Conserve a building, save the planet

There’s a new reason to preserve Singapore’s landmark modernist buildings: the reduction of carbon emissions by extending their lives instead of demolishing them.

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For The Straits Times

Many heritage-effusions have been发烧ing the vinegar of 1950s-1960s modernist buildings, which are to be preserved for conservation, People’s Park Complex and Wing On Life Building next to the cultural capital that speaks to the sense of history. They are also environmental capital as they provide a space for more sustainable urban living.

Extending the lives of old modernist buildings is not just to commemorate the human imagination and skills that went into constructing them, but also to connect the community of those who experienced and encountered them, and the society that they helped shape.

To reduce carbon waste, conserve embodied energy and significantly reduce our contribution to the climate crisis, institutions have decided to rehabilitate, not demolish and rebuild, in New York headquarters— and not just because it’s a $350-million upgrade.

In other words, preserving and modernising buildings can have environmental benefits.

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In 2007, the URA had proposed a new approach for a change in the heritage rules to allow for more modernisation of buildings, but the move was not well received by heritage advocates.

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