COUNTY: HUMBERSIDE/SOUTH YORKSHIRE
SITE NAME: THORNE, CROWLE AND GOOLE MOOR

DISTRICT: BOOTHFERRY/DONCASTER

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

Local Planning Authority: Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, Boothferry Borough Council

National Grid Reference: SE 730160 **Area:** 1918.6 (ha.) 4740.9 (ac.)

Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000: 112 **1:10,000:** SE 71 NE, NW, SE, SW

Date Notified (Under 1949 Act): 1970 **Date of Last Revision:** 1975

Date Notified (Under 1981 Act): 1986 **Date of Last Revision:** 1986

Other Information:
1) This site Is listed in 'A Nature Conservation Review' (1977) edited by D A Ratcliffe. Cambridge University Press.

2) Part of Crowle Waste is managed as a nature reserve by the Lincolnshire and South Humberside Trust for Nature Conservation.

3) Site boundary changed at renotification by partial deletion and small extension.

4) 1309.1 hectares (3234.7 acres) lie in South Yorkshire and 609.5 hectares (1506.1 acres) lie in Humberside.

Description:
Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors are situated 8km south of Goole, lying between the Aire and Trent. These moors form the largest extent of lowland raised mire in England, even though much modified by peat cutting. The peat deposits are of variable depth, possibly up to 4m and these are underlain by lacustrine clays and silts. The site lies at round 0.5-1m above sea level.

Since the middle of last century commercial peat winning and warping have destroyed the original bog surface of moss hummocks, wet hollows and shallow pools. However, traditional methods of peat extraction have ensured continuity of suitable conditions for the recolonisation by remnants of the original flora and fauna, while fen habits, containing rich assemblages of species, have also developed.

Wet peat cuttings are typically dominated by common cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium* and occasionally soft rush *Juncus effusus* but locally there are carpets of bog mosses *Sphagnum spp* containing species such as cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccus*. The old mire surface between the cuttings is dominated by downy birch, bracken, heather and hare's tail cotton-grass *Eriophorum vaginatum*. Such dry birch communities are particularly well developed in the south-eastern portion of the site, and also occur on warped land (ie land subject to deliberate flooding with river water).

Other habitats, notably the extensive series of canals linking the cuttings, contain a wide range of plant species, including some elements of the original raised mire flora, eg bog rosemary *Andromeda polifolia*, cranberry, royal fern *Osmunda regalis*, sundew *Drosera rotundifolia* and several *Sphagnum* moss species. A number of characteristic fenland plants such as marsh cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*, great fen-sedge *Cladium mariscus* and common reed occur within clay-lined canals while on warped land there is a well

developed fen vegetation containing marsh arrow-grass *Triglochin palustris*, southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* and common meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum*.

Thorne, Crowle and Goole Moors are highly regarded for their invertebrate fauna in particular for insects. They support typical assemblages of peat bog and fen species including several nationally rare as well as local insects such as the bog bush cricket *Metrioptera brachiptera*, the scarce vapourer moth *Orgyia recens*, the bug *Globiceps woodreftei*, and the beetle *Bembidion humerale*. There is also a strong population of large heath butterfly *Coenonympha tullia*.

This site is important for its breeding and wintering, bird populations. Breeding species characteristic of dry scrub and heathland include nightjar, nightingale, woodcock and whinchat while teal, snipe, reed and grasshopper warblers are associated with the wet heath and fen habitats. The breeding population of nightjars on the Moors is of national importance as its numbers regularly exceed 1% of the total British breeding population.