

## Include conservation in home, heart and hope

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IN THE final segment of his National Day Rally speech, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong described his memories of home, and spoke of how such memories have a way of entrenching a person's sense of belonging to Singapore as he grows older ("Help write the next chapter in S'pore story, says PM"; Monday).

Mr Lee reminisced about old places and how they rekindled fond memories of the past.

In my view, it would have been appropriate to discuss the conservation of places that still remain, for what's gone cannot be rebuilt.

Naturally, some old and even well-known buildings must make way for progress.

But along the way, others could have been conserved. A case in point is the old National Library building along Stamford Road. If it were still there today, it would be a hive of activity with the Singapore Management University just across the road.

But alas, it had to be demolished to make way for the very short stretch of Fort Canning Tunnel. Its necessity is questionable.

Building the tunnel might have improved traffic flow but we have lost an icon which certainly qualifies as one part of our identification with Singapore.

Memories enrich one's life but tangible places which hold meaning, in the form of conserved buildings and structures, are far better. It will be a sad day if, in the end, all we have are memories of places long gone, when some could have been kept.