



FORT NELSON, PORTSMOUTH



Above: The existing fort and visitor centre set into the landscape.
Right: The new entrance to the fort



Right: The entrance to the new visitor centre.
 Below (top): The cafe and shop in the new visitor centres.
 Below (bottom): The new earth covered visitors centre.



Fort Nelson is a 19 acre Victorian gun fort, sited atop Portsdown Hill and directly overlooking Portsmouth Harbour and the Solent. It is a designated Scheduled Monument and home to the Royal Armouries' stunning national collection of historic cannon and artillery. After a Conservation Plan was generated and agreed with English Heritage a master plan was developed. This highlighted the benefits of this project which was awarded a £2 Million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The design involved turning the museum on its head by creating a new exciting entrance to the museum across the draw bridge that used to be only used as the staff entrance. The main parts of this project are:

1. A new earth covered Visitor Centre containing an information centre, shop, café and children's play and activity area. The new facility has stunning views across Portsmouth Harbour and Solent and allows for a new interpretation of the fort.
2. A new glazed timber frame entrance building called the 'Voice of the Guns Gallery'. This large orientation space was designed to house some of the most iconic guns in the Armouries' collection. With its immediate views across the parade ground at the ramparts and glimpsing views of the Redan building this new gallery also provides a much improved visitor orientation to the museum as a whole and is able to accommodate the higher volumes of visitors.
3. A new car park adjacent to the Fort means that visitors can also appreciate the relationship the fort has with the original Nelson's monument.
4. The creation of different story lines to follow now facilitates visits to be made in the following easy 'parcels': The Voice of the Guns Gallery; The tour of Fort Nelson – which helps visitors explore the site; the story of Fort Nelson – new galleries within the existing barracks and Redan building and the existing story of artillery
5. Enhanced & improved educational facilities through the creation of a 'Classroom of the Future' giving more room and a separate entrance.



Top: The Voice of the Guns Gallery presents a new elevation to the existing parade ground.
 Right: The interior of the Voice of the Guns Gallery



The Voice of the Guns
Gallery green roof and
timber structure





The Voice of the Guns
Gallery.

The Royal Armouries
3,800m²
£3.35 million
2006-2010