

## DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

NO. 1404

21 DECEMBER 2018



## SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

## DECLARATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY (ROYAL OBSERVATORY) AS A NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

By virtue of the powers vested in the South African Heritage Resources Agency, in terms of section 27 (5) of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) SAHRA hereby declares the South African Astronomical Observatory, Erf 26423 Cape Town, Western Cape, as a National Heritage Site.

**Statement of Significance**

*The South African Astronomical Observatory in Cape Town has played a highly significant scientific role over time as the oldest permanent observatory in the Southern Hemisphere. The site offers an overview of the history of astronomy both locally and internationally. It is a "living site" with more than 150 years history while still retaining its prominence in the international astronomical community.*

*Contributions to astronomy from site range from accurate measurements of the distance to a star (Alpha Centuri), first catalogues of the principle southern stars, first photographic survey of the sky, accurate measurement of the distance to the sun (a value that became the benchmark to measure all other cosmic distances and represented a paradigm shift in astronomy), development of spectroscopy, remeasurement and extension of Lacaille's Arc of Meridian, establishment of the true shape of the Earth in the southern hemisphere and first accurate geodetic surveys of southern Africa*

*Architecturally, there are several buildings of historical value and not only reflect the changing the architectural styles over the nineteenth century, but also have considerable scientific value due their contributions to the field of astronomy. The Main Building (a Georgian building) - designed by the British naval architect, John Rennie, and completed in 1828, the heliograph - the oldest dome on the site and runs on cannon balls, and the McClean Telescope Building - designed by Herbert Baker are closely association with David Gill and leading astronomer of the time.*

*The range of scientific objects related to the observatory as a collection are integral to the scientific value of the site. Some of the instruments within structures have been used with varying degrees of continuity and consistency for about 180 years*

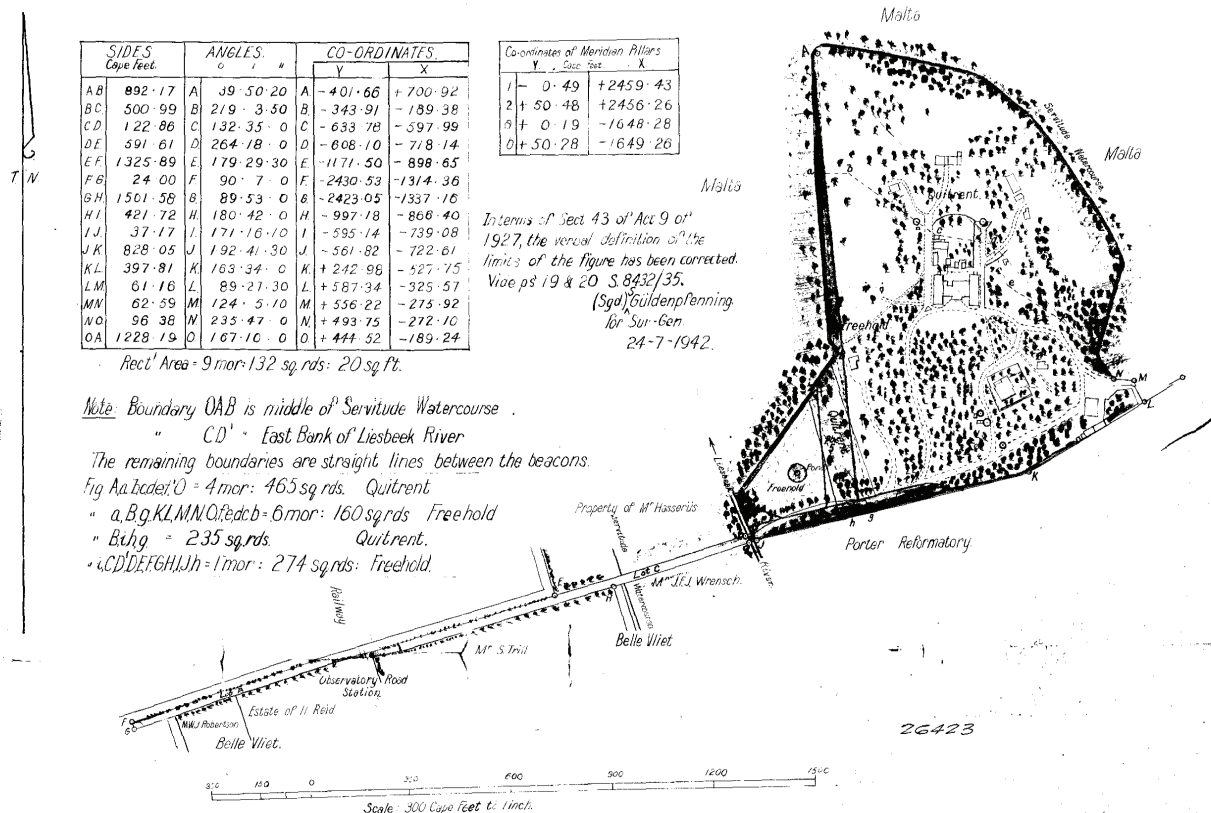
**Schedule**

The demarcation of the South African Astronomical Observatory (Royal Observatory) is as follows:

Site Name	Erf No/ Farm	Province	Town	Municipality	Survey Diagram	Figure
The South African Astronomical Observatory (The Royal Observatory)	Erf 26423 Cape Town	Western Cape	Cape Town	City of Cape Town	512/1888	A,B,D,D <sup>1</sup> ,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L,M,N,O

D<sup>o</sup> N<sup>o</sup> 512/1888

The numerical data of this diagram are sufficiently consistent

(Sgd) Max Jurisch  
Examiner.

The figure ABCD'EFGH.IJKLMNO represents 12 morgen 534 sq rds of land in the Cape Division called the Royal Observatory, being an amended diagram of the several properties granted and transferred as follows:-

- Freehold Grant to Rev<sup>d</sup> F. follows dated 18 December 1824
- Quitrent " " Rev<sup>d</sup> F. follows " 27 December 1827
- Transfer " " Lords Com<sup>s</sup> of the Admiralty 31 January 1840
- " " " Naval Civil Department 13 June 1843

Bounded as indicated above

Surveyed by me.  
(Sgd) Edward H.V. Melvill.  
Govt. Surveyor.  
October 1888.

amended  
24th June 1889  
David Gill in his capacity as H.M. Astronomer  
C.F. 2016  
N<sup>o</sup> 1085/1947

Deducted:

1 Lot D = 34 sq rds: 133 sq ft. for Colonial Government ded. 28 5 1906 tr<sup>d</sup> 24 7 1907  
A 4578-1927 2 Lot A = 104 " " " Cape Town City Council " 28 11 1927 " 13 6 1929 tr<sup>d</sup> 5851/1929  
A 4579-1927 3 Lot C = 363 " " " " " " " 13 6 1929 " 5851/1929

E 1706/50 7435.54 E 26427  
" do " 7436.54 E 26426  
E 1751/93 4801/93 E 151833

5139 Gans Gt. 279/156  
51385 Gans Gt. 274/156  
withdrown R2

M 3457

B M 1428 S

M 1422

C