SITE NOTIFIED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THE 29TH NOVEMBER 1988

COUNTY: NORFOLK SITE NAME: SWANTON NOVERS WOODS

DISTRICT: NORTH NORFOLK

Status: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended.

Local Planning Authority: North Norfolk District Council

National Grid Reference:	Barney W	TF 987328	Area: 83.36 (ha.) 205 98 (ac.)
	Guybon's	TG 008333	
	S Gt W	TG 015313	
	Little W	TG 007316	

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: – 1:10,000: TF 93 SE and TG 03 SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1968 (part) Date of Last Revision: –

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1988 Date of Last Revision: –

Other Information:
All four woods have been identified as having key site status (Nature Conservation Review, Ratcliffe 1977). Barney Wood and Guybon's Wood are an extension to the SSSI. Swanton Great Wood, Little Wood and Barney Wood are a National Nature Reserve.

Description and Reasons for Notification:
This site consists of four blocks of ancient woodland, almost certainly all of primary origin. Together they are considered to form one of the most important group of woods in the country, embracing between them an exceptional range of woodland stand-types, several of which are uncommon nationally. The woodland flora is particularly diverse and a number of local and uncommon species occur, including a national rarity. Bryophytes, fungi and epiphytic lichens are well represented with uncommon species present. There is a particularly diverse population of breeding birds and invertebrate fauna is also of considerable interest.

Situated on a plateau of acidic glacial sands and gravels overlying calcareous boulder clay, which reaches the ground surface only locally, the woods are a mixture of high forest and coppice-with-standards, with small blocks of more recent plantation. On the well-drained acid sands plateau oak woodland is present. In Barney, Guybon's and Little Woods pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* is associated with birches *Betula spp* and hazel *Corylus avellana*. In Swanton Great Wood sessile oak *Quercus petraea* is the more abundant. This occurs as high forest stands over a ground flora dominated by Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* or the moss *Leucobryum glaucum*. The natural occurrence of both oak species and the presence of extensive stands of oak coppice under oak stands are both features unique in East Anglia. A large area of sessile oak-lime coppice-with-standards woodland also occurs with a ground flora dominated by dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Other species present include great woodrush *Luzula sylvatica*, lily-of-the-valley *Convallaria majalis* and the nationally rare may lily *Maianthemum bifolium*.