

Construction to Go Ahead at Arkhangelskoye Estate

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Arkhangelskoye estate outside of Moscow is likely to be ruined as a result of pending construction works, preservationists warned after a court refused an appeal about the legitimacy of rental agreements between the city and three private companies.

The court gave the green light for developing three plots of parkland surrounding the estate by privately owned companies Erlikom Group, Oblstroiuuniversal and Park Arkhangelskoye, according to a statement issued late last week by a group of preservationists.

The plots, totaling 46 hectares, which the companies will be renting from the Moscow branch of the Federal Forestry Agency for the next 49 years, are located near a theater designed by Italian architect Pietro Gonzago in the early 19th century.

The court ruling allows the tenants to carry out construction works, cut down trees, build roads and even helicopter pads on forest land, in line with the rental agreements signed

in 2004, preservationists said in a statement published on the Ekho Moskvyy website.

"As a result, it will be impossible to restore the integrity of Arkhangelskoye over at least the next 49 years, and the world-famous Gonzago Theater will remain isolated from the rest of the museum's territory," the statement said, adding that the park will be "completely destroyed."

Preservationists claim that no construction works can be carried out on the leased territories, as they are part of a historical ensemble and are protected by law. But the tenants contested this status in court, which revoked the protected status, making construction possible. The federal heritage protection watchdog and the museum administration later appealed the decision.

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