

Lumps Fort

Commenced	1859	Armament	
Completed	1861	1886	3 x 7-inch R.B.L. 1 x 7-inch R.M.L. 11 x 64-pdr R.M.L. 1 x 40-pdr R.B.L.
Cost	£ 1,8945	1893	2 x 6-inch BL H.P. (1 x 7-inch & 1 x 7-inch RBL 2 x 64pr RML for 6 x 64pr RML drill & practice only)
Map Reference	SZ 657984	1898	2 x MG added 1902 2 x 5-inch BL Volunteer practice battery outside fort. 3 x 6-inch B.L. 1907 disarmed WWI 2 x 6-inch B.L.
Position	Portsmouth Sea Front / Southsea	Caponiers	3 (musketry only)
Type	Coast Battery/beach defence	Counterscarp galleries	None
Ditch	Dry. Could not hold water.	Haxo casemates	None
Guns	17 reduced to 16	Moncrieff Pits	None (3 x H.P.)
Barrack Accom.	100		
Present use	Public Rose Garden / model village / gardeners workshop		
History	Volunteer practice battery nearby Electric Lights		
Disposal	Sold in 1932 to Portsmouth Council		
Condition	Recognisable / partly filled in		
Access	Parts all year round		
Sources			

History and Description

The first fort to occupy the Lumps site was in existence in 1545 and was built as a redoubt to prevent a beach landing to the south of Southsea Castle. During the Napoleonic Wars Lumps Fort was in use once more. In 1857 Jervois proposed to occupy 'again the ground at Lumps Fort and at Eastney, between Southsea Castle and Fort Cumberland.' The two batteries nearest Southsea Castle, one of which was Lumps Fort, were to act as keeps to guns placed at intervals along the shore between them. They were to be for nine guns each, with accommodation under the terre-plein for 100 men, provided with full revetments, 27 feet high, flanked by small caponieres, and covered by an earthen glacis to the front. Each fort was to be surrounded by a ditch and rampart. Reconstruction began in November 1859 and was completed in October 1861. The fort was armed with seventeen guns, nine on its sea face, commanding the entrance to the channel leading into Portsmouth Harbour, and four each on its east and west flanks. Fourteen of these guns were constructed so as to fire through embrasures on the parapet and the other three were pivot guns, on circular bastions or cavaliers, on the salient angles of the front of the work. These three guns were placed to sweep the flank and the front of the work. They were well placed to "dominate the whole of the work". The rear of the work was undefended by artillery, being closed from each flank by an earthen parapet, with a brick wall, pierced or loopholed for rifle fire, as well as some officers' and mens' quarters, and the entrance gate. The fort was surrounded by a wet ditch of considerable depth and breadth on its sea front. The landward side was less deep and less broad. The entrance to the fort was over a drawbridge, the rolling part of which was only four paces wide. At this point the whole width of the ditch was only sixteen paces. The front of the fort had three caponieres flanking the ditch, one at each angle, and the front was also covered by an earthen glacis which extended to within a short distance of the high water mark. The ditch was not revetted and the bottom was of loose sand and shingle and it was reported to be unlikely to maintain its angle for any length of time. It was the intention of the engineers to counteract the defect in the original design of the fort by building a sea wall right in front of the fort, thereby resisting the action of the sea. The 1869 report stated that Lumps Fort was "...well constructed... well adapted to its object - that of preventing a landing between Eastney and Southsea Castle." The report stated that the fort had 14 guns in embrasures, and three en-barbette. It was then armed with 68 pounders, 8-inch guns, and breech loading 7-inch rifled guns. The ditch surrounding it was designed to be filled with water, but the report noted that it would not retain water and it was ... "*an imperfect obstacle to an assaulting party, and although protected by the flanking fire of three caponieres, some measure seems to be necessary to improve it, which might however be deferred till a time of expected attack.*" During World War One Lumps Fort was armed with two 6-inch guns (there are pits for three). At the end of the war it was abandoned and was purchased by Portsmouth Council in 1932. It is now occupied by a Rose Garden and a model village.

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