

'Transform this ugly grey concrete with Indigenous art' Let's make pylons beautiful

EXCLUSIVE

JESSICA MCSWEENEY

UGLY slabs of concrete, bare grey or covered in bad graffiti – these are the pylons and containing walls that greet visitors to Sydney in dire need of a facelift.

Business Sydney's Paul Nicolaou is calling on councils and the incoming state government to learn from the success of World Pride's "rainbow-ification" of Sydney streets and commission Indigenous art on the drab parts of the city.

Particularly in his sights are the motorway pylons in Pymont, which are currently covered with graffiti.

"We have a beautiful city to show off to the world but visitors enter it via a concrete jungle that has become a haven for graffiti vandals," Mr Nicolaou said.

"It doesn't need to be this way. WorldPride 2023 showed us what can be achieved with a display of colour.

"Painting otherwise drab cement freeway pylons would do more than beautify and celebrate Sydney, it also has great potential to combat graffiti."



A Business Sydney digital mock up of how Sydney's concrete road pylons could be adorned with Indigenous art.

During the World Pride celebrations rainbows were painted on Margaret St, including on previously boring bollards.

While Business Sydney is proposing Pymont be the pilot for an urban beautification scheme, other areas Mr Nicolaou says aren't up to scratch include Southern Cross Drive from Sydney

Airport and the Western Distributor leading to the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

In Pymont, travellers coming off the Anzac Bridge towards the fish markets are also greeted by blank walls and boring, unadorned concrete structures.

The Gore Hill Freeway to the city's north, the Hume Hwy near Campbelltown and

the M4 at Granville are also areas Business Sydney says needs an upgrade.

The idea is also inspired by the painted silos and water towers of regional NSW, which have transformed the usually dull structures into huge canvases.

Regional NSW is leading the way when it comes to beautifying infrastructure

with Indigenous art.

In Cowra the Lachlan River Bridge pylons are painted by local artists Kym Freeman and depict the local history and wildlife of the area.

"Using art in this way would make Sydney an even more attractive place for visitors and locals alike," Mr Nicolaou said.