

The clean curve of the raised planter draws the eye around the garden and enhances the sense of flow.

TICKING THE BOXES

A space-maximising design has created a garden that meets a busy family's multiple needs

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Pet-friendly? Tick. Places where the kids can play and the parents can entertain? Tick. A warm sense of welcome for visitors? Tick. This garden, designed by Steve Warner from OUTHOUSE design and constructed by Outside Space, ticks all the boxes.

"The homeowners had spent many years focusing on the house construction. It was a knock-down rebuild project and

the process had taken its toll on the landscape. We inherited a rusty boundary fence, a great deal of builders' rubble and poorly considered stormwater pit locations," says Steve. "It was time to help our client re-engage with the outdoor space and ground the house into the garden. In doing this, the plan was to deliver three key activity zones: an open lawn area suitable for ball games, a pet-friendly entertaining space for all to enjoy, and a side utilities area."

The garden's easy flow is evident from the moment you arrive at the front door, as is its arresting planting scheme. "Planting is paramount to any successful garden and can make the difference between an okay garden and an amazing garden," says Steve.

The planting palette ensures visual interest year-round. A stroll around the garden reveals mass-planted society garlic, groundcovers of native violet and dwarf mondo grass, screening plants such as *Acmena smithii* 'Hot Flush', feature



TOP LEFT The raised deck includes in-built seating for the family and a kennel for their pet dog Diesel. **LEFT** The natural tones of the Lichen tiles and the timber decking complement the planting scheme. **ABOVE** Mass planting gives the entry garden a sense of welcome and creates a very lush look.

“The strong lines and curves of the garden beds and walling complement the house and contrast the planting”

shrubs that include bird of paradise, Indian hawthorn, Japanese pittosporum, gardenia, viburnum and liriopse, and *Cercis canadensis* ‘Forest Pansy’ feature trees.

The strong lines and curves of the garden beds and walling complement the house and contrast the planting. “The rendered masonry walls have an acrylic finish that delivers a clean, durable surface and as the walls were used front and back, they maintain a unified look,” explains Steve. “These walls are essential to this garden as they draw the eye around the space while acting as a key structural item that supports the deck and steps,” he adds.

Decking was installed to extend the undercover entertaining area out into the garden and resolve the problem with the stormwater pits. “Due to a number of large stormwater pits we needed to maintain an unobstructed overland flow pathway, so a raised deck was the natural solution,” says Steve. “We installed access traps into the deck to make maintenance easy.”

Acting as a visual connection between the rear and side garden, the deck also features built-in seating and a safe, dry external kennel for Diesel, the family dog. To complement the natural colour of the timber, Steve chose warm-toned Lichen tiles for the paved elements, resulting in a garden of great harmony.

