



Proposed Road Closure and Reallocation of Road Space: Little Cross 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 16th July 2020.

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At the request of business owners on Little Cross Street and in order to support businesses through reallocating street space for the purposes of al fresco dining in light of reduced space available to restaurants due to Covid-19 social distancing guidelines, Cork City Council proposes to introduce a temporary road closure on Little Cross Street. Little Cross Street is a low footfall corridor for members of the public accessing Hanover Street from Washington Street. Two businesses border the street.

The street starts at its junction with Washington Street and runs perpendicular to Washington Street connecting to Hanover Street. Currently it is a two-way street for traffic travelling from Washington Street onto Hanover Street with a left turn only allowed onto Washington Street from Little Cross Street. There is one loading bay on the street. Footpath widths on this street vary, but overall are narrow and cannot support the 2m social distancing requirement for pedestrians.

In order to create as much space as possible for an al fresco dining space it is proposed that roadway be cordoned off and reallocated for use for restaurant tables and chairs and the existing footpaths be used for pedestrian access.

Street furniture licenses will then be granted to premises on Little Cross Street for the street furniture. The Fire Department is being consulted with a view to implementing systems for emergency access to the street as a condition of the street furniture licenses.

A similar road closure and street furniture licenses were previously approved for this location as is detailed in Figure 3 below.

Cork City Council proposes to close Little Cross Street to vehicular traffic 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, from Friday 17th of July 2020 until the 31st of August 2020.

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 Washington Street and Hanover 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 and other properties
- Address concerns about refuse collection
- The loading bay on the street – it is proposed that loading bays on Hanover Street can be used instead of this.

Benefits of the proposed temporary closure include:

- Creation of an al fresco dining space that will support the large number of restaurant businesses on the street and act as an attraction for the city centre and therefore support the city centre as a whole.
- Improved pedestrian management to allow for easier social distancing for people walking and cycling during the current Covid-19 pandemic
- Enhancement of a key City pedestrian corridor to meet the needs of users

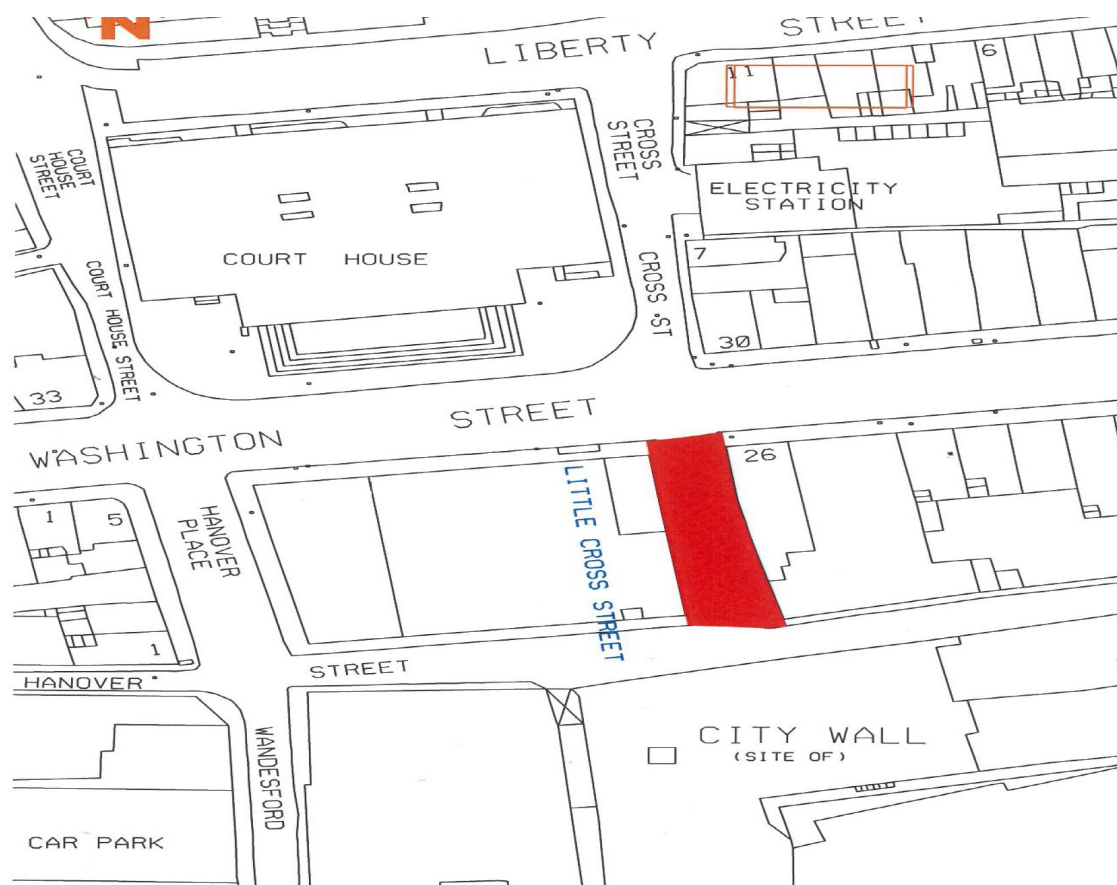


Figure 1: Overview of Little Cross Street Road Closure



Figure 2: Little Cross Street

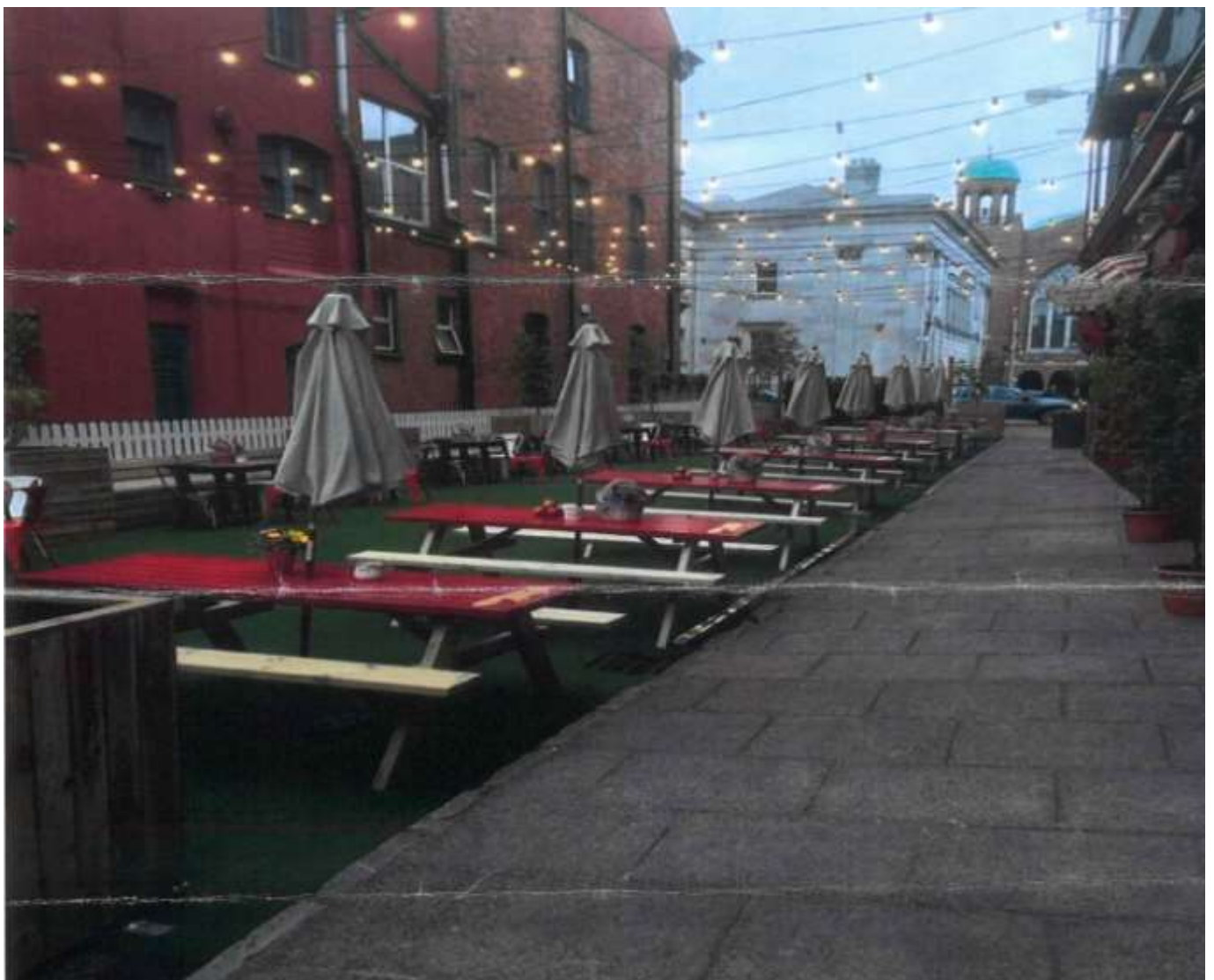


Figure 3: Previously licensed Little Cross Street street furniture following a road closure



Figure 4: Little Cross Street road closure barrier location at its junction with Washington Street



Figure5: Little Cross Street road closure barrier location at its junction with Hanover Street