

NAME: Dwelling, Outbuilding and Oak Tree, 20-22 St Georges Street, WILLUNGA

PLACE NO.: Local, HID 5507

CURRENT USE:	Dwelling
FORMER USE:	Cottage and outbuilding
DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION:	C.1850s with later additions and alterations
LOCATION:	20-22 St Georges Street, WILLUNGA
LAND DESCRIPTION:	CT 5561/919, Section 258, Hundred of Willunga
OWNER:	Private ownership
REGISTER STATUS:	Local, HID 5507



Former cottage and oak tree at 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga (GGA, 2021).

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DESCRIPTION:

C.1850s Victorian Regency cottage constructed of masonry with external rendering, brick chimneys original door and window openings with early timber-framed sash windows with slate sills. Early lean-to additions to south elevation constructed of masonry with original window and door openings with early timber fittings and slate sills. Various areas of rendered masonry, some areas of pise construction with internal slate floors. Modified later roof form and materials (likely originally clad in slate) with replacement corrugated steel cladding. C.1900s additions to immediate west built by Willunga builder George Sara, constructed of masonry, slate and brick with various later alterations and brick chimneys, associated late 20th century timber framed kitchen and dining additions. Modified later roof form and materials (likely originally clad in slate) with replacement corrugated steel cladding. C.2010 additions to east elevation constructed of rendered masonry with timber framed windows and doors.

C.1850s outbuilding, likely former dairy, walls of pise construction with external rendering with original door and window openings with early timber door leaf and fittings with later 20th century glass window. Original timber gabled roof structure with various periods of slate tiling.

C. 1850s English Oak tree dating to early development of site registered with the SA National Trust as a tree of Local Significance.

It is recommended that the dwelling, oak tree and outbuilding at 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga be retained on the SA Heritage Register as a Local Heritage place.

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

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

The dwelling, English Oak tree and outbuilding at 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga is of significance as a distinctive mid-19th century dwelling with significant later additions effectively representing the development of the township of Willunga from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. The property is strongly associated with a number of prominent Willunga residents including Richard Polkinghorne, quarry owner; George Sara, prominent Willunga builder and the Male family. The property's English Oak tree was planted in the 1850s and is of significance as an early surviving example in South Australia. The pise outbuilding is also of significance as an intact example of this important early construction method in South Australian history.

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, being a representative example of the typical development of an early residence with significant later additions from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. The associated pise outbuilding is a good representative example of this early construction method and the English oak tree dates to the site's initial development.

b) it represents customs or ways of life that are characteristic of the local area, being a mid-19th century dwelling with substantial later c.1900 additions, undertaken by a prominent local builder.

d) it displays aesthetic merit, design characteristics or construction techniques of significance to the local area; the outbuilding being built of pise construction; an early construction method in South Australian history of note within the local district.

e) it is associated with a notable local personality or event; being associated with the family of Richard Polkinghorne, a notable slate quarry owner in Willunga during the mid-19th century; as the last home of George Sara, a prominent, prolific and well-documented builder of the Willunga district and with the Male family, prominent local Willunga citizens in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

g) in the case of a tree, it is of special, historical or social significance or importance to the local area; being a significant and early example of an English Oak tree deemed to be of local significance. The tree dates to the 1850s and has been identified as one of the earliest surviving examples in South Australia.

RELEVANT HISTORIC THEMES:

Theme 2: Regional Life in the Southern Vales

2.1 Cottages and small dwellings

2.8 Significant local trees and plantings

Theme 4: Local Settlers and Local Entrepreneurship

4.3 Early Willunga slate mining identities

4.4 Early local builders and contractors

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The dwelling, oak tree and outbuilding at 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga were first assessed as part of the 1985 Fleurieu Peninsula Survey, D. C. Willunga. The 1985 survey noted that the nine roomed house was developed in several stages; initially dating from approximately 1850. The 1985 Survey noted that early occupiers included the Male family, who worked the Bangor slate quarry. The Polkinghorne family also lived in the property and reputedly planted the oak tree in the 1850s. The 1985 Survey noted that the site was particularly notable due to the impressive, old English Oak tree.

The property was also assessed as part of the 1997 Willunga District Heritage Survey, which noted the house was owned in 1857 by Thomas Polkinghorne, a quarry owner. The presence of small slab sheds was also noted at this time, as was the illustration of the house on the Wadham Survey Plan of the Willunga township of 1857. It is interesting to note that while the 1997 Survey identified heritage significance in the site's old English Oak tree, an assessment of the tree was not included in the relevant criteria section.

A recent, well-researched history of 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga is available on the 'Willunga Now & Then' website. This reads as follows:

Large brick and stone 8-roomed house on Lot 148; first owned by Cornishman Richard Polkinghorne who, with his wife and four children, had arrived in SA in 1849 on the ship

“Pakenham” and settled in Willunga soon after. Some sections of the house were built in the early 1850s, probably after Polkinghorne arrived back in SA in 1852 with £700 after ten weeks in the Victorian goldfields. The English oak tree at the front of the block was planted by Polkinghorne in the mid-1850s. In June 2015 it was added to the NTSA’s (National Trust of South Australia) Significant Tree Register as having Local Significance.

Richard Polkinghorne ran pigs on the surrounding land and had a butcher’s shop on the side of the house, together with a slaughterhouse nearby.

The house was bought by John Robert Percy Male in 1891. He was a quarryman and his wife Elizabeth was the district nurse and midwife – many of the town’s babies were born here.

George Sara built an addition to the eastern end of the home and lived here under Elizabeth’s care until his death in 1914, aged 100 years.

Rose Foreman bought the property in 1937 and transferred it to her daughter Alma Foreman in 1949. Alma (known as Ruth) lived here with her three children (Brian, Dorothy and David Barry) until she died in 1975. They milked a few dairy cows, raised calves and sold butter and eggs. Alma was also a dressmaker.

Note on the opposite side of the street a wooden slab shed, at one time used as a milling shed and a fine example of early construction.

(Willunga Now & Then, House and Oak Tree, 22 St Georges Street, 2020).

The ‘Willunga Now & Then’ website’s Richard Polkinghorne biography identifies a little further information relating to the development of the dwelling and surrounding land:

Some sections of his house at 22 St Georges St were built in the early 1850s. In 1857 after a dispute about the initial land grants, he was able to formally purchase this land (lot 148) on which he had been living since his arrival. At the same time, he bought Lot 147, Pt Lot 151 and nearby Lots 182-189, 191, 192, 195 and 196. In the 1850s he also owned sections 552 and 443, each of 80 acres, the latter occupied by son-in-law James Foreman.

Richard Polkinghorne died at home on 4 October 1873, aged 64 years, and was buried at Strout Road Cemetery. He bequeathed all his property to his wife Alice. She died of apoplexy on 25 September 1880, aged 70 years, leaving the property to Henry James Polkinghorne, Grocer, of Goodwood. In 1891 it was purchased by J R P Male and then Rose Foreman in 1937. (Willunga Now & Then, Richard Polkinghorne biography, 2020).

As noted, builder George Sara, a significant Willunga historical figure who was responsible for many of the district’s early structures, resided at the property with the Male family in the late 1900s until his death in 1914 at the age of 100 years.

Current research largely supports existing historical findings; identifiable Land Title records date to John Roberts Percy Male’s purchase in November 1891. The current owners have retained the property since the mid-1970s.

The English Oak tree is understood to be among the oldest surviving examples in South Australia.

EXTENT OF LISTING:

The form and materials of the c.1850s cottage, including all masonry walls, brick chimneys, original door and window openings, all early timber fittings and slate sills. Masonry elements, early timber fittings and slate sills to the early lean-to additions are also included in the listing. Modified room forms and later corrugated steel cladding to the original c.1850s portion are not included in the listing.

The form and materials of all early masonry elements relating to the c.1900s additions by George Sara, including all early masonry, slate and brick elements. Later modifications and later adjoining timber-framed kitchen and dining area additions are not included in the listing. The original roof form is included in the listing though the form and materials, currently including corrugated steel likely replacing slate elements, are not included in the listing. It is recommended that the reintroduction of slate cladding to all roof forms be considered.

C.2010 additions to the east elevation are not included in the listing.

All early elements to the c.1850s outbuilding, including rendered pise walls, timber-framed roof with various periods of slate cladding, early timber door leaf and fittings, are included in the listing. Later glass window replacements are not included in the listing.

The current form of the English Oak tree is included in the listing. It is recommended that a regular arborist assessment of the English Oak tree be established to assess its condition and therefore its ongoing heritage significance to the local district.

REFERENCES:

Historical CT 1054/6-7, etc.

Heritage Investigations and Historical Consultants Pty. Ltd., *Heritage Survey of the Fleurieu Peninsula, District Council of Willunga*, Item Ref. No. 276.

McDougall & Vines, 1997, Willunga District Heritage Survey, pp. 283-4.

Willunga Now & Then, House and Oak Tree, 22 St Georges Street, 2020.

https://willunga.nowandthen.net.au/House_and_Oak_Tree_22_St_Georges_Street, accessed 26/10/2021.

Willunga Now & Then, Richard Polkinghorne biography, 2020.

https://willunga.nowandthen.net.au/Polkinghorne,_Richard, accessed 26/10/2021.

SITE MAPPING:

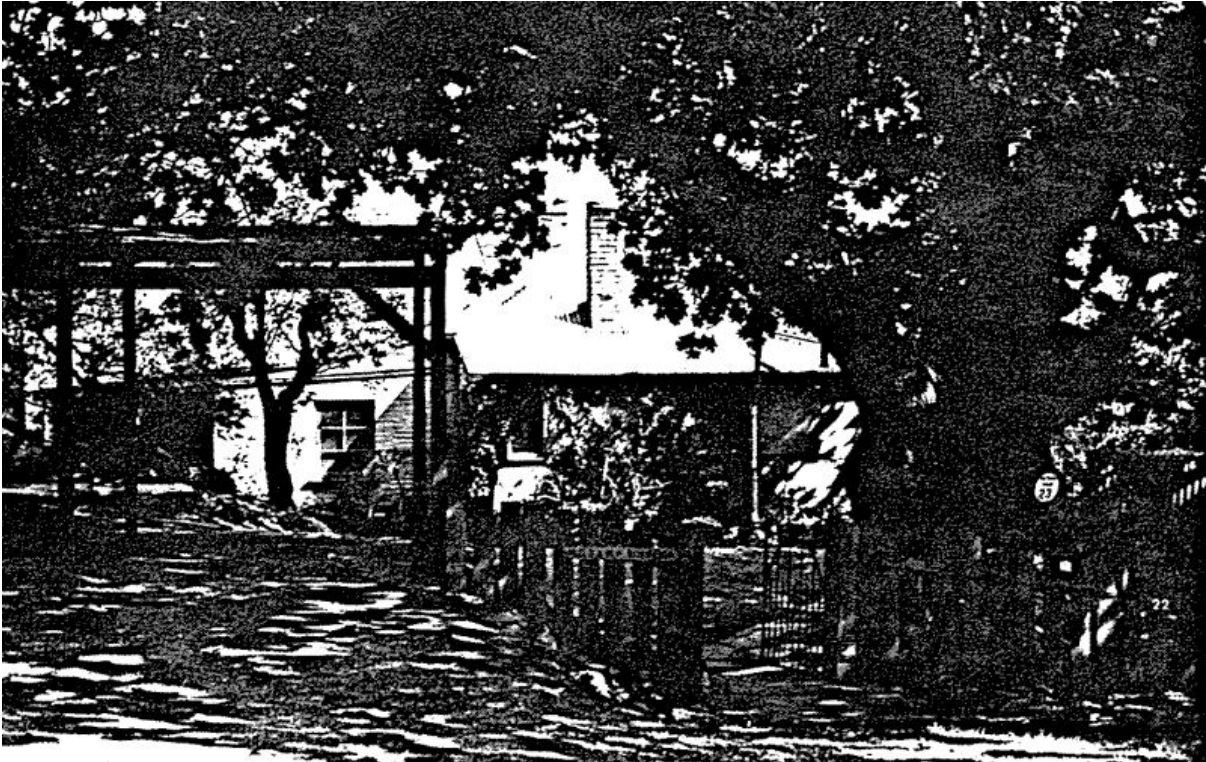


Site of 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga; (1) residence; (2) oak tree; (3) outbuilding (Planning SA SAPPa)

HISTORICAL IMAGES:



Builder George Sara, photographed on 30th November 1909, aged 96 years
(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/willunganowandthen/13947875609/>, accessed 26/10/2021).



1985 photograph of residence and oak tree at 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga (1985 Fleurieu Peninsula Heritage Survey, D. C. Willunga).



1997 photograph of residence and oak tree at 20-22 St Georges Street, Willunga (1997 Willunga District Heritage Survey).

OTHER IMAGES:



C.1850s original residence, now central portion of dwelling with modified roof and verandah (GGA, 2021).



Early 20th century additions to west elevation of c.1850s cottage (GGA, 2021).



Early masonry to c.1850s lean-to additions and early 20th century masonry fabric to south elevation (GGA, 2021).



Late 20th century dining and kitchen additions to west elevation, looking south (GGA, 2021).



English Oak tree, planted by Richard Polkinghorne in the early 1850s (GGA, 2021).



c.1850s English Oak tree and nearby pise outbuilding dating to a similar period (GGA, 2021).



North and west elevations of early pise outbuilding, with external rendering, early timber fittings and various periods of slate roofing (GGA, 2021).