CALVER WEIR RESTORATION PROJECT

by Nick Quaife, Project Officer

GREEN COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE
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The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow
CALVER WEIR RESTORATION PROJECT
location of the project area
The mill and the weir

- Calver Weir is a Scheduled Monument, built in 19th century to provide water for cotton spinning at Calver Mill.
- Two earlier weirs, but neither survive.
- Calver Mill ceased spinning cotton in the 1920’s, by which time the weir was already in a poor state of repair.
- Gas engine used as auxiliary source of power 1899-1920 (Mackenzie, Derbyshire Archaeological Journal vol. 84, 1964).
CALVER WEIR RESTORATION PROJECT
the restoration project

• In 2004, Calver Weir Restoration Project (CWRP) was formed, with the objective of saving the weir from collapse.
• CWRP acquired the weir from private ownership in 2009.
• Restoration work began in October 2009, and completed August 2010.
• Total cost of restoration exceeds £1.8 million, largely funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, but with substantial contributions from English Heritage, Environment Agency, and PDNPA.
CALVER WEIR RESTORATION PROJECT
a hydro scheme at Calver Weir?

• Considered early on in process, but focus then was on urgent repair of the weir.
• Advice given by local planning authority regarding what was/wasn’t acceptable. LPA awaiting future contact.
• Using the power provided by the dammed-back water obvious route to go if a scheme acceptable to all concerned can be devised!
CALVER WEIR RESTORATION PROJECT
a hydro scheme at Calver Mill?

• Old cotton mill constructed in 1804.
• The water that powered the mill still flows through the site’s wheelhouse, which is a potential location for a “micro-hydro” scheme.
• A study of the feasibility of a hydroelectric power scheme at Calver Mill has been undertaken, which suggests that scheme is viable.
Initial feasibility study (Derwent Hydro Scheme Evaluation, A. Higginson, Uni of Notts.) suggests that a waterwheel should be used, with electricity sold to the grid.

A number of option to consider, depending on stakeholder preferences and Environment Agency decisions regarding water abstraction issues….

Capital costs between £92,000 and £132,000

Annual operating profit of between £31,000 and £83,000

Scheme has payback period between 1 and 3.5 years
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acknowledgements for images used

- *Part of 1833 map showing location of old weir* (slide 2): Sheffield Archives Bagshaw Collection Bag C/675

- *B/W photo of Calver Mill, 1956* (slide 5): Reproduced by permission of English Heritage NMR.