

Victorian Forts and Batteries

Datasheets on the Victorian Fortifications of the United Kingdom

Gosport



David Moore

<http://www.victorianforts.co.uk>

Fort Brockhurst

Commenced	31/03/1858	Armament	
Completed	20/12/1862		Originally for 50 guns on ramparts and in flanking casemates with 30 in the keep and caponiers.
Cost	£ 108,999	1893 Approved	8 x 7-inch RBL 9 x 64 pr RML 2 x .45 MG
Map Reference	SU 596020	1893 Mounted	9 x 64 pr. RML 16 x 7-inch RBL
Position	Gosport Advanced Line / Western Flank		
Type	Land Front / Polygonal	Caponiers	Two demi one full
Ditch	Wet	Counterscarp galleries	None
Guns	73	Haxo casemates	Four (2 x double) + one on keep
Barrack Accom.	308 men	Moncrieff Pits	None
Present use	English Heritage / museum / training workshop		
History	Army barracks and transit camp		
Disposal	Army moved out in 1957		
Condition	Actively conserved and restored		
Access	All year round		
Sources	Solent Papers No 6		

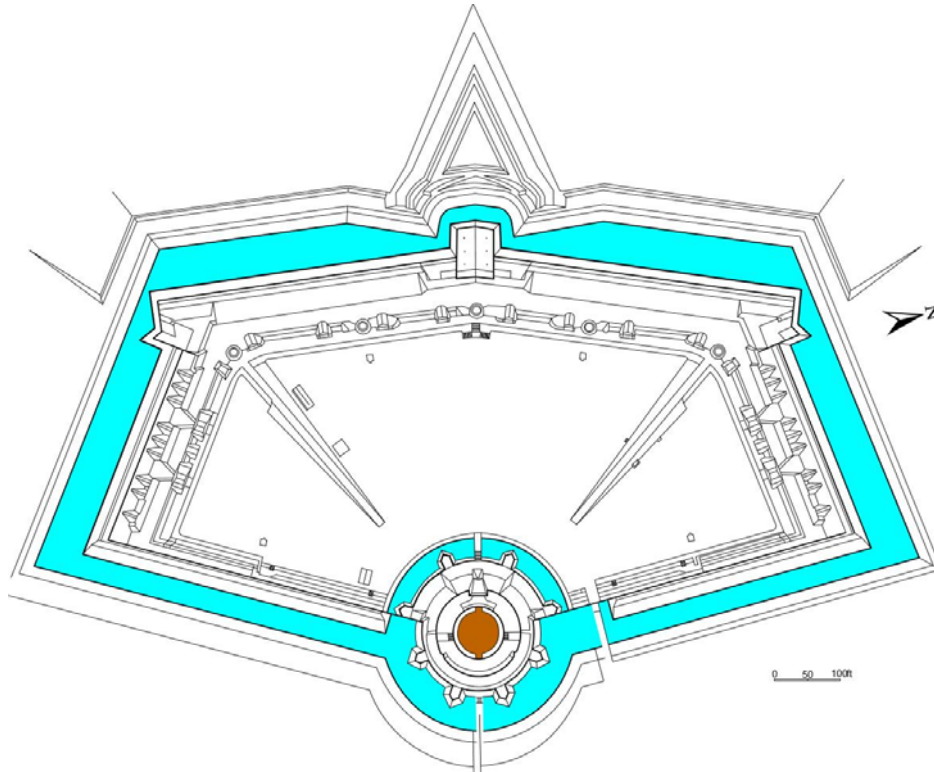
History and Description

One of a line of five forts to defend the western approaches to Portsmouth Harbour. It was designed, together with its sister forts, Grange and Rowner, by William Crossman. It is an early example of the polygonal fort and features a circular keep of last resort at its gorge. Its main west rampart is built over a series of casemated barrack rooms. The central parade is divided into three sections by two long earth ramps for access to the terreplein. The shoulders of the fort house the main magazines whilst the north and south flanks provide accommodation for officers and NCOs as well as gun casemates for flank defence. The terrepleins of the flanks have two Haxo casemates each. Brockhurst was the discharge depot where the periodical drafts of men, whose time of service had expired while abroad, were kept until the details incident to their discharge were completed.

Brockhurst was a recruitment centre and served as a demobilisation centre in 1918. It was the depot and headquarters for a variety of regiments from the 1900s onwards. This included the 4th. Medium Regiment, the Royal Warwicks and finally 245 Armament Battery.

The fort was in use by the army until 1957. It was sold in 1962 and English Heritage acquired it in 1984. It has now been refurbished as a museum and has workshops and a training facility for the English Heritage Craftsmen. The south Haxo contains a 64 pr. 64cwt RML on a traversing carriage. The old Regimental Institute building in the centre of the parade has been converted for storage of artefacts from English Heritage properties across south east England. The fort is not open to the public, except by arrangement with E.H. and the majority of rooms beneath the ramparts now serve as a storage facility.

Fort Brockhurst



Top Plan



Fort Rowner

Commenced	Summer 1859
Completed	20/01/1862
Cost	£ 110,388
Map Reference	SU 594011
Position	Western Flank Gosport Advanced Lines
Type	Land Front Polygonal
Ditch	Wet
Guns	73
Barrack Accom.	300 men
Present use	Within navy establishment H.M.S. Sultan / fishing club
History	Army Barracks R.A.F. and Navy
Disposal	Soon?
Condition	Very over grown mostly derelict
Access	None. Can be viewed from Military Road
Sources	Solent Papers No 6

Armament

53 guns on ramparts and in casemates, 30 guns keep and caponiers

1893 Approved

8 x 7-inch RBL 11 x 64 pr RML 2 x .45 MG

1893 Mounted

11 x 64 pr. RML 15 x 7-inch RBL

Caponiers Two demi
one full

Counterscarp galleries None

Haxo casemates Four (2 x doubles) +
one on keep

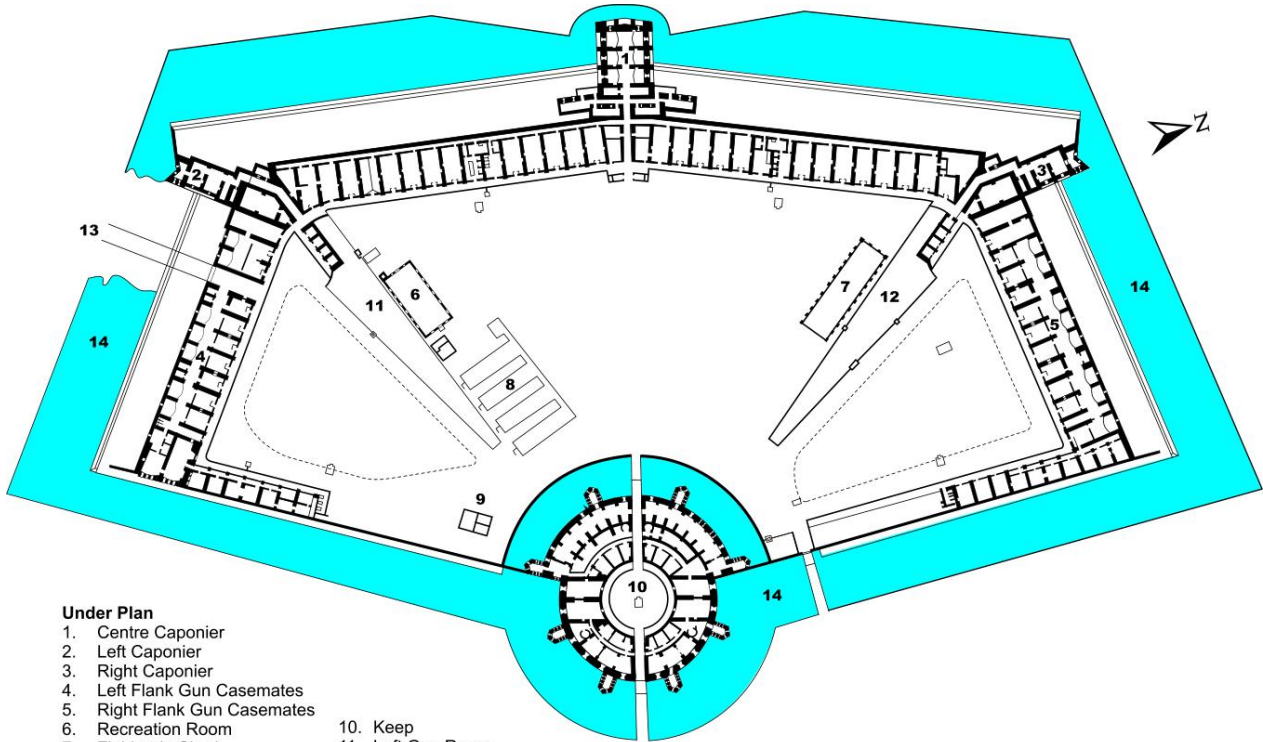
Moncrieff Pits None

History and Description

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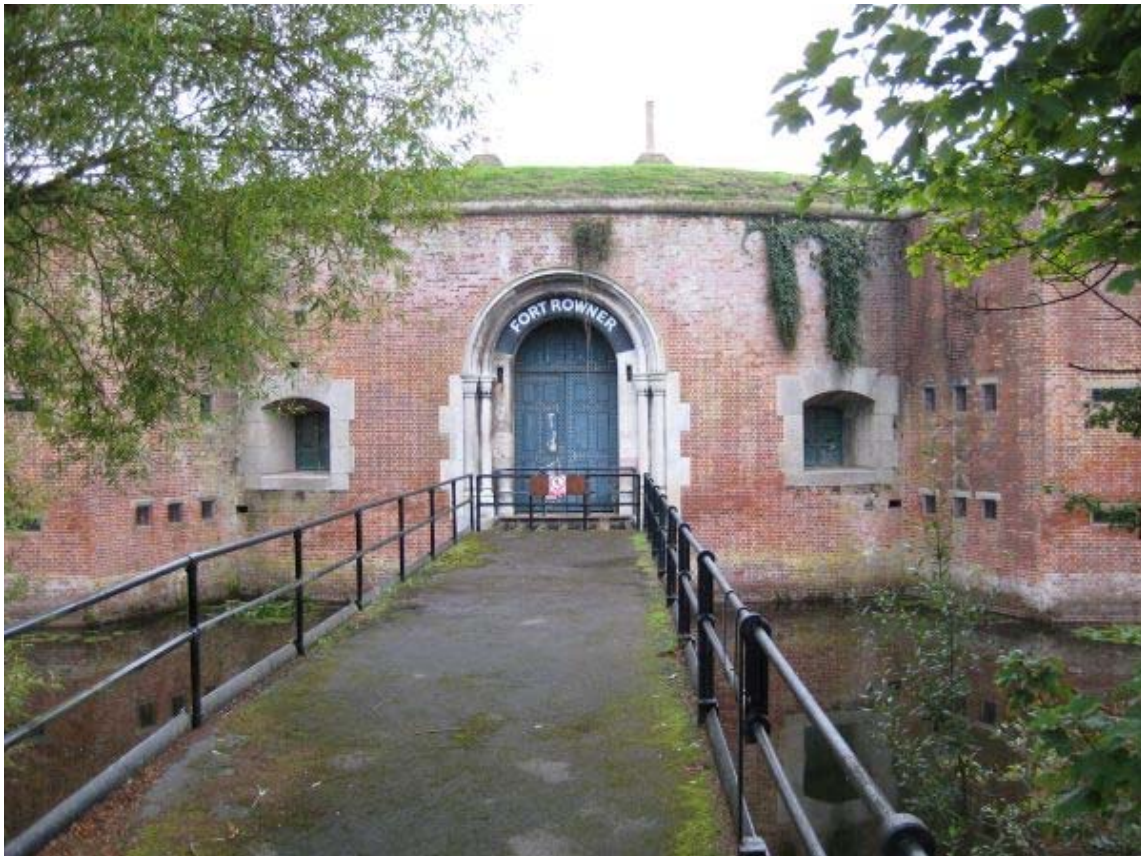
Rowner served much of its life as an army barracks and was used to prepare troops for the Boer War. It was the H.Q. for the Auxiliary Artillery, Southern Division (Militia and Volunteers) as well as the Depot for that Division. It was used by the RAF during the Second World War. It was occupied until 1945 by 3502 Servicing Unit. It then became part of HMS Siskin in 1946 and HMS Sultan in 1956. It served for a period as a 'Degaussing Establishment' and as offices for various MOD departments. In 1991 the Degaussing Establishment moved and the fort became redundant. It is now largely unused although the Navy maintain a presence and the HMS Sultan Naval fishing club use its moats. The keep and flanking casemates are largely derelict. Part of the southern section of the moat has been infilled and a new entrance cut through the ramparts. The future of the fort is uncertain but in 1994 work began to clear the ramparts of undergrowth and trees.

Fort Rowner



Under Plan

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Centre Caponier | 10. Keep |
| 2. Left Caponier | 11. Left Gun Ramp |
| 3. Right Caponier | 12. Right Gun Ramp |
| 4. Left Flank Gun Casemates | 13. New Entrance (post 1945) |
| 5. Right Flank Gun Casemates | 14. Wet Ditch |
| 6. Recreation Room | |
| 7. Field train Shed | |
| 8. Hutments (WW2) | |
| 9. Sling Wagon Shed & Bread and Meat Stores | |



Fort Grange

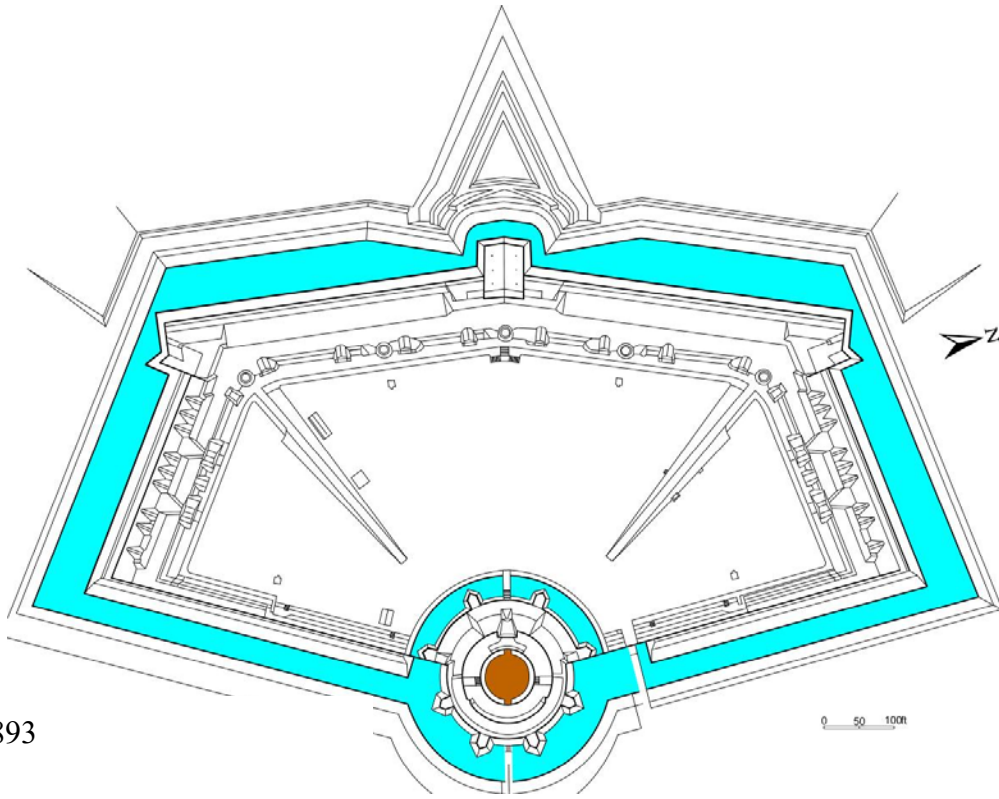
Commenced	31/08/1858	Armament	
Completed	20/01/1863		53 guns on ramparts and in casemates, 30 guns keep and caponiers
Cost	£ 163045	1893 Approved	8 x 7-inch RBL 9 x 64 pr RML
Map Reference	SU 591011		2 x .45 MG
Position	Western Flank Gosport Advanced Lines	1893 Mounted	9 x 64 pr. RML 16 x 7-inch RBL
Type	Land Front Polygonal		
Ditch	Wet	Caponiers	Two demi one full
Guns	73	Counterscarp galleries	None
Barrack Accom.	300 men	Haxo casemates	Four (2 x double) + one on keep
Present use	Retained by Navy under D.O.E / H.M.S. Sultan	Moncrieff Pits	None
History	Army Barracks, R.A.F. Fleet Air Arm and Navy		
Disposal Condition	Derelict in parts/much altered		
Access	None. Can be viewed from Military Road		
Sources	Solent Papers No 6		

History and Description

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Grange served as an army barracks and was the H.Q. of the Gosport Sub District Royal Artillery. In 1914 the Royal Flying Corps was stationed at the fort and at nearby Grange airfield. It then became part of RAF Station Gosport in 1918. The RAF used the fort in the Second World War, it served as the headquarters for 7 Group Coastal Command from 1940 to 1945 and was known as 'Aeronautics Gosport'. It was incorporated into HMS Siskin in 1946 as a Naval Air Station, and was the home of first British Helicopter Squadron. It became part of HMS Sultan in 1956. All of the earth has been removed from the ramparts and the moat filled. Some casemates have been altered and two of the keep's caponiers have been removed. The fort is still owned and occupied by the Royal Navy as part of H.M.S. Sultan. The keep is occupied by the Sultan Volunteer Cadet Corps and the layout of many of its rooms have been altered.

Fort Grange



Top plan 1893



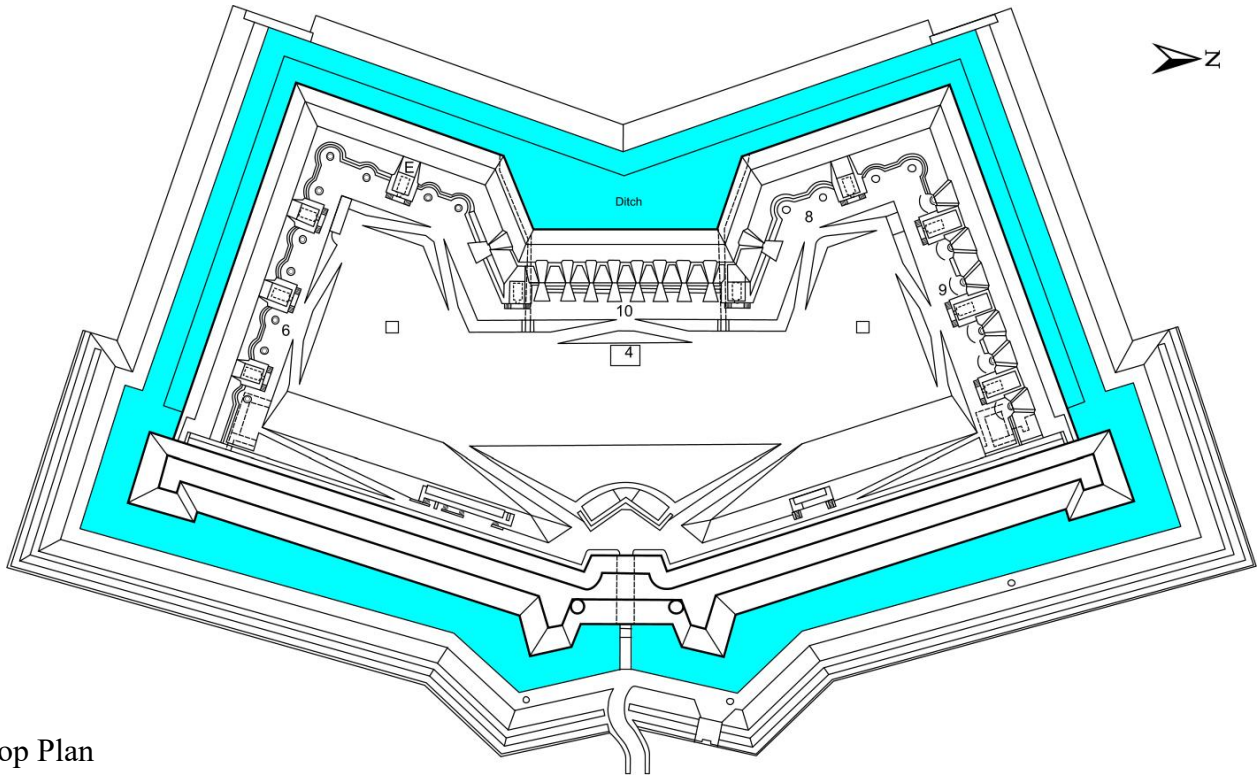
Fort Gomer

Commenced	1853	Armament	
Completed	1858	Designed for 30 guns on the ramparts.	
Cost	£ 92,000 (The Times 1858)	1860 armament	9 x 68 pr. 5 x 10-inch 85 cwt. 7 x 8-inch 65 cwt. 9 x 32 pr. 3 x 13-inch mortars.
Map Reference	SZ 588993	1886 mounted	20 x 7-inch RBL and 2 x 13-inch mortars.
Position	Western Flank, Gosport Advanced Lines	1888 -1898 mounted	6 x 64pr 58cwt. RMLs, 8 x 7-inch RBLs
Type	Land front, Early Polygonal	1901 Disarmed	
Ditch	Wet	Caponiers	None - two flanking galleries
Guns	73	Counterscarp galleries	Two 'bastionettes'
Barrack Accom.	300	Haxo casemates	None
Present use	Nothing Remaining / Under housing estate	Moncrieff Pits	None
History	Army Barracks Sold for demolition in 1964		
Disposal Condition	Nothing remaining		
Access			
Sources	Solent Papers No 6		

History and Description

Fort Gomer was constructed between 1853 and 1858 and as such it was the first of the Polygonal land forts based on the Prussian System of mutual defence. It was unique and an example of early attempts to break away from the old bastioned system of fortification. A low lying brick barracks occupied the rear of the fort, closing off the gorge. To the west the main armament of the fort was placed on two earth bastions with a central curtain providing more guns firing through embrasures. Flanking fire for ditch defence was provided for musketry only. Two bastionettes were placed on the far side of the wet ditch, one at each shoulder. Two more flanking galleries fired across the faces of the curtain and bastions. It was possibly intended to mount guns on the roof of the barrack, using it as a cavalier, but this was never done. Mortars were to be mounted on the central parade. The fort was modified early on to remedy shortcomings in its method of mounting guns, barbette positions being substituted for some of the embrasures on the flanks. In the Victorian period the fort was used mainly as barracks and as a training establishment. Line regiments undergoing the musketry course at Browdown were quartered in the fort. It was disarmed in 1901. It saw service as a training facility once more in preparing troops for the Boer War and the First World War trenches. The 3rd. Field Training Regiment was stationed at the fort during 1939. A Canadian unit, The Fort Garry Horse occupied the Fort in 1943/4 with its A and Headquarters Squadron for Amphibious assault training. The 1st Hussars (6th Armoured Regiment) moved to Fort Gomer on 4 March 1944 in preparation for the D-Day landings. The 7th. Royal Tank Regiment was based at the fort in the 1950s, leaving in 1953. Briefly in 1953 the fort was occupied by the RAOC Boys Training School and the fort was eventually released in 1964. It was sold at auction for £169,000 and a Fareham firm demolished it to provide land for housing. Nothing of it remains.

Fort Gomer



Top Plan



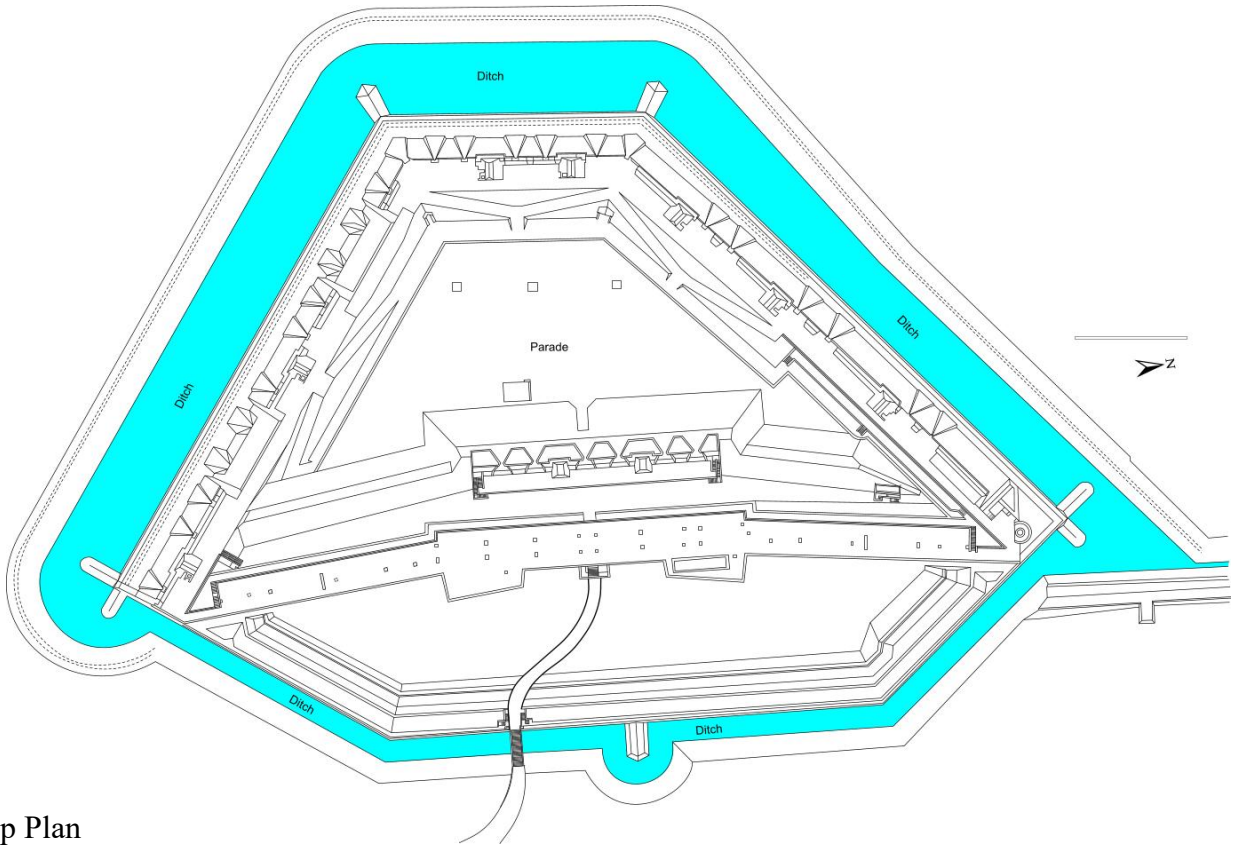
Fort Elson

Commenced	1855	Armament	Designed for 28 guns on the ramparts and the cavalier
Completed	1860	1872 mounted	4 x 10-inch SB, 6 x 8-inch SB, 10 x 68 pr. 8 x 32 pr.
Cost	£ 61,180 (actual) £63,740 (Est)	1886 mounted	18 x 7-inch 82 cwt. RBLs, 3 x 13-inch mortars.
Map Reference	SU 599029	1898	14 x 7-inch RBLs (3 on Moncrieff)
Position	Western Flank, Gosport Advanced Lines	1901 Disarmed	
Type	Land Front, Early Polygonal	Caponiers	7 x musketry flanking galleries
Ditch	Wet	Counterscarp galleries	None (escarp gallery)
Guns	73	Haxo casemates	Four (2 x double)
Barrack Accom.	300	Moncrieff Pits	Three
Present use	Retained by M.O.D / recently listed		
History	Army Barracks/ Wartime use mines and topedoes		
Disposal	Soon ?		
Condition	Derelict and heavily overgrown		
Access	None		
Sources	Solent Papers No 6		

History and Description

Fort Elson was the second of the Polygonal forts and, since the destruction of Fort Gomer in 1964, it is the oldest surviving polygonal fort. It is also unique in plan, this time completely abandoning the bastions of earlier fortifications in favour of earth ramparts constructed 'en decharge'. The gorge is closed with a fortified barracks and between this and the central parade is a cavalier with positions for six guns. The main ramparts had the usual mixture of 7-inch RBL guns and 64 pr. RML guns. The southern flanks had two double Haxo casemates and in the 1880s three Moncrieff disappearing mountings for 7-inch RBLs were added. The magazine arrangements, although primitive, were an improvement on those at Fort Gomer. The main magazine chamber is situated underneath the main west rampart. A gallery run within the length of the ramparts, primarily as a means of effecting the *escarp en decharge*. Twelve casemated chambers for accommodation and stores are built underneath the north flank. Seven musketry galleries project into the moat to provide flanking fire along it. The fort closed off the northern end of the western approaches to Portsmouth harbour. A sluice connected its moat with the harbour. On the eastern side of the short connecting moat was a prepared rampart for more guns. The fort was disarmed in 1901 and was used to store torpedoes and depth charges during the Second World War. It was incorporated into the naval munitions depot of Bedenham and Frater and although no longer in use, still lies within its jurisdiction. It was surveyed by English Heritage (1990) prior to listing it. It is very heavily overgrown and parts of its tunnels and casemates are reported to have collapsed. It has now been left to decay under an English Heritage policy of 'controlled ruination that is to allow the fort to deteriorate under a controlled and planned manner ensuring adequate records and safety aspects are addressed'.

Fort Elson



Top Plan



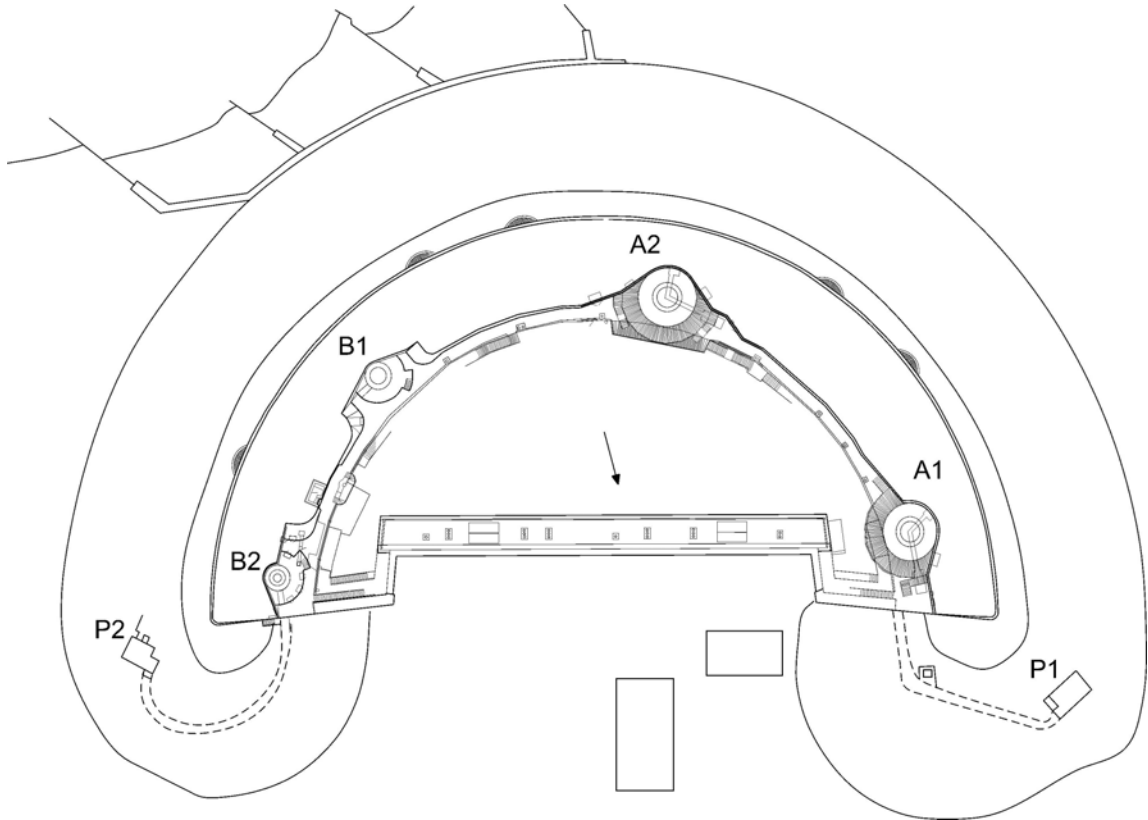
Fort Gilkicker

Commenced	1863	Armament	
Completed	1871	1884	2 x 12-inch R.M.L. 25 tons 3 x 11-inch R.M.L. 25 tons 17 x 10-inch R.M.L. 18 tons 5 x 9-inch R.M.L. 12 tons
Cost	£ 6,1395	1891	10 x 10-inch R.M.L. 5 x 9-inch R.M.L.
Map Reference	SZ 606975	1898	2 x 9.2-inch B.L.Mk X 2 x 6-inch B.L. Mk VII
Position	Gilkicker Point / Stokes Bay	Caponiers	None
Type	Sea Battery / granite faced	Counterscarp galleries	None
Ditch	Dry - Front only	Haxo casemates	None
Guns	27	Moncrieff Pits	None
Barrack Accom.	1 F.O. 3O. 130 men (1891)		
Present use	Hampshire County Council		
History	Auxiliary battery to Fort Monckton		
Disposal	Abandoned 1951 / H.C.C. 1987		
Condition	Protected but deteriorating		
Access	No access at present Solent Papers No 5 "Fort Gilkicker"		
Sources	David Moore		

History and Description

The present Fort Gilkicker replaced an earlier one constructed in 1856 on the same site. This was known as Monckton Auxiliary Battery. The Royal Commission of 1860 recommended that the first battery should be extended and strengthened, instead a new fort was built and its name changed to Fort Gilkicker. It was intended to cover the beach at Stokes Bay, already defended by a line of ditch and rampart with five flanking batteries, known as the Stokes Bay Lines, and the deep water anchorage off Browndown as well as the inner approaches to Portsmouth Harbour. It was proposed as '*a casemated battery of curvilinear form for 26 guns on one tier*'. It was to direct its principal fire on Stourbridge Shoal and the flanks on Spithead and Stokes Bay. It was commenced in June 1863 and following the failure of the contractor it was recommenced in 1865. By then the plans had been revised to allow for iron shields in the casemates and iron shields to protect five guns on the roof. By 1871 the fort was complete, except for its shields. A defensible barrack closed the rear of the fort. This was loopholed for rearwards defence. The basement, under the main sea facing gun casemates, contained the magazines allocated equally to shells and cartridges. In 1888, following the recommendations for all sea batteries, some of the casemates were filled with concrete to act as traverses. The magazine arrangements were also modified. By 1898 the RML armament was obsolete and it was proposed to mount the latest BL guns on the roof instead. These were in place briefly from 1902 until 1906. At this time the casemates were obscured by an earth bank, covering the gun ports. The guns were declared superfluous to requirements by the Owen Committee in 1905. The fort was briefly used in WWII and was bought by Hampshire County Council in 1986. The intention was to convert it for modern use as high quality apartments. In 2010 a scheme by Askett Hawk Developments was given planning permission following a public enquiry. In 2016 the fort has a new owner but it remains derelict and badly vandalised.

Fort Gilkicker



Fort Monckton

<p>Commenced c1783</p> <p>Completed 1789-90 but updated to 1880s</p> <p>Cost £ unknown</p> <p>Map Reference SZ 612979</p> <p>Position Gosport, Stokes Bay (Gilkicker)</p> <p>Type Sea Front / bastioned</p> <p>Ditch Dry / Wet</p> <p>Guns 22 casemated, 6+ on terreplein</p> <p>Barrack Accom.</p> <p>Present use Various Military uses</p> <p>History Napoleonic Fort updated in 1860s</p> <p>Disposal Condition Still in Military use Actively preserved</p> <p>Access None</p> <p>Sources "Western Defences of Portsmouth Harbour" G.H. Williams Portsmouth Papers No.30</p>	<p>Armament</p> <p>1872 2 x 7-inch R.B.L. 2 x 8-inch S.B. 9 x 32pr. 2 x 24pr. 6 x 18pr. 7 x 12 pr.</p> <p>1893 6 x 64pr. R.M.L.</p> <p>Caponiers Two for musketry (two storey)</p> <p>Counterscarp galleries None</p> <p>Haxo casemates None</p> <p>Moncrieff Pits None</p>
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History and Description

Fort Monckton was constructed in the 1780s on the site of a former fort know as 'The Fort at Gilkicker'. Much controversy surrounded its design and construction and it eventually changed its name to the present 'Fort Monckton', named after the Governor of Portsmouth Lt. Gen. Robert Monckton who had ordered a Col. Archer to build it. The fort in its original form was practically completed during 1789-90, just prior to the French Revolutionary War of 1793. It was built mainly with civilian labour.

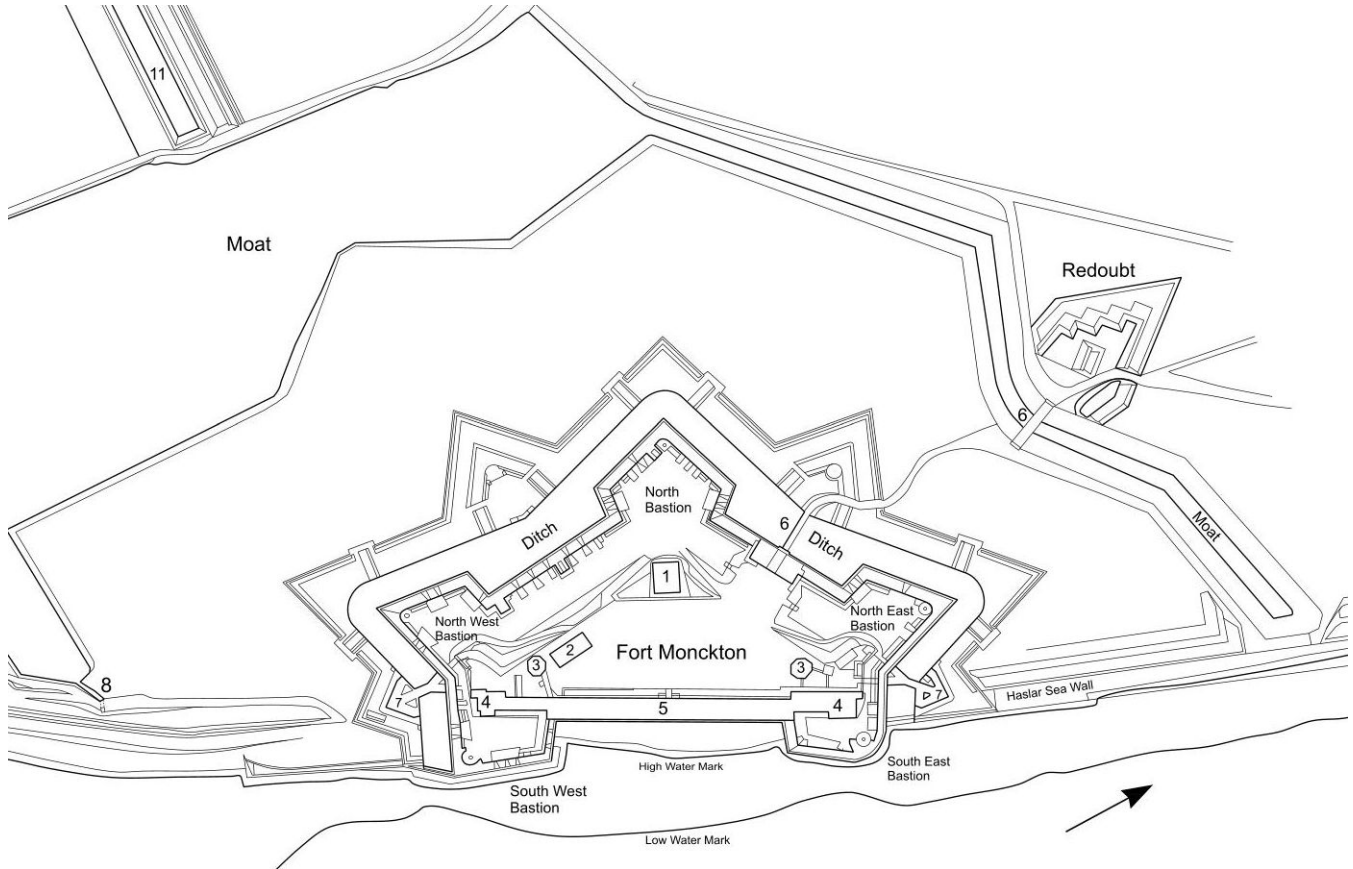
When the 1860 commission was set up Fort Monckton was considered to be well out of date. It was given a minor defensive role in the great scheme for Portsmouth Harbour. In 1878 the Royal Engineers moved into Fort Monckton to use it as a barracks whilst they trained in the use of submarine mines, and later searchlights. In the 1880s the armament of the fort was revised. In 1880 Fort Monckton was the headquarters of the 4th (Submarine Mining) Company Royal Engineers.

The Portsmouth Division Submarine Miners (Militia) Royal Engineers were trained at Monckton for two months each year in May and June. In 1893 the Royal Marine Artillery also had a detachment of subarine miners at Monckton.

During World War One it was used to mount Anti-Aircraft searchlights and in World War Two it held an Anti-Aircraft artillery unit.

Almost the whole of the original fort still exists but it is a present occupied by the Military and no access to it is possible. It can be viewed from a distance across the golf course at Gilkicker but any closer viewing is not recommended. It has the honour of being the only fort of the Portsmouth defences still in Military (as opposed to Naval) hands.

Fort Monckton



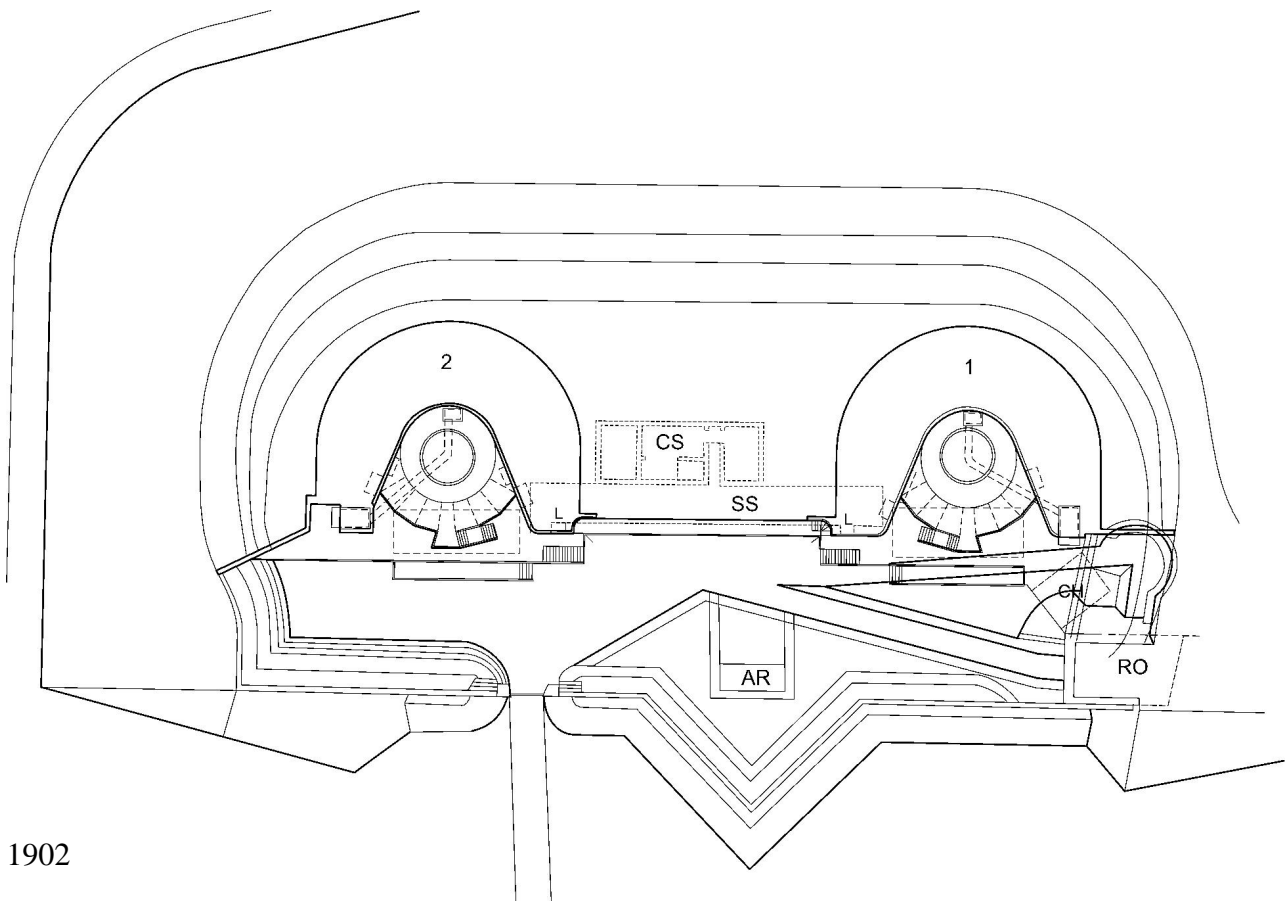
Browndown Battery

Commenced	1888	Armament	
Completed	1889	1888 -1901	2 x 12.5-inch 38ton RML
Cost	£ 4,237	1902	1 x Maxim M.G. on parapet mounting
Map Reference	SZ 582989	1904 -1906	2 x 9.2-inch BL MkX on Barbette V mountings
Position	Gosport, Browndown Point, West end of Stokes Bay		1 x Maxim M.G.
Type	Sea Battery	1907	disarmed
Ditch	Dry, to seaward only	Caponiers	None
Guns	2	Counterscarp galleries	None
Barrack Accom.	2 officers	Haxo casemates	None
Present use	Under Military control (Browndown Camp)	Moncrieff Pits	None
History	Built on the site of one of two earlier batteries. Remodelled 1902.		
Disposal Condition	Fair condition.		
Access	By arrangement with Browndown Camp		
Sources	Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore		

History and Description

In 1852 two primitive batteries were built on Browndown Point at Stokes Bay. They consisted of prepared positions for movable guns behind earth parapets. According to an armament list of 1860 Browndown Battery East had positions for 3 x 68pr of 112 cwt. and 7 x 8-inch of 65 cwt. whilst Browndown Battery West had positions for 3 x 68pr. and 8 x 8-inch. Both batteries were heavily criticised by James Fergusson who proposed a system of moats and ramparts to defend Stokes Bay. As a result Major Jervois designed an alternative Stokes Bay Moat defence scheme. In 1888 the need for two heavy guns to protect the deep water anchorage off Browndown Point resulted in the demolition of Browndown Battery East and the rebuilding of the west one. It was extensively remodelled to mount two 12.5-inch 38 ton RMLs on the terreplein in open barbette positions. These were paid for at a cost of £6,000 under the Imperial Defence Loan. Underneath and between were the usual shell and cartridge stores with lifts to the gun positions. The rear of the battery was closed by a loopholed brick wall, the centre of which projected northwards (landwards) to form a redan. Shortly after completion a small barrack room for two officers and servants was constructed against the gorge wall. Soldiers to man the guns were quartered in nearby Fort Gomer. The guns were still in position in 1898 when the Montgomery Committee proposed to replace them with two 9.2-inch BL guns acting as a gun group with two 6-inch guns on nearby Stokes Bay No.2 battery. The new battery received its armament by 1904 but was declared superfluous by the Owen Committee in 1905. It is still within the perimeter of Browndown army training camp and until the 1990s was looked after by a volunteer workforce of army cadets. Browndown Battery has listed building status.

Browdown Battery



1902



Stokes Bay Lines

Commenced	1857
Completed	1861
Cost	£ 75120
Map Reference	SZ586989 TO SZ608978
Position	Gosport - West/Stokes Bay
Type	Rampart & ditch + 5 batteries
Ditch	Wet (one side only extant)
Guns	39
Barrack Accom.	(Provided in Fort Gomer)
Present use	Moat filled in but some batteries and course of moat remains.
History	No.2 battery Moat filled in 1950s Nos 1, 3 & 4 dismantled
Disposal	Route of moat can be followed
Condition	Mostly destroyed
Access	Open access to most o the route
Sources	Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore

Armament

1872	21 x 8-inch S.B. & 9 x 68 pr.
1898	No.1 2 x 7-inch RBL No.2 8 x 7-inch RBL 2 x 7-inch RML on Moncrieff
	No.3 3 x 7-inch RBL
	No.4 4 x 7-inch RBL
	No.5 4 x 7-inch RBL
1900	19 Maxim machine guns
1901	No.2 battery 2 x 6-inch BL Mk VII
1906	No.2 2 x 6-inch BL & 6 MMG No.3 2 x MMG
1905-07	disarmed

Caponiers None

Counterscarp galleries None

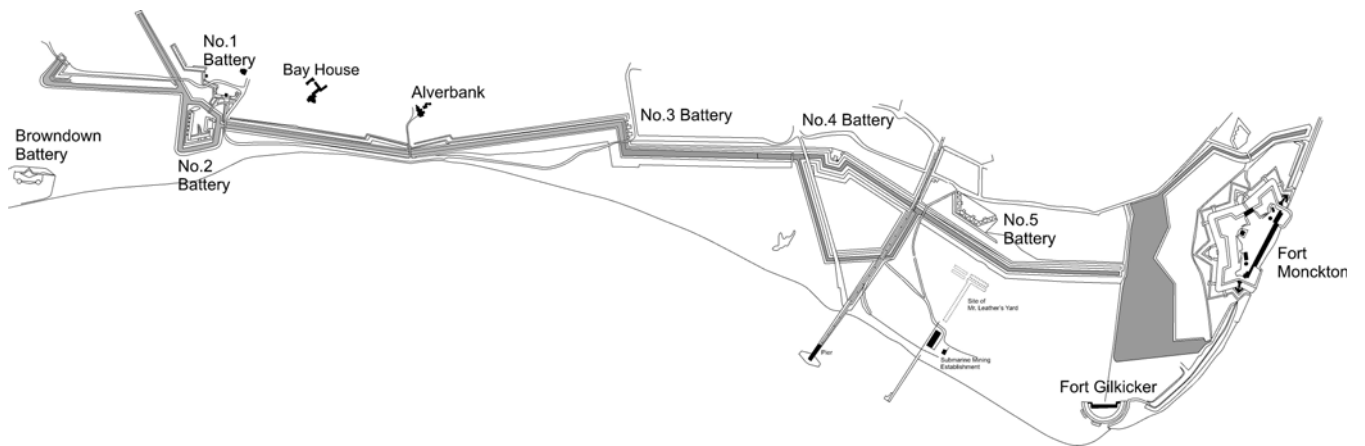
Haxo casemates None

Moncrieff Pits 2

History and Description

In the 1840s and 50s the possibility of a French landing at Stokes Bay caused some concern and three batteries were built along the bay to counter this, two at Browndown Point and one at Gilkicker Point. All three were simple earth ramparts with little to protect them from direct assault. In 1857 Major Jervois proposed a complex system of moats, ramparts and batteries to close off the gap between the new fort at Gomer and the earlier fort at Gilkicker, Fort Monckton. This defensive moat was to become the 'Stokes Bay Lines'. It ran from the rear of the Browndown batteries in the west to the glacis of Fort Monckton in the east and consisted of a ditch with rampart and five flanking batteries of various traces. At the western end No.2 battery consisted of a sea facing rampart with four casemated guns to fire westwards across the gap between the Browndown Batteries and Fort Gomer. Three more casemated guns fired eastwards along the first branch of the moat running towards No.3 battery. No.1 battery was at the rear of No.2 straddling the only coast road to Browndown army ranges and Lee-on-the Solent. It also covered the rear of a dam constructed to flood the Gomer marshes in time of attack by closing off the River Alver. A tunnel connected No.1 battery to the parade of No.2. No.3 battery mounted three guns to fire westwards along the section of moat towards No.2 battery. At No.3 battery the moat turned south towards the sea for a short section before continuing eastward to the lake at Gilkicker. This section of moat was flanked by No.4 battery. No.5 battery was to the north of this section of moat and mounted nine guns facing seawards. The River Alver was diverted into the moat system at No.1 battery and flowed out of the moat to the sea at various sluices along its length and from another at Gilkicker lake, thus maintaining a constant water level in the moat. Another section of moat ran southwards from No.4 battery and branched east and then north to rejoin the main moat west of No.5 battery. This secured the open ground in front of No.6 battery and the railway line to Stokes Bay pier. A small section of moat continued from the north end of Gilkicker lake along the rear of Fort Monckton towards Haslar sea wall. No.1 battery was demolished in the 1930s. No trace remains apart from the tunnel and short section of rampart with concrete revetments. The site of No.3 battery is inside a garden. No.4 battery is recognisable but nothing remains. No5 battery is relatively intact. No.2 battery is the best preserved. It is a grade II listed building and was altered in the 1980s to become Gosport Council's Nuclear bunker. For a short period in 1994 it was opened briefly as a D-Day interpretation centre in 1994. In 2010 the Historical Diving Society took over the lease with a view to opening the east casemates as a small museum. The upper emplacements are fenced off and are inaccessible. It can be viewed from outside the fence. The parade is a private (council) residential estate.

Stokes Bay Lines



Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.1

Commenced	1857	Armament	
Completed	1861	1872	9 x 8-inch S.B.
Cost	£ 75,120 for the Lines	1890	2 x 7-inch R.B.L.
Map Reference	SZ 58764 98986	1901	2 x Maxim Machine Guns
Position	Gosport Stokes Bay	1904	Disarmed
Type	Coast Defence Flanking Battery	Caponiers	None
Ditch	wet	Counterscarp galleries	None
Guns	9	Haxo casemates	None
Barrack Accom.	None	Moncrieff Pits	None
Present use	Caravan/chalet park		
History	Coast Defence		
Disposal	Half demolished Post 1950		
Condition	Some concrete revetments remain		
Access	None. Private property.		
Sources	Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore		

History and Description

No.1 Battery was first armed with eight 8-inch Smooth Bore guns firing through embrasures. In 1886 it was proposed to replace these with two 7-inch 82cwt R.B.L. guns on Dwarf Traversing Platforms mounted on A pivot racers. These were in place by 1891. Ammunition was provided by two expense magazines, one a shell store for 153 rounds and the other a cartridge store holding 47 barrels. In 1891 the cartridge store held 288 cartridges and the shell store 170 shells. A short tunnel and covered way connected No.1 Battery to the parade of No.2 Battery via a bridge across the moat.

The battery was mostly demolished when the Browdown Road and a roundabout was constructed. A portion of the concrete revetment and rampart is still extant inside the chalet park as is the tunnel to No.2 Battery. All of the gun positions and magazines have been removed. In 2010 a set of granite blocks that held the gun racers for one of the gun emplacements were uncovered and were re-sited within the park. In 2012 the battery was listed.

Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.1

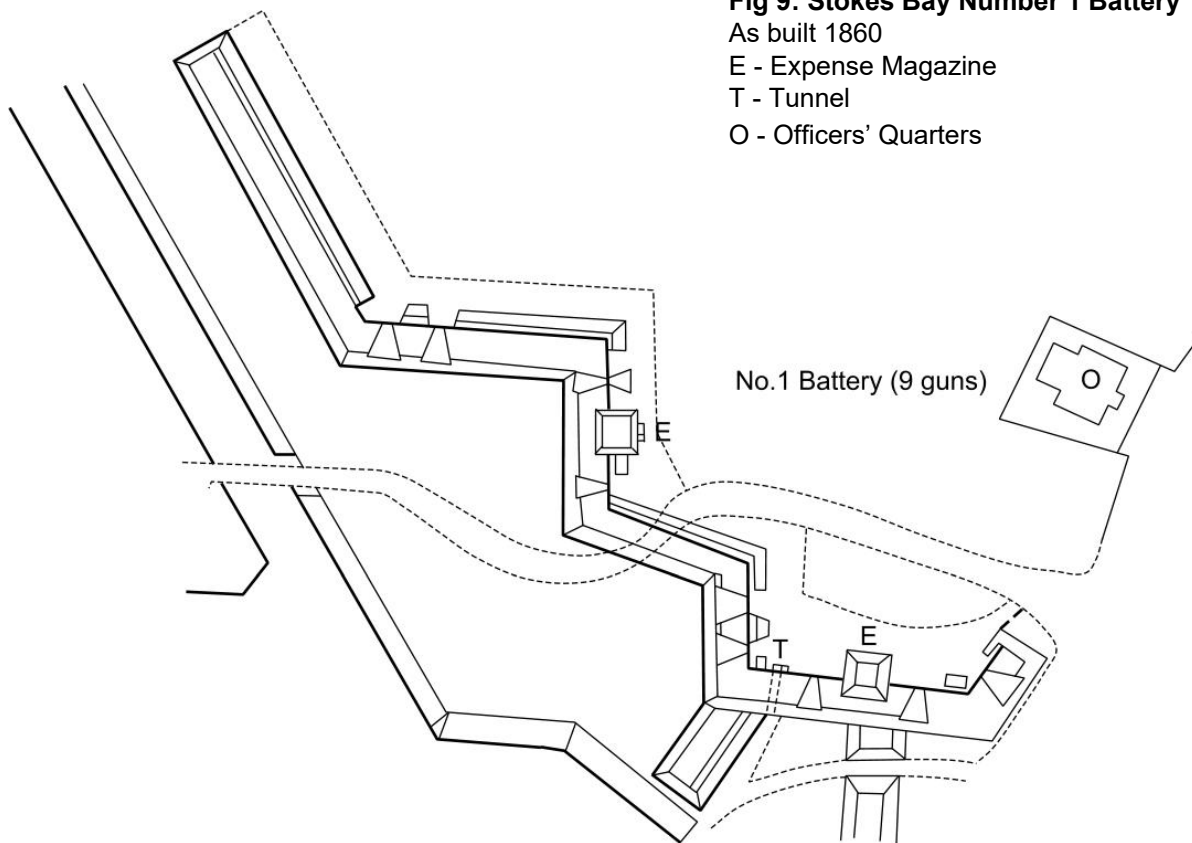
Fig 9: Stokes Bay Number 1 Battery

As built 1860

E - Expense Magazine

T - Tunnel

O - Officers' Quarters



Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.2

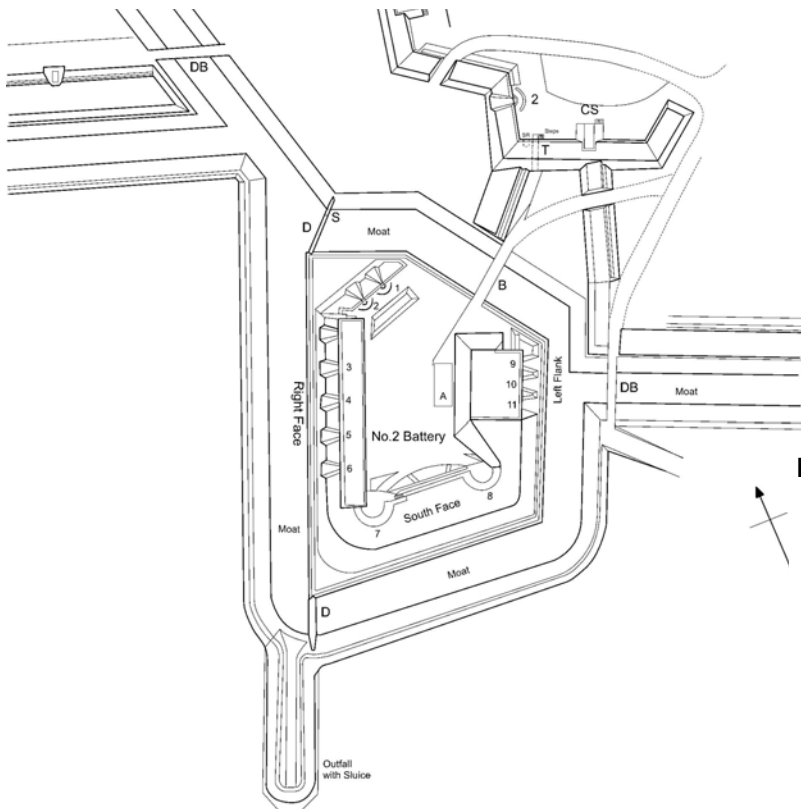
Commenced	1857	Armament	
Completed	1861	1872	10 x 8-inch S.B. 2 x 68pr S.B.
Cost	£ 75,120 for the Lines	1886	12 x 7-inch R.B.L.
Map Reference	SZ 58697 98929	1890	9 x 7-inch R.B.L. 2 x 7-inch RML on Moncrieff carriages
Position	Gosport Stokes Bay	1901	2 x Maxim Machine Guns 2 x 6-inch Mk VII B.L. on CP II Mountings
Type	Coast Defence Flanking Battery	1907	Disarmed
Ditch	wet	Caponiers	None
Guns	15	Counterscarp galleries	None
Barrack Accom.	2 Married Soldiers	Haxo casemates	None
Present use	Caravan/ Chalet park & east battery storage/museum	Moncrieff Pits	2
History	Coast Defence		
Disposal	Sold to Gosport Council 1932		
Condition	Good		
Access	Exterior only. East casemates open during Summer months.		
Sources	Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore		

History and Description

No.2 Battery was completely encircled by its moat. Access was over a fixed bridge. It was first armed with 8-inch S.B. guns firing along the moat towards No.3 Battery and in the west facing casemates (Right Face) which fired in the rear of the Browndown Batteries. Two 68pr S.B. guns were to be mounted on its sea facing emplacements (South Face) which were approached by a long gun ramp. By 1886 the smooth bore guns had been replaced with twelve 7-inch 82cwt R.B.L. guns whilst the main sea facing armament of two 64pr R.M.L. guns was to be replaced with two 7-inch 7-ton RMLs on 6ft parapet mountings. In 1890 the decision was made to temporarily mount the 7-inch R.M.L.s on dwarf traversing platforms as no 6ft parapet mounting had been developed for this gun. The battery had magazine accommodation in the form of two shell stores and six cartridge stores. In 1890 cartridge stores 1 and 2 held 462 cartridges each whilst numbers 5 and 6 held 192 cartridges each. Stores 3 and 4 had been removed. Shell store 1 held 390 rounds and shell store 2 held 500 rounds.

In 1890 it was decided to remove the No.10 gun, the centre gun of three on the left flank (the east facing casemates), and substitute the two remaining guns (nos 9 & 11) with Maxim machine guns on embrasure (cone) mountings to fire along the ditch. In 1891 the two sea facing emplacements were rebuilt to take two 7-inch 7-ton R.M.L. guns on Moncrieff disappearing carriages. A Sling Wagon Shed and Artillery General Store were built on the parade. One of the right face casemates, the northern one, was appropriated as a Married Quarter for two soldiers and their families. The other casemates were retained briefly as gun positions for the 7-inch 82cwt R.B.L. guns and as expense magazines, fuze and tube store and lamp room. No.2 Battery is a grade II listed building and it is the best preserved of the Stokes Bay Batteries. Gosport Borough Council purchased the Battery in 1932 from the Home Office for £1,500. In 1933 the Council approved the use of the site as a caravan park. 1939 the Council moved their records from the town hall to the Battery for safe storage. During World War Two the battery was requisitioned for military use and after the war it was retained. In 1947 it was being used by the Special Armament Development Establishment (S.A.D.E.) based in Fort Gomer. In 2010 Gosport Borough Council were actively seeking a use for the structure, and the Historical Diving Society expressed an interest in acquiring it for a small museum to display their diving apparatus. In 2011 It opened as a museum.

Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.2



No2 Battery (1892)

- 1 to 6 - 7-inch 82cwt R.B.L. Right Face
- 7 & 8 - 7-inch ton R.M.L. on Moncrieff Carriage
- 9 to 11 - 7-inch 82cwt R.B.L. Left Flank
- A - Artillery Store & Sling Wagon Shed
- B - Bridge
- DB - Drawbridge
- D - Dam
- S - Sluice



Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.3

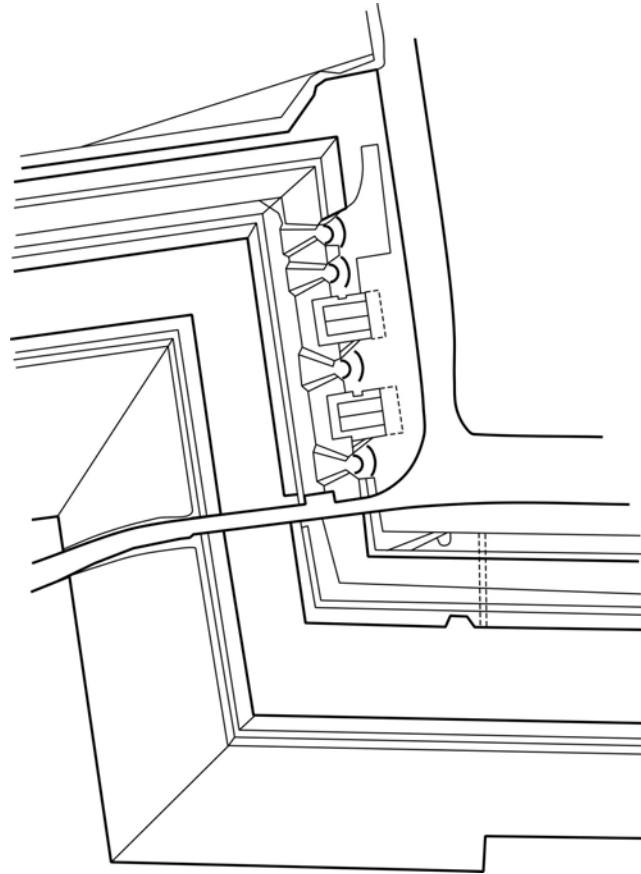
Commenced	1857	Armament	
Completed	1861	1872	4 x 8-inch S.B.
Cost	£ 75,120 for the Lines	1890	4 x 7-inch R.B.L.
Map Reference	SZ 59715 98603	1901	2 x Maxim Machine Guns
Position	Gosport Stokes Bay	1907	Disarmed
Type	Coast Defence Flanking Battery	Caponiers	None
Ditch	wet	Counterscarp galleries	None
Guns	4	Haxo casemates	None
Barrack Accom.	None	Moncrieff Pits	None
Present use	Private garden		
History	Coast Defence		
Disposal	Demolished Post 1950		
Condition	Nothing remains		
Access	None		
Sources	Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore		

History and Description

No.3 Battery was first armed with four 8-inch SB guns. By 1886 these had been replaced with four 7-inch 82cwt. R.B.L. guns on Dwarf Traversing Platforms, two firing along the ditch towards No.2 Battery and two firing along the glacis in front of the ditch. In 1890 it was decided to remove the No.1 gun because it was too close to the No.2 gun for safe working and the magazine accommodation was insufficient. Two magazines were provided, one a cartridge store for 288 cartridges (original capacity 42 barrels) the other a shell store for 153 shells. To the north of the battery was an Artillery General Store, used to store equipment for operating the guns. By 1892 the embrasures for the guns had been altered to allow them to be traversed through an arc of 53 degrees. This alteration appears to have been done to all of the 7-inch R.B.L. gun positions along the Lines. The battery was armed with three machine guns by 1901 and disarmed in 1907.

The site of No.3 Battery is inside a garden. Nothing of the battery remains although there are some hints of the battery in the form of a bank of earth and some garden structures comprising of brick arches.

Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.3



As built 1860

Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.4

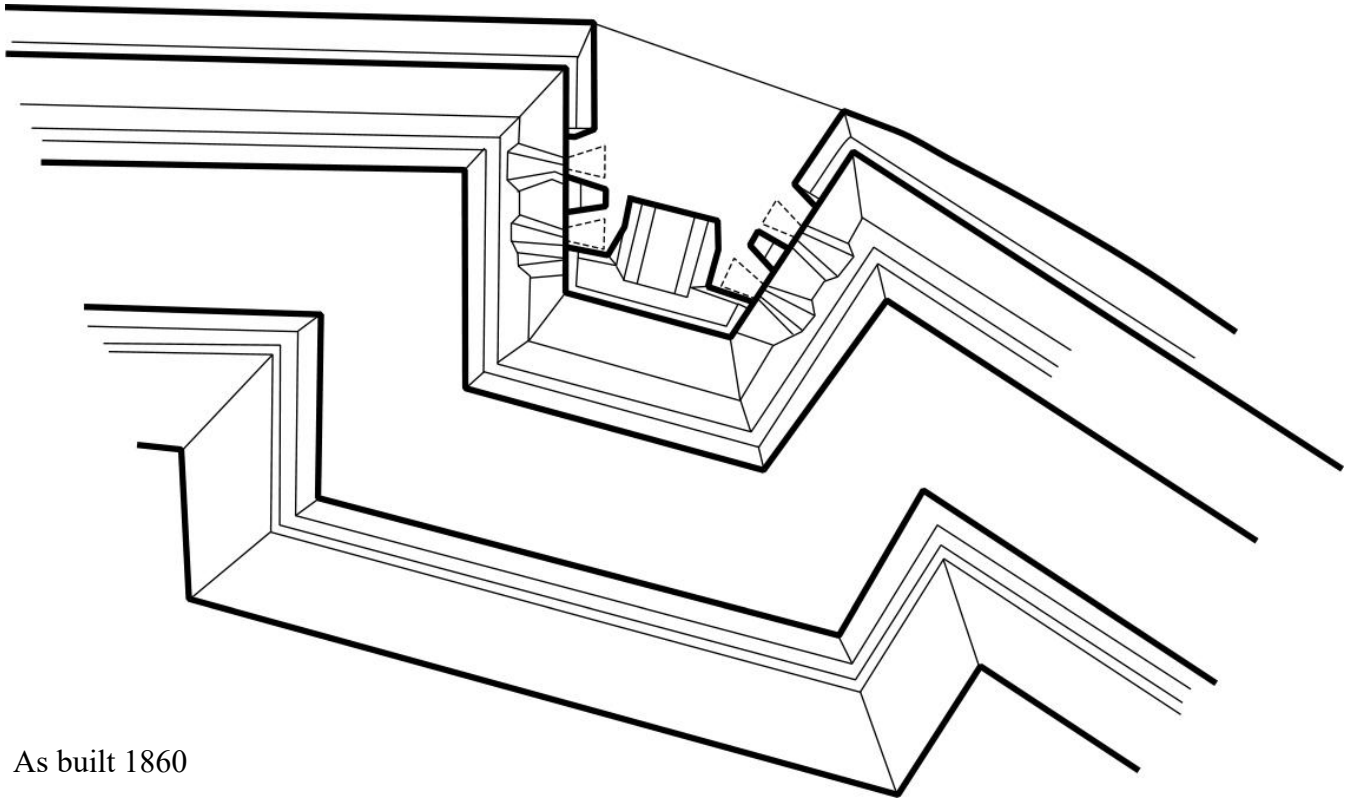
Commenced	1857	Armament	
Completed	1861	1872	4 x 8-inch S.B.
Cost	£ 75,120 for the Lines	1890	4 x 7-inch R.B.L.
Map Reference	SZ 60215 98354	1901	4 x Maxim Machine Guns
Position	Gosport Stokes Bay	1904	Disarmed
Type	Coast Defence Flanking Battery	Caponiers	None
Ditch	wet	Counterscarp galleries	None
Guns	4	Haxo casemates	None
Barrack Accom.	None	Moncrieff Pits	None
Present use	Horse paddock		
History	Coast Defence		
Disposal	Demolished Post 1950		
Condition	Nothing remains		
Access	None		
Sources	Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore		

History and Description

No.4 Battery was first armed with four 8-inch SB guns. These were mounted in pairs to fire down each branch of the moat. By 1886 these had been replaced with four 7-inch 82cwt. R.B.L. guns on Dwarf Traversing Platforms. Two magazines were provided one for cartridges holding 44 barrels (later 448 cartridges) and one shell store holding 420 shells. Both were located in the centre of the battery beneath an earth mound for protection. Outside the entrance to the shell store, but beneath the earth mound, was a side arm store and two recesses for the storage of vent pieces for the 7-inch R.B.L. guns. In 1890 it was decided to replace all four 7-inch R.B.L. guns with machine guns on parapet mountings. The 7-inch R.B.L. guns were to be retained until the machine guns were supplied by 1901. The battery was disarmed in 1904 but by this time a transmitting station had been added for the position finding cell directing the two 9.2-inch B.L. guns on Fort Gilkicker.

The site of No.4 Battery is recognisable but most features have been destroyed. The site is used as a stable and paddock for horses. The ditch has been filled by pushing the ramparts into them and no evidence of the gun emplacements or magazines remains on site.

Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.4



As built 1860



Stokes Bay Lines Battery No. 5

<p>Commenced 1857 Completed 1861 Cost £ 75,120 for the Lines Map Reference SZ 60494 98094 Position Gosport Stokes Bay</p> <p>Type Coast Defence Flanking Battery Ditch wet Guns 4 Barrack Accom. None Present use Due for sale/disposal 2010</p> <p>History Coast Defence Admiralty campment then AMTE</p> <p>Disposal 2010 Condition Fair Access None</p> <p>Sources Stokes Bay Defences - D.Moore</p>	<p>Armament</p> <p>1872 11 x 8-inch S.B. 1890 4 x 7-inch R.B.L. 1901 4 x Maxim Machine Guns 1904 Disarmed</p> <p>Caponiers None Counterscarp galleries None Haxo casemates None Moncrieff Pits None</p>
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History and Description

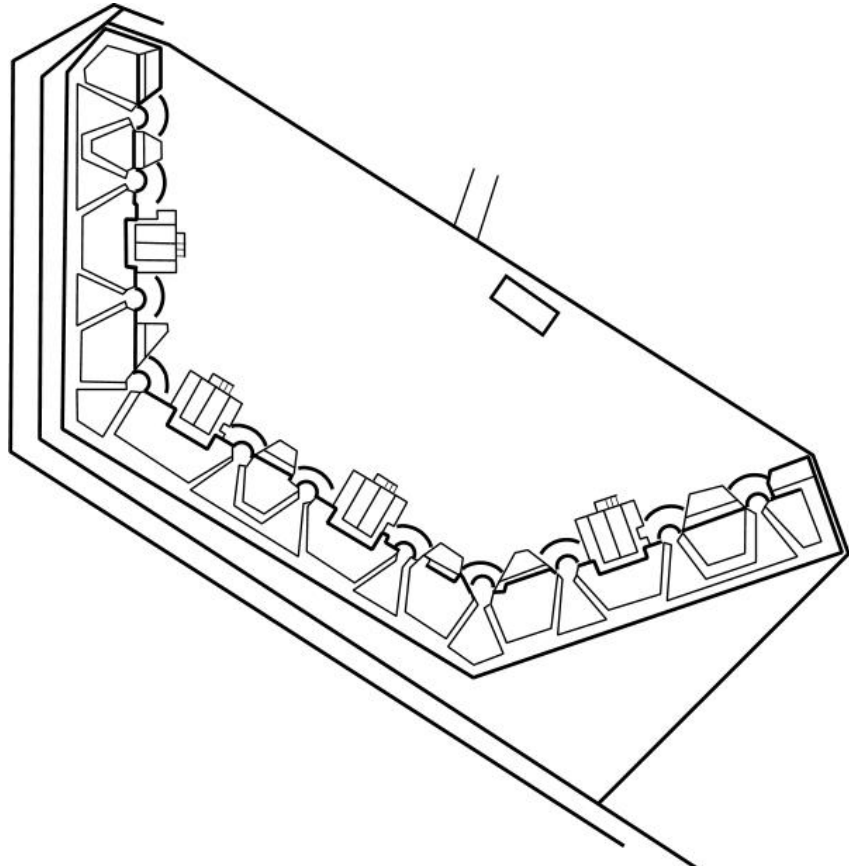
No.5 Battery was first armed with 68pr and 8-inch smooth bore guns. In 1872 it was proposed to replace them with nine 7-inch R.B.L. guns. By 1886 these had been reduced to four. The battery had four expense stores, two for cartridges each with a capacity for 41 barrels of powder, later 288 cartridges each, one a shell store holding 153 shells and one an artillery store for side arms to operate the guns.

To the rear of the battery was an Artillery General Store. The battery was armed with four machine guns in 1901 and was disarmed in 1904. At some time after 1892 the shell and cartridge recesses were modified to act as issue hatches enabling ammunition to be handed out to the gun platforms from the magazines. This may date from the time of the installation of the machine guns.

In 1886 it was proposed to fit six 13-inch Sea-Service mortars on a platform in front of No.5 Battery. The platform is shown on a plan of 1892 but the armament was never fitted and the earthwork was then removed.

A road has been driven through the west salient of the battery destroying the gun emplacement. All five of the expense stores are extant. At least one gun emplacement has been found beneath modern infill. In September 2010 some of the post 1900 buildings on-site were due to be demolished when the current owners QinetiQ, vacated the site. In 2016 the site remains empty.

Stokes Bay Lines Battery No.5



As built 1860



Fort Blockhouse

Commenced	1714 updated 1845, 1892, 1898	Armament	
Completed	1847	1872	6 x 7-inch R.B.L. 15 x 8-inch S.B. 9 x 18prs.
Cost	£	1891	3 x 64pr. R.M.L. 3 x 0.45 M.G.
Map Reference	SZ 625994	1897	5 x 12pr. Q.F. 4 x M.G.
Position	Portsmouth Harbour Mouth west side	1902	5 x 12pr. 12 cwt. Q.F. 2 x M.G.
Type	Coast Battery	1911	6 x 12pr. QF, 2 x M.G.
Ditch	Wet	1922	6 x 12pr. Q.F.
Guns	28	1940	Twin 6pdr 2 x 12pdr
Barrack Accom.	3 officers 92 men	1943	2 x 40mm Bofors.
Present use	M.O.D.	1956	all guns withdrawn
History	Submarine mining establishment. H.M.S. Dolphin, home of Navy submarine fleet.		
Disposal	Always been in Military hands		
Condition	Actively Preserved		
Access	By Arrangement with M.O.D. "Earlier Fortifications of Gosport"-		
Sources	Williams		

History and Description

Fort Blockhouse occupies the the end of the spit of land overlooking the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour on the western side. The first blockhouse erected on the site was a tower built in the reign of Edward VI (1552) to hold one end of the boom defence. It was regularly modified and enlarged and in 1813 the whole fort was remodelled, according to an inscription above the main gateway. In 1825 the seaward battery was converted to a casemated battery with 13 embrasures. In 1845 the bastions were altered and in 1863 the stone parapet was thickened and the terreplein extended to provide guns at the rear. A high wall and living accommodation was added. The sea facing casemates were altered to provide two tiers of guns.

It became known as Fort Blockhouse in the mid eighteenth century. The 1859 Commission did little to update the armament at that time of fifteen 36-pounder and fifteen 18-pounder SB guns. In 1875 the Royal Engineers took over Blockhouse as a sea-mining base and by 1880 the 4th Company were quartered in Blockhouse. New buildings were added and piers built along the creek. The Portsmouth Militia Division (Submarine Miners) moved from Monckton to Blockhouse in 1892.

In 1891 Blockhouse was armed with two 64pr. 58cwt. RMLs on sliding carriages with another on a 6ft. parapet slide. This was supplemented with three machine guns on parapet carriages. By then it was part of a Royal Engineers Submarine Mining establishment. In 1897 it was armed with 5 x 12pr. Q.F. guns at a cost of £363. By 1899 they were dismantled temporarily. They were sent to Woolwich in 1900. Two 12pr. B.L. guns were held as movable armament for the defence of the beach between Blockhouse and Fort Monckton. 5 x 12prs. were back in place from 1901 to 1910. In 1911 this was increased to 6 x 12prs. on Q.F.1 mountings. By 1917 there was no armament listed for the fort when the 12prs. were withdrawn from the approved armaments for anti-aircraft purposes list. They were back in 1922 in care and maintenance, that is the guns, mountings and cradles were dismantled separately and kept in a covered place in the vicinity of the emplacements.

In 1905 the Submarine Boat Station was established at Blockhouse. A 1915 armament return shows 2 x 3pr. and 2 x 6pr, QF guns at Blockhouse on naval mountings as anti-aircraft guns. In 1931 the whole of Fort Blockhouse was transferred to the Admiralty on condition that they provided the War Department with certain accommodation when necessary. In 1943 the fort had 2 x 40 mm Bofors gun in place. In December 1940 a Twin 6pdr was added on the sea curtain. After the War the fort was incorporated into the submarine establishment of HMS Dolphin. It was disarmed in 1956. The submarines were withdrawn in 1994 and Blockhouse was declared surplus to requirements in 1996. To date (2013) the QF position on North Bastion survives as does the one on the west end of the sea battery. In the centre of the sea battery QF position no.3 also survives with positions for two QF guns and a second emplacement close by together mounting four Nordenfelt 3pr. QF guns as a Naval saluting battery. Blockhouse is now occupied by 3rd Field Hospital of the British Army.

Fort Blockhouse

Fort Blockhouse April 1892

- 1 Main Magazine
- 2 Married Soldiers' Quarters
- 3 Master Gunner's Quarters
- 4 Store (Field Gun Shed)
- 5 Stores
- 6 Soldiers' Quarters
- 7 Loaded Mine Store
- 8 Loading Shed
- 9 Officers' Quarters
- 10 Stores

Armament

- a 64pr R.M.L. Nos 1 to 7
- b 64pr R.M.L. No.3
- c 64pr R.M.L. No.2
- d 64pr R.M.L. No.10 on 6ft parapet carriage and slide.

