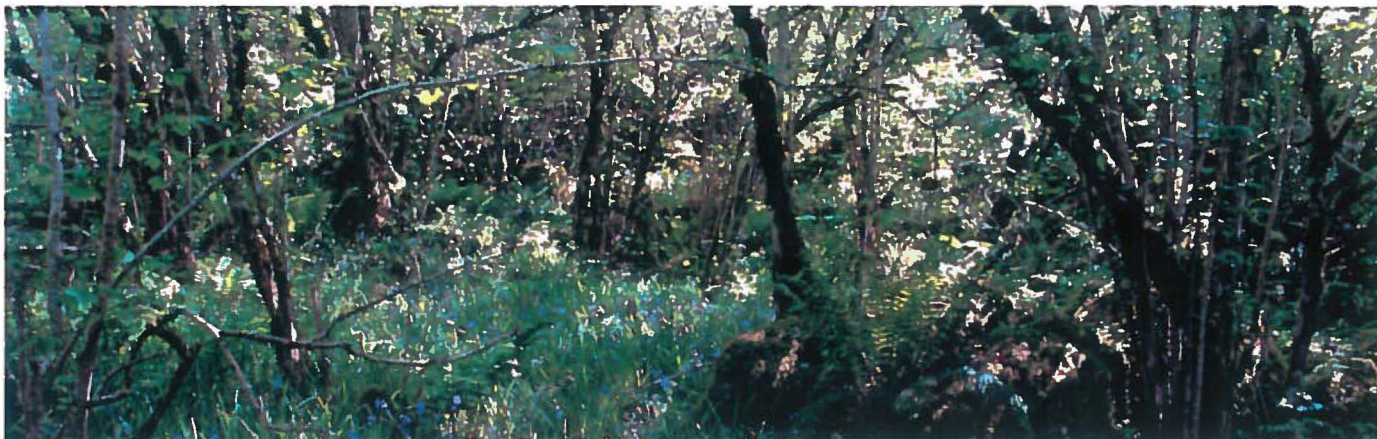


GRANGE WOOD - A SPECIAL PLACE



Moss-covered boulders, Bluebells and ferns beneath the hazel canopy.

In the past, most of Ireland was covered by forest. As agriculture spread, woodlands declined in extent. Today, less than 1% of Northern Ireland has a semi-natural woodland cover, making it one of the least wooded areas in Europe. Woods are not just collections of trees. They also include all the other species that live on and underneath the trees, making woodland one of our most important habitats for our native plants and animals. There are several reasons for this - woodlands have different layers, canopy, shrub layer and ground layer, providing different sources of food and places for wildlife.



Scarlet Elf Cup - a fungus of dead wood

These woodland layers are home to well-known species like flowering plants and birds, and to a range of less conspicuous inhabitants such as mosses, liverworts and lichens. These are well adapted to the moist conditions of woodland. Fungi also commonly occur in woods and are of particular importance because they recycle nutrients from fallen leaves and dead wood. Invertebrates such as insects and spiders are often very abundant in

woodlands. This is in part due to their complex structure, but also because of the accumulation of deep humus-rich soils, moist leaf litter and dead wood. These provide both shelter and food.

Grange Wood is special because it includes a number of different woodland types and as a result, it is particularly rich in woodland plants and animals. It is also important because it includes woodland communities that are not common in the Sperrins region. Part of the wood occurs over an isolated outcrop of Dungiven Limestone. This often comes to the surface, either as exposed rocky outcrops or as boulders, particularly in the upper slopes.

The structure of the woodland and the species that live in it are very variable. This reflects different environmental conditions and past and present management practices. Hazel and Ash dominate the canopy, with Willow and Alder more frequent on the wetter, lower slopes. Guelder Rose, Brambles and ferns are present in the field layer, with a colourful mix of plants on the ground.



Wood Sorrel is common in the ground flora.

This includes typical woodland species such as Bluebell, Lesser Celandine, Enchanter's Nightshade, Bugle, Wood Sorrel, Wood Avens and Wood Speedwell. Mosses and liverworts are particularly abundant on boulders and rocks. Where the soils are wetter, other species such as Creeping Buttercup, Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage and Meadowsweet occur.



Guelder Rose occurs in the shrub layer at Grange Wood.

Woods take a very long time to develop into mature systems because they have a complex structure and many of the plants are slow to grow and spread. It is therefore vitally important that all remaining areas of woodland are maintained and encouraged to regenerate. Environment and Heritage Service aims to work with landowners to ensure that special woods like Grange are protected for the future.



ENVIRONMENT
AND HERITAGE
SERVICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

DECLARATION OF AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST AT GRANGE WOOD, COUNTY TYRONE. ARTICLE 24 OF THE NATURE CONSERVATION AND AMENITY LANDS (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1985.

The Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland (the Department), having consulted the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside and being satisfied that the area described and delineated on the attached map (the area) is of special scientific interest by reason of the flora and fauna and accordingly needs to be specially protected, hereby declares the area to be an area of special scientific interest to be known as the "Grange Wood Area of Special Scientific Interest".

The area is of special scientific interest because of its woodland flora and fauna. Grange Wood has a range of woodland vegetation types, including base-rich woodland communities that are more characteristic of the Carboniferous limestone rocks of County Fermanagh. Due to the diversity of woodland communities the wood has one of the richest plant assemblages in the Sperrins region.

Grange Wood occurs on the north-eastern flank of Bessy Bell Mountain, partially over an isolated outcrop of Dungiven Limestone, which accounts for its calcareous nature. The limestone is frequently exposed as rocky outcrops and boulders, particularly on the upper slopes, where rocks are interspersed with shallow, stony soils. Deeper pockets of soil are present only in hollows. On the lower slopes, soil depth increases and limestone exposures are less frequent. Streams and rills are particularly abundant in parts of the wood, producing extensive flushing and waterlogging.

The structure and composition of the woodland are very variable and reflect the variation in environmental conditions, in addition to past and present management practices. The canopy is generally dominated by multi-stooped Hazel *Corylus avellana* with occasional tall standards of Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*. On the waterlogged lower slopes these species are partially replaced by Willow *Salix* spp. and Alder *Alnus glutinosa*.

The field layer is composed of occasional Guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus* and a scattered cover of Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and ferns. The ground flora in the upper part of the wood strongly reflects the base-rich conditions here. It is characterised by a carpet of Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, with other species such as Lesser Celandine *Ranunculus ficaria*, Enchanter's-nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, Bugle *Ajuga reptans*, Wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, Wood Avens *Geum urbanum*, Wood Speedwell *Veronica montana* and the moss *Eurhynchium striatum*. One of the most notable features in this part of the wood is the luxuriant growth of mosses and liverworts (bryophytes) on boulders and rocks. Exposed rock faces are carpeted by bryophytes such as *Hylocomium brevirostre* and *Plagiochila asplenioides*. On the lower slopes where the soils are flushed or waterlogged, the ground flora is rich in plants associated with wet woodlands. Stands of Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* and Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, interspersed with Marsh Violet *Viola palustris*, Remote Sedge *Carex remota* and Smooth-stalked Sedge *C. laevigata*.

In addition, Grange Wood supports a range of woodland animals, including a number of breeding bird species.

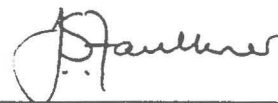
SCHEDULE

The following operations and activities appear to the Department to be likely to damage the flora and fauna of the area:

1. Any activity or operation which involves the damage or disturbance by any means of the surface and subsurface of the land, including ploughing, rotovating, harrowing, reclamation and extraction of minerals, including sand, stone and gravel.
2. Any change in the present annual pattern and intensity of grazing, including any change in the type of livestock used or in supplementary feeding practice.
3. The application of herbicides, fungicides or other chemicals deployed to kill any form of wild plant, other than plants listed as being noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
4. The storage or dumping, spreading or discharge of any material not specified under paragraph (3) above.
5. The destruction, displacement, removal or cutting of any plant, seed or plant remains, other than for plants listed as noxious in the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.
6. The release into the area of any animal (other than in connection with normal grazing practice) or plant. 'Animal' includes birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates; 'Plant' includes seed, fruit or spore.

7. Burning.
8. Changes in tree or woodland management, including afforestation, planting, clearing, selective felling and coppicing.
9. Construction, removal or disturbance of any permanent or temporary structure including building, engineering or other operations.
10. Alteration of natural or man-made features, the clearance of boulders or large stones and grading of rock faces.
11. Operations or activities which would affect wetlands (including marsh, fen, rivers, streams and open water), e.g.
 - (i) change in the methods or frequency of routine drainage maintenance;
 - (ii) modification to the structure of any watercourse;
 - (iii) lowering of the water table, permanently or temporarily;
 - (iv) change in the management of bank-side vegetation.
12. The killing or taking of any wild animal except where such killing or taking is treated as an exception in Articles 5, 6, 11, 17, 20, 21 and 22 of the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.
13. The following activities undertaken in a manner likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area:
 - (i) educational activities;
 - (ii) research activities;
 - (iii) recreational activities;
 - (iv) exercising of animals.
14. Changes in game, waterfowl or fisheries management or fishing or hunting practices.
15. Use of vehicles or craft likely to damage or disturb the wildlife of the area.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the
Department of the Environment for
Northern Ireland on 10 JUNE 1999



Dr J S FAULKNER
Assistant Secretary

FOOTNOTES

- (a) Please note that consent by the Department to any of the operations or activities listed in the Schedule does not constitute planning permission. Where required, planning permission must be applied for in the usual manner to the Department under Part IV of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. Operations or activities covered by planning permission are not normally covered in the list of Notifiable Operations.
- (b) Also note that many of the operations and activities listed in the Schedule are capable of being carried out either on a large scale or in a very small way. While it is impossible to define exactly what is large and what is small, the Department would intend to approach each case in a common sense and practical way. It is very unlikely that small scale operations would give rise for concern and if this was the case the Department would normally give consent, particularly if there is a long history of the operation being undertaken in that precise location.

GRANGE WOOD

Views About Management The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 Article 28(2)

A statement of Environment and Heritage Service's views about the management of Grange Wood Area of Special Scientific Interest ("the ASSI")

This statement represents the views of Environment and Heritage Service about the management of the ASSI for nature conservation. This statement sets out, in principle, our views on how the area's special conservation interest can be conserved and enhanced. Environment and Heritage Service has a duty to notify the owners and occupiers of the ASSI of its views about the management of the land.

Not all of the management principles will be equally appropriate to all parts of the ASSI and there may be other management activities, additional to our current views, which can be beneficial to the conservation and enhancement of the features of interest. It is also very important to recognise that management may need to change with time.

The management views set out below do not constitute consent for any operation or activity. The written consent of Environment and Heritage Service is still required before carrying out any operation or activity likely to damage the features of special interest (see the schedule on pages 2 and 3 of the attached Document B for a list of these operations and activities). Environment and Heritage Service welcomes consultation with owners, occupiers and users of the ASSI to ensure that the management of this area maintains and enhances the features of interest, and to ensure that all necessary prior consents are obtained.

MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Management principles for the Woodland

Mixed ashwood is an important habitat for wildlife. It provides food and shelter for a wide variety of mammals, birds and invertebrates.

Environment and Heritage Service would encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the woodland through the development of its structure and the conservation of its associated native plants and animals.

Specific objectives include:

Encourage the woodland to become more "mature" by avoiding disturbance.
The structure of the wood will gradually become more diverse, with



well-developed canopy, shrub and ground layers, and an abundance of species like Ivy, mosses, liverworts and lichens that live on the trees themselves.

Encourage the retention of dead wood, both on the woodland floor and still standing in the canopy. Dead wood is a very important habitat for some of the less conspicuous woodland species, such as fungi and invertebrates.

Encourage regeneration of woodland through the control of grazing. In general, natural regeneration is preferable to planting.

Discourage non-native species, especially those that tend to spread at the expense of native wildlife.

Ensure that disturbance to the site and its wildlife is minimised.

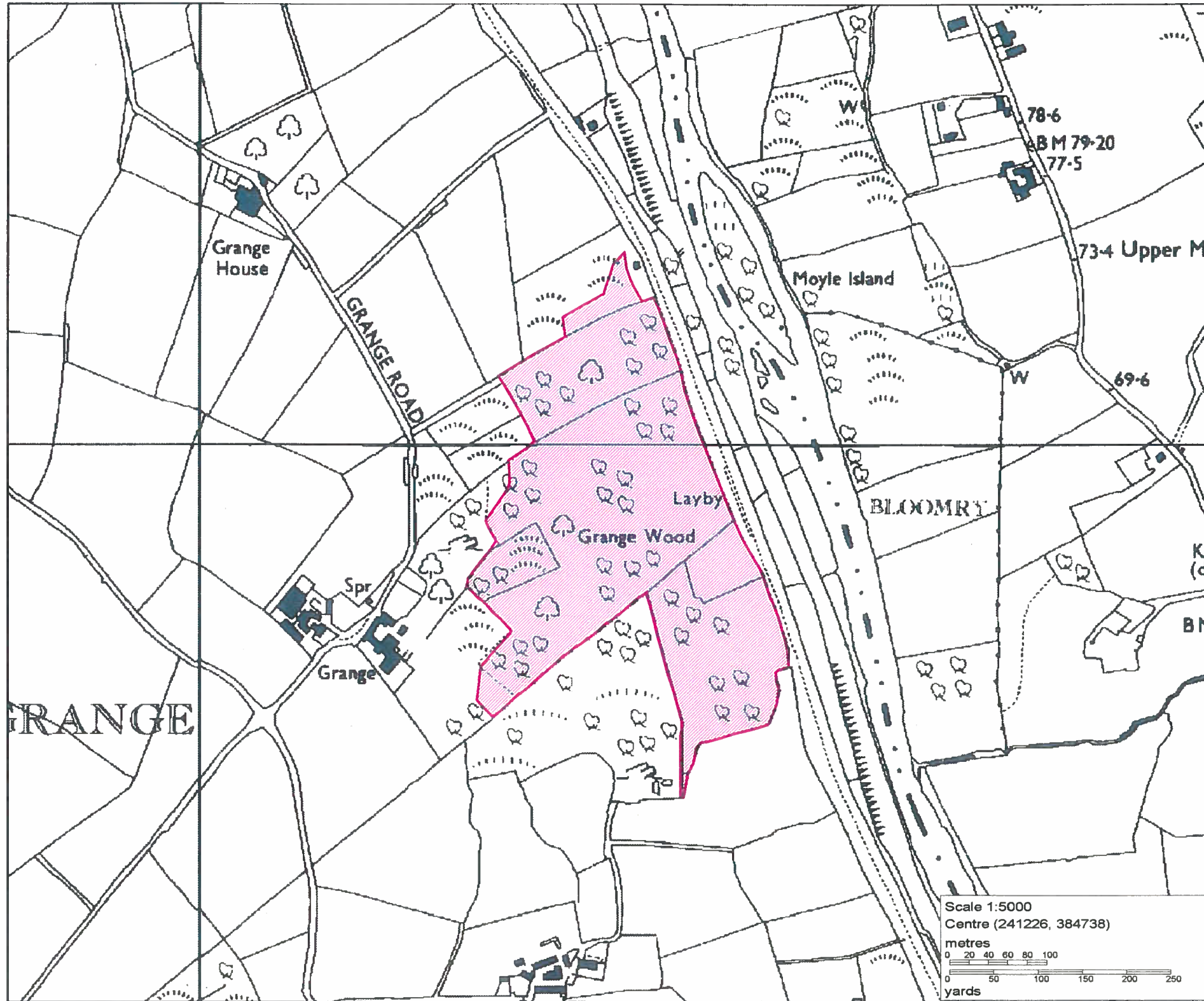
Maintain the diversity and quality of habitats associated with the woodland, such as scrub. These adjoining habitats can often be very important for wildlife.

[Signed by]

G R Seymour
Authorised Officer

Dated the 12th of September 2007

GRANGE WOOD ASSI



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

GRANGE WOOD AREA OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Map referred to in the Declaration dated: 10 JUNE 1999

SITE BOUNDARY: The Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) includes all the lands highlighted within the solid coloured line.

AREA OF SITE: 9.11 hectares

OS MAPS 1:50,000: Sheet No. 12
1:10,000: Sheet No. 104

IRISH GRID REFERENCE: H 412847

COUNCIL AREA: STRABANE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNTY: TYRONE



DR J S FAULKNER
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

