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Department of Arts and Culture

GRADING SUBMISSION

SUBMITTED BY: Built Environment Unit

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SAHRIS SITE ID:

SAHRIS SITE CATEGORY: Place/Site

Significance Category (THEMES): Historical: Association with person/groups & events

ENQUIRIES: Heidi Weldon, Ben Mwasinga, Palmira de Almeida

ITEM: Proposed Nomination of Site for Grade 1 Site Status

A1. BACKGROUND

A1.1. Process background

A1.1.1. SAHRA has been working towards the protection of sites relating to Muslim heritage significance since the promulgation of the National Heritage Resources Act. The National Monuments Council attempted declaration of certain sites as far back at the 1980's. Ongoing efforts are documented within SAHRA (and NMC) case files relating to various kramats and burial grounds in and around Cape Town. In 2001, SAHRA proposed a programme to ensure the formal protection of the Circle of Tombs.

A1.1.2 In 2005, then Minister Pallo Jordan expressed intent to have the kramat of Shiekh Yusuf declared as a national heritage site. SAHRA graded Sheikh Yusuf kramat as Grade 1 in September 2005, with the intention to investigate further kramats for serial nomination. Formal declaration process was not undertaken at such time.

A1.1.3. Tana Baru declaration efforts date back to 1993. The Tana Baru was declared as a national heritage site in 2019 as part of the Bo Kaap serial nomination.

A1.1.4. vidamemoria heritage consultants approached the Muslim Judicial Council in 2007 to consider the serial nomination of the kramats as provincial heritage sites. At the time,

Heritage Western Cape were keen to accept and process nominations. Further to several attempts, public participation process was not concluded, and sites were not considered for declaration.

A1.1.5.vidamemoria partnered with the Cape Mazaar Society (CMS) to consider the serial nomination of the kramats. vidamemoria represented by Quahnita Samie and Yunus Samodien in association with the Cape Mazaar Society represented by Mr Mahmood Suleiman Limbada and Mr Yusuf Khan Dalwai initiated serial nomination of the kramats towards the declaration of the ‘Circle of Tombs’ as National Heritage Sites in 2018.

A1.1.6. The following sites were identified as the first sites in the serial nomination:

<u>Kramat</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sheikh Yusuf	Faure
Sayed Mahmud	Constantia (Summit Rd)
Tuan Dea Koasa and Tuan Ismail Dea Malela,	Simonstown
Sheikh Mohamed Hassen GhaibieShah	Signal Hill
Tuan Kaape-ti-low	Signal Hill
Sayed Moegsien bin Alawieal Aidarus	Mowbray
Sheikh A ibn Muhammad Allraqi,	Mowbray
Sheikh Abdurahman Matebe Shah	Constantia
Sheikh Abdul Mutalib	Constantia Forest
Sheikh Noorul Mubeen	Oudekraal

A1.1.7. The Matarah Kramat on Robben Island was also considered, however, as the site is already part of the Robben Island declaration, there is no need to formally protect the site again.

A1.1.8. SAHRA has requested one report incorporating information regarding each site. In addition, a nomination report and form per site has been submitted for consideration by the Grading and Declaration Review Committee.

A1.1.9. Site visits were conducted by SAHRA and a representative of vidamemoria to each of the sites nominated, with the exception of Robben Island.

A1.2. Historical background

A1.2.1. Over 250 years ago, an Islamic prophecy claimed that there would be a ‘circle of Islam’ around the Cape. Several Muslims believe that this circle is formed by shrines of Islamic saints, who were brought to the Cape through slavery by the Dutch East India Company. The shrines are often referred to as kramats or Mazaars.

A1.2.2. The Circle of Tombs/Kramats are extremely important to South African Muslims and have deep roots in Islam. The Circle of Tombs/kramats encompasses the tombs of Auliyah (Friends of Allah), as well as freedom fighters who fought against slavery and colonial rule and who introduced Islam to South Africa. These kramats contain some of South Africa’s most influential spiritual figures. The kramats are a shrine to Muslim

holy men who died at the Cape. There are approximately 20 identified kramats in the Peninsula area and three in neighbouring districts (Caledon, Faure, Bains Kloof, and Rawsonville).

A1.2.3. The history of the kramats initially started with the invasion of places such as Java, India, and Ceylon by the Dutch. The resistance to the Dutch invasion led to the banishment of leaders to the Cape and sold as slaves. This prompted the emergence of the first Muslim communities in the Western Cape. The practice of Islam was illegal under the Dutch rule, however under British occupation Muslims were permitted to have Mosques.

A1.2.4. Kramats are the resting places for Muslim saints and are incredibly important to the Muslim faith and heritage. These kramats have become places of spirituality, peaceful meditation and contemplation, places to remember and be closer to God and His mercy. These places of sanctity are not just accessible to Muslims but to people of all faiths. Majority of the kramats are open to the public.

A1.2.5. The circle of Tombs/kramats Islamic prophecy states that the circle begins at the Tana Baru (Bo-Kaap) and is completed at Signal Hill, where you will find the grave of Sheikh Mohamed Hassen GhaibieShah and Tuan Kaape-ti-low.

A2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A2.1. The history of Islam in Cape Town has its roots in colonialism and initiated the arrival of the first Muslims in 1657. Faced with banishment, imprisonment, and enslavement has created a history of Islam that tells the story of incredible resilience. The history of Islam is portrayed throughout the Western Cape landscape, which includes several shrines/kramats. These kramats are often dedicated to political exiles, sheikhs, and Islamic scholars. These kramats are regarded as sacred places and people tend to worship at these sites. It's believed that descendants living within 'The Circle of Tombs' will be protected from fires, famine, plague, and other natural disaster, and too a certain extent this prophesy has been fulfilled. The kramats are not only places of spirituality but are tangible signs of the emergence and spread of the Islamic faith throughout the Western Cape and the rest of South Africa. The Saints of Islam resting in these holy shrines played a major role in developing contemporary South Africa.

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1. PURPOSE OF THE SUBMISSION

1.1 The purpose of the submission is to assess whether the 10 kramats identified contain the appropriate elements and characteristics to be graded with Grade 1 status.

2. DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION OF THE SITE

2.1. The kramats listed below are all located within the Western Cape, particularly Cape Town.

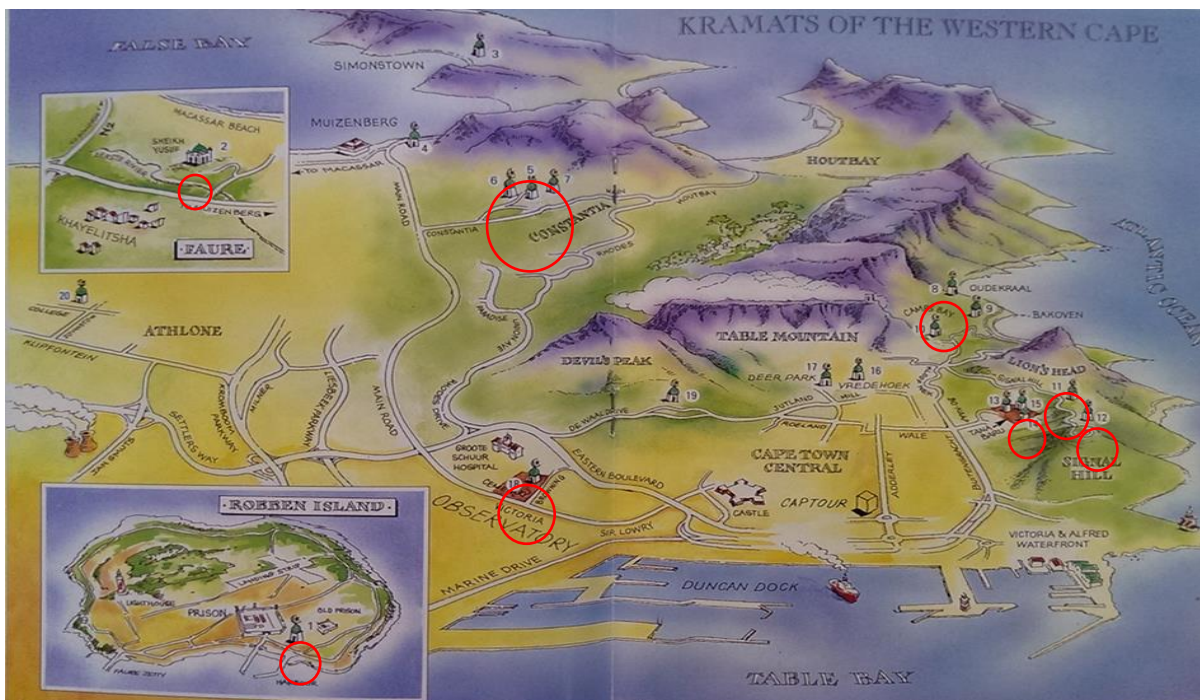


Fig 1: Map Indicating the Locations of the 10 Kramats (Circle of Tombs- Not to Scale)

2.2. Kramat of Sheikh Yusuf, Faure

2.2.1. Sheikh Yusuf was the ruler of Gowa, South East Asia. He was banished to the Cape in 1694. He passed away in 1699 and was buried in Faure/Macassar, Cape Town. This kramat is held in high esteem and is ordained with expensive clothes. This kramat is in Kramat Road, Macassar. Sheikh Yusuf died in 1699 and was buried on the property Zandvliet. While his wife and children departed for Goa in 1704, some of his retinue chose to remain at the Cape. The area surrounding Zandvliet farm was renamed Macassar in honour of Sheikh Yusuf's place of birth. Sheikh Yusuf was buried on the hills of Faure, overlooking Macassar. A shrine was erected over his grave and to this day Muslims in the area visit it to pay their respects.

2.3. Kramat of Tuan Dea Koasa and Tuan Ismail Dea Malela, Simonstown

2.3.1. This kramat consists of two holy shrines, initially the identity of the Auliyah was unknown until the discovery of an ancient Sumbawanses kitaab that verified the shrines belong to Iman Abdule Karrien bin Imam Jalil bin Imam Islam of Sumbawa in Indonesia (Tuan Dea Koasa and Tuan Ismail Dea Malela). The kramat is located above Runciman's Drive, Simonstown. For hundreds of years, residents of Simonstown had known of the existence of two holy shrines situated just above Runciman's Drive. There in the forest clearing above Goede Gift, people from far and wide came to pay their respects. In the early years of Simonstown the community was a small and concentrated one – all living within the immediate proximity of the two shrines. Typical of all kramats, the area has always been enveloped in an aura of calm and tranquillity. An ambience heightened by the sound of a full stream running along the length of the shrines and down to the mosque where it collects to form a small pool (Mountain 2004:172).

2.4. Kramat of Sheikh Abdurahman Matebe Shah, Constantia

2.4.1. On the 24th January 1667, the ship the Polsbroek left Batavia and arrived at the Cape on the 13th of May 1668, with three prisoners in chains. They were Malays from the West Coast of Sumatra, brought to the Cape after their defeat at the Castle of Soeroesang in 1667. One of them was incarcerated on Robben Island, while the other two were sent to the Company's forest at Constantia. Sheikh Abdurahman Matebe Shah, the last of the Malaccan Sultans, was one of the two. He was regarded as Orang Cayen, a title which means 'man of power and influence'; and viewed as particularly dangerous to the interest of the Company.

2.4.2. He died at the Cape in either 1682 or 1685, and was buried on the spot, near the river, where he took his ablutions, meditated and said his prayers. His shrine is at the gateway to Klein Constantia. It was contained in a wooden shack quaintly situated amongst the trees, adjacent to a stream of running water. The cramped little shack, with its small window and grave inside was a wonderful place. But the old building became dilapidated and a new structure was created. A beautiful edifice designed by Gawie Fagan and constructed by the Cape Mazaar Society.

2.5. Kramat of Sayed Mahmud, Constantia

2.5.1. Sayed Mahmud was a spiritual and religious leader of the Malaccan Empire. He was one of the religious advisors captured with Sheikh Abdurahman Matebe Shah. He was banished to Constantia in the Cape where the following inscription on his

shrine on Islam Hill, Constantia appears: "On 24 January 1667, the ship the Polsbroek left Batavia and arrived here on 13 May 1668 with three political prisoners in chains. Malays of the West Coast of Sumatra, who were banished to the Cape until further orders on the understanding that they would eventually be released. They were rulers 'Orang Cayen', men of wealth and influence. Great care had to be taken that they were not left at large as they were likely to do injury to the Company. Two were sent to the Company's forest and one to Robben Island." This description in terms of the Records of the Cape Archives appear to be correct. It illustrates, however, the beginning of the policy of isolating influential political exiles from the slave population. This policy persisted throughout Dutch rule of the Cape of Good Hope and had severe implications for the spread of Islam in the Cape Colony.

2.6. Kramat of Sheikh Abdul Mutalib, Constantia Forest

2.6.1. The shrines of the Orang Cayen of Constantia, though the most prominent, are not the only graves of Auliyah to be found in Constantia. In 1972 another grave was found. The grave was identified by woodcutters working in Constantia. Strange things happened to their donkeys and their carts, especially at about one o' clock on Friday afternoons. There was this special spot over which their animals refused to go. Spiritualists were consulted and they confirmed that a kramat lies buried at that spot. During Company rule many political prisoners of high standing were exiled to the Cape. They were usually placed at the more remote post to prevent them from having contact with the majority of the slaves. Many were sent to work in this forest where they later died.

2.7. Kramat of Sheikh Mohamed Hassen GhaibieShah, Signal Hill

2.7.1. The person buried in the grave inside the newly erected tomb is Sheikh Mohamed HassenGhaibie Shah al Qadri, one of the two better known Auliyah who lies buried on the Signal Hill Ridge. The other one is Kaape-ti-low. Both of them, according to oral tradition, were followers of Sheikh Yusuf of Macassar. On the death of Sheikh Yusuf and the return of his party to Banten, two of his followers and his daughter elected to remain behind.

2.8. Kramat of Tuan Kaape-ti-low, Signal Hill

2.8.1. Further up the Signal Hill Road, though not visible from the road itself, lies the grave of Tuan Kaape-ti-low. It is situated at the far end of Scout Camp, some distance away from the road. The shrine is a simple structure, rectangular in shape, with a moon and star built on to one wall. Inside the shrine lies the grave, which has been built up with bricks. In the 1930's, the shrine of Tuan Kaape-ti-low was some distance away from the path behind a pond. This pond was apparently destroyed when the area around the shrine was fenced in as a military camp during the Second World War. It is claimed that Tuan Kaape-ti-low was a general from Java in Sheikh Yusuf's army and was exiled to the Cape with the great Sheikh.

2.9. Kramat of Sheikh Noorul Mubeen, Oudekraal

2.9.1. Of the three prominent Auliyah buried on the hills facing the Atlantic seaboard, the one nearest to Oudekraal, appears to be the better known. The man buried there is Sheikh Noorul Mubeen. His grave is reached by ascending the 99 steps leading to it from Victoria Road up the mountain slope. The tomb, a simple, recently renovated building,

stands beside a stream. On the other side of this stream is another set of steps leading to another grave higher up. Some believe the wife of Sheikh Noorul Mubeen lies buried here while others believe it is one of his followers. This grave too is afforded the respects of a holy personage. Sheikh Noorul Mubeen was apparently banished to the Cape in 1716 and incarcerated on Robben Island. According to a popular legend he escaped from Robben Island by unknown means and came to make his home in this desolate spot. Soon he made contact with the slaves on the estates in this area, teaching them, mainly at night, the religion of Islam. When he died, he was buried on the site where he had most frequently read his prayers. After a time, a wood and iron structure was erected around the grave, acting as the first tomb. In a second legend, it is claimed that he swam from Robben Island, across the Atlantic Ocean and made good his escape. His tired body was discovered by slave fishermen. They nursed him to health and hid him on the mountain side, providing him with all his requirements. The fishermen soon discovered he was a holy man and started to take lessons from him. Sheikh Noorul Mubeen became their Imam and counselled them in their moments of difficulties. His mountainside refuge, aside from allowing him to easily detect danger, gave him a magnificent vantage point from which he could see the towering peaks of the Twelve Apostles and the quiet dignity of Lions Head. An alternative version is that he did not swim, but walked, across the Atlantic Ocean from Robben Island to the mainland. A present day legend tells of a spirit on horseback from Robben Island who still comes to take lessons from his teacher. He is seen, so they say, at about midday on a white horse coming across the ocean from Robben Island. Those who visit the grave of Sheikh Noorul Mubeen find there a quiet serenity, an ideal spot for meditation, away from the rigours of urban life.

2.10. Kramat of Sayed Moegsien bin Alawieal Aidarus and Sheikh Abdurahman ibn Muhammad Allraqi, Mowbray

2.10.1 The history of Wali Allah Sayed Moegsien (RA) can be traced to the beginning of the 20th century to a mountain hamlet, Hadratul Mout near Aden in Yemen. As denoted by the title Sayed, Sheikh Moegsien (RA) was a direct descendent of the supreme prophet Nabi Muhammed Mustafa (SAW). In 1927, he again journeyed to Cape Town to continue his missionary work. On his return, he met and married Khadija Kamrudien Parker. Of all the great wonders attributed to Sayed Moegsien, the one most vividly retold over the years describes an encounter with the Sheikh at Rhodes Zoo. Having had his piety and nobility contested one time too many by rather influential people, the Sheikh asked to be taken to the wild animal enclosure at the foot of the Constantiaberg Mountains. He then proceeded to request that the enclosure be opened so that he could step inside. The story goes that after much persistence and deliberation, the zookeeper relented, and Sheikh Moegsien stepped into the lions' den. The lion timidly laid down at the Sheikh's feet and placed his large paw on Sheikh Moegsien's hand. The astounded group of doubters conceded and acknowledged the divine spirituality of the Sheikh. The Sheikh was most noted for his great piety, his spirituality and wealth of theological knowledge.

2.11. In summary, all the kramats are in good condition. It is important to note that Tuan Dea Koasa and Tuan Ismail Dea Malela, Sheikh Abdul Mutalib, Tuan Kaape-ti-low, and Sheikh Noorul Mubeen are open grave structures, whilst the remaining listed have an edifice.



Fig 2: Images of Some of the Kramats Inspected

3. SHORT HISTORY OF THE SITE

- 3.1. The initial arrival of the first Muslims in 1600s to the Cape was as slaves and exiles. This in turn led to the emergence of Islam in the Cape. Several of the Muslims banished to the Cape were considered honourable and noble people, who also fought against the colonial rule of the Dutch and British who oppressed them order to control and minimise their influence in Malaysia, Indonesia, India, and Africa.

- 3.2. When setting up a refreshment station at the Cape, Jan van Riebeeck had been ordered to barter- but not wage war- with the indigenous population. Instead of enslaving the local Khoekhoen, he and subsequent commanders were obliged to import slaves to the Cape to ease the chronic shortage of labour (Worden et al 1998: 21). It was not until six years after his arrival that a significant cargo of slaves was diverted to the Cape, and while slavery at the Cape had a slow start, by 1808 approximately 63 000 slaves had reached our shores from Africa, Madagascar, India and Indonesia (Shell 1994: 40). The majority of slaves were of Indonesian origin- from Java, the Celebes, Bali, Timor, Buton, Madura, Tambora, the Moluccas, Bengal in India and Ceylon (Townsend 1977: 9). Some were brought to the Cape not only as slaves, but political exiles and company convicts, many of whom were Muslim. In 1681 the Cape was officially made a place of confinement for high-ranking prisoners from the lands situated in Indonesian Archipelago where the Dutch East India Company was attempting to establish control (Ibid: 10). It is through these Eastern slaves, convicts and political exiles that Islam was brought to the Cape.

- 3.3. According to historians, the rapid growth of Islam was one of the most striking features of early 19th century Cape Town. "Although Muslims had formed a significant part of

the Dutch settlement, it was only in the early British period that a distinctive and sizeable Muslim community began to be visible. From less than 1000 in 1800, the number of Muslims in Cape Town grew to 3000 in 1822 and then doubled to over 6000 by 1840. This growth was not just the result of natural increase, but of conversion, especially among the slave and labouring classes of the town” (Worden et al 1998: 124). It was perhaps a combination of a lack of missionary effort to Christianize slaves as well as the very real social and spiritual benefits that Islam offered to its adherents in 19th Century Cape Town that stood behind this growth: “The Muslim community transcended divisions of class, if not race, and was marked by an increasing number of institutional structures which gave support and identity to its members, both slave and free” (Ibid).

- 3.4. “Although there had been Muslim slaves, exiles and free blacks in the town from the seventeenth century, this sense of community only began to emerge markedly in the late VOC period” (Ibid). There are written accounts that celebrations used to take place in the homes of free blacks in 1772 to honour the Prophet’s birthday and the end of Ramadan (Thunberg 1986:47-48). With the development of Islam by individuals such as Tuan Guru who had been banished to the Cape in 1780, a religious school and place of worship was established in his house in Dorp Street. At this stage no formal approval of these religious practices or establishments had been secured from the authorities. It was noted by John Barrow in 1797 that Muslim slaves and free blacks, without the permission to build a mosque, held their prayer meetings in the stone quarries at the head of town (those situated in Chiappini Street) (Bradlow & Cairns 1978: 10). In 1822 Wilberforce Bird similarly noted that not only did the ‘Malays’ carry their devotions in the stone quarries near the town, but also in rooms and halls fitted for that purpose (Ibid: 16). These places of worship were not formal mosques, but ‘langgars’ or places of worship in a house (Ibid: 24). By 1811 there were reportedly 12 langgars for daily prayers in the houses of imams around the city (Townsend 1977: 12).
- 3.5. But in 1797 under a new British administration, permission was granted for the conversion of a warehouse in Dorp Street into the Auwal Mosque with Tuan Guru presiding as imam. In 1804 when the interim Batavian government guaranteed religious freedom, land was granted on the slopes of Signal Hill for a Muslim cemetery. This measure was aimed at maintaining Muslim loyalty in the event of a British invasion at the Cape (Davids 1985: 5). In 1807 Cape Town’s second Mosque was founded in a Long Street house bought by Frans van Bengal and Jan van Bougies. Known as the ‘Palm Tree Mosque’, its establishment was set against the backdrop of the property owners breakaway from the Auwal Mosque (when Jan van Bougies had failed to secure succession as imam to Tuan Guru). Rivalry between the two congregations continued through the 1830s until the death of Jan in 1846 at the age of 112 (Ibid: 127). According to Worden et al by 1824 the number of Muslim schools had increased to twelve and the Dorp Street *madrassah* (religious school), “which had 372 slave and free black pupils by 1807 and almost 1825 ‘initiated a prolific process of literacy among Cape slaves’” (Ibid:126).
- 3.6. While slaves were not permitted to marry under Christian rites until 1823, under Islam recognition of their unions was able to be obtained. As formal slavery drew to a close

at the Cape, access to Muslim meetings and services increased. By the mid-1830s former slave masters found it increasingly difficult to prevent their Muslim apprentices from attending religious practices or festivities. At this stage, places of worship had not yet taken on the characteristics of Islamic architecture, and Mosques looked like ordinary houses. Minarets were only added in the mid-century which is around the same time that Islam became an officially recognised religion in the town (Ibid:127 and 187). While Muslim slaves were still scattered quite broadly across the Town, a community of Muslim free blacks began to concentrate themselves in the area that would become known as the Bo-Kaap. In 1840 there were only two fully constituted mosques in the Bo-Kaap district, by 1860 this had grown to five with the first Mosque in Claremont being built in 1854 (Ibid: 187). According to Worden et al, the most prominent Mosque was the Jami'a Mosque (or Queen Victoria Mosque) situated in lower Chiappini Street, built in 1850. "It was the first mosque to be erected on land granted by the government for such a purpose, and was sanctioned in a deliberate attempt to secure the loyalty of the 'Malay Corps' during the frontier war of 1846" (Ibid: 187). By 1860 teachers reportedly came from Arabia and India to work in Cape Town, and by the 1870s Muslims were residentially concentrated around the Mosques springing up in District One on the waterfront and on the slopes of Signal Hill.

- 3.7. In 1863 Abu Bakr Effendi was sent to the Cape by the Ottoman government to settle religious differences at the request of the British Government. Effendi's school at 71 Wale Street was the beginning of organized higher religious education (Townsend 1977: 13). But it was the formation of the Cape Malay Association in 1923 in the Bokaap that "was the first attempt by Muslims at the Cape to organize themselves politically" (Ibid: 13). When the Group Areas Act was passed in 1950, many Muslim communities in and around Cape Town were broken up in their forced removal to new townships situated on the Cape Flats.
- 3.8. Historical research shows that what transpired during the 17th century at the Cape involved not only the Malays, but also large numbers of Indians, Javanese, Bengalese, and even Arabians. In fact, there were more Indians brought to the Cape than any other nationality. Therefore, be we Malays or Indians, our history originated here and cannot be ignored. Firstly, we must look at events in the East which led to Muslims being brought to the Cape. There was a power struggle between the Dutch and the Portuguese for supremacy of the seas. These two powers were competing to plunder and loot as much as possible. In order to do so, they built up a large naval capacity in the Asiatic sea. The target centres were places like Bombay, Goa, Cochin, the Coramandel Coast and Bengal in India, Columbo and Galle in Ceylon, Medan and Padang in Sumatra, Patani in Malasca, Batavia and Bali in Java, as well as smaller islands like Macassar, Rotti, Timor, Ternate, Tidore and others. Very soon, the inhabitants began to resist and united to form defences against the imperialist tyranny.
- 3.9. The men to lead the people were of a high calibre; men of great spiritual intellect who commanded a great deal of respect from the communities. They were however cunningly captured, and together with their followers, banished to the Cape. In the meantime, Jan van Riebeeck, had his own peculiar problem in the Cape. His plan was to establish a Dutch garrison here to defend the sea route to the East, but all was not going well. He had hoped that the capture of the local Hottentot population would

adequately serve his labour force requirements. This proved difficult as the Hottentots soon fled to the interior. Those captured were too lazy to work. Van Riebeeck wrote to the Dutch Council in the East (VOC) to plead for slaves. The slaves would be used for the hard labour, in addition to which they could be made to carry stones, build the Fort, make bricks, dig, plough, sow, plant and construct homes. They would also be used to work the salt mines and club seals. This marked the beginning of the Muslim community in the Cape. The Dutch arrived as conquerors and slave-masters, and the Muslims arrived as conquered slaves.

- 3.10. Some historians have a different view: “The slaves” arrived here with chains around their necks, leg-irons and hand-cuffs on their wrists, but their minds could not be chained. These very ‘slaves’ were the leaders of resistance against the Dutch colonialists and exploiters in the Far East. These ‘slaves’ did not have experiences in battles, but they brought with them a supra-national ideology of liberation, the ideology of Islam. It is said that 250 years ago a prophecy was made that there would be a “Circle of Islam” around the Cape. According to local beliefs the circle is complete, comprising the tombs of saints and a uliyah (friends of Allah) who were brought as slaves to the Cape.

4. SWOT SUMMARY

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The kramats are in good condition and well maintained • The sites are visited by local as well as international tourists • Prayer meetings are held weekly at a number of the sites • Sites are often visited by interfaith groups and form part of the annual interfaith route • The CMS has established relationships with owners of the sites 	<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <p>Opportunity exists to create a kramat route, to include interpretative signage and potentially generate funding for the CMS to maintain the sites</p>
<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not well known outside Muslim and interfaith groups • Lack of interpretation • Funding for the maintenance of the sites 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vagrancy, burglary, desecration and vandalism included arson • Illegal occupancies claiming to be on spiritual seclusion • Development of institution contrary to Sufi teachings • Development pressures and threats Political posturing

5. MOTIVATION FOR NATIONAL DECLARATION

"When I make someone my beloved then I become his ears by which he hears, his eyes by which he sees, his hands by which he holds and his feet by which he walks." (Hadith Qudsi). When the Auliyah physically depart from this earth, then their status is still upheld. The grave of a Wali is unlike that of an ordinary person. Their bodies do not decay or perish but remain intact and fresh. The Holy Prophet (SAW) has said:"The bodies of the Ambiyah and Auliyah remain intact in their graves. Furthermore, the mercy and blessing of Allah continuously descends on them."

5.1. Its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history:

- 5.1.1. The contribution of the Muslim Community to the history and traditions of the City of Cape Town have been vital since early Cape Settlement. The social and cultural uniqueness of the city is largely due to the important role played by its inhabitants through the centuries. The Saints buried at the Cape played a significant role in creating present-day Cape Town, introducing of Islam to Southern Africa and on a local level, having suburbs named after their place of origin.
- 5.1.2. It is believed that a series of kramats stretches in a circle round the Cape Peninsula, incorporating the tomb of Sheikh Yusuf in Faure embracing tombs on Robben Island, Signal Hill, Oude Kraal and Constantia. A guide to the kramats of the Western Cape published in 1996 states that the 'Circle of Islam' starts at the old cemetery on the slopes of Signal Hill where two burial sites are situated (just above the quarry in Strand Street) continuing to two graves on the top of Signal Hill. The circle includes a grave situated above Oudekraal and a kramat at Constantia on the Tokai road. The circle proceeds to the most important and widely known of all tombs, the kramat of Sheikh Yusuf at Faure, on the farm Zandvliet. The circle is completed by an old tomb on Robben Island.
- 5.1.3. Sheikh Yusuf died only six years after his arrival in exile at the Cape. Despite the short duration of his stay in the Cape and the extraordinary measures the authorities took to curtail his activities, Sheikh Yusuf had a three-fold impact on the growth of Islam at the Cape. Firstly, by encouraging Islam he contributed to the rebuilding of the Muslim identity which had been virtually destroyed by enslavement and exile. Most Muslims at the time were social outcasts and the psychological impact this had on the Muslims at the Cape was perhaps the most important contribution. Secondly, by encouraging the creation of socio-religious structures amongst the Muslims he laid the foundations for the establishment of the first socially responsible Muslim community in the country. Zandvliet became the meeting place for the slaves and exiles that rallied around him. Even though it was illegal for the Muslims to hold private meetings, Shaykh Yusuf, together with the other religious scholars with him, conducted religious services wherever they could find a venue. Finally, through missionary work he 'gradually gave the community the numerical strength and the "fresh blood" it needed for stabilisation and growth'. They did a considerable amount of missionary work amongst the Khoi-Khoi and slaves at the Cape. As a result, the authorities eventually complained that the Muslims "are multiplying rapidly and increasing in numbers". While there may be different views on the extent to which Sheikh Yusuf was able to promote Islam during the five years of his life as an exile in the Cape, there is agreement on the important

symbolic significance he holds today for Muslims in the region. Some three centuries after his death, his shrine at Macassar is still one of the most important places of pilgrimage.

5.2. Its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage:

5.2.1. The kramats are a symbol of resistance, religious freedom and perseverance, a place of sanctity for many devotees. The intangible heritage value of the kramats are largely spiritual and religious. It is believed to be spiritually beneficial to visit the Mazaars of the Auliyah and partake in their remembrance. In a hadith of the Prophet (SAW) it has been reported that, 'When the beloved of Allah is discussed, abundant and intense mercy of Allah descends on all those present'. Such discussion can be upheld in various ways; which include; reading a book on their life histories, struggles, striving in the path of Allah, emulating their examples and patterns of thinking, learning to uphold the Sunnah as practised by Auliyah, lecturing to an audience and informing them about the life history of a particular Wali or other Auliyah. Visiting the 'Circle of Tombs' provides opportunity for such remembrance and reflection.

5.3. Its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage:

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5.4. Its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons:

5.4.1. When setting up a refreshment station at the Cape, Jan van Riebeeck had been ordered to barter with the indigenous population. Instead of enslaving the local Khoekhoen, he and subsequent commanders were obliged to import slaves to the Cape to ease the chronic shortage of labour. It was not until six years after his arrival that a significant cargo of slaves was diverted to the Cape, and while slavery at the Cape had a slow start, by 1808 approximately 63 000 slaves had reached the Capes shores from Africa, Madagascar, India and Indonesia. Most slaves were of Indonesian origin from Java, the Celebes, Bali, Timor, Buton, Madura, Tambora, the Moluccas, Bengal in India, and Ceylon. Some were brought to the Cape not only as slaves, but political exiles and company convicts, many of whom were Muslim. In 1681 the Cape was officially made a place of confinement for high-ranking prisoners from the lands situated in Indonesian Archipelago where the Dutch East India Company was attempting to establish control. It is through these Eastern slaves, convicts, and political exiles that Islam was brought to the Cape.

- 5.4.2. According to historians, the rapid growth of Islam was one of the most striking features of early 19th century Cape Town. It was perhaps a combination of a lack of missionary effort to Christianize slaves as well as the very real social and spiritual benefits that Islam offered to its adherents in 19th Century Cape Town that stood behind this growth: 'The Muslim community transcended divisions of class, if not race, and was marked by an increasing number of institutional structures which gave support and identity to its members, both slave and free'
- 5.4.3. Although there had been Muslim slaves, exiles, and free blacks in the town from the seventeenth century, the sense of community only began to emerge markedly in the late VOC period. There are written accounts that celebrations used to take place in the homes of free blacks in 1772 to honour the Prophet's birthday and the end of Ramadan. With the expansion of Islam by individuals such as Tuan Guru who had been banished to the Cape in 1780, a religious school and place of worship was established in his house in Dorp Street. At this stage no formal approval of these religious practices or establishments had been secured from the authorities. These places of worship were not formal mosques, but 'langgars' or places of worship in a house. By 1811 there were reportedly 12 langgars for daily prayers in the houses of imams around the city. In 1797 under a new British administration, permission was granted for the conversion of a warehouse in Dorp Street into the Auwal Mosque with Tuan Guru presiding as Imam. In 1804 when the interim Batavian government granted religious freedom, land was granted on the slopes of Signal Hill for a Muslim cemetery. A portion of such cemetery, the Tana Baru is the first kramat in the Circle of Tombs to have been declared as a national heritage site.
- 5.4.4. When the Auliyah physically depart from this earth, then their status is still upheld. The grave of a Wali is unlike that of an ordinary person. Their bodies do not decay or perish but remain intact and fresh. The Holy Prophet (SAW) has said: 'The bodies of the Ambiyah and Auliyah remain intact in their graves. Furthermore, the mercy and blessing of Allah continuously descends on them'. to distinguish the grave of a Wali-Allah from the ordinary person's grave, and also as a sign of recognition, a Chaadar or Ghilaaf is placed on their graves.
- 5.5. Its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organization of importance in the history of South Africa:**
- 5.5.1. The memories of Sheikh Yusuf, Sayed Abduraghman Motura, Sheikh Abdurahman Matebe Shah, Sayed Mahmud, Sayed Abdul Malik, Tuan Guru, Sheikh Mohamed Hassen Ghaibie Shah, Sheikh Noorul Mubeen and Sayed Jaffer to name but a few, are to be kept alive. Subjected to harsh forms of cruelty and torture they never wavered from the true path. These Saints taught unity and peace amongst different faiths. In keeping with these teachings many non- Muslims also visit the kramats regularly.
- 5.5.2. The Tricentenary commemoration held in 1994 served to commemorate 300 years of Islam since the arrival of Sheikh Yusuf to South Africa, and rekindled links between Cape Muslims and their brethren from Indonesia and Malaysia.

5.6. Its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects:

5.6.1. The kramats or shrines (mazaars) are the resting places of the pioneers of the Muslim community in South Africa. For generations, residents of Cape Town and its environs have been visiting these kramats. Since early times, traditions regarding the history of these Saints, have been passed down mostly by word of mouth. The kramats inspire a reverence and a peace not because of architectural achievement or aesthetic appeal, but because of the character, knowledge, and spiritual presence of the men buried there.

5.7. Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa:

5.7.1. The Dutch arrived at the Cape as conquerors and slave-masters, with Muslims arriving as conquered slaves. Sheik Yusuf considered the father of Islam in Southern Africa arrived at the Cape aboard the Voetboog in 1694. He was exiled to Zandvliet in Faure, which belonged to Petrus Kalden, a Dutch Reformed minister. Zandvliet became a place of safety for fugitive slaves. Sheikh Yusuf provided great wisdom and spiritual upliftment for the slaves establishing the first Muslim community in South Africa. During Easter, the field adjacent to his shrine is packed with the tents of pilgrims, a tradition maintained for almost 300 years.

5.7.2. Sheikh Yusuf lived in a time of commercial expansion led by the western powers, particularly the English, Portuguese, and Dutch. In the East Indies, the Dutch had established a virtual domination; only the three Sultanates of Mataram (Java), Atjeh (Sumatra) and Ternate (northern Indonesia) successfully defied them. Under the rule of Sultan Ageng, Bantam continued to flourish, as did southern Sumatra, much to the frustration of the Dutch. The Dutch sought to vanquish the Sultan by blockading the trade routes. Undeterred, Sultan Ageng turned to other European powers for assistance. The resultant war saw Ageng's elder son supporting the Dutch against his own father. But Sheik Yusuf's formidable and trustworthy support in the Sultan's fight against the Dutch compensated for the betrayal by his son. Ageng was unable to muster a strong force and resorted to guerrilla war tactics. In the end, Ageng was forced to surrender in 1638 as large numbers of his forces deserted him. Ageng was eventually taken to Batavia, today's Djakarta, where he died in 1692. Contrary to his wishes, his elder son succeeded him as Sultan of Bantam and welcomed Dutch trading. However, Shaykh Yusuf refused to surrender and continued to encourage resistance to the Dutch and their East Indian lackeys. He took refuge with about 4 000 followers of whom about 1000 were able-bodied men, in the mountains of Fatsijara in Bantam, hoping to go eastwards from there to Mataram. Many of his followers fled while en-route, especially after two ferocious Dutch battles. They were followed by the Dutch troops and routed in a fierce battle in September 1683. Shaykh Yusuf retreated to a small village near Soccapoera where he was captured in 1686.

5.7.3. On 2 April 1694 a ship, the de Voetboeg, arrived at the Cape. On board was a large group of Muslim exiles from the East Indies, 49 in all, who had kept closely together throughout the voyage. Apart from Shaykh Yusuf, the group consisted of his two wives, two slave girls, twelve children, twelve religious' scholars, and several friends with their families. Upon arrival they were 'welcomed' to the Cape by Governor Simon van der Stel, the major official of Dutch colonization there. The authorities here, mindful of his

political and religious background, ensured that he would be settled at a fair distance from Table Bay to frustrate contact with like-minded exiles or slaves. Sheik Yusuf was confined at Faure, about 40km from Cape Town, on the farm Zandvliet. The farm Zandvliet had its origin in several different grants.

- 5.7.4. Under the leadership of Shaykh Yusuf, who was 68 years of age when he arrived here, the group at Zandvliet formed one of the first very elementary structures of a Muslim community, and they came to represent the first area of resistance to colonization at the Cape. Sheikh Yusuf's presence there could not remain a secret and Faure became a 'rallying point for fugitive slaves and other Orientals'. It was reported that under the leadership of Sheikh Yusuf and his 12 imams, the Cape was gaining more adherents to Islam as they carried out teaching sessions and religious services secretly in their lodges.
- 5.7.5. To remember slavery is not only to remember pain, but also the creation of new cultures, evasion of official strictures and categories, remaking of received practices, and splicing of language, food, music and beliefs in ways that would eventually come to shape national culture as a whole. 'The slaves' arrived here with chains around their necks, leg-irons and hand-cuffs on their wrists, but their minds could not be chained. These very 'slaves' were the leaders of resistance against the Dutch colonialists and exploiters in the Far East. These 'slaves' did not have experiences in battles, but they brought with them a supra-national ideology of liberation, the ideology of Islam.

5.8 Its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage:

- 5.8.1 The 'Circle of Tombs' does not exist elsewhere in South Africa and is internationally renowned.
- 5.8.2 It is spiritually beneficial to visit the Mazaars of the Auliyah and partake in their remembrance. In a hadith of the Prophet (SAW) it has been reported that, "When the beloved of Allah are discussed, abundant and intense mercy of Allah descends on all those present." This is because Allah loves His Auliyah, thus He loves the discussion of the Auliyah. This discussion can be upheld in various ways; which include; reading a book on their life histories, struggles, striving in the path of Allah, emulating their examples and patterns of thinking, learning to uphold the Sunnah as practised by Auliyah, lecturing to an audience and informing them about the life history of a particular Wali or other Auliyah. The 'Circle of Tombs' provides an opportunity for such remembrance and reflection.
- 5.8.3 The 'Circle of Tombs' is of phenomenal significance to South Africa and internationally. Despite ongoing efforts to ensure protection and management of the sites, declaration the 'Circle of Tombs' has not been afforded formal protection.
- 5.9. The current status and lack of national status has proven problematic in so far as the heritage resources management of the sites are concerned. The Cape Mazaar Society has overseen management of the sites for decades, however it has become imperative

for protection and assistance with management. Formal protection would provide an opportunity for the Cape Mazaar Society to access assistance in this regard.

6. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The 'Circle of Tombs' is considered to possess to national heritage value. Statement of significance considers various criteria as stipulated by the NHR Act and also addresses the following aspects:

- Role of Islam and slavery in the Western Cape
- International cultural connections
- The value of historic environments
- Sacredness of Muslim Burial Grounds
- Preservation of the legacy for generations of Muslims at the Cape
- Struggle for religious freedom
- Origins of Islam at the Cape

“A prophecy made over 250 years ago said that there would be a “Circle of Islam” around the Cape. It is believed that this Circle is formed by the shrines of Islamic Saints, the tombs of the Auliyah (Friends of Allah) and some of South Africa’s most influential spiritual leaders.

Referred to Mazaars or kramats, these shrines are regarded as highly sacred places that represent the advent of Islam to southern Africa; and are symbolic of the resistance against religious, social and political oppression by the Dutch, slavery and British Colonization. These are places of sanctity that provide spiritual benefits to those who visit and partake in the remembrance of the Auliyah. The kramats inspire reverence and peace, not because of architectural achievement or aesthetic appeal, but because of the character, knowledge, and spiritual presence of those buried there. These Saints, further, contributed to shaping the cultural character of the Cape and the traditions regarding the history of these Saints have been passed from generation to generation mainly through word of mouth. Subjected to harsh forms of cruelty and torture for their roles in resisting oppression by the Dutch, and British both in Indonesia and at the Cape, the Saints never wavered and continued to teach unity and peace amongst different faiths. In keeping with these teachings many non-Muslims also visit the kramats regularly.”

7. INDICATION OF OWNER’S ATTITUDE

Shah M Trust Sheikh Yusuf Kramat, Faure – *letter of support received*

Shah M Sayed Mahmud, Constantia (Summit Rd) – *letter of support received*

Mohammedan Congregation Tuan Dea Koasa and Tuan Ismail Dea Malela, Simonstown – *engaged representative telephonically. Support noted.*

CoCT Sheikh Mohamed Hassen GhaibieShah, Signal Hill Tuan Kaape-ti-low, Signal Hill – *CoCT confirming ownership, support noted. Support noted from current users of the site*

MCB Sayed Moegsien bin Alawieal Aidarus and Sheikh A ibn Muhammad Allraqi, Mowbray Sheikh – *letter of support received*

Abdurahman Matebe Shah, Constantia – *no objection noted, support for process*

Sheikh Abdul Mutalib, Constantia Forest – *no objection noted, support for process*
 Sheikh Noorul Mubeen, Oudekraal – *no objection noted, support for process*
 Matarah Kramat, Robben Island

It is important to note that SAHRA has not received any objection from any of the owners to date, regarding the grading of the kramats with Grade 1 status.

Owner's Contact Details:

Site ref	Site name	Owner	Contact details
1	Sheikh Yusuf Kramat, Faure	Shah Mohammed Trust	Prof. M. Faadiel Essop mfessop@sun.ac.za
2	Tuan Dea Koasa and Tuan Ismail Dea Malela, Simonstown	Mohamedan Congregation and Mohamedan Community	Gasant Emeran gasantemeran@gmail.com
3	Sheikh A ibn Muhammad Allraqi, Mowbray	Muslim Cemetery Board	Mr Hendricks Chair: <u>neematola@icloud.com</u> Attorney Mr Bertie van Nlekerk: gman.gvn@gmail.com
4	Sayed Moegsien bin Alawieal Aidarus, Mowbray	Muslim Cemetery Board	Mr Hendricks Chair: <u>neematola@icloud.com</u> Attorney Mr Bertie van Nlekerk: gman.gvn@gmail.com
5	Sheikh Noorul Mubeen, Oudekraal	Private ownership	Mr. Ebersohn pieter@ebersohns.co.za
6	Sheikh Mohamed Hassen GhaibieShah, Signal Hill	City of Cape Town	Official: <u>Charlene.Davis@capetown.gov.za</u> ED: Osman.Asmal@capetown.gov.za
7	Tuan Kaape-ti-low, Signal Hill	City of Cape Town	Official: <u>Charlene.Davis@capetown.gov.za</u> ED: Osman.Asmal@capetown.gov.za
8	Abdurahman Matebe Shah, Constantia	Private ownership	Craig (farm manager) craig@kleinconstantia.com
9	Sayed Mahmud, Constantia	Shah Mohammed Trust	Prof. M. Faadiel Essop mfessop@sun.ac.za
10	Sheikh Abdul Mutalib, Constantia Forest	SANPARKS Buitenwachten Farm	michael.slayen@sanparks.org <u>chad.cheney@sanparks.org</u>

8. INDICATION OF CURRENT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 8.1. The Cape Mazaar Society was formed in January 1982 initially for the upgrade and maintenance of the Shrine of Sheikh Abdurahman Matura (R.A.) on Robben Island. However, the name chosen "The Robben Island Mazaar (Kramat) Society" was rejected by the old Prison Authorities. In changing the name to "The Cape Mazaar Society", the Society took responsibility of all the kramats in the Western Cape as custodians. The Cape Mazaar Society is a constituted body registered as a Non-Profitable Organisation (NPO) with the Department of Social Development and as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) with SARS. The Cape Mazaar Society sees to the maintenance, management and upkeep of the kramats. Future management should consider an integrated management plan.

8.2. Custodians' Letters of Support:

Statement by Sheikh Abduragmaan Alexander Imam Masjidul Quds in Gatesville and President: Cape Mazaar Society

The declaration of the Western Cape Kramats as Heritage sites is another significant milestone in the unfolding development of the Liberation struggle of our Democracy of South Africa. It is vital for the bright future of a Nation to pay homage and salute the sacrifices of our forefathers for liberation from the tyranny and enslavement of the colonial occupiers of yesteryear.

The strong resolve of our Sainly forebears to protect and preserve our religious identity and ethical culture, is rightly saluted by declaring their sacred Shrines as Heritage sites and Symbols of South African Liberation from the diabolical forces of Racism and Apartheid. God bless South Africa and its people.

Statement by Mr Mahmood Limbada Council Chairperson: Cape Mazaar Society

Mazaars or Kramats, in general, are significant in various aspects and more especially in the Religious, Historical and Cultural spheres. These tombs are resting places of Muslim Holy Men or Saints and are visited often by many for deriving Spiritual benefits. Here in the Western Cape this tradition is in existence for the past three centuries.

Historically, In the South African context, the legacy of these saintly political prisoners is in so many ways like that of our own heroic freedom fighters. On both sides of the ocean these brave men struggled relentlessly against the oppressive colonialists and slave masters of the day.

Culturally, these Sainly men started families and established communities. Social structures of learning, welfare and communal life of the Indo/Malaysian culture were continued here in the Cape of Good Hope by these revered exiles. To date, many of these Religious and Cultural traditions are still practised. Facial features and easily recognisable family names are some of the inheritance of the Cape Malaysian and Indian Communities. These, in a nutshell, are the fundamental reasons for a great need to preserve and recognise all the Western Cape Kramats as Heritage Sites for posterity.

9. DESCRIPTION OF SITE BOUNDARIES

- 9.1. The boundaries / extent of declaration for each kramat have been advised by CMS as these will include the graves of 'companions' where relevant.

9.2. In addition SAHRA has received .kml files of the all the proposed site boundaries from nominators, which will be verified and finalised during the declaration process.



Fig 3:An example of the Boundary Extent (Not to Scale)

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1. The first phase of the Circle of Tombs be supported as possessing Grade 1 status.

Prepared By:		Supported By:	
Name and Title	Signature	Name and Title	Signature
Date:		Date:	

Recommendation Approved by GDRC		Recommendation Not Approved by GDRC	
Chairperson: GDRC		Signature	
Date:			