# Paisley campaigners renew fight to save ancient woodland from housing development



In Paisley, a passionate group of environmental campaigners, Save Paisley’s Green Space, has launched yet another initiative to conserve the rich biodiversity found near Caplethill Road. Their recent campaign aims to protect a vital stretch of trees and shrubbery that stands in the way of proposed development by Miller Homes, specifically the Thornly Park housing project, which intends to construct 179 new homes on the site of the former University of the West of Scotland Thornly Park campus.

Miller Homes recently acknowledged that its original plan for a pathway along the estate's edge could not proceed due to ecological considerations. The developer now proposes to enhance an existing cycle path that runs through the site, but this revised plan includes widening part of the pathway along Glenfield Road to three metres. Campaigners fear that this adjustment will necessitate the removal of trees and significantly disrupt local wildlife habitats, as they previously witnessed the felling of numerous mature trees, some approximating 200 years old, during initial stages of the development.

The group has voiced its frustration on social media, stating, “Despite all our initial objections that this side of the road was abundant in biodiversity, our objections were ignored,” highlighting that their concerns fell on deaf ears, leading to decisions that jeopardised environmental integrity. Save Paisley’s Green Space argues that the developer’s move to replace the initial footway plan with the new three-metre pathway poses a grave risk to the biodiversity of the area, even after protected species were identified, necessitating a revision of the original plans.

To counter the current proposals, the campaigners have suggested an alternative route that would incorporate a zebra crossing, thereby improving safety for pedestrians while maintaining critical green space. However, they also pointed out ongoing safety issues; they maintain that neither side of Caplethill Road provides a safe route for school children, given the frequent presence of buses and lorries near the kerb.

This struggle is not isolated. Renfrewshire Council has previously struggled to protect woodlands from encroaching development. Attempts to impose a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) in the area were thwarted due to legal challenges from developers seeking to build over 600 homes on adjacent sites. Such developments raise questions about the balance of housing needs against environmental preservation, particularly in areas rich in wildlife.

The community’s concerns have echoed in various demonstrations and public complaints filed with local authorities, asserting breaches in planning permission by Miller Homes. In that context, Renfrewshire Council has stepped in to halt excavation work when it found that development proceeded without the completion of requisite planning conditions, underscoring the ongoing tension between development and conservation within the region.

Save Paisley’s Green Space's efforts illuminate a broader struggle many communities face as they aim to protect their local environments amid advancing urbanisation. Their campaign not only seeks to defend the local ecosystem but also raises critical questions about sustainable development practices and the need for prioritising environmental considerations in urban planning. As the campaign unfolds, it remains to be seen whether the voices of concerned residents will lead to a re-evaluation of planning decisions or whether development will proceed unfettered, further encroaching on Paisley’s green spaces.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1-2: [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/paisley-campaigners-set-another-fight-35211039)
2. Paragraph 3: [[2]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/trees-being-ripped-out-like-29397092)
3. Paragraph 4: [[3]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/paisley-campaigners-accuse-thornly-park-30829302)
4. Paragraph 5: [[4]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/tree-protection-bid-fails-developers-31466504)
5. Paragraph 6: [[5]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/builder-told-halt-work-paisley-30968263)
6. Paragraphs 7-8: [[6]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/protestors-hold-demonstration-outside-renfrewshire-26172564)
7. Paragraph 9: [[7]](https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/plans-for-former-paisley-campus-rejected)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/paisley-campaigners-set-another-fight-35211039> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/trees-being-ripped-out-like-29397092> - This article reports on the felling of trees at the Thornly Park campus in Paisley, where trees up to 200 years old were removed as part of preparations for a housing development by Miller Homes. Despite protests from Save Paisley’s Green Space, the development proceeded, leading to the loss of mature trees and impacting local wildlife habitats.
3. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/paisley-campaigners-accuse-thornly-park-30829302> - Save Paisley’s Green Space accused Miller Homes of commencing work at the Thornly Park site before meeting all planning conditions. The group filed a formal complaint with Renfrewshire Council, alleging that the developer breached planning permission by clearing trees and vegetation prematurely.
4. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/tree-protection-bid-fails-developers-31466504> - Renfrewshire Council's attempt to implement a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on woodland near Dykebar Hospital was unsuccessful. The council faced potential legal action from developers planning to build 603 homes on the site, leading to the abandonment of the TPO due to legal and financial concerns.
5. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/builder-told-halt-work-paisley-30968263> - Miller Homes was instructed to halt excavation work at the Thornly Park site in Paisley after Renfrewshire Council found that the developer had commenced work before fulfilling all planning conditions. The council emphasized the need for compliance with planning requirements before proceeding with development.
6. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/in-your-area/renfrewshire/protestors-hold-demonstration-outside-renfrewshire-26172564> - Save Paisley’s Green Space organized a demonstration outside Renfrewshire House to oppose a 179-home development on the University of the West of Scotland's Thornly Park campus. The group highlighted concerns over environmental impact, loss of green space, and potential effects on local wildlife and heritage sites.
7. <https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/plans-for-former-paisley-campus-rejected> - Renfrewshire Council rejected plans for a housing development on the former University of the West of Scotland campus, citing adverse impacts on native woodland, wildlife, traffic, and climate change. The proposal also failed to meet affordable housing requirements, leading to its dismissal.