

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 had a new owner but it remains derelict and badly vandalised. In 2018 the Developer announced that the financial backer had withdrawn from the project because of many delays caused by external agencies.

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