

Fort Scraesdon

Commenced	1859	Armament	
Completed	1862	Recommended 1875	
Cost	£ 137,411	25 x 7-inch RBL	
Map Reference	SX392549	6 x 8-inch Rifled Howitzers	
Position	Western Defences, Anthony Position	10 x SB flank guns	
Type	Land Front, Polygonal	Mounted 1893	
Ditch	Dry	8 x 7-inch RBL	
Guns	27 on ramparts	1 x 64 pr. RML	
Barrack Accom.		2 x 5-in BL	
Present use	Army/Marine training area	2 x 32pr. SBBL	
History	Used as a barracks and recently for training	Caponiers	4 demi 1 full
Disposal	Not yet (soon?)	Counterscarp galleries	2 flanking scarp galleries
Condition	Derelict and but maintained	Haxo casemates	1 for 3 guns (on lower level)
Access	Only by arrangement	Moncrieff Pits	2
Sources			

History and Description

Scraesdon Fort was designed in 1859 as a detached work upon two main levels completely enclosed with a ditch with revetted scarps 30ft. in height, flanked by caponiers and scarp galleries within. The upper level is 254ft. above the sea with two faces, west and south-west looking over the country in front of the Anthony Position, the third, the south, sweeping the ground to the rear of Fort Tregantle. The lower level is at 173 feet above the sea with its principal face towards the north looking across the St. Germain's river, and a short face on the north-west looking up that river. The original design incorporated an interior enclosed keep within the work on the upper level, comprised of a series of casemates with a parapet on top running completely around and parallel to the exterior sides. A line of casemates across the work from east to west separates the upper and lower levels of the fort. In 1862 the Defence Committee decided to omit the barrack keep as the bombproof under the ramparts were sufficient. The escarp revetments of the the lower work are arched with communications through the piers, forming a complete escarp gallery for defence around the lower work. The chambers so formed are loopholed. Access to the scarp gallery is by a set of stairs, adjacent to the entrance, that follows the slope of the hill down past the east caponier, with which it also communicates. The ditch is flanked at the south-west by a full casemated caponier and to the north, east and south by demi caponiers for musketry and flanking guns. Portions of the ditch to the north-east and west are flanked by musketry galleries and gun casemates extended out from the scarp gallery. The whole work is complicated in trace with many levels, stairs and galleries, necessary because of the slope of the hill on which the fort stands. The fort is exceptionally large and the ditch spectacularly deep in places (80ft). The fort appears to have been occupied by the military, as a barrack, for most of its life but is now empty, overgrown in places and derelict. It is used by Royal Marine Commandos on training exercises as a strongpoint for them to attack or defend and is strewn with discarded ammunition, equipment and obstacles. Recently some work has been undertaken by local volunteers and the Army Estates Office at Fort Tregantle to clear some of the bushes and undergrowth from the ramparts. It was rumoured that the fort was to be released by the Military but they are still actively using it for training. A railway connected the fort with the St. Germain's River and Tregantle Fort

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