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SUBMISSION TO THE NATIONAL MONUMENTS COUNCIL : 4 & 5 NOV 1991

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**OLD BAY ROAD, GRAHAMSTOWN**

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In a letter dated 7 August 1978 Dr Frank Bradlow drew the attention of the NMC to the old Bay Road. He pointed out that the road had been depicted in paintings by Thomas Bowler and expressed the opinion that there was a case for declaring the whole first section of the Bay Road, leading from Grahamstown, as a national monument.

The matter was submitted to Dr Rennie (the member of Council resident in Grahamstown) for his comments. He submitted a report which was considered at a meeting of the Cape Regional Committee held on 15/16 March 1979. It was agreed to recommend the declaration of a section of the road with an area to be defined by Dr Rennie. This recommendation was endorsed at a meeting of the Executive Committee held on 27/28 April 1979.

Given the difficulty of defining the area to be declared, it was decided to have the area surveyed and the Surveyor-General was requested to have a survey undertaken. The completed diagram was submitted to the NMC in September 1982.

In October 1982 the owners of the affected properties, Rhodes University and the Grahamstown Municipality, were approached for consent to declaration. The Municipality provided its consent before the end of the month. Rhodes however expressed reservations, requested clarity with regard to the question of maintenance of the road, and pointed out that it had not been the intention of the university to continue to maintain this road as it was no longer needed as an access road and arrangements were about to be made to close it in order to prevent considerable unauthorised pedestrian traffic in the vicinity.

The matter was submitted to the Regional Representative who had discussions with the University. It was clear from the discussions that the cost of maintenance of the road was the major stumbling block. The Regional Representative wrote to the Municipality and enquired as to whether they would be prepared to maintain the section of road in question. The Municipality advised that it did not see its way clear to maintain the road.

In August 1984 the Municipality advised the NMC that at a meeting between the City Council and Rhodes University it had been agreed to recommend that representations should be made to the NMC to cancel its plans for having the Old Bay Road declared.

Both Rhodes University and the Municipality made further representations in August 1985. The University stated once again that their opposition was based the fact that they would need to maintain the road.

Nothing further transpired until July 1988 when Dr Bradlow enquired as to what progress had been made in the matter. He was advised of the University's objections.

Following correspondence between Dr Bradlow and the University, in which the objections to declaration were once again set out, the Assistant Regional Representative suggested that a plaque be erected at the site. When approached, the University agreed to the suggestion.

The following wording for the plaque was approved by the Wordings Committee in June 1989:

THIS SECTION OF ROAD FORMED PART OF THE "OLD BAY ROAD",  
BUILT IN 1840 BY THE CENTRAL ROADS BOARD ESTABLISHED BY THE  
COLONIAL SECRETARY, JOHN MONTAGU (1843 - 1853). IT SERVED  
AS THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO GRAHAMSTOWN FOR ABOUT A CENTURY.

At the meeting of the Eastern Cape Regional Committee held on 21 June 1989 it was:

AGREED that a cairn and plaque should be erected in a suitable position, noting the historical significance of this old road, subject to the approval of Rhodes University, owners of the property.

The road is now completely closed to general public access, this being part of Rhodes University's aim of improving security in that portion of its campus. Special arrangements may however be made to view the road.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EASTERN CAPE REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 1991

That the decision to recommend declaration of the old Bay Road be rescinded.

COMPILED BY: Ashley Lillie  
Regional Representative : Eastern Cape

7 October 1991