

Fort Bovisand

Commenced	1861	Armament	
Completed	1869	Battery A	
Cost	£ £58,264 (excluding iron shields)	1872	22 x 9-inch RML 1 x 10-inch RML
Map Reference	SX487507	1880	9 x 9-inch RML 14 x 10-inch RML
Position	Staddon Point, east of breakwater.	1890	8 x 9-inch RML 14 x 10-inch RML
Type	Casemated Sea Battery.	Battery B	
Ditch	Dry ditch to the east.	1885-93	6 x 6pdr QF Hotchkiss
Guns	23	Battery C	
Barrack Accom.	gun floor and in Staddon Point Bty	1942	2 x Twin 6pdr QF
Present use	Underwater Diving School.	Caponiers	None
History	Part of the Staddon Point defences.	Counterscarp galleries	None
Disposal Condition	Closed in 1956, released by MOD in 2000	Haxo casemates	None
Access	Fair/Good Permission from Fort Bovisand Trust.	Moncrieff Pits	1 in the Bovisand Practice Battery - see below
Sources	Bovisand - Arthur L.Clamp. Historic Defences of Plymouth - A.Pye & F.Woodward. Forts or Follies - F.Woodward.		

History and Description

Built as a result of the 1860 Royal Commission report, the fort was originally designed to have two tiers mounting fifty 68pr and 110pr guns in a curvilinear trace to cover the eastern entrance to Plymouth Sound. Fort Bovisand was to cover the eastern entrance whilst Fort Picklecombe was to cover the western entrance with a similar number of guns. In 1864, when most of the foundations and basement level had been completed, the design was modified for a single storey battery of 23 granite Casemated gun positions for the larger RML guns which were then being developed.

The fort was completed with Iron shields to the front of each gun Casemate with a magazine complex built beneath the gun Casemates. The basement area consisted of shell stores and cartridge stores linked to a front cartridge passage and a rear shell passage which allowed the ammunition to be served via lifts to the gun floors above. The accommodation within the fort consisted of small barrack areas to the rear of each gun position; with store rooms, cookhouse and ablutions built at the basement level to the rear of the magazines. Further accommodation was also used at the near-by Staddon Point Battery and was reached using a loop holed covered way built along the scarp wall of the eastern dry ditch.

In the 1870s, 400 yards to the east of Fort Bovisand, a practice battery was built which allowed guns to be safely fired out to sea. In 1872 a Moncrieff pattern I carriage for a 7-inch RML was added to the practice battery in a Moncrieff pit and in September 1873 two test shots were fired. During the late 1880s three pairs of 6pr QF guns were emplaced upon the roof to cover the minefield which stretched between Bovisand and the Breakwater, these were removed to the practice battery during the mid 1890s. The 9-inch and 10-inch RMLs were declared obsolete and removed between 1895 and 1903. Other than the practice battery and the 12pr battery at near-by Staddon Point the fort remained unarmed until the second world war when two twin 6pdr QF guns were emplaced together with their directing towers on the roof, with Casemates 11 and 16 being converted into magazines.

In 1970 Fort Bovisand was leased to the School of Nautical Archaeology and after clearing of debris and refurbishment the fort opened in March 1972 as a diving school. The practice battery is now a car park.

2000: MoD decides to close the fort. 2004: Discovery Divers sets-up home in one of the fort's outbuildings.

2011: Fort Bovisand Trust established

Fort Bovisand

Roof 1941

