



Proposed Road Closure: Fr. Mathew Street

Introduction

Cork City Council is implementing a programme of measures 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 various phases of dealing with COVID-19. 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 has and continues to bring forward proposals for temporary road closures. One of these closures is outlined below.

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 midday on 24th June 2020.

Road Closure: Fr. Mathew 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 Fr. Mathew Street. Fr. Mathew Street connects car parking spaces on Father Mathew Quay and Morrison's Quay to South Mall.

The Street starts at its junction with South Mall and runs perpendicular to South Mall connecting to Fr. Mathew Quay. There is access to Fitton Street East. Currently it is a one-way street for traffic travelling from South Mall onto Fr. Mathew Quay. It is predominantly used as a rat run to avail of parking spaces on Fr. Mathew Quay and Morrison's Quay. There are two frequently used car parking bays, with one disabled parking space, on the street and off street parking at St Francis Training Centre. 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 Fr. Mathew Street to vehicular traffic 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from Monday 29th of June 2020 until the 31st of August 2020. This will also effectively close Fitton Street East between Fr. Mathew Street and Keefe Street to vehicular traffic. The closure will create a clear pedestrian route for pedestrians travelling from car parking spaces on Fr. Mathew Quay and Morrison's Quay to South Mall.

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 the South Mall. 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 and other properties.
- Address concerns about refuse collection
- Access to off street parking at St Francis Training Centre.
- Removal/ Loss of Parking on Fr Mathew Street. It is proposed to temporarily relocate the disabled space to Fr. Mathew Quay. Figure 5 below highlights where the proposed temporary disabled spaces will be located.

Benefits of the proposed temporary closure include:

- Improved space to allow for easier social distancing for people walking and cycling during the current Covid-19 pandemic
- Better connectivity for pedestrians travelling from South Mall/ Fr. Mathew Quay/Morrison’s Quay direction.
- Clear designated pedestrian route for students of the College of Commerce on Morrison’s Quay.
- Footpaths on the nearest main thorough fair of Parliament Street are not of sufficient width. This closure would supplement an additional thorough fair to a large parking facility area on the city centre island.

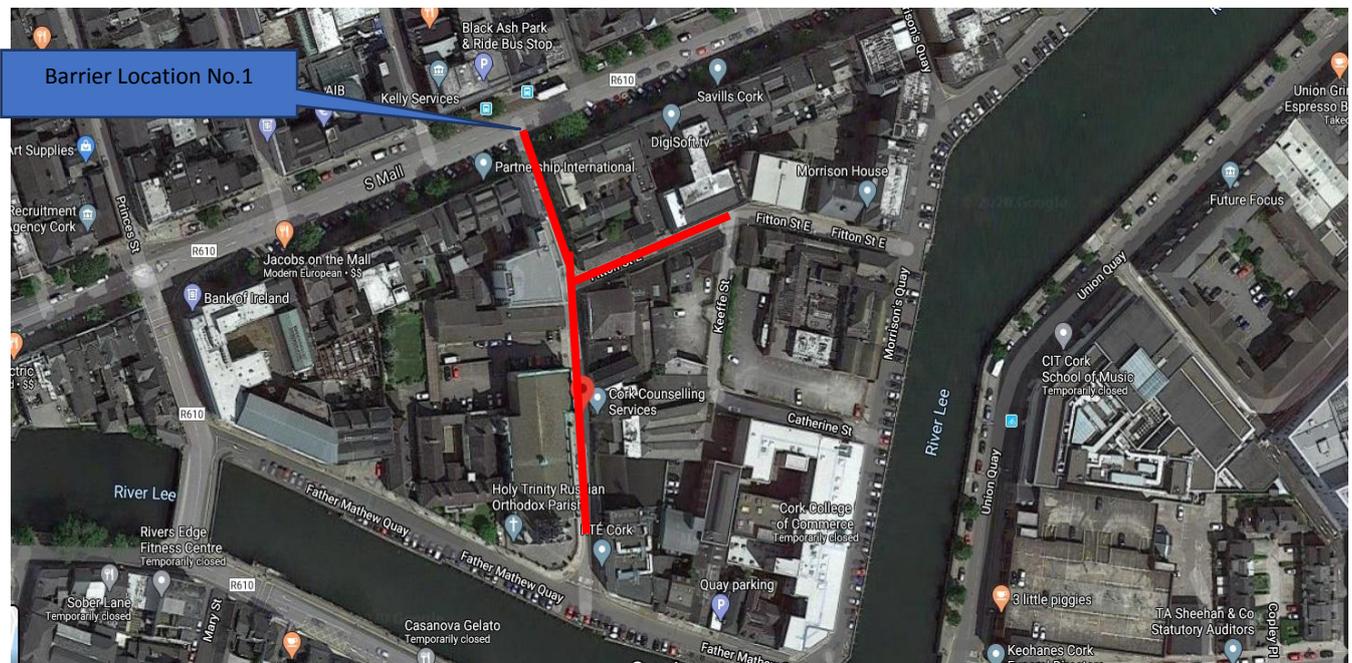


Figure 1: Overview of Fr. Mathew Street Road Closure (source Google Maps)



Figure 2: Road closure indicative location at junction with South Mall (source Google Maps)



Figure 3: Fr. Mathew Street from its junction with Fithen Street East (source Google Maps)



Figure 4: Fr. Mathew Street from its junction with Morrison's Quay (Image source: Google Maps)



Figure 5: Proposed Temporary Disabled Bay Location on Fr. Mathew Quay (Image source: Google Maps)