



Comments on proposed site of Chinese Pavilion

January 2019

We welcome the generous donation of a Peony Pavilion to Stratford-upon-Avon by the town of Fuzhou. We believe that, if sited appropriately, it has the potential to enhance the environment and to be a significant attraction for both residents and visitors.

In order for the pavilion to be seen to best advantage, we recommend:

- a conspicuous location with good sightlines;
- associate it with a purpose or activities taking place in the town;
- not close to busy roads so that visitors can enjoy its tranquillity;
- regular maintenance to keep it looking at its best;
- protection against damage from vandalism or misuse;
- good illumination at night for visibility and security.

We have serious concerns about the proposed location in the Firs:

- no context or link with nearby structures or houses;
- the terms of Marie Corelli's gift were to keep the site undeveloped;
- limited visibility because of enclosure by trees;
- likely damage to tree canopy and roots during installation;
- adjacent to two busy roads, and a distraction to motorists;
- dark at night and a target for undesirable activities;
- away from the main tourist areas and not likely to be seen;
- may be perceived as insulting by the Chinese donors.

We strongly advocate an alternative site elsewhere in Stratford or nearby, which would facilitate public access and be more secure. Possible sites include:

1. garden behind the Shakespeare Birthplace;
2. garden of the Shakespeare Institute (behind Mason Croft);
3. Bancroft gardens to the north of the Theatre;
4. open lawn area to the south of the Swan Theatre;
5. riverside gardens in the vicinity of the former Avonbank house;
6. recreational grounds on the east side of the river;
7. grounds of Compton Verney, where its aesthetic qualities would be welcome.

Prepared by Lindsay MacDonald, based on comments gathered from members.