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**NAME: Slate Culvert, 27 St James Street, WILLUNGA**

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**CURRENT USE:** Slate culvert

**FORMER USE:** Slate culvert

**DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION:** C. 1840s

**LOCATION:** 27 St James Street, WILLUNGA

**LAND DESCRIPTION:** CT 5873/782, Section 702, Hundred of Willunga

**OWNER:** Private ownership

**RECOMMENDATION:** Local Heritage Place



Slate culvert, 27 St James Street, Willunga (GGA, 2021)

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**DESCRIPTION:**

C.1840s slate culvert created as part of the Government Quarry site near Willunga township from the early 1840s onwards. Constructed of locally-sourced Willunga slate constructed in the 'book-leaf' method.

It is recommended that the Slate Culvert, 27 St James Street, Willunga be included on the South Australian Heritage Register as a Local Heritage place.

A delineation of significant historic fabric is provided in the Extent of Listing.

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**STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Slate Culvert, 27 St James Street, Willunga is of significance as a substantial and well-documented drainage culvert strongly associated with the activities of the Government Quarry from the early 1840s onwards. Constructed in c.1840, the culvert is among the earliest examples of a slate-constructed drainage culvert in the township and could number among the town's earliest structures. The culvert also represents the transportation of slate from the site as well as an early documented example of the use of Willunga slate for construction purposes.

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**RELEVANT CRITERIA (As defined in Section 67(1) of the PDI Act 2016):**

a) it displays historical, economic or social themes that are of importance to the local area; the former Government Quarry slate culvert being a significant, well-documented example of a slate culvert within the Willunga township, associated with the activities of the Government Quarry from the 1840s onwards. The culvert may now be one of the earliest surviving structures within the township of Willunga.

b) it represents customs or ways of life that are characteristic of the local area; being a significant local example of a slate culvert within the Willunga township strongly associated with the activities of the Government Quarry from approximately 1840 onwards. Constructed of Willunga slate, the township's idiosyncratic building material, the culvert is constructed using the 'book-leaf' method and is now likely among the earliest surviving structures within Willunga.

d) it displays aesthetic merit, design characteristics or construction techniques of significance to the local area; being a large, well-documented culvert constructed of Willunga slate, an important material and construction method for the township, dating from the town's initial developments during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

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**RELEVANT HISTORIC THEMES:****Theme 2: Regional Life in the Southern Vales****2.3 Construction using local materials****Theme 8: Transportation and Human Movement****8.4 Early road and drainage infrastructure**

**BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:**

The slate culvert at 27 St James Street, Willunga does not appear to have been assessed as part of any previous heritage survey.

While little historical information relating to the culvert has been previously identified, it is understood that the slate culvert was constructed to facilitate access over the Willunga Creek to the nearby former Government Quarry and most likely dates to the opening of the Quarry by approximately 1840. The culvert has been described as likely the earliest constructed crossing over the Willunga creek and is likely one of the district's earliest surviving structures. The culvert has also been associated with the construction of Willunga's earliest buildings and the district's notable slate industry.

While the history of Willunga's Delabole, Bangor and Martin's & Bastian's Quarries are historically prominent and well-documented, the history of the former Government Quarry located on Section 701 does not appear to be well-documented. Identified as having operated between 1840 to 1903, the former Government Quarry provided stone for local buildings including the Courthouse and Police Station. It is presumed that in order to reliably transport quarried slate from the site into the township across the Willunga creek, the slate culvert would have been constructed at an early stage of the site's development, ie. early 1840s. The sizeable depth of the culvert would suggest construction to support the weight and width of bullock wagons carting heavy loads of slate from the site.

References to 'Mrs. Atkinson's quarry' have been recorded from 1884; accessible Lands Title records for the site date from 1895 when portions of Section 701 and the adjoining Section 761 were acquired by Robert Fish Atkinson, accountant of Port Pirie, later owned by Atkinson's wife Susan from 1896. The site remained in the Atkinson family until 1953; extensive subdivision were undertaken from this period, particularly during the 1980s which has resulted in the current suburban landscape surrounding the site.

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**EXTENT OF LISTING:**

The form and materials of all masonry elements relating to the slate culvert.

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**REFERENCES:**

CTs 595/41; 2270/20; 3128/122; 3872/37; 3942/188; 4079/703; 4181/670; 4264/981; 4310/983; etc.

Willunga, South Australian Register, Wed 27 Aug 1884, p.3.

<http://www.willungafestivals.com/regular-events-in-willunga.asp>, accessed 20/4/2022.

[https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-australia/f98a06ad73744cc1e459e0e22529219b03b22e04/original/1610949981/Slate\\_Culvert\\_Go\\_vt\\_Quarry.pdf\\_6b78189a7e75495541a9fcdcfb4b7840?1610949981](https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-australia/f98a06ad73744cc1e459e0e22529219b03b22e04/original/1610949981/Slate_Culvert_Go_vt_Quarry.pdf_6b78189a7e75495541a9fcdcfb4b7840?1610949981), accessed 20/4/2022.

## SITE MAPPING:



Site of 27 St James Street, Willunga; culvert shown within red circle; former Government quarry site shown within red square (Planning SA SAPPa)

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## OTHER IMAGES:



C.1840s slate culvert to former Government Quarry site, looking north (GGA, 2022)