
Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Naming proposal - Observation Point, Palm Beach (Stage 1 of 1)

Impact level: Four

Report date: 8 October 2020

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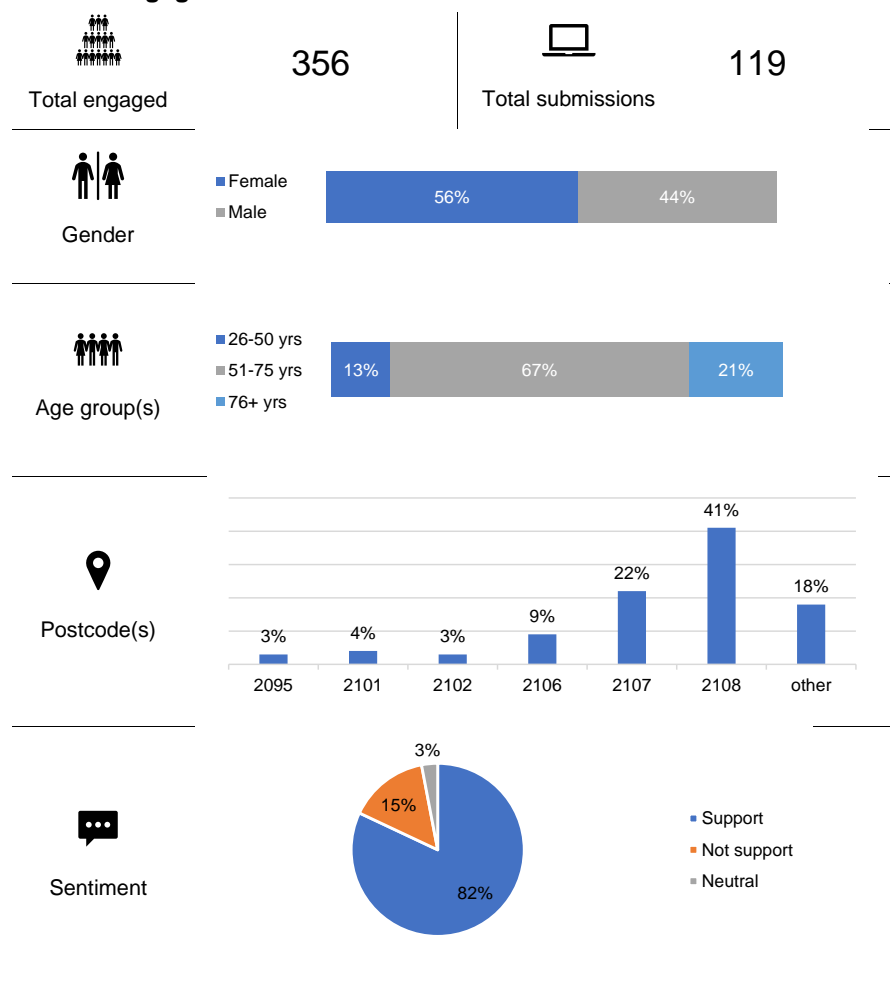
1. Summary¹

This report outlines the community and stakeholder engagement conducted as part of the project proposing to name the viewing area at [Observation Point, Palm Beach](#), Herminies Landing.

1.1. Engagement date

28 August to 27 September 2020

1.2. Who we engaged



¹ Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

1.3. How we engaged



Your Say

Visitors: 356

Visits: 541



Electronic Direct
Mail

Community Engagement newsletter: 2

Distribution: 21,000

2. Background

The Palm Beach and Whale Beach Association (PBWBA) wrote to Council requesting that the landing at Observation Point on the Palm Beach Walkway, Barrenjoey Road be named 'Herminie's Landing' in recognition of the late Herminie Swainston, "for her services and outstanding commitment to the community and in particular to the landscape and natural spaces in the Palm Beach area".

Community engagement for the naming proposal for Observation Point, Palm Beach project was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Matrix](#) (2017).

2.1. Engagement objectives

- Build community and stakeholder awareness of the project and the opportunity to provide comments (consult).
- Provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way (inform).
- Identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values (consult).

3. Key findings

The majority of the feedback (82 percent) supported naming the viewing area at Observation Point, Herminies Landing. Many of the comments were from people who knew her and believe that it would be fitting to honour Herminie's memory and her community contribution to the Bible Garden and other local projects.

The responses included a few suggestions regarding the size and design of a commemorative plaque or stone etching for the site.

A proportion of the comments received (15 percent) did not support the proposal for various reasons including:

- there was no need to name the landing, Observation Point is sufficient
- it would be a misallocation of funds
- the subjectivity of the choice of name
- a preference for an indigenous name.

4 Appendix Verbatim responses received online²

No.	Comment
1	A fitting recognition for someone who has been a very strong local supporter
2	A fitting recognition for the work that we all benefit from.
3	a warm and generous-hearted lady, whose door was always open to people, inviting them to stay to a meal and intensely interested in hearing their story
4	A well chosen proposal to honour a tireless worker for Palm Beach.
5	A well-deserved tribute
6	A wonderful tribute to a force of nature in the area.
7	A worthy recognition of a wonderful woman.
8	An inspired idea for this viewing area.
9	Anything to encourage everyone to preserve and care for the local environment.
10	As a friend and member of the Bible Study Group that Herminie attended at St David's Palm Beach, it was impossible not to see, that Herminie was such a tireless active woman who saw every day as an opportunity to make a difference in somebody's life or take the opportunity to make her wise thoughts known in active participation whether in written or verbal form, on a social, political or religious level. Herminie never stopped caring about the world she lived in and the people who inhabited it. This would be a fitting way to celebrate a woman whose life was well lived for others.
11	Clearly it is a community benefit to remember our local history and in particular the characters who contribute to what our community is today. This is an excellent initiative and has my wholehearted support.
12	Congratulations PB&WBA and Council on good idea
13	Could the lower branches be cut so that you can see through the trees to Lion Island and take in the magnificent world class vista.
14	Does NB council have style for signage that is informative without being obtrusive and that is to be used for all such places when they are named. Also a modest style if any plaque is placed saying when it was named and who was the mayor etc. Increasingly 'bronze' plaques are getting bigger than the subject being celebrated eg statue, person, art work etc While naming is not subject to Geographic Names Board, it seems appropriate to follow the GNB ruling of only conferring someone's name after he or she has died. (not relevant in this case) but it can distress living people if controversy or competition occurs about their name being applied to a hall/ location etc. The art work should not be a statue or sculpture of the named person. Thank you
15	Great idea. I agree 100 %
16	Great idea Council
17	Great initiative
18	Herminie Swainston lived in Palm Beach all of her life. Herminie was very observant and caring resident
19	Herminie was a wonderful person who cared about the people of Palm beach and her environment. I think this is most apt to give her full credit to the walkway she was passionate about.
20	Herminie was a wonderful woman who befriended everyone she met. She was warm, friendly, interested in others and generous with not only her time but also with inviting people into her home for meals and rest. She was practically-minded and always lent a hand, not just an opinion. She was a loving wife and sister and her children and grand-

² Comments are published as verbatim and inclusive of spelling and grammatical errors. Clear spelling errors that may be misinterpreted are highlighted with (*sic*). Some minor formatting is corrected by Council staff.



No.	Comment
	children are an enormous credit to her. I think its a great idea to honour someone who has loved Palm Beach for 80 years Thankyou.
21	Herminie was an amazing lady and the entire Palm Beach area benefitted from Herminie's work in some way. She was a tireless worker who loved every part of Palm Beach. Please name this special spot "Herminie's Landing" to remember a very special lady. This is quite an appropriate name for this resting spot.
22	Herminie was of the Gillham family, who helped build the PB village in its earliest days. This is a very good choice of name.
23	Herminie worked hard for the local area up to her death. She lived above Observation Point and this is an appropriate spot to be named after her. It is important to recognise people who have made a substantial contribution in this way and adds to our knowledge of how our local area has developed.
24	Herminie worked tirelessly to build community. She was dedicated to those around her and would go to great efforts to assist inform and inspire. It is so fitting for this one of her last community projects to be named after her.
25	Herminie, sorely missed, we need another 100 like you RIP
26	Herminies Landing perpetuates the mystery of how to use the apostrophe. By choosing to omit it, Council is kow-towing to State practice in this matter. Essentially the state wants to eliminate apostrophes from place names because there are insufficient, if any, teachers of English in NSW who are capable of teaching the apostrophe's correct use. Making laws about punctuation never fell within the remit of the NSW government, and it doesn't now. The name should be Herminie's Landing, and to hell with meddling bureaucrats and incompetent schoolteachers.
27	I am Herminie Swainston's daughter and live in my mother's home at Palm Beach. I am humbled and proud that the community want to honour my mother in this way. She was an energetic and vibrant contributor to the community. She was always seeking the good of other people with a big heart that reached out to include everyone: family, friends and strangers who'd then become friends. She was passionate about the natural world, was a keen gardener and bush regenerator, and was politically active to preserve public spaces for the good of all, with an eye for what was atheistically pleasing, functional and good for the environment. She is a very worthy recipient of public recognition and I heartily endorse the proposal to name the landing at Observation Point 'Herminie's Landing' in her honour.
28	I believe it would be a fitting honour for Herminies memory that the landing be called after her. Herminie worked tirelessly for the ongoing preservation and upgrade of all things Palm Beach her work in getting the walkway completed has brought untold joy to everyone who has used the walkway. Her efforts would be forever remembered by naming the landing after her.
29	I believe this is a wonderful posthumous tribute to a lady who tirelessly worked for the Palm Beach Community, Well done NBC.
30	I consider that the name should not be changed Observation Point is an appropriate name.
31	I definitely think a plaque should be installed to commemorate Herminie and her tireless efforts to preserve and sustain Palm Beach. I do not support the renaming of Observation Point, however I strongly support a plaque "Herminie's Landing" being installed somewhere very noticeable on the stonework seating.
32	I don't have any real objection to the naming of this area but also don't see this as a very tangible way to honour the essence of Ms Swainston's life. As I understand it she was deeply committed to the preservation of the natural environment and very cognisant of the value of human connection and relationships. I'm not so sure that the lady herself would feel satisfied with this proposal. Perhaps a deeper commitment from NBC to take

No.	Comment
	care of McKay Reserve, or to look after vulnerable people in the community in Ms Swainston's memory would be more meaningful?
33	I heartily support this proposal. I think recognising those who have served faithfully as part of the local community is a wonderful idea, and will encourage others to serve the community in the same way.
34	I knew Herminie and she definitely deserves this honour.
35	I met Herminie a few times when we first moved to Palm Beach. She was a delightful person, so friendly and welcoming. I love the Bible Garden and didn't know that she was so instrumental in making that happen. I fully support naming the landing at Observation Point Herminie's Landing to honour her legacy.
36	I support the proposed naming as Herminies Landing for the dedication and commitment Herminies the the community of Palm Beach.
37	I think it makes a lot of sense and is community focused.
38	I think this is a fabulous way to acknowledge Herminie's contribution to preserving and improving this area. I thoroughly support this proposal.
39	I think we should stop naming places after individual people. There are many people who contribute to our lovely place in the world over time, and in future there will be more. I think we should use names that reflect some kind of shared experience, or shared meaning of a place, or something of its natural appearance so that the names mean something to everyone, not just the few individuals who happen to know who that person was and what that one person did. I think this should be a general rule for naming things on the northern beaches so that names can reinforce a sense of shared meaning, and preferably be culture/nationality-free which people's names are not.
40	I trained with Herminie (Gillham) at the National Art School and many times over the past 66 years have visited the family (before and after her marriage to John Swainston) at Three Winds, and been caught up in her enthusiasm for the Bible Garden and bringing St David's Church within the Community. Last year I saw the landscaped Observation Point and think it would be fitting to acknowledge her contribution to the community by naming the area Herminie's Landing. (please put the apostrophe in the right place)
41	I was honoured to meet Herminie and witness her tireless dedication to the improvement of our local area. She well deserves to have the point to preserve her memory.
42	I worked with Herminie on the Bible Garden committee and she was a tireless worker, she would walk in her gardening boots from her home to the Bible Garden, work like a navvy & then walk home right up until she died.
43	I worked with Hermione in the Bible Garden & witnessed first hand her passion for Palm Beach & the local environment. I think it would be very appropriate that the landing below her home is named Hermione's Landing.
44	I would like to see recognition given to Herminie Swainston .
45	I would prefer an Aboriginal name for the area as there is not enough recognition of the traditional custodians of the land.
46	I would prefer that we provide a name honouring the first people of the area rather than the colonists.
47	I would think her entire name should be commemorated. Herminie Swainston. Named in recognition for her service to the local community.
48	It should stay as Observation Point Landing.
49	It would be a fitting memorial to an iconic Palm Beach native. The proposed site and building looks simply beautiful for all peoples local and visitors to reflect on the beautiful area, the wonderful scenery and outlook and a fitting place to reflect not only on Herminie Swainston's life and involvement in the Palm Beach area but to recall past memories of their experiences of Palm Beach.

No.	Comment
50	Its people like Herminie that place footprints for others to follow.
51	Just love this idea - a little whimsical, making you want to know a bit about who "Herminie" was.
52	Just needs to be an understated etching in the stonework - ideally the detail about Herminie would be "parked" in the walking app and on Council's website, able to be linked to by a QR Code. There's an informality about Palm Beach that locals love and treasure. Calling this pedestrian refuge "Herminie's Landing" is suitably informal. The desired outcome is to have people come to know this space colloquially as "Herminie's Landing", much in the same way as the big rock around on Ocean Road became known as "Black Rock".
53	Love this idea!!
54	My friends have heard this proposal is all about renaming Observation Point and they were concerned about this. But I don't read it this way. On the basis that it is only a name to be given to the sitting area on the walkway at Observation Point, I am fully supportive and I think the others would be too. Maybe council could offer clarification about this matter?
55	Name it after someone relevant
56	Nice to see areas named after locals who lived and grew up in the area
57	No not needed to name so many places
58	Not appropriate to change name
59	Seems appropriate and no objections
60	Sounds fair enough
61	Sure..why not. Actually it needs at least one shelter above the seating stands in the traditional style. Must be able to survive very strong winds. The landing needs some shelter!!!
62	That's a nice story but I think we could go further really stretch the imagination and ourselves and go with indigenous names and their stories.
63	There are so many people on the Northern Beaches who have achieved so much for their chosen charities and community and are not acknowledged by council etc. by such a showy and unnecessary act of acknowledgement.
64	This has been known as Observation Point for as long as I remember, even though this will not interfere with this name, its unnecessary to name so points of interest within a short circumference . we so not need any more unnecessary signage in Palm beach
65	This is an appropriate recognition of Herminie's significant contribution to the local area, especially the close relationship between the community and the local environment.
66	This is just another money wasting exercise of NBC, spoiling beautiful areas and views with ugly and unnecessary signage. Whilst Herminie had property in Palm Beach, she certainly did not live here for 80 years as stated and I am absolutely certain many other residents have had a far more positive influence in the area yet we do not recognise them with place names nor would they want or expect it.
67	This space needs a name, and "Herminie's Landing" is perfect!
68	Too parochial for a person who had a very narrow window of exposure to the broader Palm Beach community
69	Unfortunately I never met her but she sounds wonderful. Naming this location after her seems highly appropriate.
70	Worthy recognition of outstanding local citizen who did much more for the community and the environment than the (necessarily) brief outline above
71	Yes. RIP Herminie.