

MODERN RETREAT

With a garden stuck in the past, this outdoor area was in desperate need of an inspired modern renovation

Words Kate McKee



ABOVE Pops of Mandy's favourite colour through the use of red in the Bespoke cushions and the red rabbit personalise the space.

RIGHT Bifold doors were added to really open the garden up to the house and to create the flow between indoors and outdoors.

The existing callistemon provide a beautiful canopy and dappled shade.

Landscape Designer Adam Robinson of Quercus Gardens attests to the fact that this garden was well and truly caught in the 1990s and was in dire need of a complete makeover. The owners were entirely on board and wanted to contemporise the space in order to make more room for a usable living area for entertaining as well as a place to relax.

The biggest obstacle initially to the revamp was the sheer volume of material that needed to be removed from site quickly. Large jagged garden beds needed to be removed, which made up over 40 cubes of waste that needed to be removed completely from site. Sheer muscles and several skips solved this problem, but then there was the issue of the 40 fish in the rear garden pond that needed a new home. This issue was solved with the fish being lovingly transported to a new home by way of several large garden buckets.

Some of the key elements that the owners required from their renovation were that it had to have accessible storage and lots of greenery for the owner Mandy, who works long hours and travels frequently. The garden also needed to be as low-maintenance as possible, without being no maintenance. A tropically inspired lush urban oasis ticked all the boxes and was clearly the way to go.

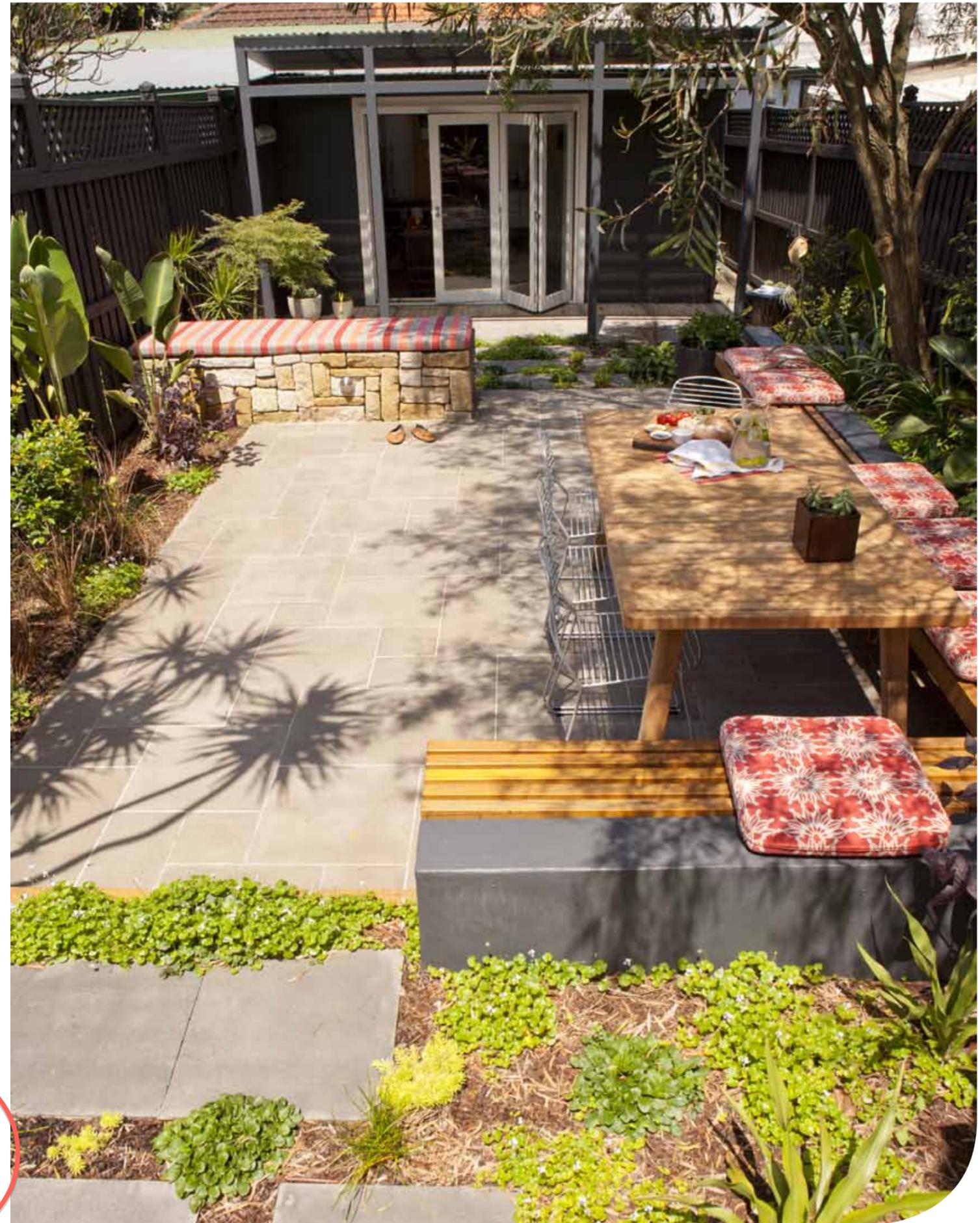
The new design left the jagged look garden and beds that made the garden look smaller than it was in the past and it now has a more open appearance. It also gives the illusion that the space is a lot larger than it really is. The garden now has room for relaxing with friends, reading a book quietly in the rear of the garden on the sofas or relishing some horizontal time on the beautiful sandstone daybed.

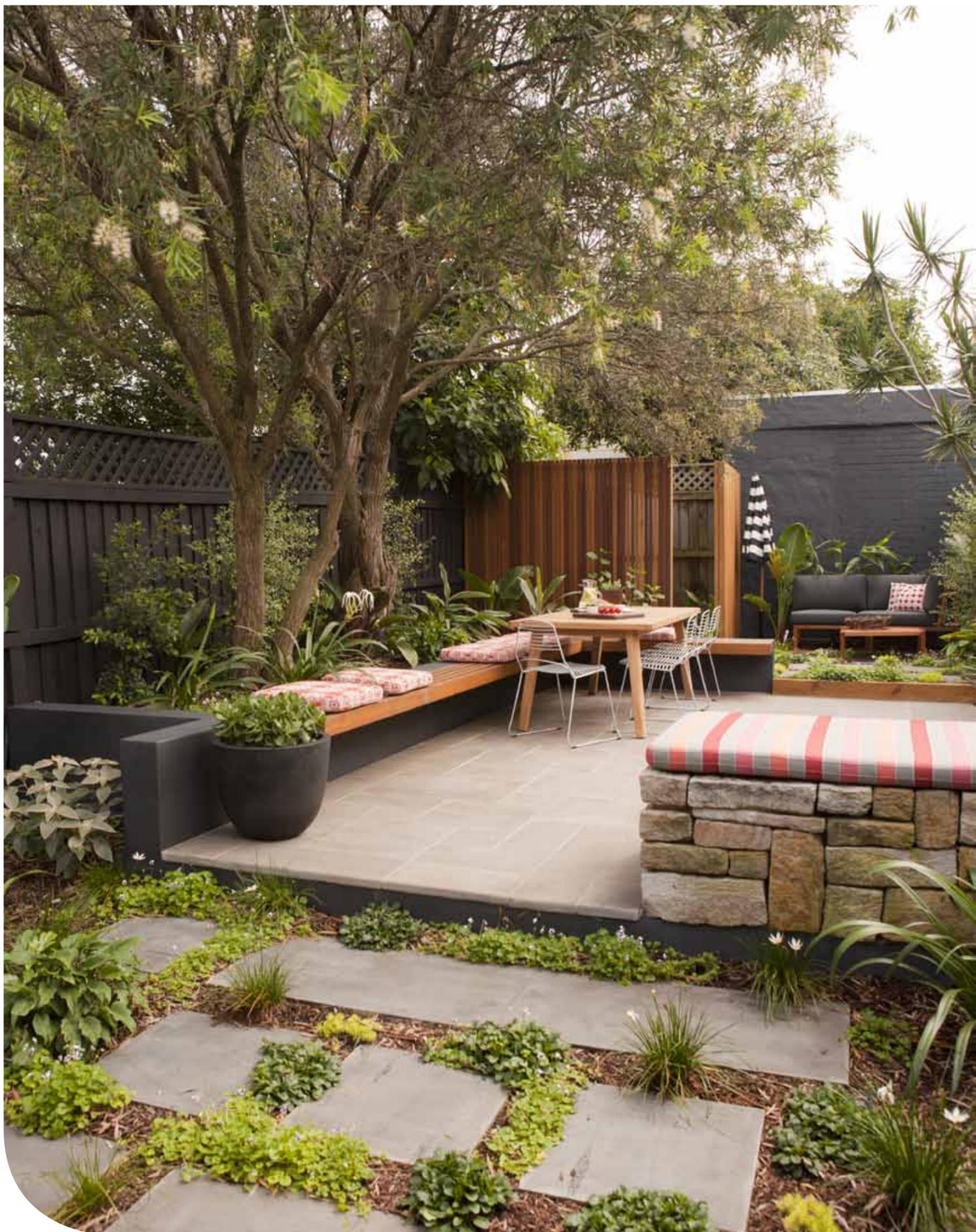
The workmanship on the garden is clearly exceptional. The attention to detail on the features such as the cantilevered seat, the paving, and the handcrafted day bed, ensures that the mix of materials pulls together with a stunning professional finish.

The use of modern pavers from Eco Outdoor and the inclusion of the sandstone daybed contribute to the modern approach of the outdoor living area. Simple lines and a varied number of spaces for living allow for a contemporary, yet welcoming space.

As the back of the house faces north, the pergola was built to extend upwards, in order to make the most of the northern sun and to allow it to flood into the house.

To soften the Bluestone tile steps that lead from the house





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ABOVE The entertaining area was paved with Eco Outdoor Modular Coco Paving.

LEFT The day bed has been placed where it receives sun for most of the day.

to the entertaining area and shed, ground cover such as Carpet Bugle weed, Native violet, Stonecrop gold mound and Autumn crocus were added for interest and greenery. The groundcover softens the edges of the pavers and the harder materials, while providing colour and bloom – with no mowing required.

A grand cantilevered seat was built in the main section of the garden, its size allowing for a large extended table to fit many. The barbecue was placed in close proximity to the house to allow for fuss free cooking and entertaining. The creation of new bespoke bi-fold doors allows for the indoor/outdoor areas to flow seamlessly and continue onto the garden. The dining table was designed to be positioned underneath the two existing Bottle Brush trees for protection from the midday and afternoon sun in the warmer months.

The original two storage sheds were replaced with one that was screened with hardwood. Owner Mandy has now deemed it 'The Royal Shed'. The fence is one of the only existing elements of the previous garden, but it needed to be re-painted. 'Sam Lucky' in low sheen from Murabond was selected to breathe new life back into the fence.

Up lighting was placed underneath the cantilevered seating and is peppered at key points throughout the garden for effect. Mood lighting rather than security lighting was used to highlight

features of the garden in the evening, as well as provide practical illumination for night-time drinks and socialising.

As Mandy sought a slightly tropical feel to her outdoor space, the Quercus team include large leafed plants, foliage colour and plants with informal habits. The plants used for screening the area includes; Pittosporum 'Super Screen', Syzygium 'Resilience', Strelitzia nicholii and Thysanolaena maxima. Mandy now enjoys the planting in her garden and has discovered a love of 'trimming' the plants and has been inspired to care for her beautiful garden.

The overall design has successfully reflected the owner's initial brief. Separate zones that have been created with the clever planting, stunning garden furniture and specifically selected materials. These living areas have really encouraged Mandy to make much more use of her outdoor area. There has been several parties, morning breakfasts and relaxing afternoons since the new garden was created. ✨

Landscape design Quercus Gardens
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