

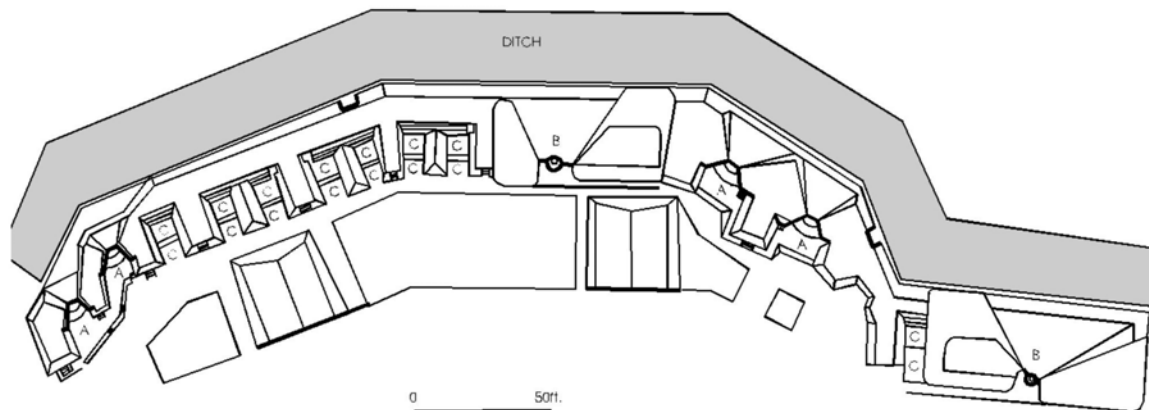
Puckpool Mortar Battery

<p>Commenced 1863</p> <p>Completed March 1865</p> <p>Cost £ 2,0864</p> <p>Map Reference SZ 615923</p> <p>Position Isle of Wight Puckpool Point /Spithead defences</p> <p>Type Sea Battery / Mortar Battery</p> <p>Ditch Dry</p> <p>Guns 30 mortars (final 4 guns)</p> <p>Barrack Accom. 4 officers 67 men</p> <p>Present use Recreation & gardens. Tea shop.</p> <p>History Modified many times. Armstrong Protected Barbette emplacements.</p> <p>Disposal Sold 1928 to District Council</p> <p>Condition Parts demolished. Some intact</p> <p>Access Free all year</p> <p>Sources <small>Precis of correspondence relating to Portsmouth prior to 1898. "Puckpool Mortar Battery", A. Cantwell</small></p>	<p>Armament</p> <p>1886 4 x 11-inch R.M.L. 30 x 13-inch mortars</p> <p>1887 4 x 11-inch R.M.L. 22 x 13-inch mortars</p> <p>1895 4 x 11-inch R.M.L. 2 x 10.4-inch R.M.L. Protected Barbette 1 x 32pr. Drill, 4 x MG.</p> <p>1900 3 x 11-inch R.M.L. 1 x 10.4-inch P.B.</p> <p>1901 3 x 11-inch 1 x 10.4-inch 2 x 6-inch B.L.</p> <p>1902 1 x 11-inch 1 x 10.4-inch R.M.L. 2 x 6-inch B.L. 4 x MG</p> <p>1904 2 x 6-inch B.L. 2 x 9.2-inch B.L.</p> <p>1907 2 x 9.2-inch B.L.</p> <p>1910 1 x 9.2-inch B.L. (1 x 9.2-inch BL in reserve)</p> <p>1927 Disarmed</p>
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History and Description

In 1862 the Defence Committee approved the construction of 'a battery for 27 guns and 30 mortars with necessary barrack accommodation' at Puckpool Point, Isle of Wight. Construction began in 1863 but in June 1864 they again considered the proposal and decided that the armament should be '50 of the heaviest mortars and it appeared that that number could be mounted without crowding if the work be considered as a battery wholly for vertical fire and not for part guns and part mortars as hitherto proposed. It was thought unnecessary to provide barrack accommodation'. The battery was supposedly completed in 1865 with seven rows of mortars, three to a row with five light guns to cover the beach, but in 1867 the Defence Committee again considered the battery. The proposal was to place the 13-inch mortars in two rows, one behind the other, with a traverse between each pair. The Royal Artillery Officers considered that there was no objection, provided that if both rows were fired simultaneously the front detachments should retire to the rear and fire their mortars by lanyards. The battery was reconstructed for thirty eight mortars (3 for practice). A barracks was built to the rear for 4 officers and 67 men (now the cafe). Four 11-inch R.M.L.s were fitted in 1873 to cover Spithead. In 1883 the mortars were test fired and in 1887 the number was reduced to twenty-two. In 1887 the Committee recommended that the remaining 22 mortars be removed and the 11-inch R.M.L. be made available for high angle fire by placing them on C pivot racers to command a larger arc and the parapet revised. The idea was abandoned and in 1888 under the provisions of the Imperial Defence Loan two 10.4-inch R.M.L. guns were proposed for Puckpool. These were in place by 1892 on protected barbette carriages. These were originally intended for Gibraltar and were the only examples of this type of mounting in the U.K. In 1901 the battery was upgraded with barbette positions for two 9.2-inch B.L. guns to counter battleships bombarding Portsmouth from Spithead. Two 6-inch B.L.s were fitted to engage cruisers and blockships. In 1909 the two 6-inch guns were transferred to Spitbank Fort and by 1910 one of the 9.2-inch guns was in reserve. The battery was manned in WW1 by RGA as a depot for coast gunners transferring to the Western Front. After the War the battery was put into Care and Maintenance. In 1927 the remaining gun was withdrawn. Puckpool was sold to the Council in 1928 and was opened as a public garden in June 1929. From 1939-1942 it became HMS Medina to train men for the Fleet Air Arm. After the War it became a public garden once more.

Puckpool Mortar Battery



Puckpool 1889 : Based on a plan in 'Puckpool Battery', (Cantwell & Sprack)

A - 11-inch R.M.L.

B- 10.4-inch R.M.L. (Protected Barbette)

C - Mortar Bay



9.2-inch B.L. emplacement



Protected Barbette emplacement