

The Return of Hydropower



CONISTON CASE STUDY



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Project facts:

Head of water: 72m

Length of pipework: 700m

Power produced: 300kW

Time water is out of the beck: 25 seconds

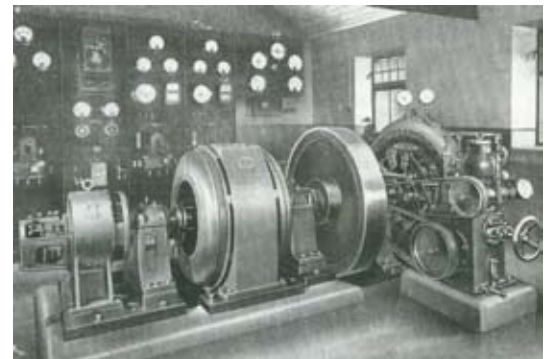
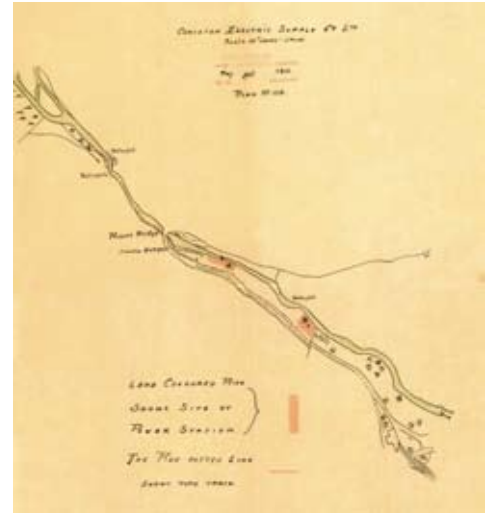
The Coniston Hydro Scheme is on Church Beck, draining the Furness Fells above Coniston, in the Lake District National Park. The site was first developed in 1932 when a single turbine was installed, with a second turbine added in 1937. The installation initially supplied power for Barrow County Council and latterly for the village of Coniston.

This provided power until the mid-1950s when the National Grid was erected through the Lake District, the power station fell into disuse, was decommissioned and the building demolished.

However, a local landowner, Major Hext, had a small 6kW unit in his house. His son, Jonathon, daughter-in-law Sue and a local builder, George Tarr, had a dream to restore the hydro power station.

They started negotiations with other landowners, the Lake District National Park and the appropriate regulatory bodies to install a 300kW scheme, fed with the water from Church Beck.

In 2003 they formed a company, Coniston Hydro Electric Power Co Ltd., with the express intent to restore the generation system. Gilkes became involved as equipment suppliers almost immediately. The system was installed and commissioned in 2007.



Original scheme



Work starting on intake



Further developments during construction of intake

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Pipework installation



Powerhouse construction and turbine during manufacture



Scheme completed