



ADAIR LANE PROPOSAL

Working Together for Safer, Vibrant Urban Lanes

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SUMMARY

PROPOSAL AT A GLANCE 3

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE..... 4

WHY THIS MATTERS 5

THE PROPOSAL 6

EXPECTED OUTCOMES7

CONCLUSION..... 8

PROPOSAL AT A GLANCE

The Aston Quay and Temple Bar Business and Residents' Alliance (the Alliance), representing local businesses and residents, proposes a pilot project to make targeted improvements to Adair Lane and Price's Lane aimed at reducing antisocial behaviour.

Lanes in Dublin city centre are widely recognised as hotspots for antisocial behaviour. Several lanes, including Harbour Court and Swan Alley, have been closed in recent years due to persistent issues such as drug use, illegal dumping, and public safety concerns. A survey published by the Alliance in March 2025 highlights the significant challenges posed by underused and poorly maintained lanes in Temple Bar, particularly in terms of safety, accessibility, and public amenity.

Following a meeting with Dublin City Council on 14 May 2025, it was agreed that Adair Lane would serve as a pilot project for targeted improvements aimed at reducing antisocial behaviour. While the precise scope of the pilot was not defined at that stage, this document sets out the Alliance's vision following consultation with the businesses that back onto the lane, all of whom are supportive of improvements.

The vision is to transform Adair Lane into an inviting, well-designed public space that encourages positive use and activity. Key objectives include:

- **Encouraging Footfall and Activity:** Creating a more inviting environment that encourages residents, workers, and tourists to use the lane regularly. Active use of the lane can naturally deter antisocial behaviour.
- **Supporting Cultural and Community Events:** Designing the space to accommodate events organised by Dublin City Council, local businesses, and cultural organisations, including small markets, performances, and community gatherings.
- **Improving Aesthetics and Identity:** Introducing elements such as lighting, street art, planting, and high-quality surfacing to make the lane visually appealing and distinctive, reinforcing Temple Bar's character as a creative and cultural district.
- **Collaboration with Local Businesses:** Ensuring that businesses backing onto the lane are actively engaged and supportive, providing a sense of ownership and stewardship over the space.

This pilot aims to demonstrate how collaborative urban design and management can activate underused public spaces, enhance community safety, and contribute to the vibrancy of the wider Temple Bar area. Lessons learned from Adair Lane could inform similar improvements in other laneways across Dublin.



Recent images showing Adair Lane

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

The Alliance was established in August 2023 in response to the high levels of open drug dealing and street crime in the area. It represents 47 businesses, the Temple Bar Residents' Association, and management companies from seven apartment complexes, all concerned about the impact of these issues on safety, business viability, and quality of life.

Formed out of frustration with the limitations of the current approach to antisocial behaviour, the Alliance is a single-issue group committed to securing urgent and lasting solutions through constructive engagement with Government, An Garda Síochána, Dublin City Council, and local public representatives.

The Alliance is led by an executive committee of business and resident representatives, including:

- **Chair:** Stephen Kennedy (Copper + Straw)
- **Business Representatives:** Graeme Reynolds (Acara Restaurant), Bob Manson (Pembr), Willie Aherne (Palace Bar & Bill Aherne's Pub)
- **Resident Representatives:** Declan O'Brien (Chair of Temple Bar Residents' Association), Tommy Brennan (Crampton Buildings), Joe Bourke (Crane Yard)

Through research, member engagement, and advocacy, the Alliance highlights the extent of the challenges and pushes for practical measures to improve safety for all who live, work, and operate businesses on Aston Quay and in Temple Bar.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Lanes in Dublin city centre are widely recognised as hotspots for antisocial behaviour. Several lanes, including Harbour Court and Swan Alley, have been closed in recent years due to persistent issues such as drug use, illegal dumping, and public safety concerns. The Alliance’s own report highlights the significant challenges posed by underused and poorly maintained lanes in Temple Bar, particularly in terms of safety, accessibility, and public amenity.

Only 51% of people surveyed reported using the lanes in Temple Bar, and of those, 80% said they felt unsafe or very unsafe when using the back lanes. This demonstrates the extent to which underused lanes can act as barriers to movement and social engagement, creating spaces that are avoided by the public and increasingly dominated by antisocial behaviour.

The Love the Lanes Report (2018) by Dublin City Council articulated a clear vision for how urban laneways could be reimagined, upgraded, and reactivated as vibrant public spaces. It highlighted that well-designed lanes, when reopened to public use and thoughtfully managed, can encourage footfall, foster social interaction, and support both cultural and commercial activity, while simultaneously deterring antisocial behaviour.

This pilot project for Adair Lane aims to apply these principles locally: improving lighting, accessibility, and aesthetics, encouraging positive activity, and creating a lane that residents, workers, and visitors feel comfortable using. By doing so, the project seeks to demonstrate the potential for targeted urban regeneration to reduce antisocial behaviour while enhancing public amenity and contributing to the vibrancy of Temple Bar.



THE PROPOSAL

Following the May 2025 meeting with Dublin City Council, where agreement was reached to improve Adair Lane, the Alliance developed this proposal to regenerate the space. The proposal is designed to address antisocial behaviour, improve public safety, and transform Adair Lane into an attractive, well-used space that benefits residents, visitors, and businesses alike. The proposal has been developed following consultation with the businesses that back onto the lane, all of whom are supportive of the improvements. While the lane is currently used for deliveries and waste management – typically before 11am, with bins stored internally on non-collection days – these activities can be easily accommodated alongside the proposed improvements.

The core elements of the proposal are:

1. Improvements to the Lane

- **New paving** similar in style and quality to Parliament Street and Capel Street.
- **Improved lighting** throughout the lane to increase safety and highlight features such as murals or planting.
- **Planting and greenery** using large planters with shrubs and other greenery to enhance appearance, define seating areas, and maintain clear space for pedestrians, deliveries, and waste management.
- **Public seating** integrated with planters to encourage people to linger.
- **Retractable canopies** to accommodate traders and events in all weather conditions.

2. Street Art Project

Transform the lane’s walls into a curated series of murals and public artworks, put out to tender for local artists or cultural organisations. The artwork could reference Dublin’s history, culture, or stories of the Temple Bar area, creating a visually striking experience for visitors. Similar initiatives in Waterford City, Bristol, and Berlin have turned urban lanes into key tourist attractions, demonstrating how street art can enhance the character of a city, draw visitors, and contribute to a safer, more vibrant public space.

3. Events and Programming

Once the lane is improved, a programme of regular events should be developed in collaboration between Dublin City Council, local businesses, and cultural organisations. This would establish the lane as an active, welcoming space and draw both residents and visitors. Potential activities include outdoor cinema screenings, artisan or seasonal markets, cultural tours and exhibitions, live performances, food and beverage pop-ups, and small workshops or artistic showcases.

4. Extension to Price’s Lane

Although not discussed at the meeting with Dublin City Council, the Alliance strongly recommends including Price’s Lane in the pilot. This lane currently attracts significant drug use and antisocial behaviour, and because it connects directly to Adair Lane, addressing it is essential to the overall success of the project. The Alliance proposes a street art initiative across the lane, incorporating its stained-glass features and creating murals that reflect Dublin’s culture and history. In addition, doorways, alcoves, and windowsills should be redesigned to prevent misuse. If the entire lane were transformed into a continuous mural, it could become a draw for tourists, pull people into the area, and make the space safer and more welcoming.

Through these interventions, Adair Lane – and potentially Price’s Lane – could become a model for how neglected urban lanes can be revitalised, improving safety, accessibility, and vibrancy, while providing lasting benefits for local residents, businesses, and the wider Temple Bar area.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The proposed improvements to Adair Lane, and potentially Price's Lane, are expected to deliver multiple benefits for residents, businesses, and visitors:

- **Enhanced Safety and Accessibility:** Improved lighting, visibility, and maintenance will reduce opportunities for antisocial behaviour and create a safer, more welcoming environment for pedestrians.
- **Increased Footfall and Activity:** A more inviting and visually appealing lane, complemented by regular events and cultural programming, will encourage residents, workers, and tourists to use the space, naturally deterring antisocial behaviour.
- **Stronger Community and Business Engagement:** Active collaboration between local businesses, residents, and Dublin City Council will foster a sense of ownership, pride, and stewardship over the lanes.
- **Cultural and Tourist Attraction:** Murals, street art, and curated events will highlight the area's history and culture, transforming underused lanes into destinations that draw visitors and support Temple Bar's identity as a creative and vibrant district.
- **Replicable Model:** The pilot will provide practical insights and lessons for future regeneration of other neglected urban lanes across Dublin, demonstrating how targeted interventions can improve public amenity, safety, and community engagement.



CONCLUSION

The proposed pilot for Adair Lane, and potentially Price's Lane, offers an opportunity to transform underused and neglected urban lanes into vibrant, safe, and welcoming public spaces. By combining physical improvements, street art, and cultural programming, the project seeks to reduce antisocial behaviour, support local businesses, and create destinations that attract residents, visitors, and tourists alike.

The Alliance, working collaboratively with businesses and residents, has developed this proposal to demonstrate how thoughtful urban design and active management can revitalise the lanes, enhance safety and accessibility, and contribute to the cultural and social life of Temple Bar. We look forward to engaging with Dublin City Council to explore the potential for this pilot to become a model for similar initiatives across the city.

