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Writing's on the wall in Sandringham

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Sandringham Rifle Club members Stewart Dunn and Glen Turner at clubrooms. Picture: JASON SAMMON.

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EYESORE or clever idea?

That is the question being asked about the Sandringham Rifle Club's attempt to ward off unwelcome graffiti by painting its building with street art.

Club secretary Stewart Dunn said the clubhouse, which is near a railway line, had been plagued by graffiti for years.

To combat the problem, Mr Dunn said the club decided to have the building painted, working on the theory that vandals generally would not graffiti quality street art.

"We did it about three or four months ago and we haven't had a single tag on it since," Mr Dunn said.

Only one of the club's 15 members had reservations about the art, he said.

Sandringham Liberal MP Murray Thompson said his office had

received a complaint about the paintings.

"The line between art and graffiti is sometimes blurred and this falls into (that) category."

Sandringham resident Ian Armstrong said he thought the principle behind the artwork was good.

"Graffiti (artists), in theory, don't want to mess up other graffiti (artists) work," Mr Armstrong said.

Graffiti had been a constant problem in the area for years and residents were tired of seeing obscenities on their walls, he said. But Graffiti Hurts Australia chief executive Scott Hilditch said research had shown legal murals actually increased the amount of vandalism in an area.

"It sends a green light to the vandals that it's OK," he said. Bayside Council infrastructure services group manager Guy Wilson-Browne said the council did not have the power to restrict painting murals on the wall.

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