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### Knox councillor's graffiti demand

NEWS > COUNCIL 16 JUN 09 @ 01:58AM | BY MICHAEL GLEESON



Cr Adam Gill (left) has local ALP Victorian upper house MP Brian Tee (right), on board in an effort to remove graffiti from State Government-controlled land adjacent to railway tracks. EUGENE HYLAND N51KN600

A KNOX councillor has demanded the State Government lift its ban on council removing graffiti from next to railway tracks.

Fences and buildings close to the government-owned tracks are riddled with unsightly tagging.

Yet although council wants to remove it, their hands are tied - and the State Government still hasn't cleaned up the mess.

This graffiti accounts for just under half the tagging across Knox.

Councillor Adam Gill says the council worked with Corrections Victoria to use criminals sentenced to community service to clean up graffiti across Knox.

But occupational, health and safety regulations mean offenders can't work within a certain distance of the

State Government-controlled Belgrave train line - and need a fence to act as a barrier between the workers and the tracks.

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State Government-controlled Belgrave train line - and need a fence to act as a barrier between the workers and the tracks.

And Cr Gill said a council audit showed that about 40 per cent of graffiti in Knox - about 4000sq m - was on fences and buildings adjacent to the railway track and therefore couldn't be touched.

He said what made it even more ludicrous was that these restrictions also applied to graffiti next to bike paths frequently used by cyclists and pedestrians.

Cr Gill has contacted Eastern Metropolitan Labor MP Brian Tee about the situation, with Mr Tee recently raising the matter in parliament.

Cr Gill wants criminals to be able to remove graffiti from next to railway lines as well, and hopes the State Government and the council can work together to achieve this. Mr Tee has asked Police and Emergency Services Minister Bob Cameron to organise a meeting with relevant stakeholders - including Connex and VicTrack - to fix these restrictions.

State Government spokesman Chris Owner said the minister was working with all the parties to resolve the issue.

Boronia resident Maureen Makin, an outspoken critic of the amount of graffiti, said she was pleased council was applying pressure on the State Government.



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