

Fort Staddon

Commenced	30 April 1861	Armament	
Completed	15 March 1869	Proposed 1875	25x 7-inch RBL, 2 x 64pr RML, 4 x 8-inch Howitzers, 30 x SB flank guns.
Cost	£ 112,844	Revised 1885	2 x 5-inch BL 5 x 64pr. RML 6 x 7-inch RBL, 8 x 32pr. SBBL 2 x MG.
Map Reference	SX 497517	Mounted 1893	2 x 5-inch BL 4 x 64pr. RML 6 x 7-inch RBL, 8 x 32pr. SBBL 2 x MG.
Position	Staddon Heights		
Type	Land front polygonal		
Ditch	Dry	Caponiers	3 with 2 flanking galleries (2 single, 1 double)
Guns	40	Counterscarp galleries	None
Barrack Accom.	200 to 250	Haxo casemates	6
Present use	Naval Communications	Moncrieff Pits	2
History	Royal Naval Signal Station		
Disposal	Still in Military ownership		
Condition	Reasonable but largely disused		
Access	By arrangement with Navy		
Sources	1893 Precis of Correspondence 1869 report, Historic Defences of Plymouth Woodward and Pye		

History and Description

Fort Staddon was designed by Captain Edmund Du Cane and constructed as the principal work of the Staddon heights position, 406 feet above the sea overlooking the harbour and naval establishments from the eastern side. It is a polygonal work with four faces and a gorge. It was connected to the nearby Fort Stamford and Watch House by a protected military road. The main armament was to deny the Staddon heights to an enemy and prevent bombardment of the city of Plymouth. The original design called for a hexagonal keep to the rear but this was changed, because of its cost, to a barrack for 200 men, the incomplete portion filled by an earthen traverse to form and enclosed work with a parade in the middle. It had a well with an ample supply of water, with storage tanks. The defensive portions of the work consisted of a dry ditch 50ft. wide at the front and 40ft at the gorge, 30ft. deep with masonry escarps and counterscarps flanked by two tiers of guns and musketry in caponiers and galleries. The main ditch is also covered by rifle galleries over the scarp. In the ditch of each flank a set of stone steps leads up the counterscarp to a covered way.

Within the central traverse is the main magazine, barrack casemates and tunnels to the caponiers and the nine gun casemated mortar battery behind the double caponier. The officers were quartered around the gateway. The main ramparts held the usual spread of guns, with two in Moncrieff pits, six in Haxo casemates and nine en barbette. The rampart of the inner parade has no gun positions. To the south of Staddon Fort a 20ft. scarp and deep dry ditch ran down to Brownhill, Watch House and Fort Bovisand.

The fort is currently used by the Navy for communications with masts sited on the parade. Much of the fort is empty but in excellent condition. The ditch is mostly clear and can be navigated for most of its length.

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