

*These notes refer to the Forestry Act (Northern Ireland)
2010 (c.10) which received Royal Assent on 28 June 2010*

Forestry Act (Northern Ireland) 2010

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND AND POLICY OBJECTIVES

3. Primary Forestry legislation is contained in the Forestry Act (NI) 1953. The Act is antiquated and reflects a past priority to establish a strategic reserve of timber and to maintain a timber supply. Modern forestry as reflected in the Forestry Strategy - “ Northern Ireland - A Strategy for Sustainability and Growth” recognises that forestry is now a complex and multi-functional enterprise, with increasing economic, social and environmental purposes and benefits. It also recognises that the modern Forest Service must manage these diverse and sometimes competing functions in an integrated and balanced way, and strive to maximise the benefit of the public estate.
4. The Act will carry forward several key existing provisions of the Forestry Act (NI) 1953 which support practical, everyday Forest Service business, but in a wider context. It will also introduce some new powers. As well as the traditional function of the development of afforestation, “forestry” will also include the management of forestry land so as to contribute to the protection of the environment, biodiversity and the mitigation of or adaption to climate change. It will also promote and encourage the enjoyment and recreational use of that land by the public and promote the social benefits of forests. The Department will also be able to use or develop forestry land for a purpose other than forestry, which will allow the Department to develop its land to obtain better value from the public estate - for example to allow for the creation of wind farms or the development of tourist facilities.