

**The alternation of the ex-Victoria Road Detention Centre site in
Mount Davis**

**The reply of the Education Bureau, Commissioner for Heritage's Office,
Antiquities and Monuments Office, Transport Department and Lands
Department:**

1. What is the progress of conversion of the Ex-Victoria Road Detention Centre into the new campus?

In June 2013, with the recommendation of an independent Vetting Committee, the Secretary for Education decided that The University of Chicago Booth School of Business (“Chicago Booth”) should be earmarked as the prospective operator for the ex-Victoria Road Detention Centre site (“the Site”) to be granted to the University of Chicago Foundation in Hong Kong Limited (“the University”) at nominal premium, for operation of locally-accredited self-financing degree programmes.

Currently, the University is engaging at the stage of designing the proposed campus and preparing a planning submission. Since the Site is currently zoned Residential (Group C), the University needs to seek town planning application approval from the Town Planning Board for using the Site as “Educational Institution” after consulting the Central and Western District Council. Subsequently, the University needs to apply for the grant of the Site before commencement of the construction works. Tentatively, the University targets to take possession of the Site and commence with the construction works thereat in around May 2016. With that, it is expected the campus could be put into operation by August 2018.

2. Will the features of the existing buildings be preserved? What will be the height of the new structures? Will the external design of the new structures match with the existing buildings?

Please see the reply from The University of Chicago at **Enclosure A** for the information on reconstruction design.

3. What is the plan for preserving the existing buildings?

The buildings within the Site are Grade 3 historic buildings. By definition, Grade 3 historic buildings are buildings of some merit. Preservation in some form

would be desirable. According to the requirements of the LGS, the University is required to comply with the Conservation Guidelines prepared by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (“AMO”) when developing and using the Site. The Conservation Guidelines list out a series of requirements for preserving the architectural features of the existing buildings and set out the principles to design the alteration and addition works for new use so as to minimize adverse impact on the existing buildings. Based on the Conservation Guidelines, the University would have to submit a Conservation Management Plan for endorsement of the AMO.

4. Is there any plan for enhancing the surrounding facilities to complement the School’s development?

The University has suggested revitalizing the “White House” for public visit in its design. Please see **Enclosure A** for details. Regarding the complement of other surrounding facilities, if necessary, departments will discuss with the University in due course.

5. Upon the completion of the campus, will there be any impact to the traffic in the neighbourhood?

According to the Traffic Impact Assessment submitted by the University, the University will provide four private car parking spaces, one disabled car parking space, a loading/unloading area for goods vehicles and a 38 metre-long pick-up/drop-off area. These parking spaces will be reserved for academic staff or VIP guests, and shuttle bus will be exclusively arranged for the students and visitors. The Assessment demonstrated that an addition of about 44 vehicles/hour will be generated by the University, and the traffic impact to Victoria Road and the nearby junctions at peak hours are minimal. In addition, to cope with the need of pedestrians crossing Victoria Road outside the University, the University will provide a cautionary crossing, a refuse island and dropped kerbs thereat. With the above traffic management and improvement measures, the traffic impact arising from the development is considered acceptable.

6. Will the School offer any courses besides its EMBA program?

The University of Chicago Booth School of Business plans to offer its flagship Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) programme taught exclusively by the world-class faculty of Chicago Booth. It also plans to offer a variety of executive education courses.

7. How would the department follow up with the military historical remains near the “White House” site?

The AMO has commissioned a study of military structures and relics in Hong Kong from the founding of Hong Kong as a colony up till the Second World War so as to better understand the structures and relics that remain and to help formulate appropriate measures for conservation.

If any damage of the graded historic buildings/structures is found within the concerned Government land, Lands Department will refer the case to AMO, Architectural Services Department and the Hong Kong Police Force for appropriate follow up

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C&WDC Secretariat
November 2014

Enclosure A

The reply of the The University of Chicago Foundation in Hong Kong Ltd.:

District Council Presentation Reference Paper for “Proposed University of Chicago Centre in Hong Kong at the Ex-Victoria Road Detention Centre site”

Project Summary

Development Objectives & Benefits

The University of Chicago Booth School of Business (“Chicago Booth”) is a premier academic and research institution. Its EMBA program has been established for over 65 years. Chicago Booth’s expansion to Hong Kong is a key step in realizing its global mission, to deepen its engagement in Asia and to nurture our future business leaders.

The proposed development is in direct support of Hong Kong’s current Education Policy to expand and enhance the education sector. Being a prestige school of business, Chicago Booth will gather executives and future global business leaders from the region and the rest of the world, leaving a lasting impression of Hong Kong. It will benefit the society by helping Hong Kong develop into an education and finance hub.

The proposed purpose-built campus is intended to be used for inter-disciplinary education, research, scholarship and social engagement. Since Sep 2014, Chicago Booth has been operating in a temporary location in Cyberport, Hong Kong until the proposed new campus is completed.

Challenges of the Project

The Site is characterized by an extremely steep topography, extensive mature vegetation and Grade 3 historic buildings scattered along the hillside. The Site is also constrained by the presence of existing Registered Slopes, soil retaining structures, tunnel structures and a drainage reserve.

Principles of Project Design

An innovative elevated structure is proposed to float lightly above the heritage structures, serving multiple purposes. This approach minimizes the

development's impact on existing topography, trees, heritage structures, trails and drains; while maximizing lighting, ventilation and permeability through the site. By contrast in form and materials, the new architecture also ensures the historic buildings are properly showcased.

Planning Gains

The proposal retains most of the existing “White Wall” ” (the boundary wall along Victoria Road), guard post and entrance courtyard, with an Interpretation Centre added at Block B Annex to illustrate the history and function of the Ex-Victoria Road Detention Centre. Other historic buildings (Blocks A & B) will be adaptively-reused for academic purposes. The Battery will also be retained and made open for public visit. As such, most of the heritage structures will be revitalized, while the historic site's value and authenticity will be celebrated and a long-term, sustainable preservation ensured.

On the other hand, with its generous landscaped decks and renovated courtyard, the proposal will significantly enhance the amenity of the locale, opening up new vistas and providing new public lookouts for capturing the fantastic sea view. The existing hiking trails will also be maintained, made safe or re-routed only where inevitable.

Project Impact Assessments

Various studies have been carried out to assess the impacts that will be brought about by the Project. These cover the traffic, visual, heritage, landscape, geotechnical, drainage, sewage and environmental aspects. All impacts are assessed to be non-substantial and can be made acceptable through implementation of mitigation measures.

Reply to Questions from DC members:

1. What is the progress of the conversion of the Ex-Detention Centre into the new campus?

The project is still in its design and planning submission phase. Subsequent to acquiring the Section 16 planning approval, the Project Team will also have to complete the execution of Land Grant and acquire approval for the tree felling proposal before construction works can proceed on Site. These are time-consuming processes, meaning the construction works are only anticipated to begin in May 2016; while the tentative completion date is in Aug 2018.

2. Will the features and views of the existing buildings be preserved? What will be the height of the new structures? Will the external design of the new structures match with the existing buildings?

The new building will be two-storey high from the street level, with a lower ground floor tucked into the slope. The overall three-storey high building, which is shorter than the four-storey height permissible by Planning OZP, will help to minimise the visual impact from Victoria Road. Lowering the building into the slope will also better conserve the character of the natural landscape. Part of the new structure will be floated over Block B and Block B Annex.

Most of the facades of the historic buildings will remain intact, with the exception of Block A rear elevation, which will abut the new building. Block B has always been recessed into the slopes, hidden behind trees and cannot be seen from the street level. All building facades facing the heritage courtyard and Victoria Road will not be affected.

The internal layout of Blocks A and B will be altered to suit classroom functions. The character defining elements, e.g. the wooden staircase, the fireplaces and the roof turrets will be preserved. The current design has been in accordance with the requirement of AMO's Conservation Guidelines and a Conservation Management Plan will be submitted to AMO for approval in the detailed design stage.

In order to achieve a great lightness for the elevated new structure, the new

building façade will largely be made of glass and metal. These finishing materials will contrast but at the same time complement the solid white facades of the historic buildings and ensure they are clearly showcased.

3. What is the plan for preserving the existing buildings?

All existing historic buildings along Victoria Road and the setting reflecting the three key historical uses of the site, i.e. the original use as Jubilee Battery in the late 1930s, the British Army Royal Engineer's Mess and Quarters in the 1950s, and the Victoria Road Detention Centre in 1960s, will be preserved in accordance with the requirements of AMO's Conservation Guidelines. A comprehensive Conservation Management Plan will be submitted to AMO for approval in the detailed design stage.

The original setting for the detention centre, including the old site entrance, white wall, the heritage courtyard, the defensive ports at Block B Annex and Block B, together with the traces of individual cells on the ceiling and floors will be preserved to show the history and the process of the detention for public's appreciation in the future.

Over and above meeting the requirements of the AMO's Conservation Guidelines, the existing historic buildings (Blocks A & B) will be adaptively-reused for academic and supporting purposes. Block B Annex, which overlooks the heritage courtyard, the white fence walls and the former guard post, will be transformed into an Interpretation Area for illustrating the history of the Ex-Victoria Road Detention Centre.

4. Is there any plan for improving the facilities in the surrounding complementary to the School's development?

The "White House" site was enclosed by its white wall and was not open to the public for years. In the proposed design, most of these heritage buildings will be adaptively re-used into functional classrooms as well as opened for public appreciation. Annex Block B and the existing entry courtyard with the guard post will be used as a Heritage Interpretation Centre. The disused battery and its annex building will be made assessable from the trails within the site which will be retained, maintained and made safe for public enjoyment. The trails will be reconnected with those surrounding the site. The public can enjoy the

preserved natural environment and big trees, as well as walking along the trail path to the street level. They can also enjoy the extraordinary sea view from the landscape deck and the Flame Tree promontory.

In order to enhance the pedestrian movements across Victoria Road, a new cautionary crossing with refuge island will be provided on Victoria Road. The crossing will have sufficient visibility and traffic signs will be installed to alert motorists. The best co-ordination effort has also been made for the design and location of the public entry in order to strike the balance between the practicality and heritage conservation, as well as to avoid blocking up the traffic along Victoria Road.

5. Upon the completion of the campus, will there be any impact created to the traffic in the neighbourhood?

Limited parking will be provided on campus for academic staff and VIP only. In terms of general operation, the school will encourage students to use public transport such as mini-bus or bus. Shuttle bus will be provided with connections to the Kennedy Town Station which will function in early 2015.

By the detailed assessments of junctions and road links in the vicinity, the additional traffic impact to the adjacent road network is considered to be acceptable.

Besides, the vehicular accesses of the site are positioned at the optimum location with consideration of traffic operation and safety, as well as the conservation of the heritage wall. Pick-up and drop-off area will be provided within the Campus capable for the peak demand, such that no stopping will be allowed for vehicles along Victoria Road to minimise the traffic impact.

Summary of traffic impact assessment (**Annex 1**) is attached for reference.

6. Will the School offer any courses besides its EMBA program?

Chicago Booth has no plans in the foreseeable future to offer any additional degree-granting programs on its Hong Kong campus. We do intend to offer some non-degree, Executive Education courses comprised mostly of 1-5 day short courses on a number of business topics. The courses are open enrolment

for qualified business professionals working in Hong Kong who wish to enhance their business skills in a specific area without enrolling in a full degree program. In addition to these open programs, we will also offer custom-designed Executive Education courses for specific companies in Hong Kong or the region. All non-degree courses are also taught only by Chicago Booth faculty who fly to Hong Kong from Chicago to teach in these programs – guaranteeing the quality and integrity of Booth programs.

7. How would the School follow up with the military historical remains near the “White House” site?

The battery within the site will be retained and made open to the public via the modified trails in the Site. Such battery together with the other two remained batteries outside the site boundary forming the Jubilee Battery will then be allowed for public visit. The later added kitchen behind the battery will be removed to restore the former setting and spatial relationship between the battery and its magazine structure, the latter of which will be secured to avoid trespassing. Other military structures are outside the Project site boundary, hence we will have no control or proposal for these relics.

Summary of traffic impact assessment

Following the luncheon meeting with the Central & Western District Council Members dated 2 September 2014, comments have been received regarding the proposed campus by University of Chicago (UoC).

The responses in terms of transport and traffic issues are consolidated below:

1. Nearby Public Transport Provision

Existing Bus Stop Location and Routes

- The nearest bus stop locates to the north of the proposed campus, serving the regular route nos. 5, M47, 971 and A10 for both northbound (towards Kennedy Town) and southbound (towards Cyberport), as shown in **Table 1** below and **Figure 1** attached.

Table 1 Existing Public Transport Services

Route	Service	Destinations	Peak Hour Frequency (minutes)
5	BUS	Felix Villas ↔Causeway Bay (Whitfield Road)	15-20
M47	BUS	Wah Fu (North) ↔Central (Hong Kong Station)	15-20
47P	BUS	Kennedy Town (Belcher Bay) →Wong Chuk Hang	Mon-Sat AM Peak only
971	BUS	Hoi Lai Estate ↔Aberdeen (Shek Pai Wan)	15-20
A10	BUS	Airport (Ground Transportation Centre) ↔Ap Lei Chau Estate	30
54/54S	GMB	Central (Ferry Piers) ↔Queen Mary Hospital	8-10
58/58A	GMB	Aberdeen (Wu Nam Street) ↔Kennedy Town (NorthStreet)	8-15
59	GMB	Shum Wan ↔Kennedy Town (North Street)	12-20

- The bus terminus for route no. 5 at Felix Villas will be maintained at its existing location opposite to the proposed UoC Campus.

Proposed Pedestrian Crossing

- A cautionary crossing (without traffic signal) is proposed in between the bus stop and the campus to enhance the pedestrian movements across Victoria Road, as shown in **Figure 1**.

- Minor modification to the pavement at Victoria Road will be required for the provision of refuge island to the cautionary crossing.
- Based on the forecast volume of vehicular traffic on Victoria Road and the estimated attendance to UoC, the proposed cautionary crossing is considered to be justified from traffic point of view.

Potential Shuttle Service to Future MTR Station at Kennedy Town

- The shuttle bus service is planned between Cyberport and the new campus, whilst students will be dropped off within UoC.
- Upon the commissioning of West Island Line Extension by 2014/2015, Kennedy Town will become the closest MTR station from the subject site.
- The potential of shuttle service connecting Kennedy Town MTR Station has been considered as shown in **Figure 2**, subject to the local traffic arrangements upon commissioning of West Island Line Extension and the future demand of UoC.

2. Road Traffic Conditions

Expected Traffic Generation from UoC and Additional Impact

- Limited parking on campus will be provided for academic staff and VIP only.
- The vehicular traffic generation will mainly consist of taxis and the shuttle service, which is at most estimated to be **44 vehicles per hour**.
- Therefore the additional traffic impact by the operation of proposed UoC campus is considered to be acceptable.

MTR Station Construction

- Whilst the completion year of the UoC campus is anticipated to be 2017, the construction works for the West Island Line Extension by MTRC should have been completed by 2014/2015.

3. Site Vehicular Access

- The main site access is positioned at the optimum location with consideration of the balance between usage and maintenance of heritage

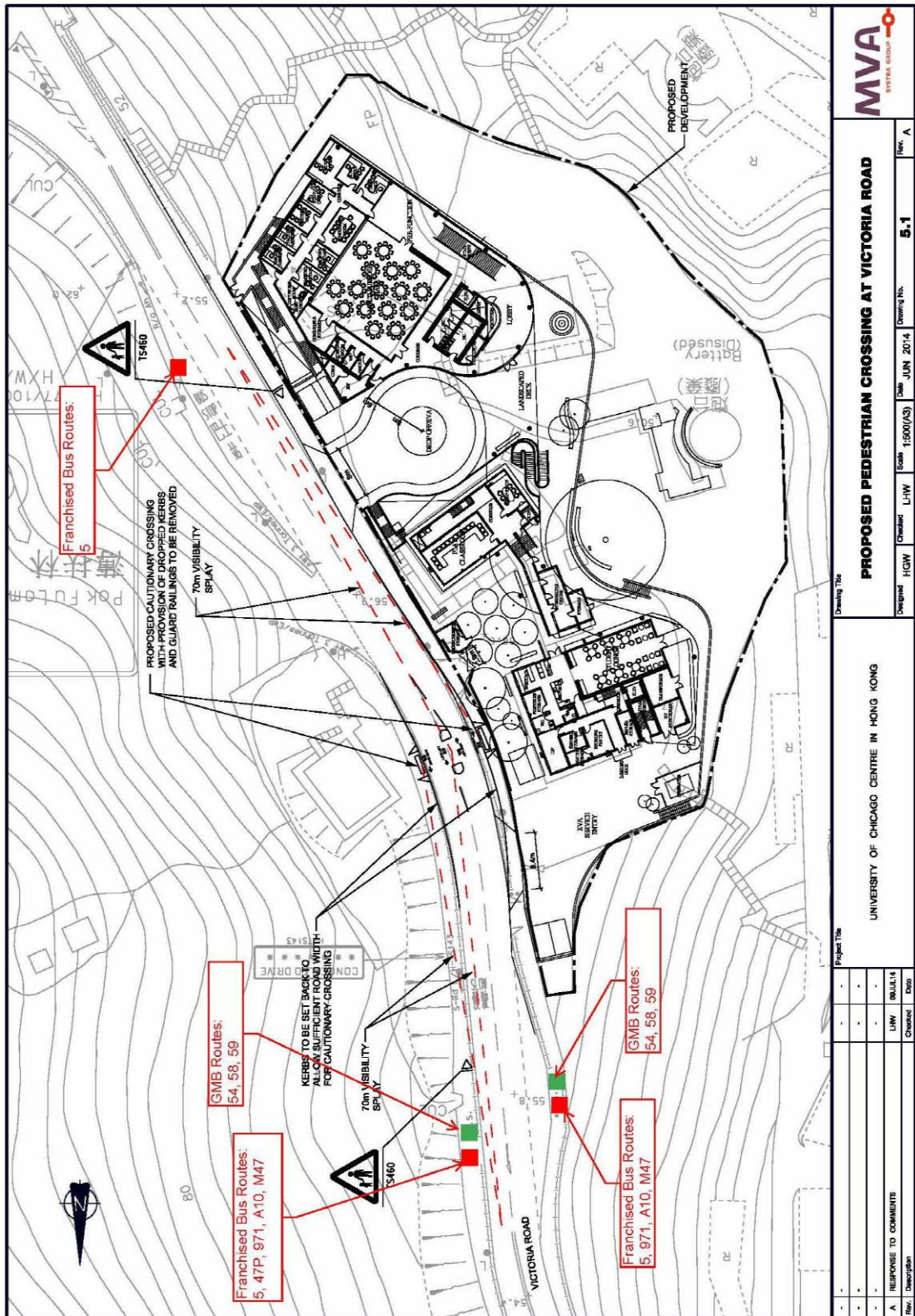
value of boundary wall.

- The proposed location of the access is acceptable in terms of Transport Department criteria on placement of run-ins in proximity to roundabouts.
- The visibility requirements for all proposed vehicle access points have been appraised as well as the visibility requirements for the proposed pedestrian crossing.
- The sightline and maneuverability at the proposed vehicular access has been carefully reviewed by swept path analysis for traffic from either direction on Victoria Road.
- The proposed widths of vehicle access points are allowable for goods vehicles and shuttle coaches as well as for emergency vehicles as part of the EVA requirements.

4. Internal Transport Facilities

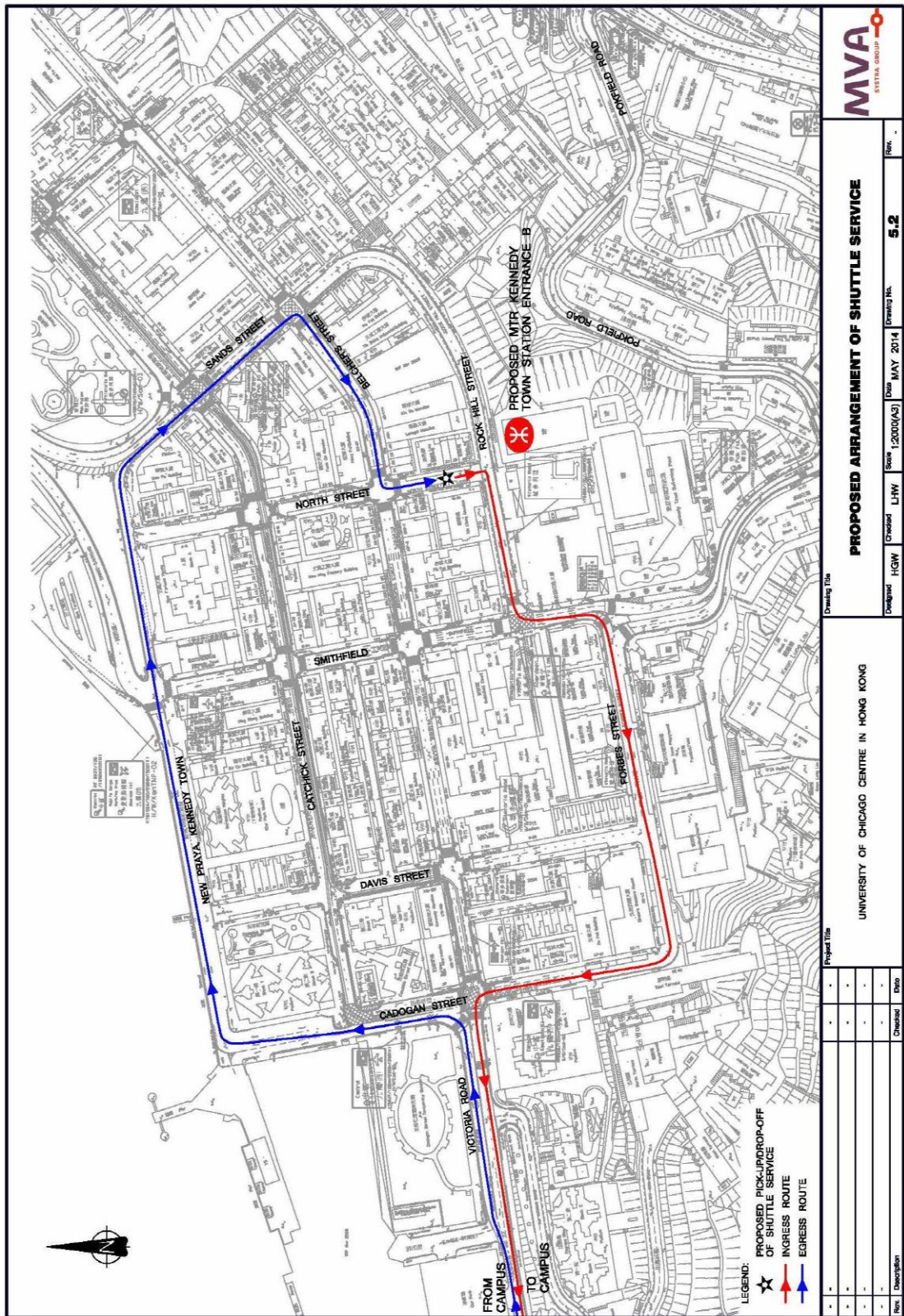
- Pick-up and drop-off area will be provided within the UoC Campus in form of a roundabout at the Main Entrance, which will be capable for the peak demand from the UoC Campus.
- No stopping will be allowed for vehicles along Victoria Road to minimize the traffic impact.

Figure 1



Project Title		UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO CENTRE IN HONG KONG	
Drawing Title		PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT VICTORIA ROAD	
Design	HGW	Checked	LHW
Scale	1:500(A3)	Date	JUN 2014
Sheet No.	5.1	Drawing No.	5.1
Rev.	Description	Checked	Date
A	RESPONSE TO COMMENTS	LHW	06/JUL/14
MVA SYSTEMS GROUP			

Figure 2



PROPOSED ARRANGEMENT OF SHUTTLE SERVICE	
Drawing Title UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO CENTRE IN HONG KONG	Scale 1:2000(A3)
Designer HGW	Date MAY 2014
Checked LHW	Drawing No. 5.2
No. Description Checked Date	Rev. Date