



the place
to live

DRAFT DAREBIN GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

2014 – 2018.

Acknowledgements

Darebin City Council would like to thank the community for their contribution to the 2014 – 2018 Graffiti Management Strategy.

The community engagement process has helped us to develop ideas, goals and actions that will meaningfully contribute to reducing the negative impact that graffiti has on our community.

Council would also like to thank the various Darebin Advisory Committees, internal departments, individuals and external organisations who have been involved in the development of this strategy and their commitment to make Darebin a clean, safe and vibrant city for all residents.

Acknowledgement of Darebin's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people and the Kulin Nations as the traditional landowners and the historical and contemporary custodians of the land on which the City of Darebin and surrounding municipalities are located.

Council recognises, and pays tribute to, the diversity of Darebin's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, valuing the unique and important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations play in progressing reconciliation, respect and the building of mutual understanding across the City, amongst its people, and in the achievement of shared aspirations.

Council also recognises and pays tribute to, and celebrates, Darebin's long standing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

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DRAFT

1. Mayor's Foreword

Darebin City Council is committed to providing a clean, vibrant and safe environment for residents and visitors. As part of this commitment, Council recognises the negative impact that graffiti has on the amenity of our city and has developed the 2014 – 2018 Graffiti Management Strategy.

Darebin City Council has been active in the space of graffiti management since 2008 and has initiated a wide variety of programs aimed at removing and preventing graffiti. In 2013 Council committed significant resources to improve graffiti management, including a once-off city wide clean-up of graffiti, the centralization of all removal activities under the coordination of a Graffiti Management Officer, a dedicated budget for prevention and the development of a new graffiti management strategy.

While Council recognises that it is not possible to completely eliminate graffiti, this strategy aims to build on our previous and existing work to enhance Council's capacity to reduce the prevalence of graffiti in the municipality and the negative impact it has on our community.

This strategy has been developed based on community consultation, the experience of graffiti in Darebin and best practice principles to prevent and manage graffiti across four keys areas; eradication, engagement, education and enforcement. The strategy and accompanying action plan gives a clear direction of how Council will work with the community and other stakeholders to manage graffiti across each of these principles. The strategy also recognises the role of legal street art in our City as a key asset to brighten the street scape, and prevent graffiti.

While Council is not solely responsible for graffiti management, we are proud to show leadership in this space through a holistic and adequately resourced strategy that is measurable, inclusive and structured on best practice. I would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who have been involved in the development of this strategy and look forward to our continued efforts to make Darebin the place to live.



CR.GAETANO GRECO, MAYOR

2. Introduction

Following the introduction of the *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007* Darebin City Council has implemented a variety of initiatives and services to assist residents and businesses in managing graffiti on private property and to maintain the cleanliness of Council owned assets and other frequently vandalized infrastructure.

While it is not possible to completely eliminate graffiti, the 2014 -2018 Darebin Graffiti Management Strategy aims to build on this existing work and enhance Council's capacity to reduce the prevalence of graffiti in the City of Darebin and the negative impact it has on our community.

The City of Darebin acknowledges that graffiti is a highly complex social activity that remains a consistent issue for inner city councils across Melbourne. Graffiti is a highly contentious and subjective issue that draws a mixture of views from the community. Therefore it cannot be effectively managed by one approach. The City of Darebin Graffiti Management Strategy 2014 - 2018 seeks to present a balanced graffiti management approach, incorporating an understanding of graffiti culture; prevention; the expectations of the Darebin community and evidence based knowledge about how graffiti can be effectively reduced.

The strategy promotes a whole-of-community response to graffiti management that includes Council, residents, businesses, artists, community organisations and those who write graffiti. It also draws a clear distinction between 'graffiti' as any marking applied without permission and 'street art' that is created on property with permission.

The strategy is based on best practice principles that will guide Council's approach to graffiti management across five key objectives, each with a series of actions across the themes of removal, prevention, education and enforcement of the criminal law, as illustrated below:

Objective 1: Maintain public amenity through the rapid removal of graffiti on Council assets

Objective 2: Support the community to rapidly remove graffiti from private property

Objective 3: Encourage and facilitate street art to prevent graffiti and enhance the street scape

Objective 4: Support community education and diversion programs to prevent graffiti

Objective 5: Support and facilitate the enforcement of the law

The strategy will be implemented, monitored and reviewed between 2014 and 2018 against a set of outcome based results. In addition to the outcomes listed against each action the overall strategy will be measured against three Key Performance Indicators that reflect the strategy goal.

Measure	Current	Target
1.Prevalence of graffiti incidents within the municipality	2,467 incidents	20% less over 4 years
2. % of respondents who feel graffiti is a problem in the City of Darebin.	53.6%	<40%
3. % of respondents satisfied with Council's efforts in managing graffiti	61.4%	>70%
4.Number of street art projects completed annually	3 per year	>3 per year

2.1 What is Graffiti?

It is important to create a clear distinction between graffiti, street art and other terminology such as 'graffiti art', which are often used interchangeably, but carry different meaning in the context of Council's graffiti management strategy.

The term 'graffiti' derives from the Italian word 'graffito' meaning 'scratching'. The term is much argued about, for some it defines a form of expression and for others an act of vandalism. In the context of this strategy it refers to the deliberate act of defacing property without permission. The *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007* defines graffiti as to 'write, mark, scratch or otherwise deface property by any means so that the defacement is not readily removable by wiping with a dry cloth'. Graffiti typically includes aerosol spray paint tagging, writing, etching, stenciling or scribing an identifying mark or symbol onto property and is a criminal offence that may lead to a penalty of up to two years imprisonment. Graffiti does not include bill poster signage.

In this strategy, Street Art is the terminology used to refer to aerosol art or other mediums that is undertaken legally with the consent of the property owner. While street art is often placed as a method to prevent illegal graffiti, on its own street art is characterized by a high level of skill, contains a strong aesthetic dimension and is a legitimate form of modern art (Morgan & Louis, 2009).

While the distinction has been made in this strategy, Council acknowledges that in some instances graffiti may be completed illegally and without the consent of the property owner, yet still be found aesthetically pleasing and to many observers may seem to enhance the aesthetics of public space. In such cases graffiti may then gain the status of legality and considered street art with the approval of the property owner and community.

These definitions of graffiti and street art are reflected in this strategy which seeks to remove unwanted graffiti from private and public assets and use legal street art as a form of graffiti prevention and as a method to add vibrancy to the street scape.

2.2 Who writes graffiti?

Current research indicates that graffiti occurs amongst people from different age groups, genders and cultural backgrounds, and for a variety of reasons (Graffiti: a toolkit for local organisations, 2000). Some of these reasons include but are not restricted to identity expression; seeking recognition from peers; marking territory; engaging in risk taking behaviour; defiance of the law and social mores, claiming ownership over space, and boredom (Arcioni, E. 2003: 2). Some individuals only participate in graffiti for a short time, usually in their teens or early twenties; while others will continue graffiti practices for a number of years.

Darebin experiences a mixture of graffiti offenders and evidence suggests that in addition to local residents, offenders come into Darebin from neighbouring suburbs to offend. A greater understanding of who in Darebin participates in graffiti and why is required and identified as an action in this document to better shape Council's responses to prevent graffiti.

Due to the illegal and covert nature of graffiti, there are a significant number of risks in engaging in graffiti for writers. The introduction of the *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007* has led to the development of tougher penalties for individuals who visibly deface property without consent; write offensive graffiti, or possess a prescribed graffiti implement without a lawful excuse. Other associated risks include theft of the materials required for graffiti, public disorder such as anti-social behavior, trespassing, loitering, and gang activity.

Health risks also constitute a major problem for graffitiists. Respiratory disorders can stem from using spray cans without masks. It is also possible for graffitiists to suffer injury or death while undertaking graffiti due to the high value placed in the graffiti culture on writing in inaccessible locations such as drains and moving trains.

2.3 Graffiti and perceptions of safety

Graffiti is a crime that adds to the perception of disorder and lack of social control within a given area, and can distort understandings regarding actual levels of community safety and crime rates. Low perceptions of safety can deter residents from participating fully within their community and accessing local services and facilities, that in turn has detrimental effects on their health and wellbeing. Graffiti can create a perception that an area is neglected and that little community pride exists. Graffiti also negatively impacts perceptions of safety when it occurs in commercial areas, and this can result in negative economic repercussions for business owners. Further to this, graffiti that is not removed can attract further issues such as vandalism and antisocial behaviour.

2.4 Costs of graffiti management

Government departments, utility companies, public transport authorities and other agencies spend a significant amount of money on community education, prevention and clean up schemes for managing graffiti. Residents, local businesses and schools often outlay significant sums to remove graffiti from private property. It is estimated that graffiti removal in Australia costs the economy approximately \$300 million per year. In 2013/2014 the City of Darebin spent \$296,000 on graffiti management including removal, prevention activities and a dedicated graffiti management officer. Further to this, the Department of Justice graffiti removal program removed an additional \$60,000 worth of graffiti damage in the Darebin City.

3. Policy Context

3.1 State Government

The Darebin City Council endorsed its first graffiti management strategy in 2008 in response to the introduction by the State Government's *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007*. The 2014 – 2018 Graffiti Management Strategy provides an up to date response based on Darebin's current graffiti culture and community expectations of how graffiti should be effectively managed across the municipality within the framework articulated by the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007.

The Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 is a key aspect of the state government's graffiti management approach. The Act identifies illegal graffiti as an offence that can attract penalties including heavy fines or imprisonment; empowers police authorities with the right to search for and seize

prescribed graffiti implements in certain circumstances, and provides local governments with increased powers and responsibilities regarding the removal of graffiti on private property and visible from a public place.

The Act makes a number of provisions that must be observed by Council when undertaking graffiti removal on private property. Part 4 of the Act states that a Council may, in accordance with this section, take any action necessary to remove or obliterate graffiti on private property if the graffiti is visible from a public place. The following actions must be undertaken prior to removal of graffiti on private property:

A Council may enter private property for the purposes of subsection (1) if

- (a) The Council has served a notice under this section on the owner or occupier of the property at least 28 days before the action to remove or obliterate the graffiti is proposed to be taken; and
 - (b) The owner or occupier of the property has given written consent to
 - (i) the removal or obliteration of the graffiti; and
 - (ii) entry to the property for that purpose.
- (3) If entry to private property is not necessary for the purposes of subsection (1)
- (a) the Council must serve a notice under this section on the owner or occupier of the property at least 10 days before the action to remove or obliterate the graffiti is proposed to be taken; and
 - (b) the Council may take the action if the owner or occupier of the property
 - (i) gives written consent to the removal or obliteration of the graffiti; or
 - (ii) does not object, in accordance with the notice, to the action being taken.

The Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 also outlines that the proposed action to remove or obliterate graffiti must not be taken if:

- (a) where entry to private property is necessary, the owner or occupier does not give written consent as required by subsection (2)(b); or
- (b) where entry to private property is not necessary, the owner or occupier objects to the proposed action in the manner specified in the notice referred to in subsection (3)(a) at any time before the proposed action is taken.

This process also applies to the removal of offensive graffiti from private property. The Act does not impose a duty on a Council to remove or obliterate graffiti from private property.

Further to the Act, Council's role in graffiti management is also supported at a state government level through the Department of Justice Graffiti Removal program and the annual graffiti prevention and removal grants.

3.2 North West Metropolitan Region

The Department of Justice Northern West Metropolitan Region Community Safety Strategy identifies graffiti as a concern for the North West Metropolitan region. This is highlighted under *Priority Issue Two: Reduce crime and improve safety in and around public transport and public spaces* that recommends Council's "Continue to promote graffiti removal programs as a key input to improved perceptions of safety at the local level."

3.3 Darebin's local context

2013 – 2017 Darebin Council Plan

Graffiti management relates to four of the five strategic goals articulated in Darebin's 2013 – 2017 Council Plan including *Healthy and Connected Community, Thriving and Creative Culture, Vibrant City and Innovative Economy* and *Sustainable and Resilient Neighborhoods*. The development, implementation and review of the Graffiti Management Strategy are identified as a priority action under Goal two: Healthy and Connected Community.

Darebin Community Safety Strategy 2012 – 2016

Graffiti management is strongly linked to the Darebin Community Safety Strategy 2012 – 2016, priority area number two, *Place: Design and maintain our city to reduce crime, and enhance public safety and perceptions of safety*. Graffiti negatively impacts on perceptions of safety and can distort understandings regarding actual levels of safety and crime. When individuals feel unsafe in their environment this can decrease their participation in the community and negatively impact on their sense of wellbeing. Further to this those who engage in graffiti are at risk of involvement in other crimes.

Darebin Arts Strategy 2014 -2020

Graffiti management aligns with the 2014 -2020 Darebin Arts Strategy, which aims to create the ideal environmental conditions for creativity to thrive and be sustainable in our City: for creativity to touch every part of our lives. In particular this strategy strongly aligns to and supports *Key Focus Area 4.3. Regenerative – Develop Creative Spaces and Places* which identifies that permanent and temporary public art, street art and welcoming, creative public spaces are key to creating the kind of neighbourhood we like to live in and feel proud to show off to visitors. The strategy also guides Council in the management of commissioned street art pieces to ensure there is a clear understanding between the artist, Council and in some cases the private property owner about the longevity of the work, the rights to the artwork and the responsibilities regarding the maintenance of the work.

Business Development and Employment Strategy 2012-2015

The 2012-2015 Business Development and Employment Strategy aims to ensure continued economic prosperity for Darebin by increasing business and employment opportunities for residents. The Graffiti Management Strategy strongly supports Goal 1, *Objective 2: Strengthen the*

unique characteristics of Darebin's Activity Centres in the strategy, which identifies working "In collaboration undertake programs that assist to improve the amenity and safety of the shopping centres" as a key action to achieve this objective.

Equity and Inclusion Policy

Darebin's Equity and Inclusion Policy (2012 –2015) identifies key population groups who can be at risk of exclusion due to discrimination, poverty, homelessness, family violence, isolation and other barriers to accessing opportunities and resources available in Darebin and our broader society. In addition to having the Darebin Equity and Inclusion Policy, Darebin Council has also developed an Equity and Inclusion Planning and Audit Tool (EIPAT) which has been applied during the development of this strategy to ensure due consideration of the relevant groups identified in this Policy. The application of the policy focused on two key areas: people at risk of experiencing graffiti on their property and people most at risk of engaging in graffiti.

Graffiti occurs at varying volumes across the entire Darebin municipality and residents of all backgrounds, age groups, gender and socioeconomic status contact Council for assistance with removing graffiti from their property. While Council will continue to encourage and support residents to remove graffiti from their property, this strategy identifies that residents have varying capacity to remove graffiti from their property and may face barriers related to cost, age and disability. The initiatives will aim to ensure that residents have equitable access to resources which will support them to remove graffiti and maintain the amenity of their property.

Involvement in graffiti occurs amongst people from different age groups, genders and cultural backgrounds. Although not exclusively, involvement in graffiti is often more prevalent amongst young people and more specifically young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a result the initiatives aimed at preventing and diverting involvement in graffiti will focus on young people, with further focus on young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Environmental and Natural Resources

In addition to the financial and social costs, graffiti management costs the community significantly in terms of environmental damage due to aerosol spray paint can litter, and paint and chemicals being washed down drains during the graffiti removal process, thereby polluting storm water systems. Council is committed to ensuring that all graffiti removal activities are undertaken in accordance with environmental standards.

4. Graffiti in the City of Darebin

4.1 Graffiti management approaches at Darebin

Council's first graffiti management strategy (2008 – 2012) outlined a four year plan for reducing graffiti in Darebin with a view to enhancing perceptions of public safety. The strategy was strongly in line with best practice and with drew upon graffiti prevention, removal, and enforcement approaches across five strategic aims, implementing a variety of initiatives to manage graffiti on private and public assets including:

- A graffiti removal subsidy program for private property owners through the provision of free graffiti removal kits and vouchers for contractors and paint. Operating since 2008, the demand for this program continues to grow each year, with over 400 requests processed in 2013/2014.
- A city wide clean-up was undertaken in the 2013/2014 financial year as part of Council's investment in a new graffiti management model and structure.
- The Department of Justice Graffiti Removal Program to remove graffiti from Council assets and private property abutting public land. In the past financial year the Department of Justice removed 6704 square meters of graffiti from public and private property.
- Street art projects have been implemented across the city on assets prone to graffiti.
- Education and diversion programs with young people to promote legitimate street art and not vandalism.
- The *Active Spaces* program to activate unused retail space and identify opportunities for the inclusion of street art to prevent graffiti.

While over 90% of the actions outlined in the plan were completed, the plan was not sufficiently resourced or structured to respond to the issue, with both reports and prevalence of graffiti increasing in the Darebin municipality over these four years.

The strategy sat within a somewhat uncoordinated model to graffiti removal, with five different areas across Council responsible for removal. The estimated budget for graffiti removal was \$60,000 per annum for removal, with no budget for prevention initiatives. On review of this strategy in 2012/2013 the following recommendations were made to improve Council's approach to graffiti management:

- Increased removal budget to reflect the prevalence of graffiti within the community.
- Centralization of all graffiti removal services and budget into one area.
- A dedicated budget for prevention initiatives including street art and education.
- A dedicated officer to manage all graffiti removal initiatives

In response to the review of the 2008/2012 strategy, in 2013/2014 Council committed significant resources to improve graffiti management, including a once-off city wide clean-up of graffiti on public property, the centralization of all removal activities under the coordination of a Graffiti Management Officer and a dedicated budget for street art and other graffiti prevention.

The new Darebin Graffiti Management Strategy 2014 – 2018 provides an up to date response based on Darebin's current graffiti culture and community expectations of how graffiti should be effectively managed across the municipality within the framework articulated by the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007.

4.2 Prevalence and patterns

In 2014 Council commissioned a city-wide graffiti audit and cleanup which recorded a total of 2,467 incidents of graffiti throughout the municipality, and removed a total of 27,279 square

meters of graffiti. The audit captured information on graffiti within Darebin on both private and public property, excluding the rail corridor.

Of these incidents 42.3% were on Council property, 31.1% on private property and 26.6% on private utilities, such as power poles, traffic signal boxes and signs. The greatest number of incidents was in Northcote followed by Preston. The audit found high volumes of graffiti in activity centres, particularly along High Street, St Georges Road, Separation Street and Arthurton Road.

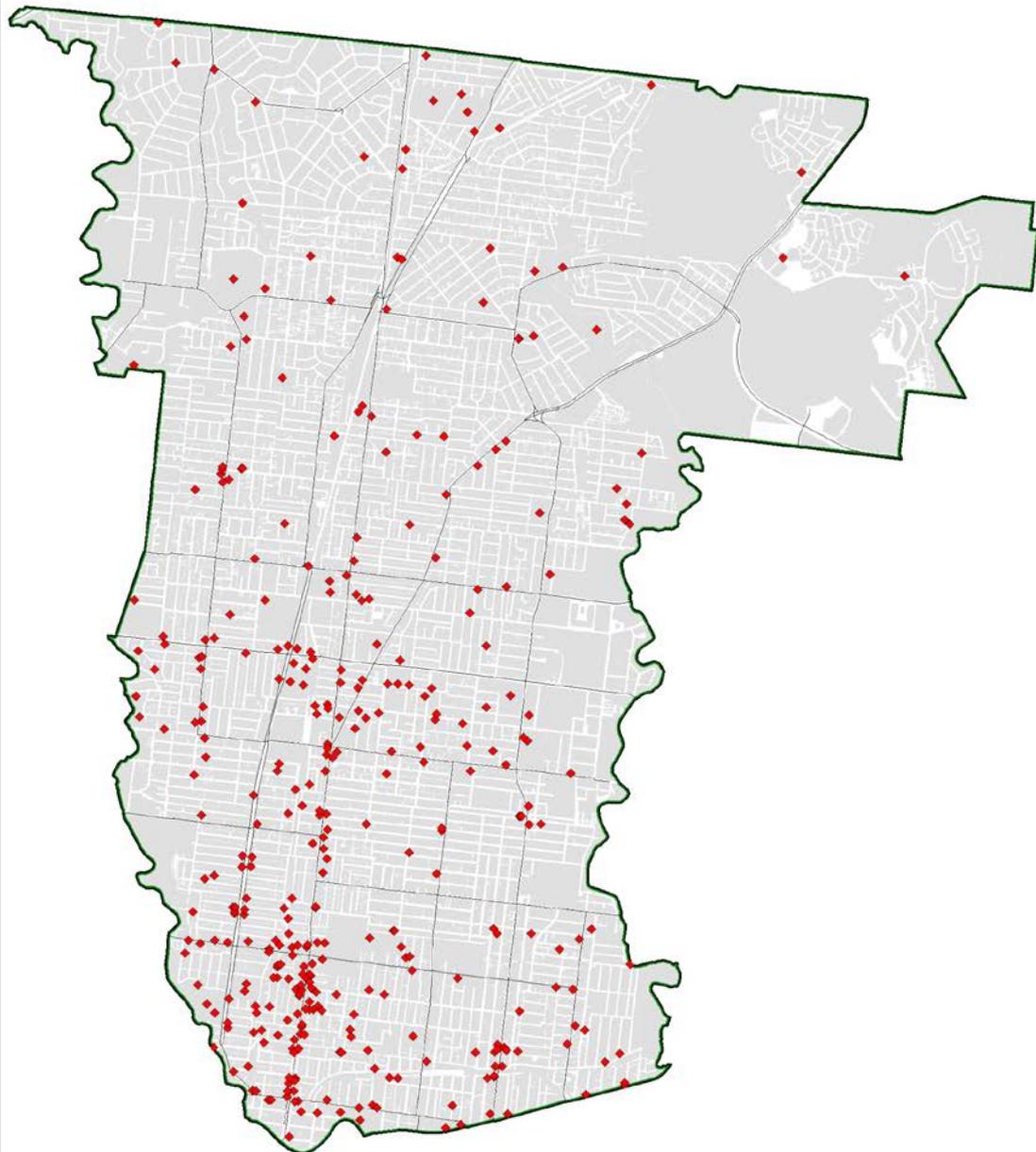
In addition to the graffiti audit, in the 2013/2014 financial year Council received 481 requests for graffiti removal. Of these requests, 34 were for graffiti in parks, 84 for other Council owned assets and 363 of these requests were for removal on private property. Almost half of these requests, 41%, are for properties located in Northcote followed by Preston with 25%, Reservoir with 14% and Thornbury with 10%.

This data further illustrates the community expectation for Council to not only remove graffiti from its own assets, but also to provide assistance to residents in the removal of graffiti from private property and privately owned public utilities.

The requests for assistance made to Council are mapped in the image below. This does not include all the incidents recorded as part of the 2013/2014 city wide clean up.

2013/2014 Reported Incidents of Graffiti

Darebin City Council



This data illustrates that graffiti is not a persistent issue across the entire municipality, with the prevalence and consistency varying between suburbs and precincts. While there is a perception that graffiti occurs at greater volumes in lower socioeconomic areas, the map illustrates that in Darebin the prevalence of graffiti is more closely linked to factors such as the proximity to public transport, the prevalence of vacant shops and the surrounding amenity, and the visibility of the

area, such as activity centres. Graffiti also frequently occurs on Council assets, transport and state utilities infrastructure, such as tram shelters, traffic signal boxes and along the rail corridor.

As illustrated above there is a high concentration of graffiti on public and private assets in the south of the municipality particularly in activity centres and along High Street and St Georges road. Based on this information and operational knowledge the following locations have been deemed graffiti hotspots and will form the focus of Council's removal activity and initiatives outlined in this strategy:

- **Activity Centres (both retail and residential properties)**
All High Street centres including in Westgarth, Northcote, Thornbury and Preston.
Gilbert Road/Miller Street Thornbury
Edwardes Street Reservoir
Station Street Fairfield
Plenty Road / Tyler Street junction
- **St. Georges Road between Normandy and Merri parade**
- **Arthurton Road / Separation Street**

4.3 The Darebin communities' view on graffiti management

As part of the consultation for this strategy, two surveys were implemented in late 2013 and early 2014 to assess community attitude towards graffiti, the level of satisfaction with Council's efforts to manage graffiti, the impact of graffiti on perceptions of safety and the support for legitimate street art initiatives. The survey also sought to understand the community's expectation of Council's role in removing graffiti from private property and ideas to manage and prevent graffiti. A total of 467 responses were received across the two surveys.

Within the Household survey only 9.3% of the 200 responses had experienced graffiti on their home in the past 12 months; however 53.6% of respondents felt that graffiti was a problem in the City of Darebin.

When asked overall how important the issue of graffiti was in the City of Darebin, the average score from the scale of 1 (Very Low Importance) to 5 (Very high importance) was 3.05. This indicates that while graffiti management is important to the Darebin residents and businesses, it is not one of the top issues of concern in this municipality.

In terms of whose responsibility it was to clean graffiti off private property, there was a considerable balance between the three options provided which were 'Property Owner' (39%), 'Council' (30%) and 'Other' (32%). From the respondents who selected 'Other', the majority thought that it was the perpetrator who was the person responsible. This information illustrates that while Council is not required to remove graffiti from private property, there is an expectation that Council will provide assistance to do so as part of its commitment to provide a clean, safe city.

Sixty one percent of respondents felt that they were satisfied with Council's efforts in managing graffiti and 15.7% said that they were not. The remaining 22.9% were neither. It is important to understand this figure in the context of community expectations regarding Council's role and

responsibility in graffiti management. This strategy will work to ensure that the community has a clear understanding of Council's role and responsibilities in graffiti management.

Thirty three percent of people said that graffiti made them feel 'fairly unsafe' while 4% said they felt 'very unsafe'. The survey found that a high level of graffiti made residents feel that the area was neglected and that gave the perception that the community did not respect each other's property. In terms of what respondents felt when they saw graffiti, there were various comments received which were either negatively or positively oriented, depending on their perceptions of the type of graffiti seen. This highlights the fact that the community holds a diversity of views when it comes to the issues around graffiti.

The graffiti survey found that the majority (89%) of respondents supported the use of street art as a form of graffiti prevention and a medium to enhance the amenity of an area. Respondents were, on average, firmly in agreement with the view that Council should encourage spaces for legal street art, and that street art improves the appearance of public areas. Respondents were also firmly in agreement that graffiti is a crime that should be dealt with by the police, reiterating the distinction between graffiti and street art.

In terms of what else Council could do to prevent graffiti, respondents provided a wide variety of ideas across the removal, enforcement and preventative perspectives. Many of these ideas have been considered and shaped in the context of best practise to inform actions included in this strategy.

5. Best practice in graffiti management and guiding principles

The Darebin Graffiti Management Strategy is based on the following principles that are widely recognised to underpin effective graffiti management.

Eradication: Rapidly removing and cleaning up existing graffiti within a timely manner has been identified as a key component of graffiti management and reduction. Rapid removal of graffiti improves the sense of ownership of a space and improves perceptions of public safety. Council must foremost show leadership by ensuring that the amenity of our own assets are maintained. In addition Council must provide information and resources for the community to take ownership in graffiti removal to enable the rapid removal of graffiti from private property.

Engagement: The City of Darebin is committed to developing the capacity of the entire community to understand graffiti and actively participate in the elements of this graffiti management strategy to remove and effectively prevent graffiti. Council will also engage with writers to redirect their talents towards piece murals and is committed to assisting the aspirations of artists in Darebin, including street artists, to engage in legal activities.

Education: alongside rapid removal, primary prevention is vital to effective graffiti management. Council will seek to coordinate a number of graffiti education and partnership initiatives involving young people that focus on discouraging young peoples' involvement in graffiti culture, and if they are engaging in illegal activity, divert this behaviour into legitimate opportunities to create legal street art. Council will also work with the broader community to build their capacity to prevent graffiti.

Enforcement: Graffiti is a crime with recognised social and economic impacts. Enforcement of the

law is a vital part of any holistic approach to graffiti management and Council will support enforcement through partnerships with Victoria Police, the enforcement of local laws regarding the provision of spray paint, and where relevant assisting with the development on diversionary models.

6. Goal, objectives and actions

Based on the application of these best practice principles and community expectations, five objectives, across the themes of removal, prevention, education and enforcement of the criminal law have been developed to meet the strategies overall goal.

Goal: To reduce the prevalence of graffiti in the City of Darebin and the negative impact it has on our community.

Objective 1: Maintain public amenity through the rapid removal of graffiti on Council assets

Objective 2: Support the community to rapidly remove graffiti from private property

Objective 3: Encourage and facilitate street art to prevent graffiti and enhance the street scape

Objective 4: Support community education and diversion programs to prevent graffiti

Objective 5: Support and facilitate the enforcement of the law

Each strategy has a series of actions developed through consultations with the Darebin community and consistent with Council's role of Council General Local Law 2007 and the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007.

6.2 Prioritisation of Graffiti Removal

Graffiti is not a persistent issue across the entire municipality, with the prevalence and consistency varying between suburbs and precincts. Further to this the impact on amenity and the perception from community also varies between suburbs.

As a result three categories have been established that prioritise Council's response for graffiti removal from Council and private assets based on the prevalence of graffiti, the relative impact of the graffiti on community amenity and perceptions of safety and the existing resources available to respond to graffiti removal.

Darebin Graffiti Removal Priority Table

Priority Location	Response
Priority 1 Offensive graffiti on Council assets or private property	Request actioned in 2 working days.
Priority 2 Graffiti Hotspots Locations, based on reported incidents of graffiti and operational knowledge	Request actioned in 3 working days.
Priority 3 All other areas in the Local Government Area.	Request actioned in 7 working days

Priority One includes any graffiti deemed as offensive regardless of location or asset. Council will endeavour to action this removal within 2 working days, recognising that our responsibilities under the Act may impede the immediate removal from private property.

Priority Two includes Activity Centres and other areas of Darebin that have a high concentration of graffiti that has a significant, negative impact on the amenity of the area. These areas are defined as Graffiti Hotspots and are mapped in section four of the strategy. Graffiti removal on Council and private assets in these hotspots will be actioned within 3 working days.

Priority Three includes all other areas in the municipality outside of the hotspots that require graffiti removal. Graffiti removal on Council and private assets in these areas will be actioned within 7 working days.

The graffiti hotspot locations identified for Priority 2 removal will be monitored and revised throughout the term of the strategy based on data from graffiti reports received, operational knowledge and the relative impact of graffiti on community amenity. Sites may be added or removed from this list based on the graffiti trends and prevalence over the next four years.

7. Coordination and evaluation

7.1 Coordination

The Darebin Graffiti Management Strategy 2014 - 2017 is relevant to all work areas across Council including:

- Infrastructure Maintenance
- Community Wellbeing
- Youth Services
- Creative Culture
- Business Development
- Civic Compliance
- Facilities Maintenance
- Darebin Parks

The review and coordination of the Graffiti Management Strategy will be led by the Community Wellbeing team in close partnership with Infrastructure Maintenance and other internal and external stakeholders as outlined in the action plan. The Darebin Graffiti Management Working Group will meet quarterly to discuss strategy co-ordination.

Infrastructure Maintenance will lead all removal activities across the organisation for Council and private assets and work in partnership with other relevant departments to deliver education and prevention initiatives.

The strategy also relates to Council's partnership with external stakeholders including Victoria Police; Community Correctional Service, Metro Trains; Yarra Trams and VicRoads.

7.2 Evaluation

Graffiti is a dynamic and changing issue. To reflect this, an annual action plan will be developed and reviewed each year to ensure it accurately reflects and responds to the issue of graffiti in the Darebin Community. The Actions will be implemented, monitored and reviewed against a set of outcome based results outlined in the action plan. The review process will inform the

development of future actions under the five strategic objectives.

The overall strategy is set against four Key Performance Indicators outlined below:

Measure	Current	Target
1. Prevalence of graffiti incidents within the municipality	2,467 incidents	20% less over 4 years
2. % of respondents who feel graffiti is a problem in the City of Darebin.	53.6%	<40%
3. % of respondents satisfied with Council's efforts in managing graffiti	61.4%	>70%
4. Number of street art projects completed annually	3 per year	>3 per year

This information will be captured through Council's customer service data and household surveys and reviewed after the completion of the strategy in June 2018. Council will record and analyse data regarding frequency of graffiti, location, reported details and cost of removal. This information will be utilised to inform Council's ongoing approach to graffiti management.

8. Appendices

8.1 Definitions

Bombing: To 'bomb' or 'hit' is to apply graffiti on many surfaces in a single area. Graffitiist commonly use throw ups and tags to bomb areas as these types of graffiti can be executed quickly and easily.

Commercial graffiti: This type of vandalism refers to graffiti that contains company logos, or exhibits advertising images or messages.

Crew tag: Crew tags are scrawls, symbols or designs identifying a group of graffiti writers.

Etch: This method of vandalism refers to scratching a tag or image onto glass with a sharp instrument. Etching may also involve the use of acid solutions for creating frosted glass, such as 'Etch Bath' to write on windows.

Graffiti: The deliberate act of defacing property without the permission of the property owner. The Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 defines graffiti as to 'write, mark, scratch or otherwise deface property by any means so that the defacement is not readily removable by wiping with a dry cloth'

Offensive graffiti: Offensive graffiti has the potential to insult members or groups of the community and commonly includes defamatory or degrading remarks about race, religion, sex or personal privacy. Offensive graffiti frequently contains abusive, crude, vulgar or obscene words, phrases or graphics and negatively impacts perceptions of public safety.

Piece: Short for the word 'masterpiece', refers to large-scale multi-coloured graffiti murals containing a combination of images, patterns, symbols, and letters. Piece graffiti commonly occurs along rail corridors and other highly visible locations. Piece graffiti can take several hours to complete and is most commonly undertaken collaboratively by a group of graffitiists.

Political graffiti: Commonly occurs in highly visible locations, and displays slogans or social commentary to signal concern for public issues.

Prescribed graffiti implement: This terminology derives from the *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007* and refers to aerosol spray paint cans; or any implement that is capable of being used to mark graffiti.

Scribe: Also called 'scatchitti', a scribe creates hard to remove graffiti by scratching a tag into a hard surface other than glass generally using a key, knife, stone, ceramic drill bit, or diamond tipped Dremel bit.

Stencils: Stenciling is a popular form of graffiti which involves creating an image, often by using a computer program such as Adobe Photoshop, and transferring the image onto a flat cardboard or plastic surface that can be cut into the shape of a design. When this sheet is placed flat against a wall or other surface, and spray paint is applied to the sheet it reproduces a pattern on the underlying surface.

Street Art: Aerosol art or other mediums that is undertaken legally and applied with the consent of the relevant property owner.

Tagging: Tag graffiti consists of illegible scrawls, symbols or initials that are used to identify the name or alias of the writer. They can also be representative of a group of graffitists, as in the case of 'crew tagging'. Tags are commonly drawn quickly, displaying misspellings or social commentary directed at other graffitists or known individuals, and are written with implements including pens, spray cans and sharp instruments such as keys.

Throw Ups: Throw ups or 'throwies' refer to tags written in fat, bubble-style writing. They are usually drawn quickly with spray paint and commonly feature two colours. One colour is used to outline the tag and the other is used to fill.

8.2 References

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