

# Community Update

APRIL 2010



Australian Government

Nation Building Program



## Proposed truck rest area F5 Freeway

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) is planning to construct a truck rest area on the F5 Freeway northbound at Varroville. The rest area would provide a safe location for truck drivers to stop, rest and check their loads.

This brochure shows the design of the F5 Freeway in-corridor truck rest area. The rest area concept design is on display for community comment from Monday 19 April until Friday 7 May 2010.

## Background

The Australian and NSW governments have allocated \$138 million to widen the F5 Freeway (Hume Highway) between Brooks Road, Ingleburn and Narellan Road, Blair Athol. As part of this project, a northbound truck rest area is proposed at Varroville.

Transporting freight by road is a key element of the NSW economy, with nearly 80% of interstate road freight travelling to, from or through NSW at some point in its journey.

Fatigue is a workplace safety issue for many truck drivers. Heavy vehicle driver fatigue is a contributor to road crashes and presents a safety risk to all road users.

New heavy vehicle driver fatigue laws in Australia set revised work and rest limits for truck drivers. The ability of truck drivers to take appropriate rest breaks can depend upon suitable truck rest areas, particularly within greater Sydney.

Rest areas are used by truck drivers to take long and short rest breaks, use amenities and check loads and vehicles.

The National Transport Commission released the *National Guidelines for the Provision of Rest Area Facilities* which recommends that there is not more than 60 minutes of drive time between major rest areas. The RTA adopted these guidelines as a basis to provide rest area facilities for truck drivers on key national freight routes.

## What has happened so far?

The RTA has reviewed the availability of truck rest areas in NSW.

An *Audit of Rest Areas against National Guidelines* (Austroads 2006) highlights that many freight routes across Australia have deficiencies in rest areas. This review and an RTA investigation found that there are insufficient truck rest areas in or approaching metropolitan Sydney and on the F5 Freeway northbound.

In 2007 the RTA removed an informal truck rest area for around 15 trucks in the northbound direction on the F5 Freeway at The Cross Roads to widen the F5 Freeway. Representatives of the road transport industry raised concerns over the loss of this area for drivers to rest and check their loads before entering Sydney.

In March 2010 the RTA released a report on truck rest areas on the F5 Freeway northbound. The RTA investigated 15 available sites along the F5 Freeway northbound, between Picton Road and the M5/M7 interchange, and the feasibility of further upgrading the existing rest area at Pheasants Nest.

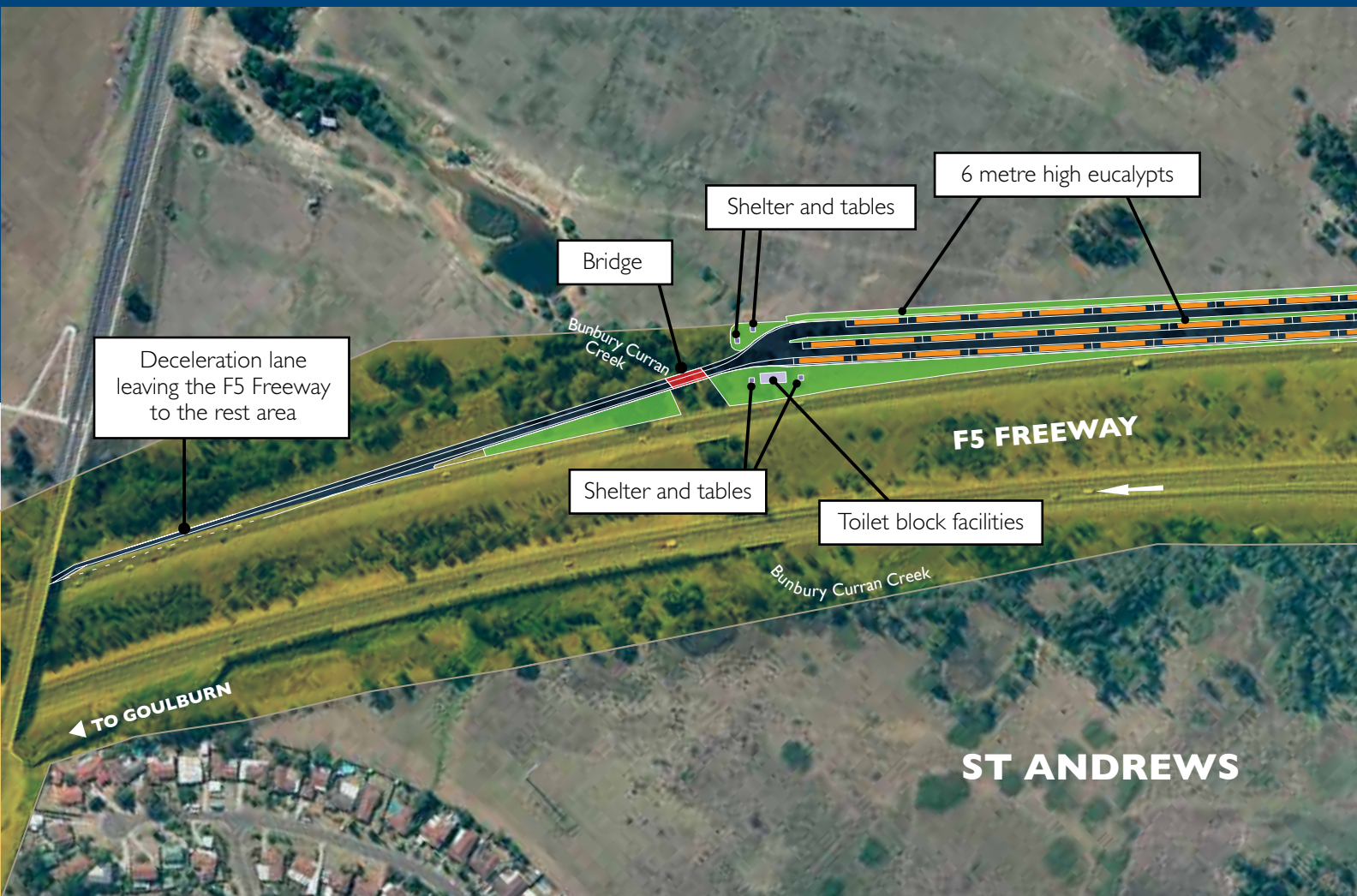
Issues included road safety, engineering and environmental constraints, proximity to existing and proposed residential subdivisions and if services such as water and power were available.

The RTA decided not to proceed with a larger site at Varroville given community concern about encroachment onto adjoining land zoned for scenic protection.

The Federal and NSW governments are expanding the Pheasants Nest truck rest area, 37 kilometres to the south of the proposed Varroville site. This complements the limited capacity at the Varroville site.

The RTA's investigations of potential sites can be viewed on the RTA website [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au) in Construction and maintenance/Sydney projects/F5 Freeway widening.

## Proposed truck rest area on F5 Freeway northbound at Varroville



### Varroville

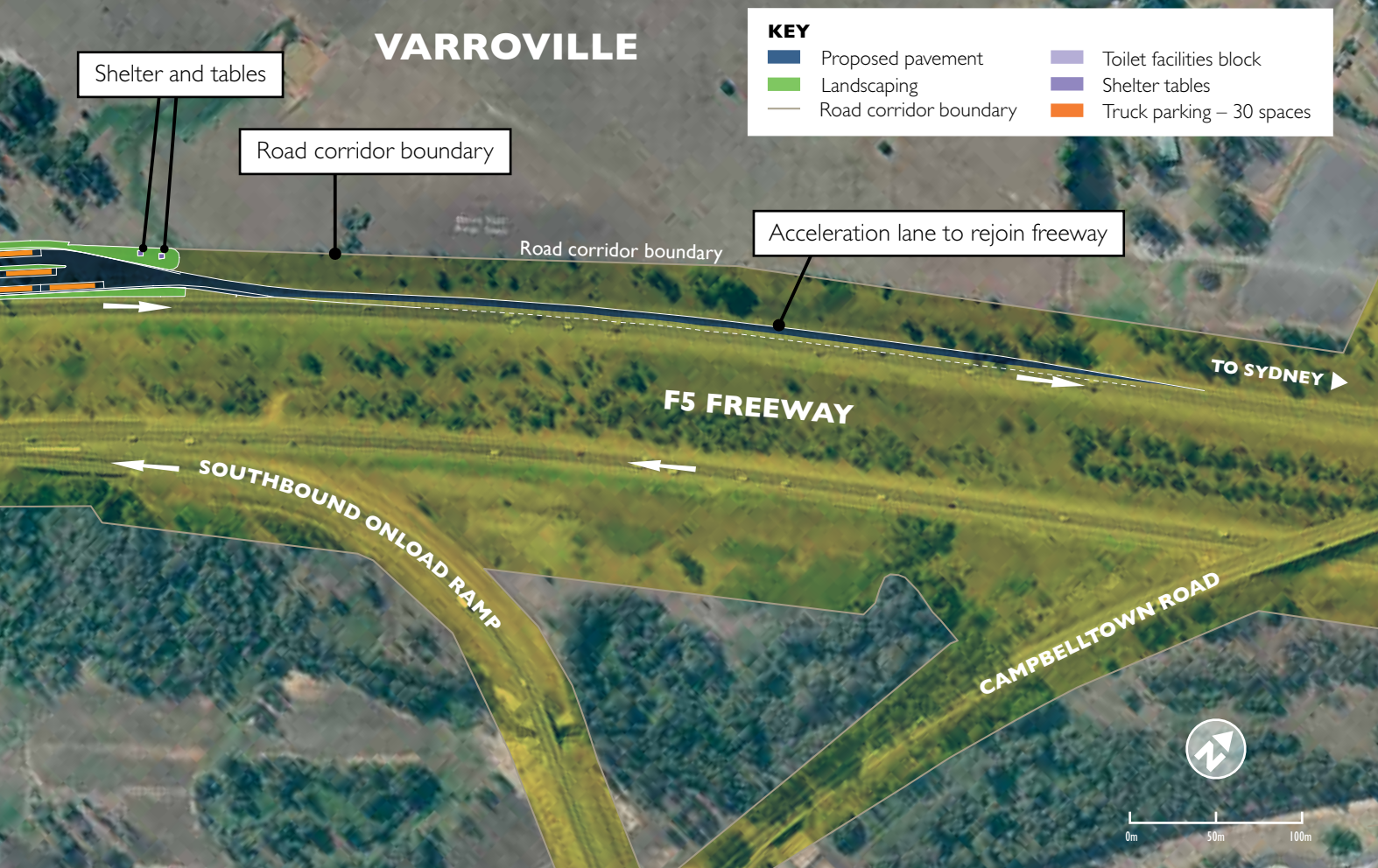
Studies conclude a site **within the F5 Freeway corridor** at Varroville, 7 kilometres south of the F5/M7 interchange just north of St Andrews Road and Bunbury Curran Creek Bridge is the only suitable location for a truck rest area close to the Sydney metropolitan area.

The site at Varroville is the preferred option because:

- It is feasible in engineering terms.
- It would have a relatively low impact on residential areas.
- It would have a relatively low environmental impact and, being within the F5 corridor, avoids adjacent land zoned for scenic protection.
- The site would provide safe truck access to and from the freeway.
- It is located on one of the principal truck routes into Sydney and would therefore be accessible to drivers using the national road network.
- It would be located near freight trip end facilities on the fringe of the Sydney metropolitan area (compared to the existing facility at Pheasants Nest) and will therefore be preferred by some truck drivers.
- It would be sufficiently distant from sensitive land uses (hospitals, homes, schools, churches etc.) and it would not exceed NSW Government noise guidelines.
- It would be located within 60 minutes (off peak) from the next major truck rest area on the national highway network heading north at Berowra.

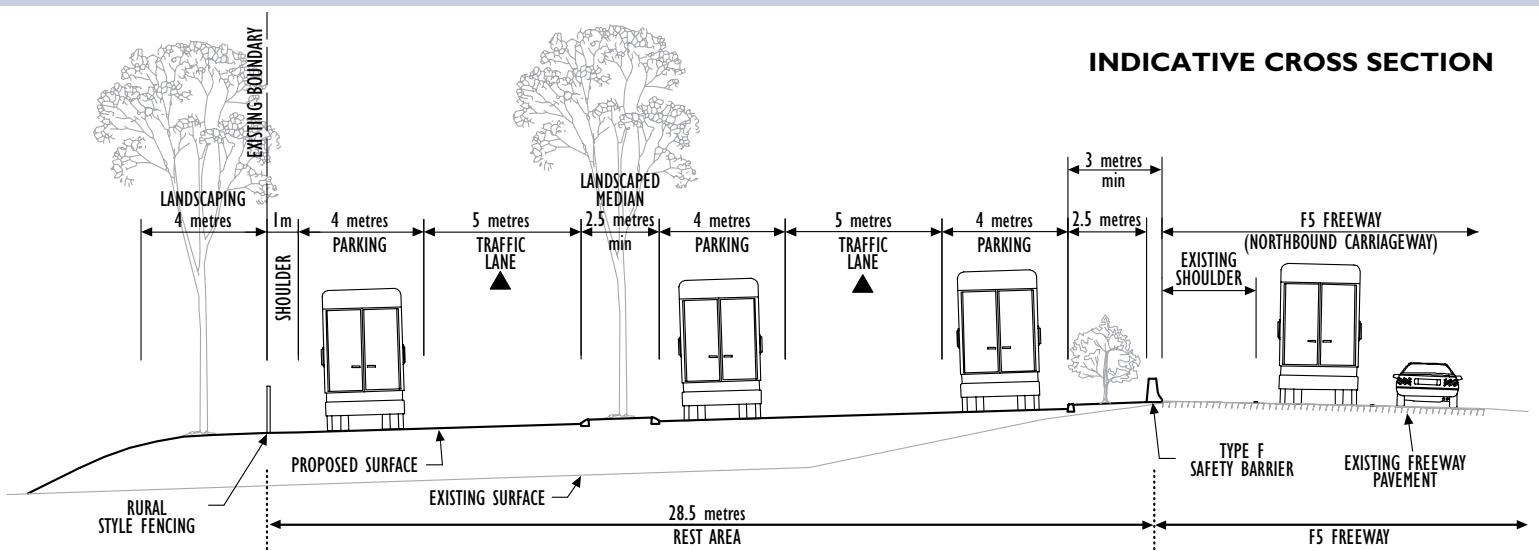
### Benefits

- The F5 Freeway is a major route for interstate road freight. It is important that truck drivers have enough locations where they can stop, rest and check their loads.
- Truck drivers would be assisted to comply with new heavy vehicle driver fatigue laws.
- An informal truck rest area near the F5/M7 interchange used by northbound trucks was recently removed for road safety reasons. Varroville would be able to service these users.
- The F5 is currently being widened. The new northbound rest area can be constructed as part of these works.
- Road safety would be improved along this route.
- The National Transport Commission recommends major truck rest areas are located not more than 60 minutes apart. The Varroville site would complement the expanded Pheasants Nest rest area and would provide less than 60 minutes travel time (off peak) to the rest area at Berowra.



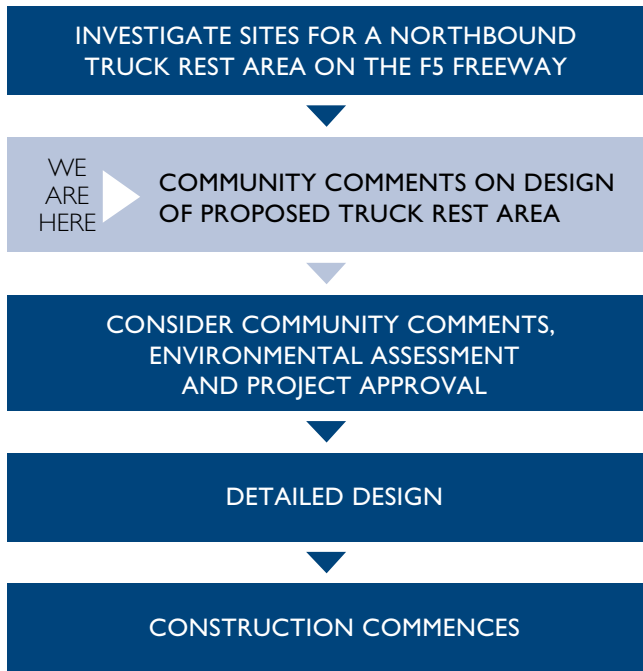
## Key features of the proposed rest area within the F5 Freeway corridor

- Parking for approximately 30 trucks.
- Dedicated acceleration and deceleration lanes for safe entry and exit onto the F5 Freeway.
- Parallel head to tail parking.
- Shaded areas and sun sheltered outdoor tables.
- Toilet facilities.
- Connection to town water, sewer and electricity.
- Landscaping around the site to provide shade and visual screening.
- **No** shops or commercial premises.
- **No** access to neighbouring properties.
- **No** land acquisition.



To view an image of the proposed truck rest area go to [www.rta.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au) in Construction and maintenance/Sydney projects/F5 Freeway widening/F5 Freeway truck rest area.

## What happens next?



## Have your say

Community comments will be addressed in the environmental assessment and the detailed design.

Please send written comments by **Friday 7 May 2010** to:

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## Locality map





australian  
made



carbon  
neutral



mill  
certified



renewable  
energy



sustainable  
forest



RTA uses  
**Greenhouse Friendly™**  
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#### For further enquiries

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