



# The knockdown-rebuild revolution accelerates

It's out with the old and in with the new as homeowners book a date with a bulldozer for their most expensive asset, says **Melissa Kehagias**



**A**n increasing number of Sydneysiders are opting to build their own dream homes, snapping up deceased estates and older homes rather than buying new builds.

Data from Hipages, an online site to hire tradies, reveals requests for demolition jobs in Sydney have increased by 10 per cent between January and February 2017 alone and have seen a steady increase since 2015.

Blacktown, the Sydney CBD, Maroubra, Eastwood and Ryde are the top five suburbs to have requested demolition jobs on the Hipages platform over the past two years. These top five suburbs together make up for 14.6 per cent of the total demolition jobs posted across Sydney.

Blacktown made up for 4.6 per cent of the total number of demolition jobs posted over the past 24 months, with more than double the amount of demolition projects compared to the

remaining top five suburbs.

Donna Hole, head of trade services at Hipages, said May 2016 saw a spike in owners looking to knock down existing homes.

"Requests for demolition jobs have increased by 60 per cent between April and May last year,"

Ms Hole said. John Limpus, of About the House Asbestos Removal and Demolition, said demolition jobs were in demand in Blacktown because of the large number of older homes found in the area.

He said buyers should ensure they carry out an asbestos inspection and report before demolishing the existing home.

"Not removing asbestos

properly results in contamination of surrounding soil and exposing neighbours' properties to asbestos fibres," Mr Limpus said.

He said months such as May were preferable for demotion jobs due to the cooler weather.

Goyko and Milica Bandjen had their heart set on Strathfield when

they went looking for their ideal knockdown and found the perfect property at 70 Mintaro Ave.

The couple paid \$1.72 million in 2014 for what was then a three-bedroom Californian bungalow which had been offered to the market for the first time in 60 years. In its place they built a five-bedroom, five-bathroom home.

They employed an architect to design the rebuild, before taking over the project themselves.

"(We wanted) a double garage, pool, five-bedrooms with one bedroom on the ground floor, two living areas, a big kitchen, impressive bathrooms, lots of storage and a big, practical outdoor area," Mrs Bandjen said.

The completed property is now for sale through The Joneses' Reece Theedam.

Comparable sales in Strathfield include 31 Coventry Rd, which sold in March for \$4.6 million, and 80 Barker Rd, which sold in July last year for \$5.04 million.

The couple said the most important features they looked for



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in a knockdown included location, land size and any easements that could affect the dwelling.

“Think about it very carefully before you make this decision, unless you already have experience in building,” Mr Bandjen said.

“It is harder than it might appear in theory and most likely much more expensive.”



**Goyko and Milica Bandjen used an architect to design the rebuild of 70 Mintaro Ave, Strathfield, before taking over the project.**