



MIDCOAST
council

Barrington River Bridge Naming

AUGUST 2019

Engagement Outcomes Report



Introduction

This report provides a summary of community consultation that was undertaken across July through August 2019 to gain community feedback on the proposed new name for the new bridge across Barrington River currently in construction.

This report is presented in four sections:

1. Introduction and background
2. What we engaged the community on
3. What people told us
4. Next steps

Project background

Barrington is a small rural community just out of Gloucester NSW. Barrington residents have a strong sense of community but can also still identify as part of greater Gloucester community. Within Barrington is a small selection of shops and a small public school. The Barrington Bridge has been a heavily used transport route for trucks, cars and bikes for the 99 years it has been operational.

As a single lane bridge, there have always been concerns with locals, commuters and tourists for the safety of drivers crossing the bridge. As part of the Timber Truss Bridge Conservation Strategy, Barrington Bridge was identified for replacement and a new multi-lane bridge is currently under construction due to be completed in June 2020.

The bridge has historical significance with many local ancestors working on the original construction and using the bridge as a primary vessel on the journey into the local shops and town.

What were people engaged on?

Purpose of engagement

The overall purpose of the engagement with the community was:

- To gain feedback from the community on the two options for the naming of the bridge and provide an opportunity to suggest other significant names for consideration.

Objectives of engagement

To achieve this, the engagement had the following objectives:

- Provide key stakeholders and community with the opportunity to complete the survey and share their opinions/suggestions.
- To educate the community and key stakeholders on the considerations given to the options.
- Ensure participants in the engagement feel their feedback is valued during this process and are informed of the how their feedback has informed the final design.

- To continue to build trust with our community and ensure that we deliver benefits by meeting the current and future needs of the community.

Project scope

A new bridge is currently underway with construction across the Barrington River as part of a program developed in consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW to identify timber truss bridges requiring replacement across NSW (Timber Truss Bridge Conservation Strategy).

As part of this process, Council was approached by a local group that created a sub-branch of the RSL in correspondence with the Historical Society in Gloucester to research and identify a local soldier of significance that could be presented as an option to the community for a new name for the new bridge.

As part of our commitment to community engagement, a project was identified to consult further with the broader community to identify community opinion on the options provided and if any further suggestions would be presented.

Background on the bridge

Barrington Bridge was built in 1920 and is located on Thunderbolts Way, which is an important freight link between the Mid North Coast and the New England Tablelands serving tourism, livestock and timber industries. The bridge is one of the bridges identified for replacement in the Roads and Maritime Timber Truss Bridge Conservation Strategy, which was developed in consultation with the Heritage Council of NSW.

The strategy was developed to address the long term management of these structures and aims to establish a balance between infrastructure provision and heritage conservation. The strategy was displayed for stakeholder and community comment in 2011. The feedback received was considered in finalising the strategy and identifying bridges for replacement and conservation.

In March 2018, Roads and Maritime prepared and publicly displayed a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for the construction of the new bridge. Following consideration of submissions from the community the REF was determined.

Construction of a new bridge would improve road freight productivity, improve road safety for motorists and pedestrians and ensure the traffic needs of the community in the Barrington, Gloucester and surrounding areas are met.

Background on the naming options

Barrington Bridge

This preserves the historic name of the original truss bridge, which was completed in 1920 on Thunderbolts Way, linking the Mid North Coast and the New England Tablelands. The community resonates strongly with this name and its historical significance for the town.

Private Everett Bridge

Honours Private Herbert William Everett (Military Medal) worked on the original bridge construction, before enlisting as a Private in the 20th infantry Battalion Army on 4 November 1915. He was killed in action on 2 March 1917 aged 24 years at Bullecourt France.

Other considerations

The RSL sub branch committee was formed to research war veterans from the local area during the construction of the old Barrington Bridge. Lance Corporal Albert Kingston Laurie (Military Medal) and Lance Corporal Clarence John Wellard (Military Medal) were also shortlisted for consideration due to their service and military medals and local connections, with the Committee nominating Private Herbert William Everett because among all of those factors he also worked on the original construction of the bridge.

How did people have their say?

The range of engagement activities undertaken provided a variety of ways for the community to share their opinion and ideas, and generate community conversations.

Face-to-face engagement	Online and electronic engagement	Communications
<p>No face to face engagement was included in this project</p>	<p>477 visits to Have your say page on Council's website with 421 unique page views</p> <p>5773 people reached with 1357 engagements on Barrington Bridge Facebook post</p> <p>67 comments on Barrington Bridge Facebook posts</p> <p>9 shares on Barrington Bridge Facebook posts</p>	<p>Media coverage - article in Gloucester Advocate, radio</p> <p>Advertisements in Gloucester Advocate</p>
		<p>Submissions</p> <p>245 submissions in total</p> <p>38 paper submissions received</p> <p>207 Online submissions received</p>

Engagement activities

The following activities were used to seek input and build awareness of the community consultation on the proposed name for Barrington Bridge.

Have Your Say page

The *Have Your Say* page provided an online hub to both share information, encourage participation in engagement activities and direct linkage to the online submission.

Information included information on the project, process and the online survey.

Over the period of the engagement, there were **477** visits to this page.

Have your Say survey

This was the primary engagement tool to gain community feedback on the name options and also provided participants with the chance to suggest another name.

245 survey submissions were completed.

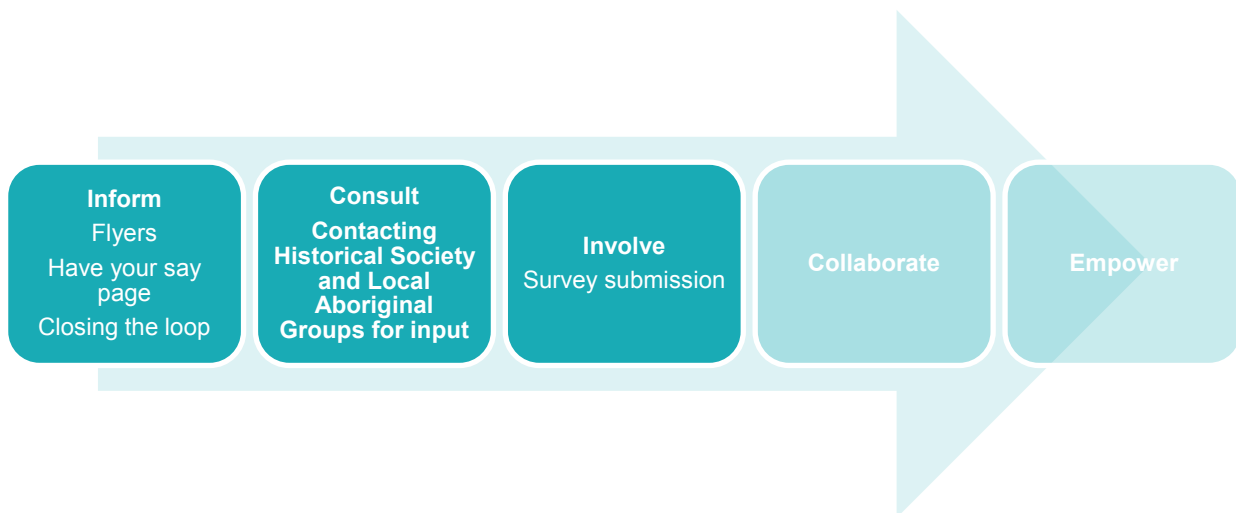
Appendix 1 provides a copy of the submission data.

Level of engagement

As outlined in MidCoast Council’s Community Engagement Policy we utilise the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) five-point framework for measuring the level of community engagement for each project.

Within this scale, this project achieved an Inform /Consult /Involve level of engagement. At this level our commitment to the community was to listen to and acknowledge the naming preferences and any suggestions provided

The diagram below shows the levels of engagement and the activities undertaken within each level.



What people said?

Participants in the engagement were asked to provide feedback on the two naming options or alternatively to suggest another name with its meaning for consideration.

Please note* among the ‘other suggestions’ that were put forward a large percentage of those were for a single name so for the purpose of grouping key themes together, the name suggestions ‘Barandan Bridge’ has been analysed as a third naming option.

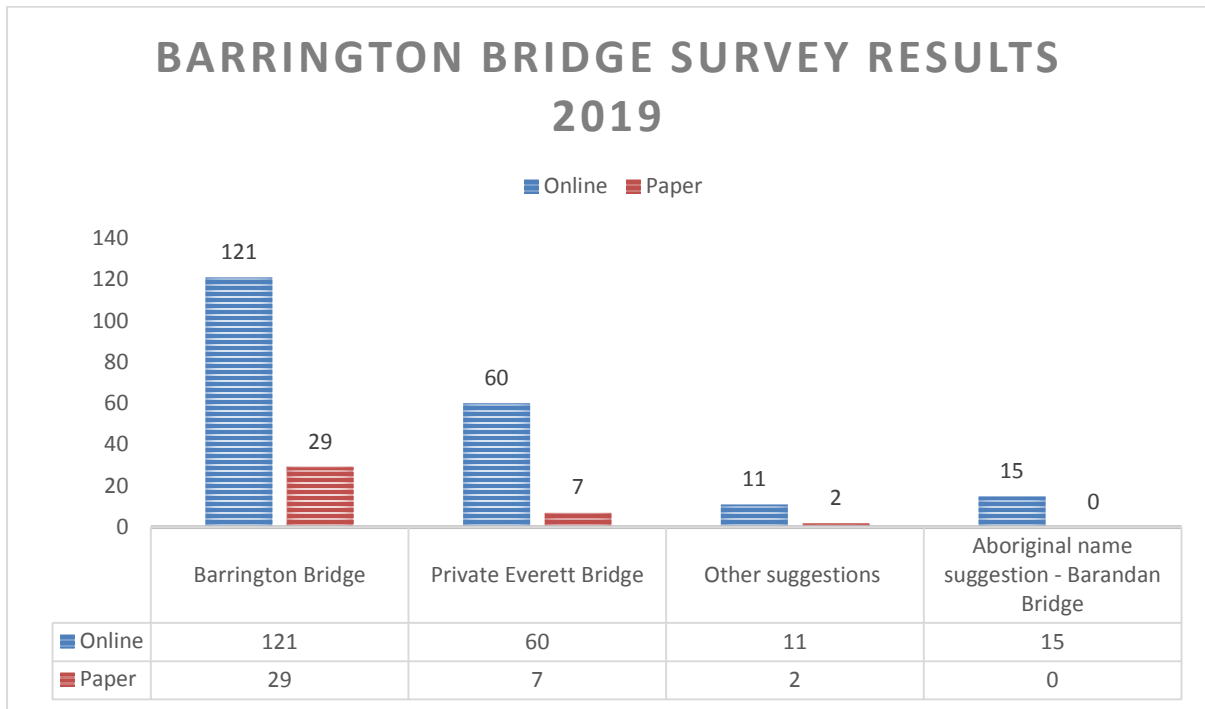


Figure 1.1 Survey results

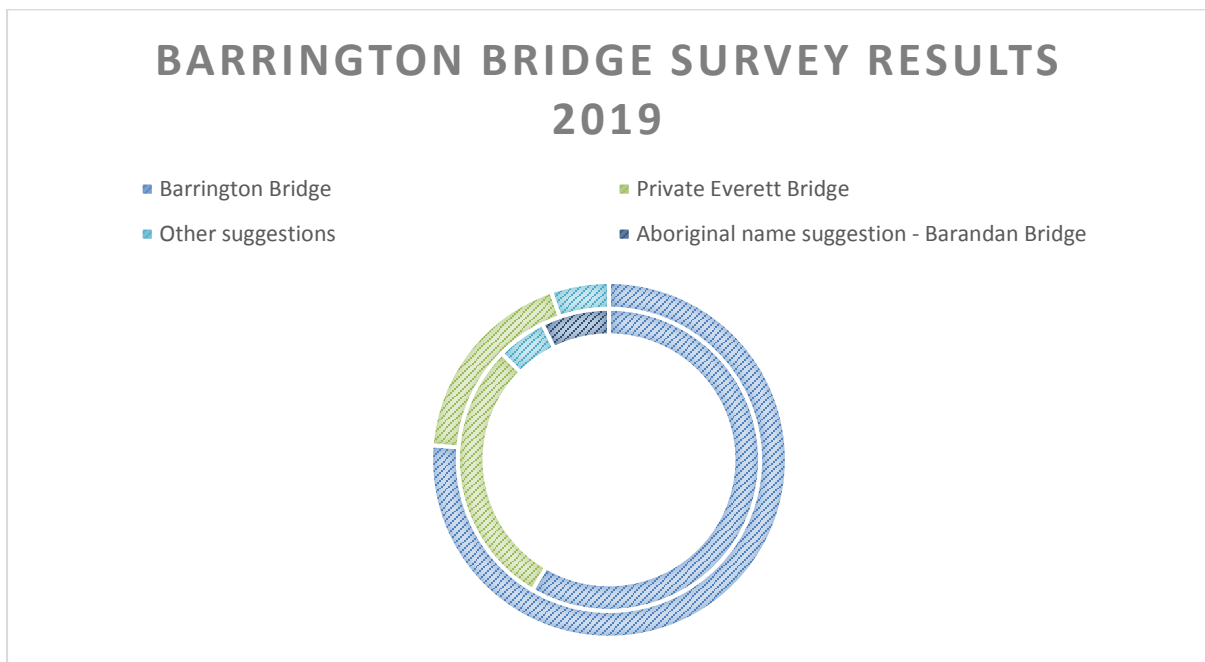


Figure 2.1

**Exterior circle represents the paper survey results; the internal circle represents the online survey results.*

Important Information

Through our Community Strengthening Officer, Aboriginal Dedicated Hannah Early, consultation occurred with multiple local groups in Gloucester both online and at their local meeting which Hannah attended. Hannah provided details of the project and the channels available to complete the survey and how to present another option if the community would like to.

Among the other suggestions, 15 of those returned with Barandan Bridge, which in the Guthang language, the traditional speaking of the local region *means The Barrington River*.

Summary

It can be easily identified that all suggestions, Barrington, Private Everett and Barandan hold rich historical significance to the community and the local area.

A large percentage of the survey data clearly showed that Barrington Bridge was the preferred option and many of the comments around the consultation supported the continuation of the historical name for the bridge.

Further to this consideration for the historical significance of soldiers who worked on the bridge, lived in the area and served could be honoured in tourism signage after the construction of the bridge in complete in the proposed 'pull off areas' to access the river for commuters to read information about the story behind the naming of the bridge, the options and the other names historically recognised as important in the area.

What's next?

The engagement data contained in this report will be used to inform key staff and management on the outcomes of the consultation for the proposed naming suggestions.

This feedback will be considered, along with other factors in the process of choosing the name for the new bridge.

A copy of this report will be made publicly available on Council's website.