Saham Saga RWE Highgrove update July 2025

It has been a few months since I provided a full update to the on going RWE Highgrove proposal and the last few months I has been assisting Saham, Ashill, Bradenham, Sporle, Wendling, Shipdham, Beeston, Swaffham, the Local Action Group, Breckland and Norfolk Council, MPs and councilors with the response to the Highgrove, Droves, and Shipdham Airfield.

I have visited Brook Farm Battery Farm near Ipswich and visted Rymer Farm Activity Centre, neighbour to the Euston Estate solar farm.

The picture below represent the research from these visits



Next to these battery storage units on Brook Farm the decibel reading was 73 db at midday. RWE proposing the same batteries on their proposal. The noise comes from inverters and coolling fans. There was a 12 high earth groin around the site to reduce noise and beyond 100 metres the sound levels were just birds and bees. 189 battery sites are being proposed around RWE High Grove.



This is a 132MW substation 24 ft high 50mx50m. RWE are proposing 7 across Highgrove. 35 decibel reading.



In the background of this photo is 2 x 420 MW substation 15 m tall and spread across 8 acres. Highgrove is proposing one of these. One is open, one is inside a building.



Euston Estate Solar Farm. The fence in the foreground is 2 metres tall. The solar panels are silence, but the scale is evident. The panels are the same height as a 2 story house.



Rymer farm had a manmade reservoir for water storage and use across the site. No water storage of any kind is currently being proposed across the 4000 acres of RWE Highgrove.



Most residents of Saham will see this view of the panels as the orientation is south facing.

So, finally some pictures to check against all these plans.

We have already detailed changing RWE plans to moves batteries and inverters to over 400 metres from any residents and details extra fire safety procedures as part of the Stage 2 response. Changed trucks routes to avoid the village and limit number and scale on rounds in the local area.

Whether this means real changes to the RWE plans we will have to wait and see.

Nationally there is currently a review of all solar and renewable projects with National Grid. Everyone needs to get their paperwork ducks in a row by the end of July, and in September each project will be allocated Stage 1 or Stage 2 status. Stage 2 do not get a confirmed National Grid connection date, so their business case becomes unviable. Stage 1 get their connection date and they hope to move forward with their projects. The rumour is Highgrove, The Droves and Shipdham Airfield will get Stage 1 status. But nothing is in stone and Orsted walking away from a 2.4GW wind farm at Horsea 4 proves things change in the energy industry even after things are signed off.

Shipdham Airfield battery and solar proposal has just been submitted to local Breckland planning. With a decision by 2026.

The Droves and RWE Highrove will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in November 2025 with a decision by April 2027.

In the meantime please report any bee, birds or bat movements to the local groups as we can only preserve what we know about.

As you can see our beautiful countryside is about to radically change in use and appearance so please enjoy our green space this Summer.