



Take a swim in a stunning pool surrounded by luscious foliage.

**ENHANCE YOUR HERITAGE**  
environment



Paying tribute to this grand garden's heritage and the environment threw some major obstacles into the path of construction



Combining an outdoor area's theme with "eco awareness" is a very important priority for Artview Landscapes. For this project, the presenting theme was heritage. In 2008, Artview Landscapes won the 2008 Landscape Contractors Association of NSW award for Eco Awareness Residential. This challenging garden project on Sydney's North Shore is an example of how Artview Landscapes incorporates sustainability into the projects it undertakes.

The brief for this outdoor project surrounding a large, beautiful turn-of-the-century-style home was to build a stylish, understated front garden to match the charming character of the house front and streetscape and a functional, enjoyable entertainment haven out the back.

In addition, the new space was to have a connection with the original environment yet retain original trees, plants and stone. Brian Baker of Artview Landscapes cleverly incorporated "eco awareness" for the environment with Andrew Davie's heritage design theme. However, he found the existing landscape would not yield without a fight.

Towards the back of the garden and the tennis court, drainage was an issue. Before the landscape works, the surface to the rear of the tennis court was sloping downwards and away from the road. It was often drenched, even days after rain. The client, Brian and Andrew Davies of Eden by Design agreed on the final solution of an above-ground water tank.

This problem has been reduced through the implementation of a water tank. By capturing more ground water off the tennis court as well as roof water, the water is instead fed into the water tank. It also promotes sustainability

by helping reduce the dependence on mains water. Water run-off was also reduced by increasing the size of garden beds and cultivating the heavily compacted soils to increase water absorption.

During construction works, Brian had other responsibilities, ranging from looking after a couple of four-legged residents to keeping peace with the neighbourhood. All deliveries, therefore, became smaller and more frequent to cater for occasional traffic chaos stemming from the nearby highway.

Existing root zones were also an issue for construction. Trees planted at the house's inception in both the front and the rear gardens had grown to considerable heights and established roots could not be breached in excavation.

As mentioned, preserving and maintaining the original flora was essential, but fortunately Artview Landscapes is apt at seeking other alternatives and finding solutions to achieve the desired outcome. The existing plant life also posed an access limitation that Brian needed to overcome for the transportation of materials through to the rear garden.

Brian constructed a garden that is a delight to clients, pets and guests alike. Considering the scale of the project, Brian's attention to detail in all elements of construction connects the heritage house perfectly with its more natural surroundings and the original environment.

With the environment in mind, a primary consideration was to reuse stone from the original site, so Artview Landscapes combined the old with the new. The original stone from the front paths was lifted and relaid, and stone was also removed from the client's cellar and reused to build the stone plinths and stone wall

Grassy areas are plenty in this eco-aware home. Below Existing root zones were an issue but Brian and team were about to find a way to create a gorgeous garden feature while preserving the existing fauna. Opposite page above Garden features add a special touch to the lavish landscape. Opposite page below Stepping-stone paths adds interest to the landscape while an undercover outdoor setting can enjoy the peacefulness of the gardens.

near the tennis court and front yard.

The stone walls are reminiscent of the sandstone used in the formal front garden pathway and in plinths that mark the journey from front gate to front door. Though Brian ensured materials were kept consistent, the stone theme was kept throughout to complement all outdoor elements, the distinctive ambience in these two garden areas is pleasantly surprising.

A formal feel has been achieved in the front yard by the meandering stone pathways that travel under the giant arms of well-established cedar trees and pass by an elegant water feature sourced from Eden Gardens. The outlook from the back verandah, however, is full of energy and life, achieved by flowing foliage, bright colours and careful attention to detail.

In yet another nod to the environment, the soil was composed of reused waste. Artview Landscapes then planted all of the plants, which are an interesting mix. Highlighting this scene are bromeliads, ravishing burnt-red leaves against tennis court-green.

Plants also add vibrancy to the space through their form and colour. A key example is the combination of green, yellow and purple foliage gushing forth over stone retaining walls — plants such as *Alpinia*, *Pelargonium*, *Heliotrope*, *Convolvulus*, *Alternanthera*, *Liriope* 'Silver Dargon' and many more. The colour of the plants selected enhances the natural sandstone, reflecting its raw, natural beauty and creating an ambience that complements the existing flora.

An important achievement in this space is the way built and natural elements marry to achieve both functional and aesthetic appeal for a very active and social family. With children fast growing into teenagers, the inclusion of a pavilion allows family and guests to enjoy their outdoor space no matter the weather. And even the Dalmatians are happy, with their own stretch of lawn to bask, fetch, paw around and play in.

It is now a place for the family to sit and reflect, a place to relax and laugh in, to pick fruit and burn some energy. Enhance your environment — these owners most certainly have.

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