Hackett residents are worried the face of Bragg Street and others in the inner north suburb will change forever with the building of townhouses on a cluster of former Fluffy blocks. Resident Tess Horwitz said of Bragg Street's 31 houses, four are among the asbestos-contaminated cohort and slated for demolition. Adjacent Brennan St has another two contaminated homes and another is directly opposite, on the adjoining Mackenzie Street. "Some streets are already full of razed scars," she said. "Nearly all of those blocks can now be zoned for dual occupancy, and it will be developers who buy them and then have to maximise their profits to cover the inflated prices." In all, Hackett has 29 Fluffy homes. Mr Horwitz said it was the worst hit of any inner-north suburb. The government has rezoned Fluffy blocks that are over 700 square metres in size, to allow dual occupancy and separate titles - essentially allowing townhouse-style development in suburbs where it is currently outlawed. As many as 771 of the 1021 blocks can be rezoned, and the government expects the value of the blocks will increase 25 per cent as a result. It expects to net an extra $90 million or $100 million by the rezoning. The zone change is a way of clawing back some of the cost of the demolition scheme, but former Fluffy owners have complained it puts the blocks further out of their reach if they want to buy their land back and rebuild. But Ms Horwitz said dual occupancy would "pack two premises on a very small block". "The residents are passionate about the quietness, the green of Hackett and the close community," she said, concerned about maintaining the character of Bragg Street, which she said had old street trees, established gardens and long-term residents. Residents of Bragg and nearby streets have signed a petition, which was tabled in the ACT parliament on Wednesday. "Multiple occupancy developments that cover the block with houses, driveways and prominent garages, leaving no space for any garden, are environmentally disastrous hot spots that destroy the consistency of green streetscapes and impact on the wellbeing of communities," the petition said. "We care for our streetscape and our community. We are grieving the loss of valued residents through the Mr Fluffy crisis. We are anxious about the impact on the character of our area." It called on the government to restrict how much of each block could be built out, and on height and scale, a limit on concrete pads, an assurance of garden set-backs and the conservation of street trees. A spokesman for the Environment and Planning directorate said only eight of the Hackett blocks came under the dual occupancy planning rules. The rest were below the 700 square metre cut-off or already in an RZ2 suburban zone. It was up to the new owners of the blocks whether to develop them as dual occupancy blocks, and if they did they would need to submit a development application, which would include consultation with neighbours.

Hackett residents from left Shan Short, Tess Horwitz, Jack Taylor, Theresa Layton, and Bev Hogg, worried about the impact of townhouse development on the Fluffy blocks in their suburb. Photo: Rohan Thomson

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Hackett resident Tess Horwitz with a petition calling for careful development on razed Fluffy blocks in the suburb. Photo: Rohan Thomson

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