber production will come from clearfelling & thinnings (conventional & LISS).</p> <p>We propose that 1,680 ha (51%) of Mourne LU is suitable for thinning. A stocking density of 2,500 stems per hectare is proposed for the re-establishment of these areas.</p> <p>We propose to increase the area classified as LISS to 718 ha in Mourne LU.</p> <p>Fell dates have been applied to maintain a wide age class distribution across Mourne LU with many areas have extended fell dates and growing stock well beyond economic maturity.</p> <p>Broadleaved areas should be allowed to regenerate naturally where practical however in some of the LISS areas planting will be required. The species will follow the regeneration layer.</p> <p>Control programmes will be required for controlling the spread of grey squirrels and both red & fallow deer where they pose a threat to woodland management objectives.</p>																																																																														

Current Status

Area

Mourne Landscape Unit comprises of two forests totalling 4256 ha and is part of the Down Management Planning Unit.

Forest	Area (Ha)
Annalong	341.78
Bohill	90.45
Castlewellan	637.78
Donard	296.78
Drumkeeragh	200.31
Mourne	250.56
Narrow Water	138.41
Rostrevor	1676.39
Tollymore	623.99
Total	4256.45

Location

All forests are located in with the Mourne AONB with the exception of Bohill.

Ownership

A legal summary for each forest is contained within the Forest Folder.

All land is owned by the Department except

Annalong	238.80ha & 28.70ha in Annalong & Silent Valley managed by an agreement with NI Water
Bohill	68.2ha in Tievenadarragh, Bohill Wood and Drumsade (Eleven acres Woods) leased from Mr Desmond C Forde to the Department dated 24/06/59 for 150 years.(effective from 01/11/58)
Castlewellan	UR 08/05/28 (124.9ha) Land leased from Annesley Estate to the Department see lease dated 8 May 1928 for 210 years. UR 29/03/63 (20.2ha) Land leased from Annesley Estate to the Department see lease dated 29 June 1963 for 210 years. UR 26/06/61 (5.38ha) Land leased from Ulster Transport Authority
Donard	All land is leased from GF Annesley
Mourne	16.7 ha at Spelga, which is managed on behalf of NI Water Ltd
Narrow Water	All land is leased from The Hall Estate
Tollymore	UR (22/09/1978) Fofanny managed by an agreement with NI Water

Buildings

There are premises within the Forests below:

Annalong	Rourkes Cottage	Disused Cottage
Castlewellan	Grange Yard	Forest Office, Cafe (leased), leased offices & sheds
	Annlesley Garden; Bothy Yard Garden Cottage Castlewellan Castle	
Mourne	Whitewater Cottage	Disused Cottage
Rostrevor	Office Building & Store	

Operational issues	<p>Tollymore</p> <p>Clanbrassil Barn Top Yard & Stores Jackie's Cottage Bottom Yard & Stores Former Tea House Toilet Block 3 Ablution Blocks</p> <p>Carpark Caravan sites</p>															
	<p>Within the period of this plan harvesting interventions due in all forests.</p> <p>Based on our proposals timber productivity will in the region of 650,000m³ over the next 20 years, with 30% of this production coming from thinning produce.</p> <p>Past production figures for the period 2010 – 2014 were 105,549 m³ (237.9ha) of clearfell and 10,667 m³ (113ha) of thinning.</p> <div data-bbox="517 712 1377 1014" data-label="Figure"> <table border="1"> <caption>Mourne LU Proposed Clearfell Areas (ha)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Period</th> <th>Proposed Clearfell Area (ha)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2015 - 2019</td> <td>180</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020 - 2024</td> <td>90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2025 - 2029</td> <td>260</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2030 - 2034</td> <td>270</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2035 - 2039</td> <td>160</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2040 - 2044</td> <td>260</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2045 - 2049</td> <td>180</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <p>The proposed felling programme should be treated as indicative only.</p> <p>P Ramorum</p> <p>P Ramorum has been confirmed in larch species within Mourne LU since 2011. Japanese larch & hybrid larch have been removed from Bohill, Castlewellan, Donard, Tollymore and Narrow Water Forests.</p> <p>Larch is the main species or a component of the species composition in 470 ha of the total planted area in Mourne LU 15% of total species in the Landscape Unit</p> <p>Invasive Species</p> <p>Non-native invasive species will be required to be controlled within the period.</p>	Period	Proposed Clearfell Area (ha)	2015 - 2019	180	2020 - 2024	90	2025 - 2029	260	2030 - 2034	270	2035 - 2039	160	2040 - 2044	260	2045 - 2049
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2015 Review	Outcome of Proposals
<p>Land Use</p> <p>Production</p> <p>Continuous Cover</p> <p>Regeneration</p>	<p>No significant change in Land Use</p> <p>2015 - 19</p> <p>Clearfell</p> <p>189ha to be felled with an estimated volume of 95,850m³. This is reduced from previously approved 469ha. All coupes UKWAS compliant with the exception of a coupe in Rostrevor which will be felled in response to fire damage.</p> <p>Thinning 820ha identified as the potential to be thinned with an associated estimated volume 28,000m³ of timber</p> <p>Additional areas of LISS have been identified in Castlewellan, Tollymore, Donard, Rostrevor and Narrow Water Forests.</p> <p>To re-generate 220ha of conifer species on clearfell sites by planting. To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration.</p>
<p>Forest Operations</p>	<p>Forest Operations</p> <p>Control of Invasive Species.</p> <p>Grey Squirrels</p> <p>A control programme may be required within to protect broadleaf crops in Castlewellan, Tollymore and Narrow Water.</p> <p>Laurel & Rhodendron</p> <p>A control programme is ongoing in Donard, Tollymore, Castlewellan and Narrow Water. It is expected that this will be required over the period of the plan.</p> <p>Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam</p> <p>A control programme will be required across the landscape unit if Knotweed is reported to prevent spread.</p> <p>Clearfelling</p> <p>It is proposed that the clearfelling for the period of this plan is amended from 469ha to 189ha.</p> <p>The main factor contributing to this is extending the areas managed under LISS as well extending rotation lengths across the landscape unit where practical to do so.</p>

Felling Plans

Fell Date	2015 (ha)	2016 (ha)	2017 (ha)	2018 (ha)	2019 (ha)	Total (ha)
Annalong	4.59				6.87	11.46
Drumkeeragh		34.66				34.66
Mourne			13.8			17.65
Rostrevor		52.96				52.96
Bohill		13.17				13.17
Tollymore		27.65				27.65
Castlewellan		30.81	7.29			38.1
Totals	4.59	159.25	21.09		6.87	191.80

Thinning

Thinning is planned within the period in the following forests

	2015 (ha)	2016 (ha)	2017 (ha)	2018 (ha)	2019 (ha)	Total (ha)
Castlewellan				76.59	10.78	87.37
Donard		38.28				38.28
Mourne		69.87	22.44			92.31
Narrow Water			87.78			87.78
Rostrevor			237.73			237.73
Tollymore		235.69	46.89			282.58
Grand Total		333.36	394.84	76.59	10.78	826.5

Regeneration

During the period 260 ha are proposed to be regenerated with 220 ha of these being replanted with conifer species. Primary species, secondary species, open ground, natural reserves and native broadleaves are identified within the Forest Design and Forest Regeneration layers in HELIX . It may be necessary to provide protection from deer in Tollymore and Donard forests.

5.2 Woodland Management

Long Term Policy for the North Down & Strangford Landscape Unit																																											
Woodland	<p>North Down & Strangford LU must meet the requirements of at least two species site under UKWAS 3.3.2.</p> <p>We propose that the future make up of the forest should be as follows.</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Total Area</th> <th colspan="2">546.79</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Area</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Primary Species</td> <td>24.97</td> <td>4.57%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Species</td> <td>329.36</td> <td>60.24%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Native Woodland</td> <td>151.93</td> <td>27.79%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open Space</td> <td>29.86</td> <td>5.46%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Environmental Protection & Enhancement</td> <td>12.37 29.59%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Infrastructure & Development</td> <td>8.05 19.26%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Production Forestry</td> <td>9.37 22.42%</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Recreation & Social Use</td> <td>0.07 0.17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natural Reserve</td> <td>6.54</td> <td>1.20% 1.27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water</td> <td>4.69</td> <td>0.86%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting Replant</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting New Regeneration</td> <td>0</td> <td>0.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Total Area	546.79			Area	%	Primary Species	24.97	4.57%	Secondary Species	329.36	60.24%	Native Woodland	151.93	27.79%	Open Space	29.86	5.46%		Environmental Protection & Enhancement	12.37 29.59%		Infrastructure & Development	8.05 19.26%		Production Forestry	9.37 22.42%		Recreation & Social Use	0.07 0.17%	Natural Reserve	6.54	1.20% 1.27%	Water	4.69	0.86%	Awaiting Replant	0	0.00%	Awaiting New Regeneration	0	0.00%
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Silviculture	<p>This represents no significant change from the current status. The NI Water controlled reservoirs in Ballysallagh account for an additional area 30 ha of open space contiguous with the forest meeting the UKWAS requirement for open space in North Down & Strangford LU.</p> <p>Timber production will come from clearfelling & thinnings (conventional & LISS).</p> <p>We propose that 386ha (71%) of North Down & Strangford LU is suitable for thinning. Over 65% of these areas will be classified as LISS. A stocking density of 2,500 stems per hectare is proposed for the re-establishment of areas not classified as LISS</p> <p>We propose that 245 ha of North Down & Strangford LU is classified as LISS.</p> <p>Fell dates have been applied to maintain a wide age class distribution across North Down & Strangford LU.</p> <p>Broadleaved areas should be allowed to regenerate naturally.</p> <p>Control programmes may be required for controlling the spread of non native species (deer & squirrels) where they pose a threat to production of quality timber.</p>																																										

Current Status

Area

North Down & Strangford Landscape Unit comprises of five forests totalling 547ha and is part of the Down Management Planning Unit.

Forest	Area (Ha)
Ballysallagh	161.63
Castleward	75.27
Clandeboye	101.45
Hollymount	110.94
Mount Stewart	97.50
Total	546.97

Location

All forest are situated in North Down and the Strangford Lough catchments.

Ownership

A legal summary for each forest is contained within the Forest Folder.

All land is owned by the Department except for:

Ballysallagh	34.0Ha is leased from NI Water Ltd (formerly Holywood Urban District Council) by Lease dated 23/06/65 and 116.55Ha is owned by NI Water Ltd but managed by the Department under 1978 Exchange of Letters.
Castleward	185 acres are held under Surrender and Grant in Perpetuity dated 25/02/72.
Clandeboye	All land is leased from the Clandeboye Estate Co by way of a 150 year lease dated 29/12/78, except Portavoe which is owned by NI Water Ltd and managed by DARD under 1978 Exchange of Letters
Mount Stewart	All land is leased from The National Trust lease dated 26/06/1968 (effective from 04/08/1964) for 150 years

Operational issues

Within the period of this plan there are no clearfell interventions due with thinning planned for Hollymount and Mount Stewart forests.

Based on our proposals timber productivity will be in the region of 30,000m³ over the next 20 years, with 30% of this production coming from thinning operations.

Past production figures for the period 2010 – 2014 were 15,159m³ (45ha) of clearfell and 303m³ (9ha) of thinnings.

The proposed felling programme should be treated as indicative only.

P Ramorum

P Ramorum has been confirmed in larch species within North Down & Strangford LU. Felling has taken place in Ballysallagh and larch remains as the main species or a component of the species composition in 62ha of the total planted area in North Down & Strangford LU 13% of total species composition.

Invasive Species

Non-native invasive species will be required to be controlled within the period.

2015 Review	Outcome of Proposals
<p>Land Use</p> <p>Production</p> <p>Continuous Cover</p> <p>Regeneration</p>	<p>No significant change in Land Use</p> <p>2015 - 19</p> <p>Clearfell</p> <p>No clearfelling is proposed within the period.</p> <p>This is reduced from previously approved 68ha</p> <p>Thinning</p> <p>115ha have been identified for thinning within the planning period in Hollymount and Mount Stewart forests.</p> <p>An additional area of 114ha to have a LISS classification.</p> <p>To re-generate 8 ha of conifer species on clearfell sites by planting. To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration.</p>

<p>Forest Operations</p>	<p>Forest Operations</p> <p>Control of Invasive Species.</p> <p>Deer Fallow Deer are present in Clandeboye forest. Munjac have been found in Mount Stewart. At present there is little or no damage to crops and the population will require monitoring to prevent damage.</p> <p>Grey Squirrels A control programme may be required within Ballysallagh to protect broadleaf crops.</p> <p>Laurel & Rhondendron A control programme is ongoing in Mount Stewart. It is expected that this will be required over the period of the plan.</p> <p>Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam A control programme will be required across the landscape unit if Knotweed is reported to prevent spread.</p> <p>Clearfelling It is proposed that there are no clearfells within the period of this plan this is reduced from previously approved 68ha. The main factor contributing to this is the impact of P Ramorum within the Landscape Unit resulting in clearfelling in Ballysallagh.</p>
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Felling Plans

No clearfelling is planned within the period.

Full details are given in

Thinning

Thinning is planned within the period in the following forests

Fell Date	2015 (ha)	2016 (ha)	2017 (ha)	2018 (ha)	2019 (ha)	Total (ha)
Hollymount					40.05	40.05
Mount Stewart				73.43		73.43
Grand Total				73.43	40.73	114.16

Regeneration

During the period 23 hectares are proposed to be regenerated with 60% of this are being regenerated with broadleaf species. Primary species, secondary species, open ground, natural reserves and native broadleaves are identified within the Forest Design and Forest Regeneration layers in HELIX .

5.3 Woodland Management

Long Term Policy for the Lagan Valley Landscape Unit																																																					
Woodland	<p>Lagan Valley LU must meet the requirements of at least two species site under UKWAS 3.3.2.</p> <p>We propose that the future make up of the forest should be as follows.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Total Area</th> <th style="text-align: right;">286.41</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Area</th> <th style="text-align: right;">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Primary Species</td> <td style="text-align: right;">21.47</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">7.49%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary Species</td> <td style="text-align: right;">167.76</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">58.55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Native Woodland</td> <td style="text-align: right;">50.17</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">17.51%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Open Space</td> <td style="text-align: right;">27.12</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">9.46%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Environmental Protection & Enhancement</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4.35</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">16.30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Infrastructure & Development</td> <td style="text-align: right;">6.03</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">22.60%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Production Forestry</td> <td style="text-align: right;">15.69</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">58.81%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Recreation & Social Use</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.05</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.94%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natural Reserve</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4.79</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.67%</td> <td style="text-align: right; color: red;">1.84%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water</td> <td style="text-align: right;">15.33</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">5.35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting Replant</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Awaiting New Regeneration</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0.00%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Total Area	286.41	Area	%	Primary Species	21.47		7.49%	Secondary Species	167.76		58.55%	Native Woodland	50.17		17.51%	Open Space	27.12		9.46%	Environmental Protection & Enhancement	4.35		16.30%	Infrastructure & Development	6.03		22.60%	Production Forestry	15.69		58.81%	Recreation & Social Use	1.05		3.94%	Natural Reserve	4.79	1.67%	1.84%	Water	15.33		5.35%	Awaiting Replant	0		0.00%	Awaiting New Regeneration	0		0.00%
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Water	15.33		5.35%																																																		
Awaiting Replant	0		0.00%																																																		
Awaiting New Regeneration	0		0.00%																																																		
Silviculture	<p>This represents no significant change from the current status. The AFBI controlled Farmland in Hillsborough account for an additional area 2.5 ha of open space contiguous with the forest meeting the UKWAS requirement for open space in Lagan Valley LU..</p> <p>Timber production will come from thinnings over the period of the plan.</p> <p>We propose that 196 ha (68%) of Lagan Valley LU is suitable for thinning Over 44% of these areas will be classified as LISS. A stocking density of 2,500 stems per hectare is proposed for the re-establishment of areas not classified as LISS.</p> <p>We propose that 95ha of Lagan Valley LU is classified as LISS.</p> <p>Fell dates have been applied to maintain a wide age class distribution across Lagan Valley LU.</p> <p>Broadleaved areas should be allowed to regenerate naturally. In Belvoir following clearfelling due to P Ramorum the areas will be allowed to regenerate naturally. Oak is the preferred species and some small groups will be planted.</p> <p>Control programmes may be required for controlling the spread of non native species where they pose a threat to production of quality timber. There will also be a requirement to control invasive flora such as rhododendron and laurel in both Belvoir & Hillsborough.</p>																																																				

Current Status

Area

Lagan Valley Landscape Unit comprises of two forests totalling 286ha and is part of the Down Management Planning Unit.

Forest	Area (Ha)
Belvoir	92.97
Hillsborough	193.54
Grand Total	286.41

Location

All forest are situated in the Lagan Valley

Ownership

A legal summary for each forest is contained within the Forest Folder.
All areas are owned by FS except: -

Belvoir	UR Land 20/11/83 (effective from 01/11/83) at Belvoir which is leased on a 10,000-year lease from Northern Ireland Housing Executive but hereafter referred to as owned
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Buildings

There are premises within the Forests below:

- Belvoir – Forest Offices, Exhibition Hall, Conference Room
Offices leased to RSPB
Hillsborough – Forest store & Disused workshop

Operational issues

Within the period of this plan thinning interventions due Belvoir.

Based on our proposals timber productivity will in the region of 27,100m³ over the next 20 years, with 52% of this production coming from thinning produce.

Past production figures for the period 2010 – 2014 were 5,463m³ (25ha) of clearfell and 1,887 m³ of thinnings.

The proposed felling programme should be treated as indicative only.

P Ramorum

Felling took place in 2014 in Belvoir as a result of P Ramorum infection. All Japanese larch has been removed from Belvoir. Larch is the main species or a component of the species composition in 25ha of the total planted area in Lagan Valley LU 9% of total species composition.

Invasive Species

Non-native invasive species will be required to be controlled within the period.

2015 Review	Outcome of Proposals
<p>Land Use</p> <p>Production</p> <p>Continuous Cover</p> <p>Regeneration</p>	<p>No significant change in Land Use</p> <p>2015 - 19</p> <p>Clearfell</p> <p>No clearfelling is proposed within the period.</p> <p>This is reduced from previously approved 8ha</p> <p>Thinning</p> <p>32ha identified as the potential to be thinned with an associated estimated volume 1,200m³ of timber</p> <p>An additional area of 60.39ha to have a LISS classification.</p> <p>To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration in Belvoir. Supplementary planting may be required. There are no areas of conifer regeneration planned within the period</p>
<p>Forest Operations</p>	<p>Forest Operations</p> <p>Control of Invasive Species.</p> <p>Grey Squirrels</p> <p>A control programme may be required within Hillsborough & Belvoir to protect broadleaf crops.</p> <p>Laurel & Rhodendron</p> <p>A control programme is ongoing in Belvoir and Hillsborough. It is expected that this will be required over the period of the plan.</p> <p>Japanese Knotweed & Himalayan Balsam</p> <p>A control programme will be required across the landscape unit if Knotweed is reported to prevent spread.</p> <p>Clearfelling</p> <p>It is proposed that the clearfelling for the period of this plan is amended from 8ha to no clearfelling with the period of the plan.</p> <p>Proposed Felling Plans</p> <p>No clearfelling is planned within the period.</p> <p>Thinning</p> <p>Thinning is planned within the period in the following forests</p>

Fell Date	2015 (ha)	2016 (ha)	2017 (ha)	2018 (ha)	2019 (ha)	Total (ha)
Belvoir				32.87		32.87
Grand Total				32.87		32.87

Regeneration

To re-generate broadleaf species by natural regeneration in Belvoir. Supplementary planting may be required. There are no areas of conifer regeneration planned within the period. Primary species, secondary species, open ground, natural reserves and native broadleaves are identified within the Forest Design and Forest Regeneration layers in HELIX .

6.1 Conservation & Enhancement of the Rural Environment

Long Term Objectives for Mourne Landscape Unit	
Woodland	Within the Mourne LU 24.5% of the area under Forest Service control is managed with conservation as a major objective. It is our proposal to maintain this level of land managed with conservation as a major objective and manage these in accordance with FS and NIEA objectives.
National Designations	There are two internationally designated sites within Mourne LU, Eastern Mourne SAC and Rostrevor Wood SAC. There are five nationally designated sites Castlewellan Lake ASSI, White Water River ASSI, Western Mournes and Kilfeaghan Upper ASSI and Shimma River ASSI.
Native Fauna & Flora	We propose to continue to work with partners in the conservation and enhancement of priority species. Control programmes will be required for controlling the spread of non native species where they pose a threat to priority species and old woods.

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Current Status	
National designations	Forests within Mourne LU have features with an SMR number such as cairns, megalithic tombs etc. These features are listed in the legal summary for each forest.
NI Biodiversity Action Plan	Various mobile species – Irish hare, bats, badgers, Red Squirrels, Red kites, Peregrine falcons and other raptors
UKWAS Reqts	The requirement to manage at least 15% of current rotation, with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective, is being achieved within Mourne LU.

2015 Review	Outcome of Proposals
	<p>To rationalise existing Natural Reserves plans across the Mourne LU.</p> <p>To ensure that areas managed with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective are kept in a favourable condition.</p> <p>To recognise that the requirement to manage at least 15% of the current rotation with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective is being delivered with a contribution from each forest.</p>

Natural Reserve Plans

Following on from the restructuring of areas contained within the Forest Plan, Natural Reserves are proposed to be rationalised within Mourne LU.

It is proposed that the following Natural Reserves are discontinued and PLUO reverts to Productive Forest

Forest	Compartment	Reason
Mourne	Cpts 226 & 227 2.77ha.	Integrate into Productive forest.
Bohill	105 1.53ha	Integrate into Productive forest.
Drumkeeragh	Cpts 506 & 508 3.62ha	Integrate into Productive forest.

It is proposed that the following Natural Reserves are extended in size to rationalise Natural reserves across the landscape unit.

Forest	Compartment	Reason
Annalong	Cpts 103,105,106. 13.91ha	Extend area of existing Natural Reserve.
Castlewellan	Cpt 37 1.36ha	Extend area of existing Natural Reserve.
Castlewellan	Cpt 9 1.72ha	Extend area of existing Natural Reserve.

Natural Reserves are listed in Appendix 4.

Ancient Woodland Inventory

Old woodland sites within Mourne LU have been identified in Bohill and Castlewellan as part of the Forest Service AWIW inventory and survey (2013), carried out in woodlands classified as Ancient Woodland 1 – 3. Widespread threats of shade casting trees were identified in both areas and these are recorded within Helix. There are plans to restore woodlands in Castlewellan and Rostrevor.

Forest	Ancient Woodland (1)	Ancient Woodland (2)	Ancient Woodland (3)
Bohill		6.87	
Castlewellan			73.45
Donard			
Mourne			
Narrow Water			
Rostrevor			
Tollymore			
Grand Total		6.87	73.45

Dead Wood

Deadwood has a high conservation value and is generally present in all afforested areas. We recognise that there is a high demand for fuelwood in Northern Ireland and that this is a limited resource. Therefore we intend to manage our deadwood in line with the “FS Provision of Deadwood Habitat”.

Water Protection

There are two NI Water catchments (Fofanny, Annalong Wood) within Mourne LU.

Mourne LU contains the following Local Management Areas for river catchments; Upper Bann, Carlingford & Newry, South Down, Lagan and Quoile.

Site Designation	Forest	Area (ha)	% Area of LU % Planted Area	Relevant details
SAC	Annalong	77.37	} 2.26 % 2.86%	Eastern Mourne SAC Rostrevor Wood SAC
	Donard	1.88		
	Rostrevor	16.63		
		95.88		
ASSI	Castlewellan	47.07	} 9.08% 11.54%	Castlewellan Lake ASSI White Water River ASSI Western Mournes and Kilfeaghan Upper ASSI Shimma River ASSI
	Mourne	0.45		
	Rostrevor	335.4		
	Tollymore	3.42		
		386.34		
Natural Reserve	Annalong	13.92	} 0.78% 1.01%	
	Castlewellan	9.34		
	Drumkeeragh	4.86		
	Rostrevor	5.17		
		33.29		
LTR	Annalong	4.48	} 1.45% 1.85%	Cpts 305/306 Cpt 103 Cpt 3 Cpt 6 Cpts 6/7 Cpts 83 Cpt 84 Cpt 71 Cpt 97
	Annalong	10.31		
	Mourne	6.45		
	Rostrevor	7.31		
	Rostrevor	9.77		
	Rostrevor	8.78		
	Tollymore	3.31		
	Tollymore	3.86		
	Tollymore	7.65		
		61.92		
Native, Semi Natural Woodland & PAWS Restoration	Tollymore	2.95	} 5.73% 7.31%	
	Annalong	2.31		
	Bohill	93.40		
	Castlewellan	18.26		
	Donard	7.46		
	Drumkeeragh	6.01		
	Mourne	13.84		
	Narrow Water	51.19		
	Rostrevor	49.38		
Tollymore	244.78			
OG Semi Natural Habitat	Annalong	80.76	} 6.32% 7.96%	
	Donard	14.61		
	Rostrevor	173.49		
		268.86		
Deadwood	All forests			The requirement for deadwood is met by 425 hectare of forest identified in Table 1 of the Provision of Deadwood Habitat and an additional 900 hectares of TP 1 plantation. No major changes are planned within the period.
Totals	4256.45 ha 3347.82 ha	1091.07ha	25.63% 32.59%	

6.2 Conservation & Enhancement of the Rural Environment

Long Term Objectives for North Down and Strangford Landscape Unit	
Woodland	<p>Within the North Down and Strangford LU currently 31.66% of the area under Forest Service control is managed with conservation as a major objective.</p> <p>It is our proposal to maintain this level of land managed with conservation as a major objective and manage these in accordance with FS and NIEA objectives.</p>
National Designations	<p>There is one internationally designated site within North Down and Strangford LU, Hollymount SAC.</p>
Native Fauna & Flora	<p>We propose to continue to work with partners in the conservation and enhancement of priority species.</p> <p>Control programmes will be required for controlling the spread of non native species where they pose a threat to priority species and old woods.</p>

Current Status	
Local designations	<p>Forests within North Down and Strangford LU has features with an SMR number such as cairns, megalithic tombs etc. These features are listed in the legal summary for each forest.</p>
NI Biodiversity Action Plan	<p>Various mobile species – Red Squirrels, Irish hare, bats, badgers, raptors</p>
UKWAS Reqts	<p>The requirement to manage at least 15% of current rotation, with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective, is being achieved within North Down and Strangford LU.</p>

2015 Review	Outcome of Proposals
	<p>To rationalise existing Natural Reserves plans across North Down and Strangford LU.</p> <p>To ensure that areas managed with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective are kept in a favourable condition.</p> <p>To recognise that the requirement to manage at least 15% of the current rotation with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective is being delivered with a contribution from each forest.</p>

	<p>Natural Reserve Plans</p> <p>Following on from the restructuring of areas contained within the Forest Plan, Natural Reserves are proposed to be rationalised within North Down and Strangford LU.</p> <p>It is proposed that the following Natural Reserves are discontinued and PLUO reverts to Productive Forest</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="416 1014 1318 1352"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="416 1014 635 1048">Forest</th> <th data-bbox="635 1014 956 1048">Compartment</th> <th data-bbox="956 1014 1318 1048">Reason</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1048 635 1200">Castleward</td> <td data-bbox="635 1048 956 1200">Remove Cpt. 307 5.79ha.</td> <td data-bbox="956 1048 1318 1200">Public pressure due to the introduction of walking and cycling paths</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1200 635 1352">Clandeboye</td> <td data-bbox="635 1200 956 1352">Remove Cpt. 3 2.17ha.</td> <td data-bbox="956 1200 1318 1352">Integrate into Productive forest.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>It is proposed that the following Natural Reserve is adopted and PLUO Changes to Environmental Protection and Enhancement.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="416 1503 1318 1686"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="416 1503 635 1536">Forest</th> <th data-bbox="635 1503 956 1536">Compartment</th> <th data-bbox="956 1503 1318 1536">Reason</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 1536 635 1686">Hollymount</td> <td data-bbox="635 1536 956 1686">Part of Cpt. 602 6.54ha.</td> <td data-bbox="956 1536 1318 1686">Part of existing Hollywood SAC</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Proposed Natural Reserves are listed in Appendix 4.</p>	Forest	Compartment	Reason	Castleward	Remove Cpt. 307 5.79ha.	Public pressure due to the introduction of walking and cycling paths	Clandeboye	Remove Cpt. 3 2.17ha.	Integrate into Productive forest.	Forest	Compartment	Reason	Hollymount	Part of Cpt. 602 6.54ha.	Part of existing Hollywood SAC
Forest	Compartment	Reason														
Castleward	Remove Cpt. 307 5.79ha.	Public pressure due to the introduction of walking and cycling paths														
Clandeboye	Remove Cpt. 3 2.17ha.	Integrate into Productive forest.														
Forest	Compartment	Reason														
Hollymount	Part of Cpt. 602 6.54ha.	Part of existing Hollywood SAC														

Ancient Woodland Inventory

Old woodland sites within North Down and Strangford LU have been identified in Hollymount forest as part of the Forest Service AWIW inventory and survey (2013), carried out in woodlands classified as Ancient Woodland 1 – 3

Forest	Ancient Woodland (1)	Ancient Woodland (2)	Ancient Woodland (3)
Castleward Hollymount Mount Stewart			33.69
Grand Total			33.69

Dead Wood

Deadwood has a high conservation value and is generally present in all afforested areas. We recognise that there is a high demand for fuelwood in Northern Ireland and that this is a limited resource. Therefore we intend to manage our deadwood in line with the “FS Provision of Deadwood Habitat”.

Water Protection

There are no NIW catchment within North Down and Strangford LU.

North Down and Strangford contains the following Local Management Areas for river catchments; Quoile, Strangford and Belfast Lough.

<i>Site Designation</i>	Forest	Area (ha)	% Area of LU % Planted Area	Relevant details
SAC	Hollymount	49.49	9.05% 9.80%	Hollymount SAC
Natural Reserve	Hollymount	6.54	1.20% 1.30%	Part of Hollymount SAC
LTR	Castleward Ballysallagh	13.98 <u>3.47</u> 17.45	3.19% 3.47%	Cpts 301 & 302 Cpt 203
Native, Semi Natural Woodland & PAWS Restoration	Ballysallagh Castleward Clandeboye Hollymount Mount Stewart	37.45 11.41 31.87 6.03 <u>20.60</u> 107.36	19.63% 21.26%	
Deadwood				The requirement for deadwood is met by 173 hectare of forest identified in Table 1 of the Provision of Deadwood Habitat.
Totals	546.79 ha 504.98 ha	174.30 ha	31.61% 34.23%	

6.3 Conservation & Enhancement of the Rural Environment

Long Term Objectives for Lagan Valley Landscape Unit	
Woodland	<p>Within the Lagan LU currently 29.90% of the area under Forest Service control is managed with conservation as a major objective.</p> <p>It is our proposal to maintain this level of land managed with conservation as a major objective and manage these in accordance with FS and NIEA objectives.</p>
National Designations	<p>There is one nationally designated site within Lagan Valley LU, Belvoir ASSI.</p>
Native Fauna & Flora	<p>We propose to continue to work with partners in the conservation and enhancement of priority species.</p> <p>Control programmes will be required for controlling the spread of non native species where they pose a threat to priority species and old woods .</p>

Current Status	
Local designations	<p>Every forest within Lagan Valley LU has features with an SMR number such as cairns, megalithic tombs etc. These features are listed in the legal summary for each forest.</p>
NI Biodiversity Action Plan	<p>Various mobile species – Bats, badgers, raptors</p>
UKWAS Reqts	<p>The requirement to manage at least 15% of current rotation, with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective, is being achieved within Lagan LU.</p>

2015 Review	Outcome of Proposals
	<p>To ensure that areas managed with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective are kept in a favourable condition.</p> <p>To recognise that the requirement to manage at least 15% of the current rotation with conservation and enhancement of biodiversity as a major objective is being delivered with a contribution from each forest.</p> <p>To rationalise existing the Natural Reserve to ensure compliance at landscape level.</p>

	<p>Natural Reserve Plans</p> <p>Following on from the restructuring of areas contained within the Forest Plan, Natural Reserves are proposed to be rationalised within Lagan Valley LU.</p> <p>It is proposed that the following Natural Reserves are discontinued and PLUO reverts to Productive Forest</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="395 913 1299 1115"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="402 920 612 958">Forest</th> <th data-bbox="617 920 938 958">Compartment</th> <th data-bbox="943 920 1292 958">Reason</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="402 965 612 1106">Hillsborough</td> <td data-bbox="617 965 938 1106">Remove Cpts 4 2.17ha.</td> <td data-bbox="943 965 1292 1106">Integrate into Productive forest</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>It is proposed the following Natural Reserve are adopted and PLUO Changes to Environmental Protection and Enhancement.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="395 1234 1299 1406"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="402 1240 612 1279">Forest</th> <th data-bbox="617 1240 938 1279">Compartment</th> <th data-bbox="943 1240 1292 1279">Reason</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="402 1285 612 1400">Hillsborough</td> <td data-bbox="617 1285 938 1400">Cpts 10 & 12 4.79ha.</td> <td data-bbox="943 1285 1292 1400">Developing old woodland and large corridor effect between woodland and farmland for wildlife</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Proposed Natural Reserves are listed in Appendix 4.</p> <p>Ancient Woodland Inventory</p> <p>One old woodland site within Lagan Valley LU has been identified as part of the Forest Service AWIW inventory and survey (2013) carried out in woodlands classified as Ancient Woodland 1 – 3.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="395 1711 1147 1924"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="402 1718 612 1816">Forest</th> <th data-bbox="617 1718 778 1816">Ancient Woodland (1)</th> <th data-bbox="783 1718 944 1816">Ancient Woodland (2)</th> <th data-bbox="949 1718 1141 1816">Ancient Woodland (3)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="402 1823 612 1888">Belvoir Hillsborough</td> <td data-bbox="617 1823 778 1888"></td> <td data-bbox="783 1823 944 1888"></td> <td data-bbox="949 1823 1141 1888">25.19</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="402 1895 612 1917">Grand Total</td> <td data-bbox="617 1895 778 1917"></td> <td data-bbox="783 1895 944 1917"></td> <td data-bbox="949 1895 1141 1917">25.19</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Forest	Compartment	Reason	Hillsborough	Remove Cpts 4 2.17ha.	Integrate into Productive forest	Forest	Compartment	Reason	Hillsborough	Cpts 10 & 12 4.79ha.	Developing old woodland and large corridor effect between woodland and farmland for wildlife	Forest	Ancient Woodland (1)	Ancient Woodland (2)	Ancient Woodland (3)	Belvoir Hillsborough			25.19	Grand Total			25.19
Forest	Compartment	Reason																							
Hillsborough	Remove Cpts 4 2.17ha.	Integrate into Productive forest																							
Forest	Compartment	Reason																							
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Forest	Ancient Woodland (1)	Ancient Woodland (2)	Ancient Woodland (3)																						
Belvoir Hillsborough			25.19																						
Grand Total			25.19																						

	<p>Dead Wood</p> <p>Deadwood has a high conservation value and is generally present in all afforested areas. We recognise that there is a high demand for fuelwood in Northern Ireland and that this is a limited resource. Therefore we intend to manage our deadwood in line with the “FS Provision of Deadwood Habitat”.</p> <p>Water Protection</p> <p>There are no NIW catchments within Lagan Valley LU.</p> <p>Lagan Valley LU contains the following Local Management Area for water; Lagan.</p>
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<i>Site Designation</i>	Forest	Area (ha)	% Area of LU % Planted Area	Relevant details
ASSI	Belvoir	74.19	25.89% 28.70%	Belvoir ASSI
Natural Reserve	Hillsborough	4.57	1.18% 1.28%	
LTR	Belvoir Hillsborough	7.11 } <u>3.17</u> } 10.28	3.60% 3.98%	Cpt 107 Cpt 4
Native, Semi Natural Woodland & PAWS Restoration	Belvoir Hillsborough	23.81 } <u>32.40</u> } 56.21	19.61% 21.75%	
OG Semi Natural Habitat	Belvoir	4.19	1.22% 1.62%	Belvoir Meadow
Water	Hillsborough	14.68	5.12% 5.68%	
Deadwood				The requirement for deadwood is met by 67 hectares of forest identified in Table 1 of the Provision of Deadwood Habitat.
Totals	286.56 ha 258.46 ha	85.36ha	29.90% 33.25%	

**Clearfelling Programme
Mourne LU**

Clearfelling Programme

FOREST	FC_NO	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand Total
Annalong	051/35	1.06							1.06
Annalong	051/32	3.53							3.53
Annalong	051/15					6.87			6.87
Drumkeeragh	043/33		5.99						5.99
Drumkeeragh	043/28		9.73						9.73
Drumkeeragh	043/14		14.78						14.78
Drumkeeragh	043/4		4.16						4.16
Mourne	050/37			13.8					13.8
Rostrevor	048/146		1.9						1.9
Rostrevor	048/154		1.55						1.55
Rostrevor	048/28		46.32						46.32
Rostrevor	048/13		3.19						3.19
Rostrevor	048/166							0.81	0.81
Rostrevor	048/140							10.42	10.42
Rostrevor	048/133							8.54	8.54
Rostrevor	048/127							0.79	0.79
Rostrevor	048/118							3.5	3.5
Rostrevor	048/37							1.15	1.15
Rostrevor	048/31							5.96	5.96
Bohill	044/11						2.39		2.39
Hollymount	132/25						1.01		1.01
Hollymount	132/22						0.35		0.35
Hollymount	132/6								0.29
Tollymore	046/115			0.59					0.59
Tollymore	046/126			6.96					6.96
Tollymore	046/116			20.1					20.1
Grand Total		4.59	159.25	21.09		6.87	3.75	31.17	226.72

**Thinning Programme
Mourne LU**

Forest Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand Total
Annalong						17.87		17.87
Castlewellan				76.59	10.78			87.37
Donard		38.28						38.28
Drumkeeragh							57.63	57.63
Mourne		69.87	22.44					92.31
Narrow Water			87.78					87.78
Rostrevor			237.73					237.73
Tollymore		235.69	46.89					282.58
Grand Total		343.84	394.84	76.59	10.78	17.87	57.63	901.55

**Thinning Programme
North Down & Strangford LU**

Forest Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand Total
Hollymount				40.05				40.05
Mount Stewart					73.43			73.43
Grand Total				40.45	73.43			113.48

**Thinning Programme
North Down & Strangford LU**

Forest Name	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand Total
Belvoir				32.87				32.87
Hillsborough						130.47		130.47
Grand Total				32.87		130.47		163.34

Mourne Landscape Unit

Natural Reserves 2015

Rationale for selection

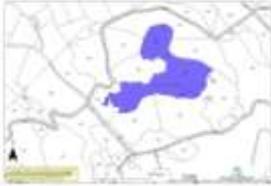
MUST

- Be predominantly wooded with a significant proportion of deadwood, or have the potential to have deadwood created, e.g. by ring barking or selective felling
- Have a high wildlife interest or potential
- Deliver biodiversity benefits without any or only the minimum of intervention

DESIRABLE for them to:

- Be representative of a priority woodland habitat type
- Have a 'corridor of connectivity' with the surrounding countryside and / or
- Reflect features of the local landscape character: eg old farm buildings

Landscape Unit Mourne	Cpt.	Area (ha)	Features of highest biodiversity	Other features	Management interventions / considerations
Annalong 	103 105 106	13.92	Ground vegetation from the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) <i>upland dry heath</i> has begun to colonise the site. Large number of standing dead / dying pine trees with associated fungi, lichens, bryophytes and invertebrate species.	Raptors resident here Red squirrels are resident in the wider forest area. This site offers a potential habitat for red squirrels. Old Quarry remnant of traditional Mourne Quarrying	Maintain a high proportion of deadwood
Rostrevor 	11	5.17	Site is along a watercourse with associated broadleaf species and ground vegetation. There is an extensive age class range within the area with a large proportion of deadwood. This is a very suitable habitat for bird and small mammal species.	Large edge effect with forest drive bordering the majority of the site. Public access is limited due to topography of the site.	Remove invasive non native species Due to it's proximity to the forest drive larger trees must be checked for safety issues where any removal of limbs or trees takes place the wood should be left in situ.

Forest Management Unit	Cpt.	Area (ha)	Features of highest biodiversity	Other features	Management interventions / considerations
Castlewellan 	36 37	6.82	Mixed stand of conifer & broadleaf species with a large percentage of deadwood. The stand has a good edge effect for wildlife	Forms a significantly bio-diverse site within an overall intensively farmed landscape	Control invasive non-native species.
Castlewellan 	9	2.52	Developing birch and rowan woodland. Ground flora is wood sorrel and ferns.	Forms a significantly bio-diverse site within an overall intensive farmed landscape	Control invasive non-native species and reduce unauthorised public access
Drumkeeragh 	506 509	2.04	Wind snapped conifers providing a large volume of both standing a fallen deadwood. The conifers provide perch sites for raptors.	Raptors are known to be resident in the wider area.	Control invasive non-native species and reduce unauthorised public access
Drumkeeragh 	508	2.82	Wind snapped conifers providing a large volume of both standing a fallen deadwood. The conifers provide perch sites for raptors.	Colonised with a wide range of native ground flora, including woody scrub species. Site contains derelict stone cottage with former paddock.	Maintain a high proportion of deadwood
Total NR area		33.27	= 1.00% (3348ha planted area)		

Strangford and North Down Landscape Unit

Natural Reserves 2015

Rationale for selection

MUST

- Be predominantly wooded with a significant proportion of deadwood, or have the potential to have deadwood created, e.g. by ring barking or selective felling
- Have a high wildlife interest or potential
- Deliver biodiversity benefits without any or only the minimum of intervention

DESIRABLE for them to:

- Be representative of a priority woodland habitat type
- Have a 'corridor of connectivity' with the surrounding countryside and / or
- Reflect features of the local landscape character: eg old farm buildings

Landscape Unit Strangford and North Down	Cpt.	Area (ha)	Features of highest biodiversity	Other features	Management interventions / considerations
Hollymount 	602	6.54	Part of Hollymount SAC.		Control invasive non-native species and reduce unauthorised public access
Total NR area		4.79	1.85% (Planted Area)		

Lagan Valley Landscape Unit – Natural Reserves 2014

Rationale for selection

MUST

- Be predominantly wooded with a significant proportion of deadwood, or have the potential to have deadwood created, e.g. by ring barking or selective felling
- Have a high wildlife interest or potential
- Deliver biodiversity benefits without any or only the minimum of intervention

DESIRABLE for them to:

- Be representative of a priority woodland habitat type
- Have a 'corridor of connectivity' with the surrounding countryside and / or
- Reflect features of the local landscape character: eg old farm buildings

Landscape Unit Lagan Valley	Cpts.	Area (ha)	Features of highest biodiversity	Other features	Management interventions / considerations
Hillsborough 	10 & 12	4.79	Area of mixed woodland. Large corridor effect with the surrounding countryside.	Native tree species, e.g. rowan, ash, holly are self seeding across a large part of the site.	Maintain a high proportion of deadwood whilst site transitions to majority native broadleaves.
Total NR area		4.79	1.85% (Planted Area)		

Glossary of Terms

Ancient woodland	An Ancient Woodland Site must be shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey maps (produced in 1830), and have been semi-natural at that time. Furthermore, tree cover will have been maintained from 1830 to the present day.
Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)	A statutory designation in Northern Ireland that offers statutory protection to habitats and species.
Biodiversity Action Plan(s)	The UK Biodiversity Action Plan sets out a programme of action to conserve and enhance biological diversity throughout the UK. It includes action plans for key habitats and species, and cross-sectoral programmes to encourage biodiversity conservation within all land uses and businesses. Local Biodiversity Action Plans integrate these measures at a local or regional level e.g. Northern Ireland Biodiversity Action Plan.
Clearfelling	The complete cutting down of an area of woodland. Sometimes a scatter or small clumps of trees may be left standing within the felled area.
Coppice	Management based on regeneration by re-growth from cut stumps (coppice stools). The same stool is used through several cycles of cutting and re-growth.
Coupe	An area of woodland that has been or is planned for clearfelling.
Deadwood	All types of wood that are dead including whole or wind-snapped standing trees, fallen branch wood and stumps, decaying wood habitats on living trees such as rot holes, dead limbs, decay columns in trunks and limbs, and wood below the ground as roots or stumps.
Design Plan (Forest Design Plan)	Long term outline planting or felling and regeneration plan (20 years or more) which takes account of the environmental characteristics of the woodland as well as the management of the growing stock.
Invasive (species)	Introduced non-native species which spread readily and dominate native species.
Landscape Character Area	An area of broadly homogeneous landscape character.
Long-term retention	Trees retained for environmental benefit significantly beyond the

(LTR)	age or size generally adopted by the woodland enterprise.
Lower impact silvicultural systems (LISS)	Is a term used to describe forest management methods which maintain continuous woodland conditions, rather than periodically removing whole crops of trees as clearfelling systems do. Primarily this is done by manipulating the over-storey through removal of individual trees or small groups, thus controlling the light regime allowing natural regeneration to occur. This gives rise to an uneven aged mixed woodland, where all age classes of tree co-exist within one forest stand.
Minimum intervention	Management with no systematic felling or planting of trees. The only work normally carried out would be fencing, control of exotic plant species and vertebrate pests, maintenance of paths and rides and safety work.
Native (species)	A species that has arrived and inhabited an area naturally, without deliberate assistance by man, or would occur had it not been removed through past management. For trees and shrubs in the UK this is usually taken to mean those species present after post-glacial recolonisation and before historic times.
Natural reserve	Natural reserves are predominantly wooded, are permanently identified and are in locations which are of particularly high wildlife interest or potential. They are managed by minimum intervention unless alternative management has higher conservation or biodiversity value.
Northern Ireland Biodiversity Action Plan	<i>See Biodiversity Action Plan.</i>
Open space	In a woodland this includes streams, ponds and well laid-out roads and rides.
Plantation on ancient woodland site (PAWS)	Most Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) was converted into farmland before 1830. However some areas of ASNW were converted into commercial forest plantations during the 20th Century. These are called Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).
Priority (species)	Priority species were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
Ramsar sites	Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

Regeneration	Renewal of woodland through sowing, planting, or natural regeneration.
Remnant	<p>The baseline of surviving ancient woodland features found in PAWS, for which there is physical or documentary evidence. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland specialist flora. These are species with a strong affinity for ancient woodland but may vary in relation to geographic region • Trees originating from the pre-plantation stand. They can be maidens, standards, coppice stools or pollards and may include ancient or veteran trees • Deadwood originating from the pre-plantation stand, coarse woody debris and associated decomposer communities. <p>These features provide the continuity of habitat with the pre-plantation phase.</p>
Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)	<p>Environment and Heritage Service: Built Heritage maintains the Sites & Monuments Record for Northern Ireland, holding information on approx. 15,000 sites. These range from Mesolithic camp sites, Bronze age landscapes preserved under bog, through the Early Christian monasteries, the castles of the Norman conquest and the defended houses of the Plantation settlers.</p> <p>The NISMR information is used to identify sites and monuments for statutory protection and is also used to identify sites and monuments which are threatened by proposed land-use changes, such as infrastructure and built development, mineral extraction and agricultural projects and forestry schemes.</p>
Semi-natural woodland	Semi-natural woodlands are composed of locally native trees and shrubs which derive from natural regeneration or coppicing rather than planting.
Silviculture (silvicultural)	The techniques of tending and regenerating woodlands, and harvesting their physical products.
Special Area for Conservation (SAC)	Area designated under the EU Habitats and Species Directive.
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Area designated under the EU Birds Directive.
Thinning	A tree removal practice that reduces tree density and competition between trees in a stand. Thinning concentrates growth on fewer, high-quality trees, provides periodic income, and generally enhances tree vigour. Heavy thinning can benefit wildlife through

	the increased growth of ground vegetation.
Veteran tree	A tree that is of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically because of its age, size or condition, including the presence of deadwood micro-habitats.