

To Whom it May Concern

I refer to your letter dated 30 March 2010 advising Council of the inquiry into the effects of graffiti on public infrastructure by the Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Public Works.

I provide this as a response on behalf of Holroyd City Council.

Holroyd City Council has a Graffiti Abatement Program. The program incorporates facets of public murals, removal, monitoring and reporting to the Police. The program is facilitated by the recently adopted Graffiti Management Plan (GMP). An outline of Council's GMP is as follows:

#### Reporting Graffiti

- A person may contact Council's Customer Service to report incidences of graffiti or request removal.
- Police should also be notified by the person.

#### Reward Scheme

- A reward scheme of \$2,500 for information leading to the conviction of any person committing wilful damage including graffiti has been implemented in partnership with the Local Police.

#### Inspection and Removal of Graffiti on Public Property

- High profile areas such as commercial precincts, major parks and high use pedestrian areas will be inspected by Council staff weekly. Identified or reported graffiti will be removed within 5 working days.
- Other general areas will be inspected routinely and graffiti which is identified or reported will be removed within 10 working days.
- Offensive graffiti such as racist or defamatory graffiti will be removed within 24 hours, or next available working day, of it being identified or reported.
- Graffiti on prominent sites or sites of significance, such as war memorials, will be removed within 24 hours, or next available working day, of it being identified or reported.

#### Removal of Graffiti from Private Property

- Private property includes structures and assets, not vested in the Crown or owned by Holroyd Council, on private land as defined by the Act. Graffiti on this land must be prominent and clearly visible from a public place yet inaccessible from a public place. Removal of such graffiti can only occur with the owners consent, in accordance with Graffiti Control Act 2008. In relation to the following:
  - o Fencing abutting parks, reserves and walkways. Council will remove graffiti from these as Council has an interest in the asset free of charge.
  - o Private fencing abutting road reserves. Council will remove graffiti from these as Council has an interest in the asset free of charge.
  - o Shop fronts. This is considered to be the responsibility of the traders/owners to remove graffiti and Council can provide advice on removal techniques or charge for the removal.

#### Posters and Notices

- In conjunction with Council's graffiti removal program, posters and other unauthorised advertising in the public domain will be removed. Council will undertake billposter removal generally once a week.

#### Community Education and Awareness

- Removal strategies that are complemented by education and awareness campaigns in the community are successful at reducing graffiti.

### Council Fees

The following charges will apply for graffiti removal from private property and are subject to appropriate public exhibition: -

- \$30 per sqm (ex GST) for graffiti removal using chemical; or
- \$20 per sqm (ex GST) for graffiti removal using paint over; or
- \$115 per hour (ex GST).

Council reserves the right to quote each project on its merit at either a per square metre or hourly rate which take into consideration the requirements of the work.

A component of Council's Graffiti Abatement Program involved implementing murals. The murals aimed at creating pleasant spaces in the areas where graffiti was of concern for the public whilst at the same time providing attractive youthful art that depicts the history of the local area, its people and their culture. A historic theme was adopted for the murals. The conversion of problem areas into pleasant public spaces was achieved by contacting an aerosol artist to work with young people and the representatives of the above partnership. Examples of the murals can be viewed at Reyes Lane, Finns Lane in Merrylands and along the boundary wall with the Merrylands Community Health Centre and Council's staff car park. The murals have the desired effect of reducing graffiti in the immediate area but they have been ineffectual in reducing graffiti on a grander scale. A positive of the mural program was that it gave the facilitators the opportunity to educate young people on the consequences of graffiti vandalism.

Council has also implemented a Graffiti Action Crew consisting of 4 staff and associated plant, equipment, resources and materials. The investment is in the order of \$340,000 per year.

### **Peter Lichaa**

Holroyd City Council | Manager Assets & Operations

☎ (02) 9840 9860 | 📠 (02) 9840 9898 | [www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au](http://www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au)