

# Welcome to the Fortress Trail at Oddane Fortress

Explore Oddane Fortress with the Fortress Trail. This guide gives you an insight into the fortress's history and its most important defences.

The walk takes about 1½ hours at normal walking speed. Enjoy your walk!

## 1 SENTRY BOX

The sentry box originally came from Bolærne Fort. It was probably built by the Germans during the war with the typical panel pattern and colours. After the war, the sentry box was moved to Håøya in the Tønsberg Fjord, and then to Oddane in 1996.

## 2 THE ODDANE FAMILY'S FARMHOUSE

The building was built by the current owner's father in 1930. It was spared by the Germans who used it for quarters and storage. The other farm buildings were blown up and the stone walls used to clad bunkers. The Oddane family were given a week to move when the Germans occupied the farm. The Norwegian Armed Forces returned the farmhouse to the landowner in 1968 and renewed his contract as the warden. In 1972, Halvard Oddane took over the position after his father.

## 3 KITCHEN AND MESS HALL

Built in 1941-42 as a mess building. The Germans called this type of building a «Casino» because it was also used for recreational activities and social gatherings. It was later used by both the Norwegian Coastal Artillery and the Norwegian Naval Home Guard until 1 July 2005. The building has a large mess for soldiers and a smaller mess for officers. It also houses a kitchen, toilets, workshop, storage rooms, offices, etc. Parts of the cellar wall are rounded and have a large embrasure covering the fort's main gate. The exterior and interiors are original, apart from some minor changes made in the post-war period.

## 4 FRITZ ALLÉ

The stretch from the kitchen and mess hall up to the commanding officer's quarters has in recent years been called «Fritz Allé» after a German soldier who is said to still «appear» here.

## 5 COMMANDING OFFICER'S QUARTERS

Built in 1941 as quarters for the German commanding officer, Altman Beech. After the war it was taken over by the Norwegian Coastal Artillery and used as officers' quarters. The Norwegian Naval Home Guard's district commanding officer had an office here. The building represents a plain, standard type of German building that used solid, standardised materials. Newer elements such as the Korea panelling in the fireplace lounge and the exterior fibre-cement boards relate something of its post-war history.

## 6 RADAR AND COMMUNICATIONS BUNKER

Built in 1940-45 it houses a radio room, telephone switchboard and two rooms used as personnel quarters. Messages arrived here from the close defence positions and observation posts located around the fort before being forwarded to the command post. The bunker was used by the Norwegian Naval Home Guard until 2005. From 1958 the bunker functioned as a command post.

## 7 CANNON 4/COMMAND POST

The command post was built on the emplacement for a 10,5 cm field gun that was in use during the war. The gun was removed in 1958 and its pivot used as a fixture for the new plot, i.e. a map with plotted positions. All of the inventory remains as it was when the fort was decommissioned in 2005.

## 8 EMPLACEMENT FOR A 40MM BOFORS GUN

The emplacement was built in 1961 for a 40mm Bofors gun L/60, located on the site of an earlier German built gun emplacement. Anti-aircraft defences were implemented at all the flank forts in Oslo fjord following the modernisation in 1961. Oddane fort had 2 guns, plus one more that was mobile. The guns were decommissioned in 1992 and were not replaced.

## 9 BUNKER USED AS QUARTERS

Built in 1940-45 as an ammunition bunker, but later used as quarters. It is an example of a German «Regelbau», i.e. a standardised design. Such standard designs were used for bunkers, casemates and other positions. Constructed in reinforced concrete with 30 cm thick walls and an arched ceiling.

## 10 COMMAND POST

The command post has two entrances, one from «Fritz Allé» via a long, covered staircase, and one from the north-west, just below the top of the actual bunker. This is the highest point in the fort. The distance to the island of Jomfruland is 18,000 metres and the distance to Svenner lighthouse is 17,000 metres. The bunker comprises two rooms that contained the most important operative functions: the central control room with fire control, communications, radio and range-finding. A swastika with an iron heel has been engraved into the staircase leading down from the command post to the dovecote.

### Key to symbols

#### Ordnance

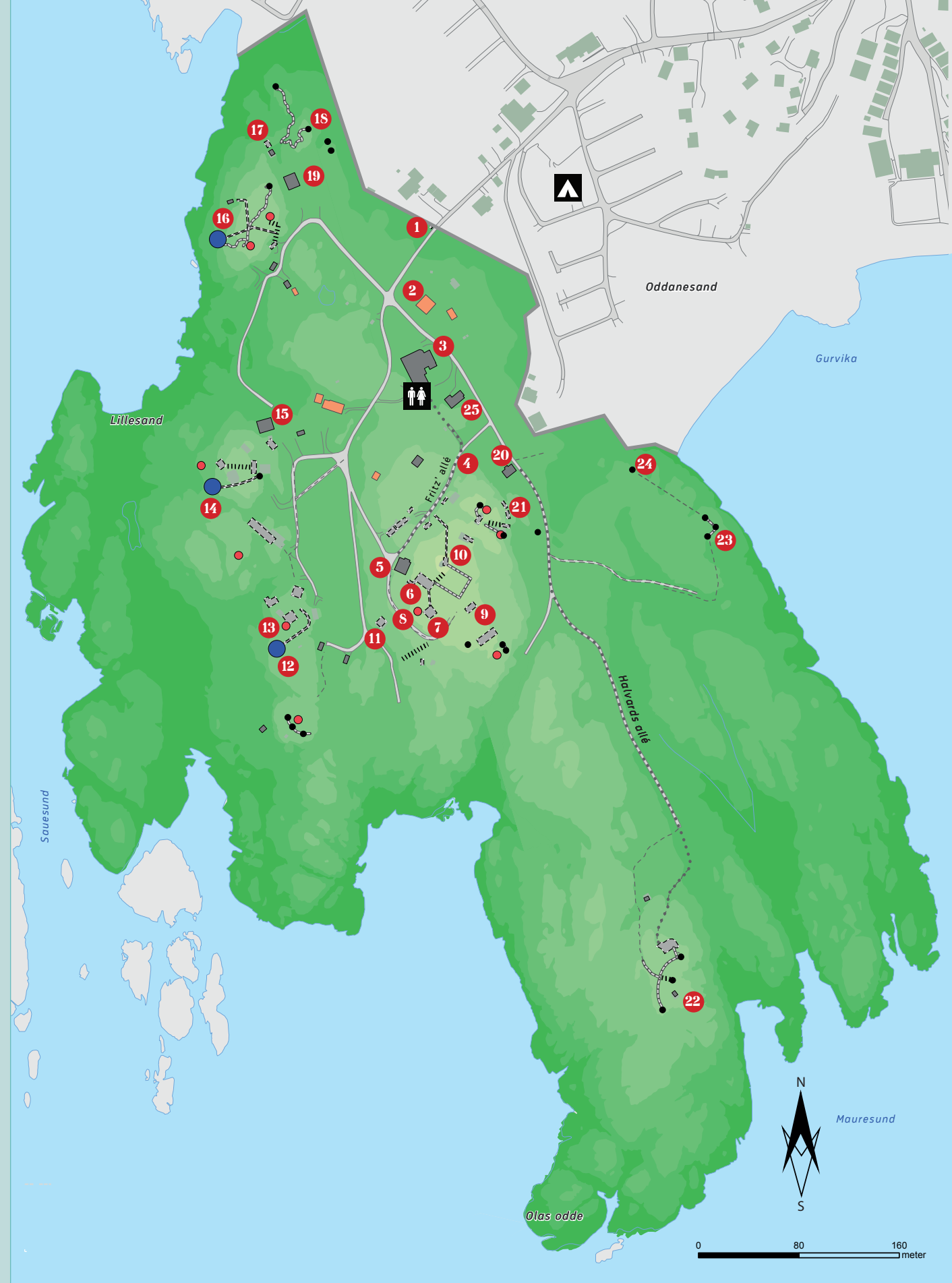
- Machine gun position
- Anti-aircraft position
- Cannon 10.5 cm

#### Terrain elements

- Path
- ||||| Steps
- Trench

#### Inventory

- Building above ground
- Bunker
- Building owned by Oddane family



*The takeover of the fort 12.5.1945*



*Cannon 1*



### 11 MOVABLE GARAGES

Four cold garages built in around 1960 using metal sheeting (corrugated iron) for the walls and roofs. This type of movable garage was produced in Larvik and represents a type of pre-fab that was much used by both civilians and the military. The Norwegian Naval Home Guard used them to store crates of small arms ammunition, gun carriages for the Colt machine gun, naval materiel such as swimming vests and camouflage materiel. 0010 was used to store fuel.

### 12 CANNON 3 IN «TOAD SHIELD» TURRET

This gun, a German 10,5 cm C/32, is larger and more modern than the other two in the fort: it is a rapid fire gun with a vent for gases and cache, but is the same calibre. It was installed in 1958 and protected by a so-called «toad shield» turret made of foam and fibreglass and painted with camouflage paint. It blends in so well with its surroundings that during the Blue Fox exercise in 1968 the fighter aircraft could not find it!

### 13 OERLIKON ANTI-AIRCRAFT POSITION

Position for 20 mm Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun. This was established in 1961, along with a further seven, and often used by the Norwegian Coastal Artillery for training purposes until 1981 when all of the anti-aircraft guns were decommissioned and removed. The weather protection remains in place.

### 14 CANNON 2

Cannon 2 was last fired in 1991 and had a range of 15,000 metres. The Cannon is a French produced 10.5 cm C732 from 1958. This gun emplacement was built in 1941. The casemate is from 1944, built on Hitler's orders in accordance with Regelbau no. 671.

### 15 INFIRMARY

First built in 1941; it burned down on New Year's Eve 1941-42 when the furnaces were overloaded. An identical building was built in 1942. Built as an infirmary with a medical office and ward. Its fittings were modern for the period with baths, tiled floors and toilets. The Norwegian Home Guard used the building for offices and quarters until 1997.

### 16 CANNON 1

Built in 1941 for a French 10,5 cm field gun. In 1944, on the instructions of Hitler, the gun was covered by a casemate built according to the German standard design «Regelbau» no. 671. In 1958, the gun was replaced by a German-produced 10,5 cm C/32).

### 17 MORTAR POSITION

Built in 1941 behind the cliff slope and well-protected from enemy fire. The position forms an octagon and has a central pillar to which the mortar was attached. It could fire through the opening in the roof. The Germans engraved a «map» into the concrete walls showing where the mortar could hit, with directions and distances to the various targets outside the fort's perimeter. The mortar was a 50 mm M1936 light mortar.

### 18 MACHINE GUN POSITION

Built in 1941 to cover the fort's outer perimeter towards the north. Close defence positions like this are spread around the fort and represent an important element of the German fortification system.

### 19 DEPOT BARRACKS

Built in 1941 – 1942. From 1957 it was used as a depot for storing mobilisation materiel for the Norwegian Coastal Artillery. It was later used as a carpentry workshop, store, offices and classrooms for the Norwegian Home Guard, Larvik District, and the Norwegian Naval Home Guard.

### 20 QUARTERS

Built in 1941-42 as quarters, also called the «Lieutenant's Quarters». Both the Norwegian Coastal Artillery and the Norwegian Naval Home Guard used the quarters in the post-war period. The building was originally ochre with red window architraves. Traces of the lieutenant's vegetable garden can be found on the eastern and southern sides of the building. The current interior with its bunk beds is from the post-war period.

### 21 BUNKER USED AS QUARTERS

Built by the occupying forces. This area was more protected from enemy attack, therefore the construction is somewhat simpler than the other bunkers at the fort. The roof structure consists of bearing timbers with trapezoidal steel sheets with concrete and loose stone on top.

### 22 FLOODLIGHT

On the southern perimeter of the fort there is a searchlight, two machine gun positions with trenches and a bunker used as quarters, all built by the Germans. The searchlight was installed to aid searches and aiming in the dark. The machine gun positions were constructed for protection and the bunker for use as quarters. The searchlight's housing is from the 1950s, but the searchlight itself is from 1936. It is tiltable and can swivel through 360 degrees. It has a range of about 20,000 metres. It is one of the few remaining of its kind in Norway.

### 23 MACHINE GUN EMPLACEMENTS

Three emplacements connected by an angled trench. Located on the eastern edge of the fort for monitoring the seaward side. The concrete steps down to the beach were built by Halvard Oddane's grandfather in 1925. The staircase leads to a jetty that during the war was used for fishing. The foundations for a fishing cottage are preserved.

### 24 KUSY

KuSy stands for Kuppel Sylindrisk (cylindrical dome). This is a bunker built in the late 1950s. The position was built to strengthen close defences, and it is strategically located at the rear of the beach in order to secure the north-eastern part of the fort. There are two of this kind in the area. When they were built, they were considered to be atomic bomb proof.

### 25 QUARTERS

Built in 1941 as offices. In the post-war period it was used as quarters before the interior was modified so it could be used for storing clothing and materiel. In 1970, the building's exterior was clad in plastic panels, but much of the original building remains intact.

## History

In March 1941, Hitler ordered the construction of 160 coastal forts in Norway. These were in addition to the forts started the year before. The construction of Oddane Fort started as early as April 1941.

The fort became part of the so-called «Neuen Westwall» – a continuous line of defence along the Norwegian coast. This line was further reinforced and extended from March 1942 and eventually covered the entire Atlantic coastline from the Bay of Biscay to Kirkenes. Oddane Fort became part of this defence system known as the Atlantic Wall. The fort represented the outermost barrier to the Oslo Fjord, together with six other forts, and helped to cover the approaches to Skien, Porsgrunn and Larvik.

After the surrender in 1945, the fort was taken over by the Norwegian Coastal Artillery and regularly modernised until it was decommissioned in 1992-93. Oddane was a mobilisation fort without a permanent garrison for the entire post-war period, although from 1959 onwards all of the Norwegian Naval Home Guard's exercises involving SHV-132 were conducted at the fort.

The fort was well supplied with ammunition and equipment and could become a well-functioning combat unit within a short space of time. The last live firing exercise took place here in 1991. The Home Guard force numbered around 80 men up to when they finally left the fort in 2005. During the Cold War, the fort was modernised a number of times with new artillery, technical equipment and materiel.

The fort also tells the story of the Oddane family who were driven from the property during the war and are still the landowners. Halvard Oddane is the fourth generation owner of the farm Oddane. The farm was purchased in 1858 for 1,300 speciedaler.

### New life on historic ground

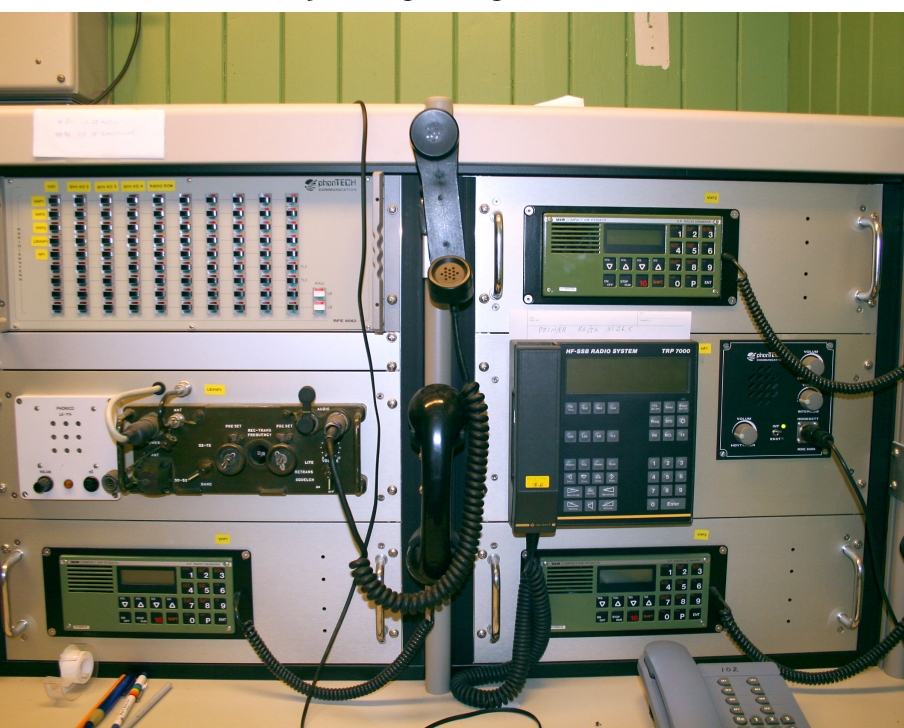
Oddane Fort was listed in 2015 and is one of the few coastal forts that have been preserved in their entirety, with both the buildings and original positions intact. The command post, ammunition bunkers, anti-aircraft positions and quarters have been preserved. The fort provides an overall impression of its use from the Second World War and during the Cold War, and communicates well the military strategies, arms technology and military architecture of the time.

The fort is home to unique populations in terms of biodiversity. The area is thus generally closed to the public, although guided tours can be booked via the website: [www.forsvarsbygg.no/festningene](http://www.forsvarsbygg.no/festningene).

### Thank you for helping us to preserve Oddane Fort

Oddane Fort is an important cultural monument and must be looked after for future generations. In addition to the fortifications and buildings, it is home to unique botanical and zoological populations and geological formations because the area has been off limits to the public for a long time. It is therefore important that visitors show respect for the buildings and area. Litter and unintended damage could easily spoil the uniqueness of the site. A year-round ban on lighting fires and barbecuing is therefore strictly enforced, and dogs must be kept on leads.

Radio communication from the postwar period



## National Fortification Heritage

The National Fortifications Heritage of the Norwegian Defence Estates Agency has been tasked with managing the fifteen fortresses. Our vision is to create new life on historic ground. The fortresses shall be conserved as part of Norway's national heritage, while facilitating both existing and new uses.

The National Fortification Heritage shall bring the fortresses into a new era and protect their unique characteristics and history by working in partnership with others to develop them into attractive arenas.

Find out more at [www.forsvarsbygg.no/festningene](http://www.forsvarsbygg.no/festningene)

