

Bradbury hillside garden

Bradbury is a little gem tucked away in the Adelaide Hills not far from Mylor and on our first trip to here we fell in love with this area. The property we visited was equally tucked away, around a corner and down a little hill. The owners were keen to establish a large vegetable garden but needed our help with the initial design and construction of the beds.

There were two potential sites for the new garden. Although our preferred option and initial design was for a food garden close to the house, the owners opted for the site that is a little further away, and on a steep hill!!!!



The flat area just under the road entrance was one of the site options for locating a food garden.



This sloping hill was our clients' preferred option for the food garden.

Building an access ramp

First things first...access!!! There was quite a ground drop to get down to the sloped garden site. We had to seriously consider how to move the heavy hardwood timber and materials down there, not to mention the soil that our clients would use to fill the beds.

So our first job was to build a permanent access ramp. This would also give our clients easier access to and from the veggie garden.

A truck arrived and tipped a load of road base onto the spot and the digger was used to compact the soft base into a hard base.



Compacting the soft road base to construct the access ramp.



Looks like someone got bogged on the soft road base (but we won't tell anyone how Sally had to pull both Roger and the digger out of the bog with the Defender truck...).

Slopes and levels

Six raised hardwood beds would make up this garden, laid out in 3 rows. The tops of each bed would be level, but due to the uneven slope both down and across, the beds would be at different levels to each other.

String lines were used to mark out the ground position where the beds would be placed. Although each bed would be 60cm high on the upside and 80cm on the low side to account for the slope, it wasn't quite that easy. We had to trench out lines to exact measurements using our laser level so that when the raised beds were put into the ground the heights would not have to be adjusted. Precision engineering was required.



In the image above, you can see the string lines, the dug-out trenches, the plastic tree root barriers and the first bed being constructed in situ. The back side of the bed is 3 sleepers high (60cm) and the front side is 4 sleepers high to ensure the top of the bed is level across the slope.



Perfectly level on top!



All the side and end panels had to be constructed up on the flat area above the garden site and carried down the access ramp. Once set in place they were joined at the corners with steel plates.



Three beds in place – we are half way finished!

But no time to rest!

Up and down more hills with more large, heavy planks, on more freezing cold mornings.

Yep...we love this job!





All six beds finished.

After finishing the six beds and 10 full days of climbing up and down this slope carrying heavy panels, we had both grown legs of steel. It was almost a relief that we didn't have to fill these massive beds with soil – it was now up to the owner (by choice) to fill the beds with soil, cover the pathways and finish off the food garden.

Our job here was done. We were very happy with the final result and so was our client. They are off to a great start with this food garden and we wish them many productive years of growing, harvesting and eating fresh organic food.

We look forward to building more beautiful food gardens in the Adelaide Hills, so feel free to call us if you need some help!