



Proposed Road Closure: Paul St

Introduction

Cork City Council is preparing a programme of measures to be undertaken to facilitate the awakening of the local economy and to support both residents and the public in safely returning to work and commercial life in the city centre and town centres while we all learn to live with this Pandemic and as Government direction allows in response to the next phase of dealing with COVID-19. The Taoiseach has announced the triggers and framework for a phased reduction of restrictions in five stages commenced on the 18th May 2020. The contagious virus is a constant which means that while public health recommendations such as social distancing, respiratory hygiene and hand washing will be more important than ever, action in the city will need to be undertaken by the Council to facilitate these changes. These measures will involve temporary changes to the layout of streets in order to maintain adequate separation space for public health social distancing requirements. In cities across Europe there is emerging evidence of the reallocation of additional road space to walking and cycling in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic is increasingly being pursued as the best available option to safely facilitate the movement of a considerable volume of people to work, education and amenities. While this approach protects health and well-being, all interventions will need to be fully considered across all stakeholder interest groups.

Cork City Council is now bringing forward three proposals for temporary road closures. One of these closures is outlined below:

Road Closure: Paul Street

In order to facilitate improved pedestrian movement and to enhance social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic, Cork City Council proposes to introduce a temporary road closure on Paul Street. Paul Street is a high footfall corridor for members of the public accessing Carey's Lane, Academy Street and the large number of surrounding retail and food outlets in the area.

The Street starts at its junction with Daunt Square connecting to St Peter and Pauls Place. In addition, access to St Pauls Avenue is from Paul Street. The street is currently one-way only for traffic travelling west to east and back onto St Patrick's Street. There are two disabled parking spaces on the street. Footpath widths on this street vary, but overall are narrow and cannot support the 2m social distancing requirement for pedestrians.

Cork City Council proposes to close Paul Street to vehicular traffic 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from Friday 5th of June 2020 until the 31st of August 2020. This will also effectively close St Peters & Pauls Place to vehicular traffic for the same period. The closure will allow for the required 2m social distancing to be adhered to on a busy pedestrian corridor.

The proposed road closure barrier will be the standard type used in the City for a static closure. The barrier will be unmanned. The barrier can be easily moved to the side in the event that the emergency services require access to the closed section. Advance warning signs will be provided on Daunt Square and Castle Street. The closure will be advertised by the City Council widely through social media, press releases etc.

Considerations to be taken into account before finalising the closure:

- Access to business's, St Peter and Pauls church and other properties
- Address concerns about refuse collection
- Temporary removal of two disabled spaces. It is proposed to provide temporary alternative disabled parking spaces on Academy Street as per Figure 7 below.
- Removable bollards on both sides of the footpath will be removed for the duration of the closure.

Benefits of the proposed temporary closure include:

- Improved space to allow for easier social distancing for people walking, cycling during the current Covid-19 pandemic
- Enhancement of a key City pedestrian corridor to meet the needs of users and support businesses in the area.
- Promotion of sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling.



Figure 1: Overview of Paul Street Road Closure (source Google Maps)

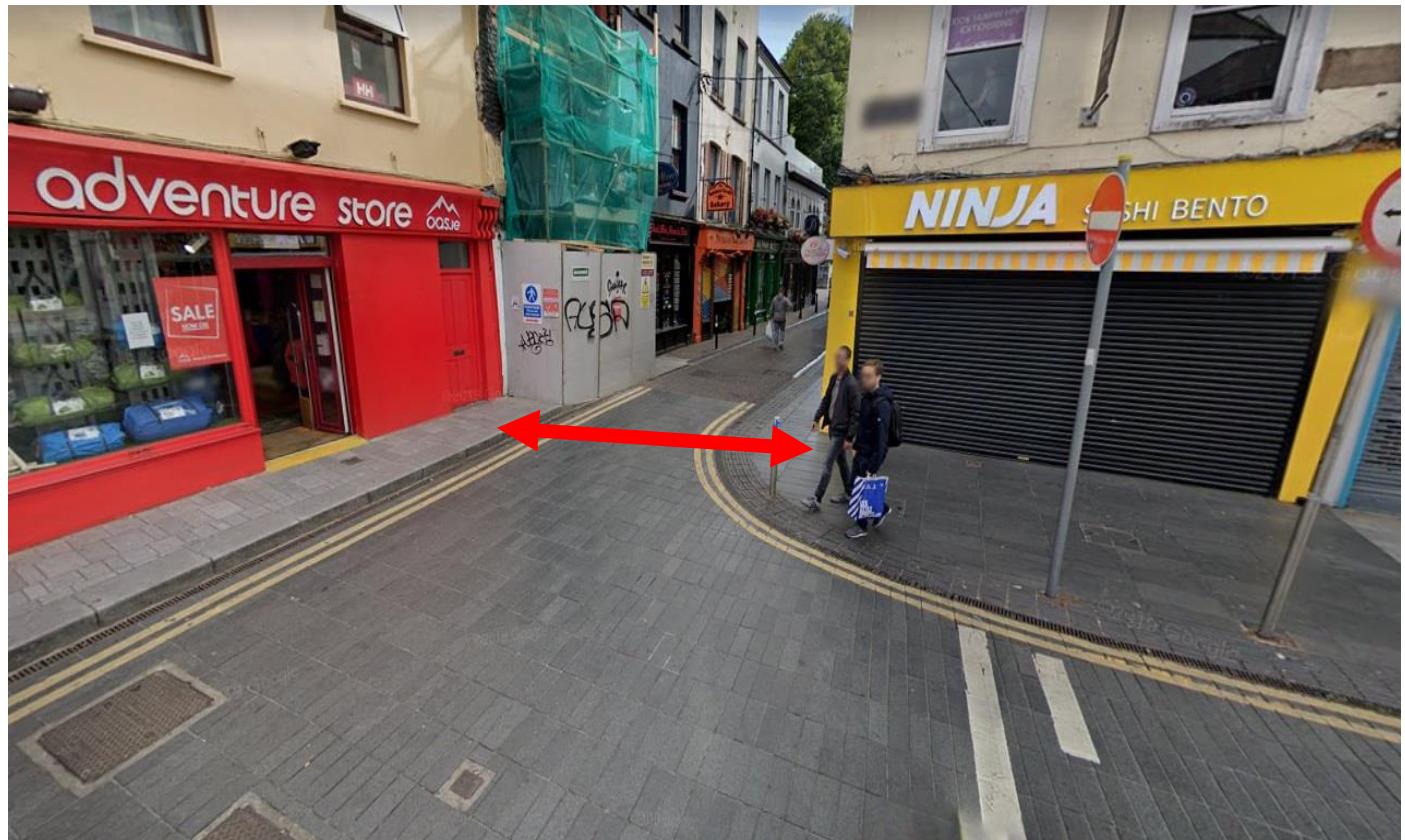


Figure 2: Road closure indicative location at junction with Daunt Square (source Google Maps)



Figure 3: Temporary removal of bollards on LHS and RHS to facilitate wider footpath (source Google Maps)



Figure 4: Rubbish Collection to be taken into consideration.



Fig 5: St Peter & Pauls Church to be consulted of closure.



Figure 6: Existing disabled spaces to be temporarily re-located on Academy Street

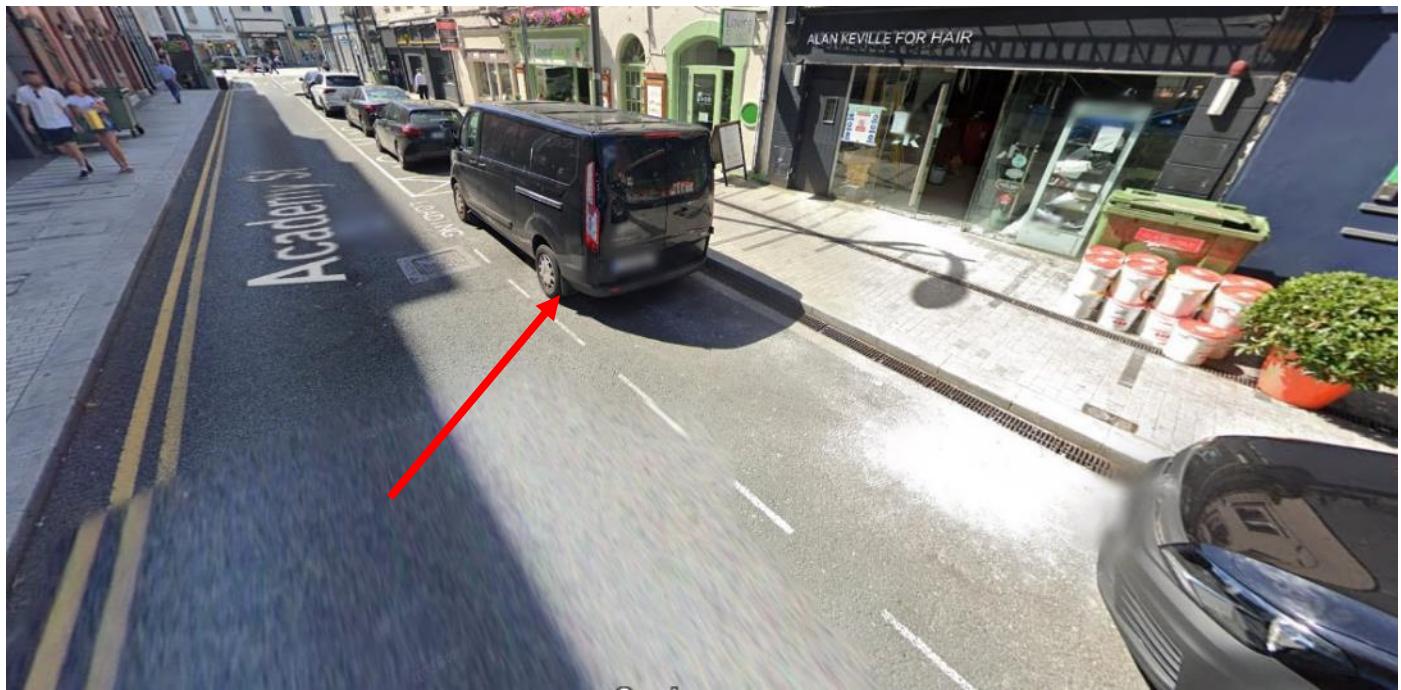


Figure 7: Two number disabled spaces to be temporarily re-located on Academy Street

Consultation:

Submissions are invited from the public, stakeholders and interested parties on this proposed temporary road closure. Submissions on the proposal may be made in writing via this online consultation portal <https://consult.corkcity.ie/> before 5pm on Friday 29th May 2020.