

## Fort Purbrook

<b>Commenced</b>	1862	<b>Armament</b>	
<b>Completed</b>	1870	<b>1876</b>	Approved 42 x 7-inch RBL; 1 x 64 pr. RML; 12 x SB flank guns
<b>Cost</b>	£ 135000	<b>1893</b>	Mounted 7 x 7-inch RBL; 1 x 4-inch BL; 7 x 64 pr. RML; 4 x 40 pr. RBL; 4 x 8-inch RML Howitzers; 5 x 32pr. SBBL.
<b>Map Reference</b>	SU 678065		Required to complete 2 x 40pr. RBL; 6 x 32 pr. SBBL (fixed amm conv.)
<b>Position</b>	Portsdown Hill / Northern Approaches	<b>1898</b>	to be added 1 x MG
<b>Type</b>	Land Front / Polygonal		Disarmed 1907
<b>Ditch</b>	Dry	<b>Caponiers</b>	1 full 1 demi
<b>Guns</b>	78	<b>Counterscarp galleries</b>	(2 ditch galleries)
<b>Barrack Accom.</b>	227	<b>Haxo casemates</b>	none
<b>Present use</b>	Portsmouth Youth Activities Centre	<b>Moncrieff Pits</b>	3
<b>History</b>	Army barracks / Naval Radar training to 1968		
<b>Disposal Condition</b>	Sold to Portsmouth City 1969		
<b>Access</b>	Partly restored		
	Open Summer weekends to public		
<b>Sources</b>	Solent Papers No 3 Garry Mitchell		

### History and Description

Purbrook occupies the east end of the defensive line on Portsdown Hill. It is 2,400 yards east of Fort Widley and it built on a seven sided trace. Because of its position on the flank of the hill it was constructed to bring more firepower to bear on the north-eastern approaches and its north-east salient is protected by a full caponier with a large five-bay mortar battery behind. The western ditch is protected by a demi caponier whilst the minor branches of the ditch are covered by musketry galleries crossing the ditch. A central spiral stair leads from the parade to the underground service tunnels from the caponiers and barrack. The main magazine is off a side tunnel from the central spiral stair. The passages are the only ones in the Portsmouth defences to be equipped with chicanes. The vulnerability of the fort to its northeast and east led to the construction of two outposts to the fort, Crookhorn and Farlington redoubts. Access to both redoubts was originally to have been through tunnels from Purbrook. Also a covered way led to Crookhorn Redoubt. The barrack block and redan at Purbrook are almost identical to those at Fort Nelson. The caponiers seem to have been used for experiments in the use of iron to cover gun ports and the fort is cited in a lecture to the Royal United Services Institute by Jervois on 'The Application of Iron to Fortification'.

During World War Two the fort seems to have been derelict until the 65th. Chemical Warfare Company moved in in June 1940.

Purbrook is now owned by Portsmouth City Council and is used for youth activities. It is largely intact and in a good state of conservation.

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