



9.

BRIDGE OF VILELA



Lugar de Vilela
Aveleda
Lousada



41° 16' 8.53" N
8° 14' 53.31" W



+351 918 116 488



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Submitted
to classification



P. 25



Free



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The Bridge of Vilela, located in the hamlet of Vilela, parish of Aveleda, municipality of Lousada, allows crossing the river Sousa, thus establishing a connection between Vilela, to the west of Caíde de Rei, and the hamlets of Vilar de Nuste and Cartão.

Built in granite masonry, the Bridge of Vilela features four round arches. The arches are supported by three blind pillars reinforced with triangular cut-waters upstream and buttresses downstream. The spans of the two lateral arches are currently shoaled.

The platform is horizontal above the central arches, prancing on the tops, and it is paved with granite slabs. The Bridge's ashlar do not have any initials, an element that quite often present in medieval bridges.

This Bridge, which is difficult to date, has similar characteristics to those of medieval times, and may have been built in a period - the 13th century - when circulation needs were growing in the Vale do Sousa together with the need to cross a natural obstacle: the Sousa river.



BRIDGES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The bridge-building activity marked the Portuguese medieval landscape in a striking way. According to Carlos Alberto Ferreira de Almeida, in terms of Romanesque civil architecture, the emphasis was placed on the numerous bridges built at the time “for the interest shown in them, for the impact they caused, for the landscape transformations they always gave rise to, for the technical and economic means they demanded and for the benefits they offered to communication and men”.

