

BACKYARD BLITZ

Peaceful Haven



In October 1999 motorcyclist Stephen Deegan was involved in a horrific head-on collision with a car. He was severely injured and had to have his right leg amputated. Stephen's sister Fiona contacted the Blitz Team to ask for their help to complete Stephen's garden so it could become a haven during his continuing recovery. While the Blitz team got to work, Stephen and his wife Annette went to Sydney to catch up with Fiona, and to enjoy the sights on a Sydney Harbour cruise.

Landscape designer Jim Fogarty has turned a bare backyard into a gentle yet colourful refuge that's designed with Stephen's limited mobility in mind. A timber ramp leads from the rear of the house to a path that links the house and garage. Pergolas at either end of the backyard enclose the garden and give privacy. In spring they'll look splendid with flowering wisteria, which will also give shade through summer. Four crabapple trees will make a colourful canopy in spring, while the underplanting of blue and pink hydrangeas and fragrant catmint will create a calming atmosphere in the heat of summer. Matching benches at either end of the central lawn face a bluestone birdbath, so the birds can enjoy the garden too.



Adapting this plan to your garden

Make a detailed scale drawing of your backyard (eg 1:100) showing the location of the house and major features then incorporate the desired elements from our makeover. As your garden will be a different size you will need to estimate the amounts of materials you will require.

Note: On your plan show the locations of any services (water pipes, sewerage, power, phone, etc) so you can avoid damaging them during the makeover.

Permits and approval: council permission is required to remove some trees, and may be required for some structural work. Neighbours need to be consulted about new boundary fences. If they don't agree with your proposed fencing idea, you are legally entitled to build your new fence on your own property - eg just on your side of the boundary line - provided it meets local council requirements.

Pergola and ramp: oregon timber was used for the pergola, with all surfaces receiving two coats of timber decking oil. The following timber sizes were used: posts 100x100x3300mm; beams 200x50x6600mm; cross beams 200x50x3000mm.

Posts were mounted on galvanised metal stirrups, that were dynabolted into concrete pads in the ground. Beams were attached to the posts using galvanised coach screws and galvanised right-angle brackets.

Galvanised wires were tensioned between the two end beams to create a climbing frame for the wisteria. These wires were tensioned using screw-eye screws, turnbuckles and wire-



rope grips.

A timber ramp from the back of the house was built using lengths of 90x45mm treated pine and 90x19mm decking boards.

Hot water service screen: treated pine posts (100x100x2400mm) were installed in the ground using rapid-set concrete and square lattice (1800x1200mm) was connected to them. Treated pine (75x38x2400mm) and L-shaped treated pine scotia (50x50x10mm) was used to finish the edges of the lattice.

Drainage: an agricultural drain was installed in the garden bed at the rear of the house. A 90mm ag-pipe was wrapped in geotextile fabric, laid into the trench and backfilled with 20mm blue metal. The ag-pipe was connected into an adjacent stormwater pipe.

Fences: existing timber fences were painted with Dulux 'Hurricane' (\$60 for 4 litres). We hired an airless spray gun for 4 hours for \$100.

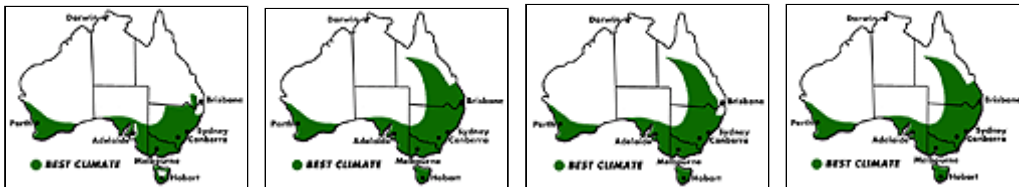
Garden beds and lawn: organic clay breaker and topsoil were incorporated into the clay soil to improve its structure. Turf underlay was spread evenly to a depth of 100mm prior to laying the turf. All of these materials are available from landscape or building materials suppliers. The organic clay breaker cost us \$48/m3. We used mushroom compost as a mulch.



Plants

We used small flowering trees, fragrant climbers, cool climate turf and flowering shrubs.

Camellia (*Camellia japonica* 'White Waratah'), crabapple (*Malus ioensis* 'Plena'), blue and pink hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*), catmint (*Nepeta x faassenii* 'Smokie Blue'), bergenia (*Bergenia cordifolia*), flag iris (*Iris germanica*), wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) and tall fescue turf.



camellia
bergenia

catmint
hydrangea



crabapple



flag iris



tall fescue turf



Cost and availability

We used mature plants in our makeover in order to create an instant effect for television. Our total cost of plants and materials was \$12,311 (including four super advanced crabapples). This cost could be reduced to \$7820 by using smaller plants.

- 'Bluestone' pavers (450x450x40mm) from Haddonstone cost about \$55/m² (including GST). Phone: (02) 9358 6688 (head office) for distributors.
- All timber was oiled using Cabots timber decking oil available from hardware outlets and timber suppliers, cost \$57 for 4 litres.
- Bluestone Birdbath from Flagstone in Melbourne, cost \$227. Phone: (03) 9785 1516.
- Timber garden benches from A Weekend Garden Furniture Company in Melbourne, cost \$475 each. Phone: (03) 9877 9766.
- Glazed terracotta pots from Kellock Trading in Melbourne, cost \$90 each. Phone: (03) 9421 2590.
- Most of the selected plants are available at nurseries, or ask your nursery to order them for you.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores, building suppliers or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire.

Getaway Details

Accommodation: The Stamford Plaza, Double Bay, 33 Cross St, Double Bay, NSW, phone: (02) 9362 4455. Tours: Captain Cook Harbour Cruises No 6 Jetty Circular Quay, Sydney, NSW, phone: (02) 9206 1122.

Acknowledgements

Jim Fogarty, landscape designer, phone: 0419 571 856 web: www.jimfogartylandscapes.com.au
Construction by the Backyard Blitz team.

For more **Step by Step Constructions** [click here](#)



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