

## Fort Popton (Popton Point Battery)

**Commenced** 1859  
**Completed** 1864  
**Cost** £ 66,304  
**Map Reference** SM 894037  
**Position** Rhoscrowther : Popton Point  
 NE corner Angle Bay  
**Type** Coast Battery with defensible barracks  
**Ditch** Dry  
**Guns** Intended 45 - Actual 19  
**Barrack Accom.** 10 officers, 180 men  
**Present use** Empty : owned by Texaco Ltd.

**History** Coast battery, Oil Terminal HQ  
 Listed Grade II  
**Disposal** 1932  
**Condition** Fair  
**Access** With permission from Valero Ltd.

**Sources** 1858 & 1868 Committee Reports, Precis of  
 Correspondence prior to 1893 National Archives.

### Armament

#### 1869 (to be mounted)

13 x 9-inch RML, 14 x 7-inch RML 1 x 10-inch RML

#### 1884

Casemates 8 x 9-inch RML

Open battery 6 x 9-inch RML

1 x 10-inch

Moncrieff Battery 2 x 7-inch RML

South Face 2 x 7-inch RBL

**1889** 2 x 64pr RML added for militia drill

**1893 Mounted** 1 x 10-inch RML

12 x 9-inch RML

2 x 64pr RML (for drill of militia)

**1898 Proposed** 3 x 6-inch BL VII

**1905** Disarmed

**Caponiers** 5

**Counterscarp galleries** None

**Haxo casemates** none

**Moncrieff Pits** 6

### History and description

Sometimes referred to as Popton Point Battery, the Fort was built as part of the recommendations of the 1858 Committee and consists of an irregular hexagonal barrack block constructed of limestone ashlar and brick, the outer walls form a scarp 22 feet high flanked by six musketry bastionettes protected by a glacis. Connected to the barracks by a wall and ditch is the casemated battery for 11 guns, this battery was always intended to receive armoured shields but never did. On the roof of the casemates a battery for seven guns was built however it was considered weak and was remodelled to take six guns on Moncrieff carriages. At the same level as the Moncrieff battery was the open battery facing north over the Haven that was initially to mount 13 guns but was built for only 10, though only 7 were actually mounted. In the event only two guns were mounted in the Moncrieff battery and were removed in 1885. In 1883 it was proposed to mount 2 x 7inch RBL guns and 3 x 40pr RBL guns as defence on the landward side but this was not approved. In 1885 the two 7inch guns, together with three from Hubberstone, were to be redeployed as armament for salients of works at Portsmouth.

In 1886 it was reported *The casemates are without shields and the bastions are weak. The Moncrieff Battery on top has been dismantled. Alternate casemates should be disarmed and the bastions strengthened. The guns in the open battery are too crowded. this battery should be armed with 2 x 10inch RML and 2 x 9inch RML. The main magazine is conspicuous from the sea.*

The next year the casemated battery was to be reduced to 5 guns and the open battery covering the Haven was to be remodelled for four guns; it seems little or nothing was done to reduce the number of guns at the Fort which retained its RML armament of one 10-inch and twelve 9-inch until it was disarmed in 1905.

The casemated battery survives with its open embrasures for eleven guns and on top are the pits for the six Moncrieff mountings; immediately behind the casemated battery is the sally port with the positions for the two RBL guns that covered it. The open battery survives very overgrown though there are plans to cut back the vegetation. The barracks remains with its six bastionettes, the buildings inside were restored by British Petroleum after a period of dereliction but the roofs on them are modern. In 1912 the Fort was given to the Admiralty and finally sold in 1932 for £300 to a private owner. In the Second World War the RAF operated a flare path for flying boats from the redan. British Petroleum purchased the Fort in 1957 as part of their Angle Bay Ocean oil terminal and a set of pumps for a large oil pipeline to the Llandarey Oil Refinery were built in the casemated battery. The main magazine was demolished and five oil storage tanks were built behind the casemated battery. The terminal closed in 1986 and the five storage tanks were dismantled. The Fort is a Grade II Listed building and is owned by Valero Ltd who use it as their site security H.Q.

Fort Popton

