

Locomotion No.1

Positive discussions between [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and Darlington Borough Council (DBC) over the autumn. As a result, SMG offered Memorandum of Understanding which included offer of future short-term loans of Locomotion No.1 back to DBC during the period 2025-2030 (including 50:50 share during 20205).

DBC have rejected the MOU as it stands and want us to commit to loan of the vehicle beyond 2030. We believe our MOU offer to be very generous for an SMG owned vehicle. It goes far beyond any arrangements we have with other lenders. We cannot tie the hands of the Museum that far into the future.

The current loan expires at the end of March. Just before Christmas we wrote to DBC to confirm that we will be collecting Locomotion No.1 w/c 22 February. DBC have replied that it will not be possible to collect Locomotion No.1 whilst pandemic restrictions are in place; *and* seeking to extend the current loan for another year.

This is the first indication from DBC that they may not cooperate with collection. Our legal advice is that the pandemic does not change the position in relation to 31 March loan expiration. We have further meetings with DBC later this week, after which we hope they will cooperate with collection. The administration of loans is critical business as usual work which we continue to progress across the group.

Locomotion No.1 – briefing note

A. Timeline of NRM and Darlington Borough Council (DBC) discussions

- 2015 [For context, not to be shared: DBC consider brewery proposal to turn museum space into brewery-restaurant. NRM express serious concerns about conservation of and access to Locomotion No.1. Brewery pull out before matter resolved]
- 2016 Darlington and NRM sign the current loan agreement expiring March 2021
[For context, not to be shared: DBC plan to close Head of Steam as part of series of council cutbacks and inquire about displaying Locomotion No.1 at Darlington station instead. NRM refuse to permit this. DBC find the finances to keep the museum open.]
- Feb 2019 NRM and Darlington Borough Council (DBC) meet at Head of Steam to discuss future plans. NRM advise that Head of Steam re-development should not be based around an object they don't own. This point subsequently highlighted to Darlington's masterplan consultants in visits to NRM.
- Aug 2019 By email correspondence NRM raise question of future of Locomotion No.1
- Sept 2019 DBC and NRM meet at NRM. NRM say that they wish to bring Locomotion No.1 back to SMG at the end of its loan period.
- Oct 2019 DBC and NRM meet at Locomotion. NRM say it is that their intention is to put it on display at Locomotion. DBC say that Locomotion No.1 is critical to their plans and that there will be political consequences if NRM move it elsewhere.
NRM subsequently confirm by email their intention to take back Locomotion. In a phone call DBC say that they will be raising this with local politicians.
- Nov 2019 In reply to an email from DBC, NRM confirm that the loan agreement will expire at the end of March 2021
- 7 Jan 2020 Darlington Cabinet consider report on the Masterplan for Head of Steam. Council approves moving forward to next stage of the development process. The report does not mention Locomotion No.1 nor any other collection item
- 22 Jan 2020 Northern Echo publish story about Locomotion No.1, leading on campaign to keep Locomotion No.1 supported by DBC Leader and Darlington MP. NRM issue press notice. Considerable regional coverage and picked up by some nationals overnight
- 23 Jan 2020 NRM publish blog about significance of Locomotion No.1
<https://blog.railwaymuseum.org.uk/shildon-the-cradle-of-the-railways-and-locomotion-no-1/>
- 30 Jan 2020 At DBC full council meeting Darlington Mayor says "What the National Railway Museum need to know is that they are going to be in a world of pain if they continue to pursue this ill-judged plan".
DBC council pass the following motion:
(a) this Council is outraged by the decision of the National Railway Museum (NRM) to seek to relocate Locomotion No 1 from the Head of Steam Museum in Darlington and relocate it to Shildon;
(b) this Council urges the NRM to reconsider its decision; and
(c) this Council will use all and every means available to it to oppose the decision made by the National Railway Museum
- 3 Feb 2020 [REDACTED] writes to [REDACTED]

B. Positions taken

██████████ ██████	Has strongly supported Darlington campaign, calling the move a kick in the teeth to the bicentennial celebrations.
██████████	Leading campaign, has raised with Culture Secretary and included in Maiden Speech.
██████████	Has expressed public support for Locomotion's development plans generally but does not want to comment on ██████████ ██████/specifics. Visited Locomotion last summer, trying to organise a further visit.

Others

██████████ ██████	██████████ has sought her support directly in a meeting. On advice from DCMS officials, she is remaining neutral.
Durham County council	Leader and senior officers sit on Locomotion Advisory Board and were made aware of our plans at meeting held in September 2019. Head of Locomotion has regular catch-ups with ██████████ and will keep her apprised of plans and developments.
Newcastle partners	Locomotion No. 1 was built in Newcastle. No voices from Newcastle have commented so far. Nor have we approached them.
Shildon partners	Unsurprisingly strong public and private support for NRM from the Town Council and residents' associations
Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway	The Friends are an influential group, fully tied into the planning for the Bicentennial celebrations. Within their group there is disagreement as to whether it is right to move Locomotion no1. Publicly the Friends have adopted a neutral stance.
Friends of the National Railway Museum	The NE Branch of the Friends are publicly supportive as are the main York branch of the Friends.
██████████	Historian and leading authority on early railways. Neutral – says no one place can lay claim to the vehicle.
██████████	Member of Early Railways Conference Committee and consultant on early railways and industrial history. Supportive of NRM position.
██████████	Respected North East Railway Historian. Supportive of NRM position
██████████ ██████████ ██████	Opposes move. Vocal in press and social media. ██████████ is also a trustee of the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust who are based at Darlington North Road and will benefit from new workshops as part of the Darlington masterplan.

C. Lines being taken

The case for Shildon/the region

- The bicentenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway is not just Darlington's story but one that belongs to the region and has national and global impact.
- Under NRM's plans Locomotion No.1 will go on display at the newly expanded Locomotion museum in Shildon. A free museum that receives 200,000 visitors each year.
- Understand Darlington's emotional connection to Locomotion No.1. However, the engine is not owned by Darlington and historically has an unbroken history of railway company ownership, before passing to the National Railway Museum.
- Many locations along the S&DR can rightly claim a connection with Locomotion No.1. But Shildon was the point where history was made when Locomotion No.1 set off on its famous journey.

The loan

- Darlington council signed a legally binding loan agreement to borrow Locomotion No.1 from the National Railway Museum collection; an agreement that is set to expire in March 2021.
 - The long established practice of loaning cultural objects is one that keeps the museum sector functioning, and ensures that access to cultural assets is shared.
- It is extremely unusual for a borrowing museum to publicly challenge an owning museum's decision not to renew a loan. The Council's action may make other organisations less willing to consider loans to Head of Steam in the future.

Working with Darlington

- NRM and Darlington have been working with other partners (under the S&DR Heritage Board) to plan for the 2025 celebrations for a number of years.
- NRM and Darlington have been discussing plans for Locomotion and Head of Steam since February 2019.
- Throughout these discussions NRM have offered to work with the council to provide ongoing assistance to help tell Darlington's Railway story at Head of Steam. Locomotion No.1 is only one of four vehicles (and many other collection items) on loan to Head of Steam from SMG.

D. Rebuttal of historical claims

*Darlington has been **home to Locomotion No.1** for 160 years.*

Locomotion loco was built in Newcastle in 1825, rebuilt at Shildon in 1828, turned into a stationary engine (almost certainly at Shildon) in circa 1849 and restored to its locomotive form at Shildon in 1856-57. It was then put on a plinth at Darlington in 1857.

Whilst Darlington has certainly been its main home since 1857, it is more widely travelled than you may think

- 1876 Philadelphia Exhibition
- 1881 Stephenson centenary celebrations
- 1886 Liverpool exhibition
- 1887 Newcastle Jubilee
- 1889 Paris exhibition (World's Fair)
- 1892 Placed on a pedestal at Darlington Bank Top station
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- 1925 In the cavalcade for the 100th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway
- 1939 Removed to Stanhope for duration of World War II
- 1951 Exhibited in York as part of Festival of Britain
- 1975 Exhibited in Stockton as part of the S&DR 150th anniversary celebrations

***The Pease family** paid for its restoration/wanted it to stay in Darlington/bought it for Darlington*

Locomotion was lent to the Pease family for use in their West Durham colliery as a pumping engine from 1850-1856. It remained the property of the Stockton & Darlington Railway who continued to value it on their books. The Pease family paid £50 to the S&DR but it is uncertain if this was for the 1857 restoration or hire fees whilst at the colliery according to records held at the National Archive.

The Pease family did not purchase the engine. It has an unbroken history of railway company ownership, before passing to the National Railway Museum.

***Darlington money** created Robert Stephenson & Co, so Locomotion No.1 only exists because of Darlington money*

The Pease family from Darlington did put in £1600 to set up Robert Stephenson & Co, but the Stephensons and Michael Longridge from Northumberland put in an additional £2400 between them.

The S&DR was also financed by people from many places with most funding coming from out with the Darlington area. The major single funder was the Norwich banker Joseph Gurney.

LOCOMOTION NO 1

Locomotion No.1 – its significance and connection to Shildon

Locomotion No.1 was the first steam locomotive to haul a passenger carrying train on a public railway – the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR). That journey started, on 27 September 1825, not in Darlington nor Stockton, but in Shildon, approximately 200m from the buildings at the historic end of the Locomotion site.

In 1828 *Locomotion* itself was badly damaged when its boiler exploded, killing its driver John Cree.

Locomotion was rebuilt under Hackworth's supervision at Shildon and its current appearance owes more to this Shildon rebuild than how the locomotive looked on the opening day of the S&DR.

Its connection to Shildon continued throughout its working life. Its base was in Shildon, it was here that it was turned into a stationary engine in c.1849 and restored to its locomotive form in the town in 1856-57. Only after its retirement did it have any connection to Darlington. Further details relating to the connection between the locomotive and Shildon can found in this blog -

<https://blog.railwaymuseum.org.uk/shildon-the-cradle-of-the-railways-and-locomotion-no-1/>

Ownership of Locomotion No 1.

One of the key arguments of the Darlington campaign to keep Locomotion No 1 in the town is that Joseph Pease, a member of the family who helped establish the S&DR, presented the locomotion to the town with the idea that it would stay with the town in perpetuity. This is inaccurate. The records held in the National Archives demonstrate that when it was first put on display (in 1857) Locomotion No.1 was in the ownership of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) and not of any individual or family. Consequently, the decision to display the locomotive was made by the company itself. Ownership then passed to the North Eastern Railway (NER) when the two companies merged in 1863. Unbroken railway ownership was retained when the NER became part of the new London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) in 1923 and then transferred to British Railways (through the British Transport Commission) on railway nationalisation in 1948. The locomotive subsequently passed into the ownership of the Science Museum Group following the Transport Act of 1968.

Location of Locomotion No 1

Following the retirement of the locomotive in 1857, it was restored and put on a plinth at Bank Top station in Darlington where it was looked after and cared for by the owning railway company. However, there is a long and continuous history of the locomotive being loaned to numerous exhibitions in the UK, Europe and North America. Indeed, for the 100th anniversary celebration of the S&DR in 1925, Locomotion No 1 was in Manchester. The locomotive was also moved to Weardale during the Second World War for safe-keeping. Claims that it has been continuously on display in Darlington for the past 163 years are therefore erroneous.

We have always maintained that we understand the emotional connection of Locomotion No 1 to Darlington. This is not in dispute. However, other towns along the 26 mile route of the S&DR also have an emotional attachment to the locomotive, particularly Shildon.

Locomotion No.1 – the loan to Darlington Borough Council

Since 1975 it has been on loan to Head of Steam Museum in Darlington (managed by Darlington Borough Council since 1984). The current loan agreement was signed by Darlington Borough Council in 2016; its term expires on 31 March 2021. Well over a year ago, Science Museum Group indicated to the Council that it did not intend to renew the loan, and formally served notice of this intention in August 2020. SMG loans a significant amount of other objects to Head of Steam, including 3 rail vehicles. We have indicated that we are willing to continue the loan of these objects.

Since January 2020 the Council have led a campaign to overturn SMG's decision not to renew the loan. Darlington Borough Council do not dispute SMG's ownership of the vehicle but have until relatively recently been reluctant to engage with plans to collect the vehicle at the end of the loan term. This situation is unprecedented, and SMG has had to indicate that it will take legal action, if necessary, to secure the return of the vehicle.

Memorandum of Understanding

Although we have been clear that we will not be renewing the loan of Locomotion No.1 to Head of Steam, we have been firmly committed to supporting Darlington Borough Council's plans for the expansion of Head of Steam and have been in an active dialogue with the Leader of the Council to bring this public dispute to an end. As part of this, SMG has offered Darlington Borough Council a Memorandum of Understanding which includes:

- Short-term loans of Locomotion No.1 to Darlington between 2025 (the bicentenary of Locomotion No.1's historic first journey) and 2030
- The extension of the loans for the other 28 SMG collection items on display at Head of Steam for a further eight years to 2029 (this includes *Derwent*, the oldest surviving Darlington-built locomotive)
- Enabling visits to Darlington from Science Museum Group's collection of operating vehicles, such as *Flying Scotsman*.

To date, the offer outlined in the MoU has been rejected by Darlington Borough Council. SMG have also been accused by DBC of being unwilling to compromise when, in fact, the MoU represents significant compromise and a clear indication that we are supportive of their plans for the expansion of Head of Steam and the Rail Heritage Quarter.

Science Museum Group's plans for Locomotion No.1

It is intended that Locomotion No.1 will go on prime display at Locomotion (which, it should be noted, is just 9 miles from Darlington) where it will act as a key object in telling the inspiring global railway story that had such strong roots in Shildon and the wider North East.

The locomotive will also undergo essential hazard remediation works (asbestos) in advance of a detailed 'archaeological' investigation of the vehicle by the world's leading practitioner of such work. This work and subsequent report will reveal so much more about the history of a locomotive that is so well known but so little understood. The report will be shared with all those people and places with an interest in and a connection to Locomotion No.1.

LOCOMOTION NO.1 - BRIEFING NOTE

A. Timeline of NRM Darlington Borough Council and Peter Gibson discussions

2016	Darlington Borough Council (DBC) and NRM sign the current loan agreement expiring March 2021
Feb 2019	NRM and DBC meet at Head of Steam to discuss future plans. NRM advise that Head of Steam re-development should not be based around an object they don't own. This point subsequently highlighted to Darlington's masterplan consultants in visits to NRM.
Aug 2019	By email correspondence NRM raise question of future of Locomotion No.1
Sept 2019	DBC and NRM meet at NRM. NRM say that they wish to bring Locomotion No.1 back to SMG at the end of its loan period.
Oct 2019	<p>DBC and NRM meet at Locomotion. NRM say it is that their intention is to put it on display at Locomotion. DBC say that Locomotion No.1 is critical to their plans and that there will be political consequences if NRM move it elsewhere.</p> <p>NRM subsequently confirm by email their intention to take back Locomotion. In a phone call DBC say that they will be raising this with local politicians.</p>
Nov 2019	In reply to an email from DBC, NRM confirm that the loan agreement will expire at the end of March 2021
7 Jan 2020	DBC Cabinet consider report on the Masterplan for Head of Steam. Council approves moving forward to next stage of the development process. The report does not mention Locomotion No.1 nor any other collection item
22 Jan 2020	Northern Echo publish story about Locomotion No.1, leading on campaign to keep Locomotion No.1 supported by DBC Leader and Darlington MP. NRM issue press notice. Considerable regional coverage and picked up by some nationals overnight
23 Jan 2020	NRM publish blog about significance of Locomotion No.1, available here
30 Jan 2020	<p>At DBC full council meeting Darlington Mayor says "What the National Railway Museum need to know is that they are going to be in a world of pain if they continue to pursue this ill-judged plan".</p> <p>DBC council pass the following motion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) this Council is outraged by the decision of the National Railway Museum (NRM) to seek to relocate Locomotion No 1 from the Head of Steam Museum in Darlington and relocate it to Shildon;(b) this Council urges the NRM to reconsider its decision; and(c) this Council will use all and every means available to it to oppose the decision made by the National Railway Museum
3/6 Feb 2020	██████████ writes to ██████████. ██████████ replies offering a meeting and addressing ██████████ claims around the history of Locomotion No.1.
6 March 2020	NRM meet with ██████████ and ██████████ (██████████ of DBC). All parties agree to work together to find a solution that would enable Head of Steam to best tell the story of engineering and entrepreneurialism in Darlington, including potentially through the use of the working replica Locomotion No 1. All parties agree not to talk about the matter further in public.
11 March	██████████ raises at PMQs, in reply the PM says he will "do what he can" to assist Darlington's campaign

May/June 2020	<p>Three meetings (the latest on 19 June) take place, virtually, between NRM, Head of Steam and DBC officials.</p> <p>All discussions highly constructive and focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of a compelling narrative for Head of Steam that links into the wider Rail Heritage Quarter and Darlington's part in the S&DR story • how the NRM & Locomotion could support this narrative in terms of vehicle loans, object loans, image usage and research • and a joint strategic approach to programming including visits of iconic locomotives from the national collection, including Flying Scotsman. <p>More meetings and a workshop are planned. SMG position on the recall of Locomotion No 1 as the loan period expires also remains unchanged.</p>
Mid-June	██████████ writes to the PM. No.10 reply suggests a meeting with Culture Minister
22 June	DBC submit FOI request to NRM requesting information relating to Locomotion no1 from the last five years. Request is undercover of an email which is positive about continuing to work together in the future
10 July	DBC's Head of Culture contacts ██████████ to say that he has been instructed (by Members) to discontinue work with NRM on Head of Steam redisplay
13 July	<p>██████████ meets with ██████████, Minister of State for Digital and Culture. In that meeting the Minister is clear that SMG is an ALB and minsters will not intervene in such matters. She also encourages ██████████ to take up the offer of a meeting with ██████████.</p> <p>██████████ raises the possibility of Judicial review of SMG's decision, because he does not think it has been taken at the appropriate level within the organisation.</p>
16 July*	██████████ writes to ██████████ (██████████, DBC) expressing disappointment about decision to discontinue work with NRM. His brief reply says that they will not rest until Locomotion No.1 is retained and that they do not want the two issues to "become blurred".
20/23/27 July	Exchange of letters between ██████████ and ██████████ renewing her offer of a meeting and addressing his question as to why SMG Board was not directly involved in decision making around Locomotion No.1.
30 July	<p>DCMS answer PQ from ██████████ as follows</p> <p>Q: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to intervene in the National Railway Museum's decision to move Locomotion No. 1 from Darlington to Shildon.</p> <p>A: The historic locomotive, Locomotion No.1, is owned by the Science Museum Group, and it is up to the Museum itself to determine where and to whom it loans objects from its collection. The Science Museum Group operates independently, at Arm's Length from Government. We will not become involved in, or seek to influence, curatorial decisions.</p>
12 August*	██████████ writes again to ██████████ at DBC reminding him of the council's responsibilities in relation to our loans, as an Arts Council Accredited Museum.
12 August*	██████████ writes in parallel to ██████████ correcting some of the inaccurate historical claims that are being used to support the Darlington campaign, and reiterating the council's responsibilities as an Accredited Museum

*correspondence enclosed with briefing

B. Lines to take

The case for Shildon/the region

- The bicentenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway is not just Darlington's story but one that belongs to the region and has national and global impact.
- Under NRM's plans Locomotion No.1 will go on display at the newly expanded Locomotion museum in Shildon. A free museum that receives 200,000 visitors each year.
- Understand Darlington's emotional connection to Locomotion No.1. However, the engine is not owned by Darlington and historically has an unbroken history of railway company ownership, before passing to the National Railway Museum.
- Many locations along the S&DR can rightly claim a connection with Locomotion No.1. But Shildon was the point where history was made when Locomotion No.1 set off on its famous journey.

SMG's ownership of Locomotion No1

- SMG's ownership is not a quirk of fate
- The Locomotive passed into SMG's ownership as part of the transfer of British Railway's historical collection under the 1968 Transport Act.
- As part of the national collection of railway vehicles, SMG is obliged (by the 1983 Heritage Act) to ensure that Locomotion is cared for, preserved and exhibited to the public

The loan

- Darlington council signed a legally binding loan agreement to borrow Locomotion No.1 from the National Railway Museum collection; an agreement that is set to expire in March 2021.
- The long-established practice of loaning cultural objects is one that keeps the museum sector functioning and ensures that access to cultural assets is shared.
- It is extremely unusual for a borrowing museum to publicly challenge an owning museum's decision not to renew a loan. The Council's action may make other organisations less willing to consider loans to Head of Steam in the future.
- Darlington Borough Council is committed to upholding national standards of museum professional standards and ethics as an Accredited Museum (last accredited in 2016)
- Government have been clear that they will not intervene in this matter.

Working with Darlington

- NRM and Darlington have been working with other partners (under the S&DR Heritage Board) to plan for the 2025 celebrations for a number of years.
- NRM and Darlington have been discussing plans for Locomotion and Head of Steam since February 2019.
- These conversations have been very constructive on both sides and accelerated after March 2020, producing really exciting possibilities.
- In addition to discussing vehicle loans, object loans, image usage and research to support Head of Steam's narrative this now extends to a joint strategic approach to programming including visits of iconic locomotives from the national collection, including Flying Scotsman.
- Very disappointed by Darlington's decision to in July to stop co-operating with this work. Short-sighted and a waste of valuable NRM curatorial resource given for free.

C. Rebuttal of historical claims

*Darlington has been **home to Locomotion No.1** for 160 years.*

Locomotion loco was built in Newcastle in 1825, rebuilt at Shildon in 1828, turned into a stationary engine (almost certainly at Shildon) in circa 1849 and restored to its locomotive form at Shildon in 1856-57. It was then put on a plinth at Darlington in 1857.

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The Pease family paid for its restoration/wanted it to stay in Darlington/bought it for Darlington

Locomotion was lent to the Pease family for use in their West Durham colliery as a pumping engine from 1850-1856. It remained the property of the Stockton & Darlington Railway who continued to value it on their books. The Pease family paid £50 to the S&DR but it is uncertain if this was for the 1857 restoration or hire fees whilst at the colliery according to records held at the National Archive.

The Pease family did not purchase the engine. It has an unbroken history of railway company ownership, before passing to the National Railway Museum.

Darlington money created Robert Stephenson & Co, so Locomotion No.1 only exists because of Darlington money

The Pease family from Darlington did put in £1600 to set up Robert Stephenson & Co, but the Stephensons and Michael Longridge from Northumberland put in an additional £2400 between them.

The S&DR was also financed by people from many places with most funding coming from out with the Darlington area. The major single funder was the Norwich banker Joseph Gurney.

Locomotion No.1 – the rail vehicle

Locomotion No.1 was the first steam locomotive to haul a passenger carrying train on a public railway – the Stockton & Darlington Railway. That journey started, on 27 September 1825, not in Darlington nor Stockton, but in Shildon.

It was built in Newcastle in 1825, rebuilt at Shildon works in 1828, turned into a stationary engine in c.1849 and restored to its locomotive form at Shildon in 1856-57. It was retired in 1857 and put on a plinth in Darlington, where it was owned and cared for continuously by the rail industry until 1968.

Locomotion No.1 – SMG ownership

In 1968 ownership of Locomotion No.1 transferred from the British Railways Board to the Secretary of State for Education and Science (under Section 144(1)(a) of the Transport Act 1968). The National Museum of Science & Industry (the previous name of the Science Museum Group, including the National Railway Museum from its opening in 1975) was at that time managed directly by Government as part of the Department of Education and Science.

In 1984 the National Museum of Science & Industry ceased to operate as part of a Government department. The Board of Trustees of the Science Museum is the corporate body of the Science Museum Group and was established under the National Heritage Act 1983. The transfer of ownership of Locomotion No.1 from the Secretary of State for Education and Science to the Board of Trustees of the Science Museum was established by Sections 12(1)(a) and 12(2) of the National Heritage Act 1983.

Locomotion No.1 – the loan to Darlington Borough Council

Since 1975 it has been on loan to Head of Steam Museum in Darlington (managed by Darlington Borough Council since 1984). The current loan agreement was signed by Darlington Borough Council in 2016; its term expires on 31 March 2021. Well over a year ago, Science Museum Group indicated to the Council that it did not intend to renew the loan, and formally served notice of this intention in August 2020. The loan agreement is a legally binding contract, which establishes both parties' obligations during the loan period, and both parties' rights to terminate the loan at any point with 30 days notice.

Since January 2020 the Council have led a campaign to overturn SMG's decision not to renew the loan. Darlington Borough Council do not dispute SMG's ownership of the vehicle. This situation is unprecedented, and SMG has indicated that it will take legal action, if necessary, to secure the return of the vehicle if Darlington Borough Council do not co-operate with plans for its collection..

SMG currently have over 1300 Railway Collection items (including 66 rail vehicles) on loan to other institutions. The practice of loaning cultural objects is long established and ensures national (and international) cultural assets can be shared. However, it is important that loaned objects are returned to their owners when the loans expire: if this were not so, museums would be extremely wary of loaning objects in future.

Memorandum of Understanding

Subject to the return of Locomotion No.1 in line with the terms of the current loan agreement, SMG has offered Darlington Borough Council a Memorandum of Understanding which includes:

- Short-term loans of Locomotion No.1 to Darlington between 2025 (the bicentenary of Locomotion No.1's historic first journey) and 2030
- The extension of the loans for the other 28 SMG collection items on display at Head of Steam for a further eight years to 2029 (this includes *Derwent*, the oldest surviving Darlington-built locomotive)
- Enabling visits to Darlington from Science Museum Group's collection of operating vehicles, such as *Flying Scotsman*.

Science Museum Group's plans for Locomotion No.1

Locomotion No.1 will go on display at SMG's museum, Locomotion, in Shildon, just 9 miles from Darlington. Locomotion attracts 200,000 visitors every year and, as a national museum, it is free to visit. The locomotive will also undergo essential hazard remediation works (asbestos) in advance of a detailed 'archaeological' investigation of the vehicle by the world's leading practitioner of such work. This work and subsequent report will reveal so much more about the history of a locomotive that is so well known but so little understood. The report will be shared with all those people and places with an interest in and a connection to Locomotion No.1.