

Art attack ‘frustrating’

By Esther Lauaki

A Sunbury trader had to chase vandals down O'Shanassy Street's main shopping strip to stop them from kicking holes in a wall adorned with community art.

Last week's vandalism was the latest in a string of attacks on the temporary safety wall, towards the Brook Street end of O'Shanassy Street west, which was erected in front of a vacant lot by Hume council.

The wall is being transformed into a temporary street art project to brighten up the popular shopping precinct.

“ Their parents would be very disappointed ”

- Richard Hainsworth

The Best Burger Bar owner Richard Hainsworth said he chased away some “kids” he saw kicking holes in the wall after 8pm one night.

“The council has spent money to put this temporary wall up and artists have taken the time to come and paint it,” Mr Hainsworth said. “And here are these kids being stupid and wrecking it.”

“Their parents would be very disappointed and I want to see these silly acts stop.”

One of the artists involved, Helen Cannon, has been commissioned by the council to depict Sunbury's past, present and future. She says the wall has been attacked about four times since she began working on it three weeks ago.

“It's been frustrating because it takes a long time to paint and just a few seconds to wreck it all,” Cannon said. “A third of the wall is complete, and thankfully the parts I've painted



Artist Helen Cannon and Richard Hainsworth beside the damaged safety wall. (Joe Mastroianni)

haven't been touched, but it means that I've had to change my plans a bit.”

Erin Callejan, of nearby Sunbury Community Health, has called on the public to look out for vandals.

“It would be a real shame if, once the mural is completed, it is once again damaged,” she said.

“Hearteningly, other recent displays of public art, including the painted bollards and alleyway posters, and projects, including the raised vegetable gardens, have been loved by the community and untouched by vandals.”

Crime Stoppers: 1800 333 000