



PRESS RELEASE

No: 200/2017

Date: 29th March 2017

Statement on Street Art

The Government regrets the Heritage Trust's rejection of the initiative by world renowned street artist Ben Eine to paint part of the northern facade of the Ince's Hall.

The Trust suggests that proper procedure was not followed. The Trust was in fact advised of the initiative in advance, and information on the proposal, including examples of the artist's style of work, was channeled through the DPC subcommittee voluntarily for guidance and advice as has always been this Government's practice.

Ben Eine works by designing his art on site and therefore it was not possible to have a final proposal available until yesterday afternoon after he was in Gibraltar. This was immediately posted on the Planning Portal. Government was aware of the subcommittee's non-approval. It was also aware of the Trust's own views as they had written to Government a few days earlier. Those views were taken on board in the process, with consideration being given to such things as ensuring the facade was in a sufficiently good state and ensuring also that the integrity of the building was not compromised in any way. The Government took the decision to proceed.

An artist of Mr Eine's standing is in huge demand around the world and his availability during this time was a key factor in not losing the opportunity of having such a major player in the world of street art in our midst.

In relation to the wider street art initiative, this is in its final preparatory stages and the Heritage Trust can rest assured that it will be invited to participate both as a member of the Urban Renewal Committee and in its own right.

Ben Eine brings to Gibraltar world class street art for the first time ever, such as is seen in major cities around the world in many different contexts. Beauty is of course, in the eye of the beholder. It will not be to the liking of all, but certainly will be to the liking of many.