

OPEPE WANDER

Topo50 Map: BG36 Iwitahi

GPS: NZTM on WGS84

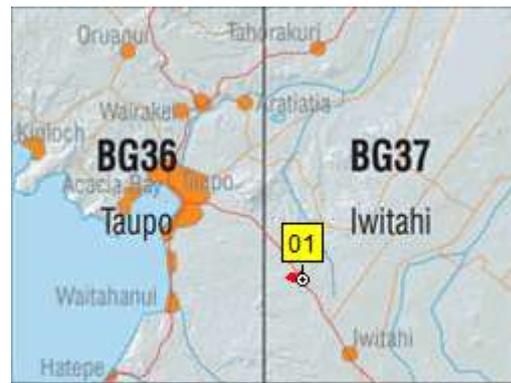
How to get to START: Leave Taupo on either the Old Napier Road or on the ETA (Eastern Taupo Arterial)

- From the Mitre 10 roundabout on the ETA follow SH5 to Napier
 - Pass the turn off left to "Mountain Road" – about 5min
- Continue for about 9-10km and park in the car park on the LHS clearly marked as a touristic spot (01)

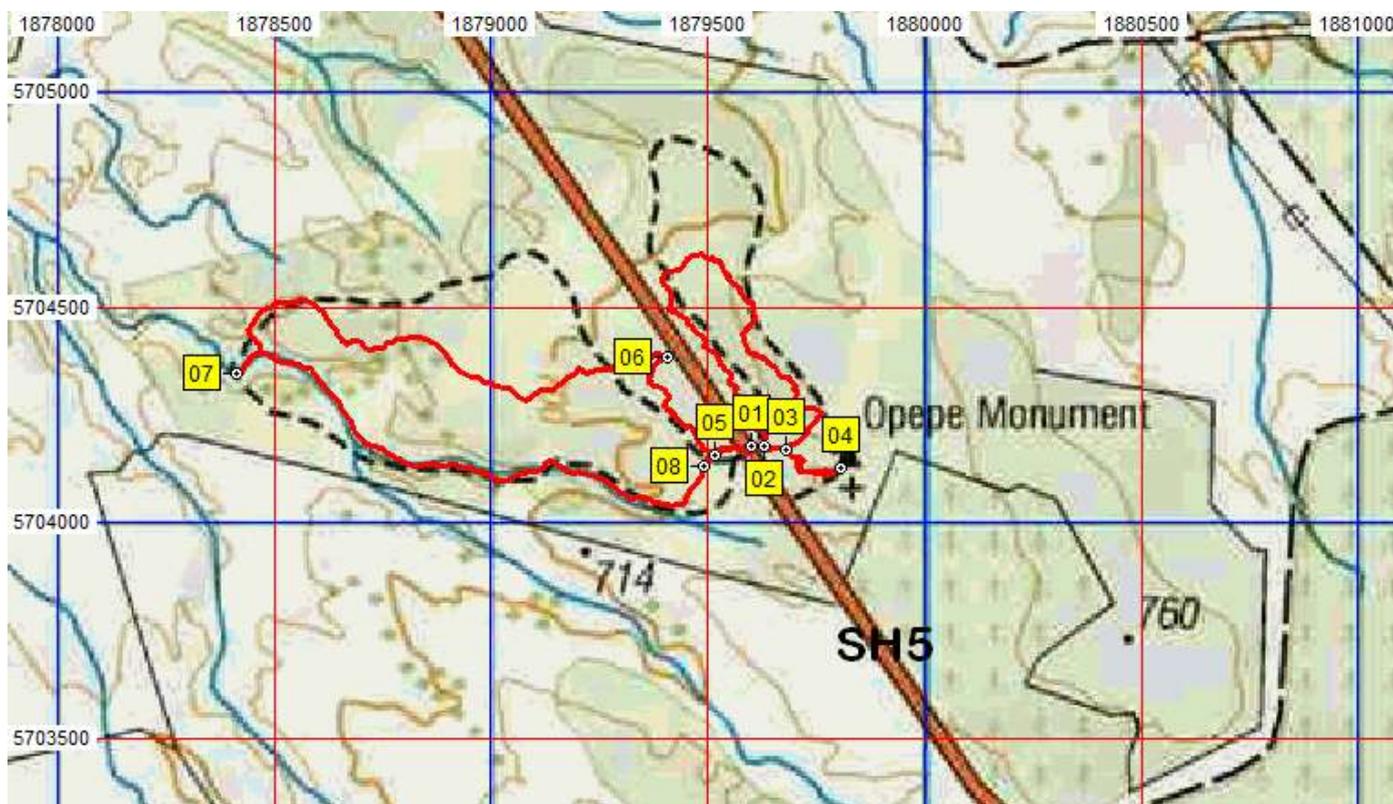
Rough description: An easy walk for adults, ancients and children of about 2 hours on good footpath which has very few tricky bits even though the surrounding area has been well gullied in the past. There are loop walks on both the N and S side of the road and the only danger that exists is the road itself which carries pretty high speed traffic.

There are points of historical interest on both sides of the road and there are detailed information boards in the relevant spots which include the graveyard where members of a troop of AC (Armed Constabulary) were buried after being slaughtered and sites of a Saw Pit and Water trough

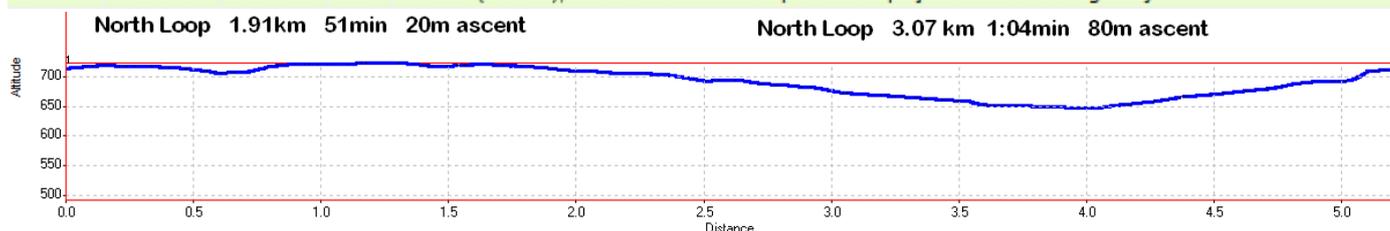
Detail: If the intention is to walk both loops it is normal to tackle the one on the north side of the road first where a clear track leads from the car park to this track where there is a sign at **WP02** indicating a turn to the NW (Left). The track surface is good and slopes are undulating to rolling at worst. There are some magnificent trees to be seen and there are ample informative notices to satisfy most people. At the end of the "Loop Track" (**WP03**) the choice is to turn left and go visit the graveyard where there is quite a lot of information about the tragedy that occurred or turn right and go back to the starting point (**WP01**).



Drive from Taupo takes about 20 - 25 minutes.



Name	Easting	Northing	Alt...	Description
01	1879599	5704176	713	Car park at Opepe on north side SH5 Napier Road
02	1879630	5704176	715	One min (45m); Track junction to left for "Loop Track"
03	1879681	5704170	717	38min (1.45km); End of Loop Track with right to cemetery
04	1879807	5704126	720	45min (1.65km); Fenced grassed cemety with headstones and story-board (1.91km / 51min whole loop)
05	1879517	5704157	710	Track junction on S side of SH5 with right for "Saw Pit" & loop of 3.13km / 1:06min
06	1879409	5704385	703	7:50min (0.35km); Fenced saw pit with huge log and story board
07	1878411	5704347	652	38min (1.72km); Water trough and story board some 100m on right after junction
08	1879491	5704132	696	1:14min (3.07km); site of old well near top of the slope just short of the highway





To tackle the south loop SH5 has to be crossed and this is not an easy or safe road to cross. If there are children involved it could be worthwhile loading them back into the transport and driving over into the large layby at the other side. Once on the south side of the road and in the layby there is a DoC toilet at the northern / Taupo end of the area; this is where the tracks start.

An info board does show that there is a loop track but the actual information / track signs can be confusing as they mention out-and-back walks and times. What was done on the day was to follow the right hand branch of the track (WP05) heading gently downhill towards the saw pit (WP06) – this is an easy stroll and takes less than 10 minutes. From the saw pit the track follows some gentle steps then wends its way downwards for a kilometre or so. Eventually a small track junction is reached where by going right for 100m metres or so a large information board is reached with a lot of history of the area – unfortunately the “water trough” (WP07) was no longer obvious. To return retrace the steps back to the small track junction and continue straight ahead to the south east and half an hour’s gentle walk upslope passes a wooden fence round an old well (WP08) which is just a few metres short of the layby and end of the track.

It might be of interest but this area of very dense bush has been used by the local LandSAR (Search and Rescue) and the Taupo Tramping Club for navigational training as indicated below:



Bearings for each line from SH5 to Target

Line	Distance (M)	Off the Map/Image		Ozi-Explorer	
		True	Mag	True	Mag
1	276	20.0	357.0	18.9	355.9
2	253	32.5	9.5	33.1	10.1
3	240	40.0	17.0	40.7	17.7
4	231	52.0	29.0	49.9	26.9
5	238	60.0	37.0	58.6	35.6
6	273	13.0	349.0	13.3	350.1

This is through almost impenetrable bush with steep slopes and windfalls as obstacles

Basics:

1. Each team should comprise 3 persons – Minimum is 2
2. High Viz gear to be worn and a torch to be carried in case it is too dark in the dense vegetation
3. Each party to carry a GPS unit switched on and ready for use if instructed or required
4. Navigate on the allocated line from the start WP on the road to the clearing using compass only
5. You will cross a footpath twice
6. Shortly after crossing the footpath the second time you should hit a fence line (see Google Image)
7. There is a clearing behind the fence line and the target is the corner where the fence turns to the NORTH
8. If the fence basically runs E – W all is well
9. If the fence runs more or less N – S you have missed the target!
10. To self-rescue get back to the track and walk in either direction (Advice passed by radio when someone shouted HELP!)

Notes:	• GPS = Garmin GPSMap 60CSx	WP = Waypoint as taken by GPS unit	masl = metres above sea level
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