



# Tranquil Views



TUCKED AWAY IN A VALLEY AND SURROUNDED BY A NATURAL NATIVE FOREST, THIS MAGNIFICENT SPRAWLING COUNTRY PROPERTY WAS A DREAM TO WORK ON AND THE RESULT IS A BREATHTAKINGLY BEAUTIFUL GARDEN FILLED WITH INTRIGUE AND DETAIL.

The sheltered location means that the property enjoys its own microclimate and the owners successfully grow a very wide range of small plants, shrubs and trees. It is jam-packed with many of the species keen gardeners dream of growing, including viburnum, iris, maples, silver birch trees and magnolias.

We were briefed to design a two and a half acre formal garden on a vacant piece of land adjacent to the house with a natural lake and an apple orchard beyond. The land was sloping so we used a series of terraces, in line with our policy of working with the land rather than rearranging it, leading to a large natural focal point – the big lake.





One of the most beautiful things about this garden is that it has been designed as a series of formal terraced ‘rooms’ that do not restrict views. The plantings within these rooms are informal, with wide beds playing host to an abundance of soft plantings. The use of compacted quartz underfoot is a soft alternative to paving. Ornamental pears have been used in avenues as deciduous borders, along with viburnum hedging and box hedging to enhance the feel – without restricting views.

The garden as a whole is a sensory explosion. Huge drifts of flowering plants create maximum impact as you gaze down to the lake, huge rotunda and formal pond that doubles as a pool. The owners say they love the scale of what we have done and that you can sit in the rotunda and feel totally surrounded by nature.

In spring, the entire property is heaving with blooms, from the apples in the orchard to the Louisiana iris, the wisteria perched on the pergola, the lavender and everything in between. In autumn, it is ablaze with colour. There are also magnificent collections of crepe myrtles, magnolias, flowering cherries, roses and maples. Even as a young garden it yields a magnificent vista, which time will only enhance.



*The lake has its own island with a new jetty and both are visited frequently by ‘The Girls’.*



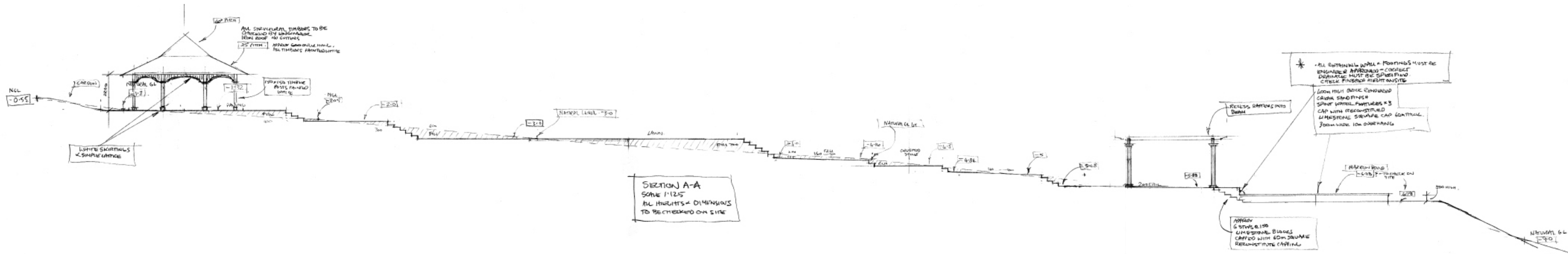
*The property is home to a flock of domestic geese that the owners refer to as ‘The Girls’. They are good guardians of the property and are very loyal to their owners.*



*It is difficult to appreciate the scale of the property until you look back from the opposite side of the lake. We had to be very careful when we planned the size of the rotunda: too small would be insignificant but too big would overpower the entire vista. The structure is open so that perfect days can be enjoyed to the maximum.*











**WATERWISE TIP**

On country properties, the use of swales in the slope of the land directs the water across the property, eliminates erosion and allows the water to soak into the ground.

The owners, John and Jane, have done a magnificent job in bringing our design plan to reality with the passion of true gardeners. Our site visits during the construction process to advise on levels and planting have been a pleasure as we have seen this garden emerge. A project of this scale shows the importance of having a professional design to work to. We thank them for giving us the opportunity to create this design and look forward to seeing it evolve into an amazing formal garden on a truly beautiful property.





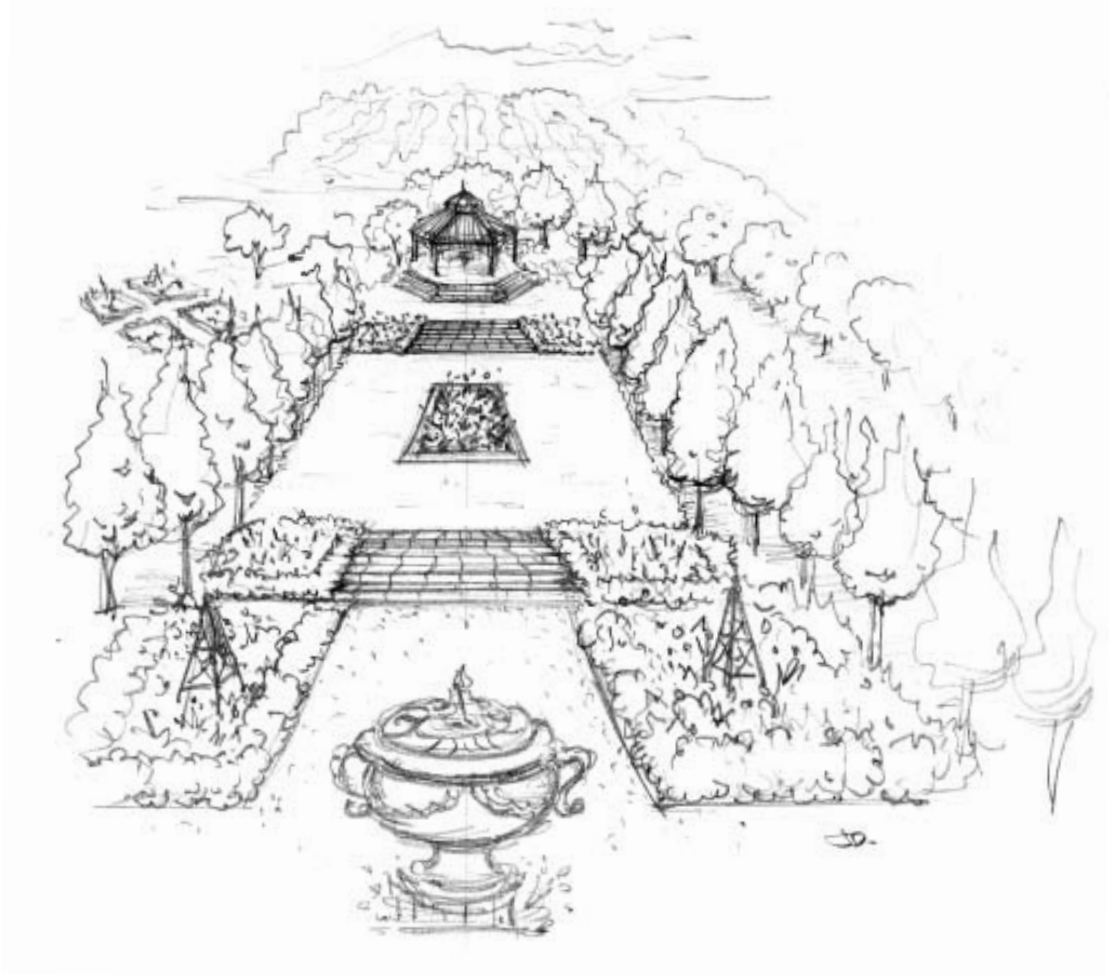


*The lavender terrace is a stunning addition to the property. When it is in flower it casts an expansive soft purple hue.*



*One of the showcases of the property will be the laburnum walk, recently planted by the owners. It will look spectacular in bloom.*

*Masses and masses of irises are clumped together to create the spectacular Louisiana iris terrace.*



*We planned the garden around a cross axis, so that all the key views are carefully integrated, adding an element of formality. This preliminary sketch shows Jenny's vision of how this would work.*





*When you drive into the property you immediately feel a sense of peace and tranquillity. The drive itself is lined with Bradford pears.*



*Edible gardens are planted in raised beds to keep their bounty safe from visiting wild rabbits.*



**LEGUMES**

Grow legume crops – these add nitrogen from the air into the soil, while their deep root system mines the soil and brings natural minerals up to the topsoil.

Over time legumes add carbon content to your soil and increase water retention.

**EXPERT TIPS**





## *Contemporary Meets Traditional*



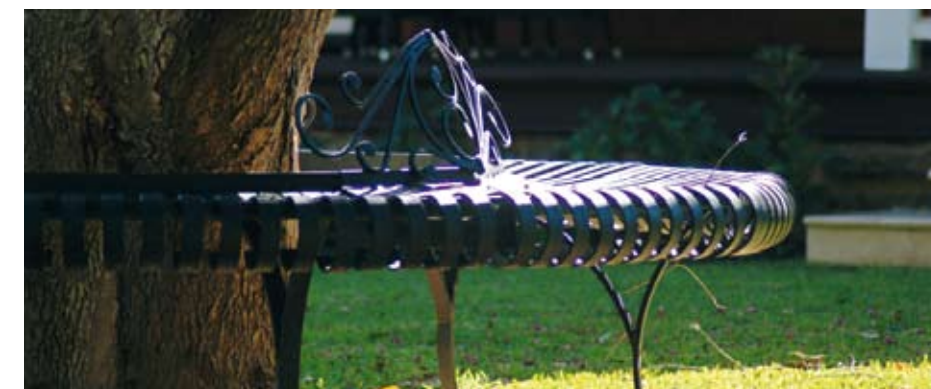
SITUATED ON A PENINSULA LOCATED BETWEEN THE RIVER AND THE OCEAN, THIS BEAUTIFUL HERITAGE-LISTED PROPERTY CATERS FOR THE NEEDS OF A VERY ACTIVE FAMILY WITHOUT COMPROMISING ON STYLE.

We felt the front garden should be reminiscent of a beautiful and traditional parkland overflowing with all manner of flowering plants including magnolias, princess lily, agapanthus, viburnum and frangipani. From the street you would never guess the secrets tucked away in the rear.

The front garden has a relaxed, romantic feel to it that mirrors the front facade. We brought in a mature frangipani to give balance and add a traditional effect to the front elevation.

The back yard is more modern and comfortably accommodates a spectacular lap pool, a tennis court, gym, and covered pool-house.





We chose to plant soft palmetto grass because, once established, it is drought tolerant and only requires two waterings per week in the middle of sizzling Australian summers. Most of the year, the grass survives solely on rainfall, and another bonus is that it is shade tolerant under the trees.

A geyser in the pond bubbles away, creating a sense of tranquillity. You can hear the moving water from the street, so that when you are walking by there's a sense of intrigue.



When it was opened publicly for the first time, visitors were amazed by the diversity of plantings in this garden. Included in the tree selection are crepe myrtles, various prunus, ornamental pears and maidenhair trees.



We used a lot of traditional flowering plants in the front garden. There are drifts of sage, statice, iris, roses, princess lily, agapanthus and thrift. We also sourced plants that are interesting. The result is a garden erupting with blooms throughout the year and with something to discover around every corner. Magnolias have been used for perfume and viburnums for hedging.

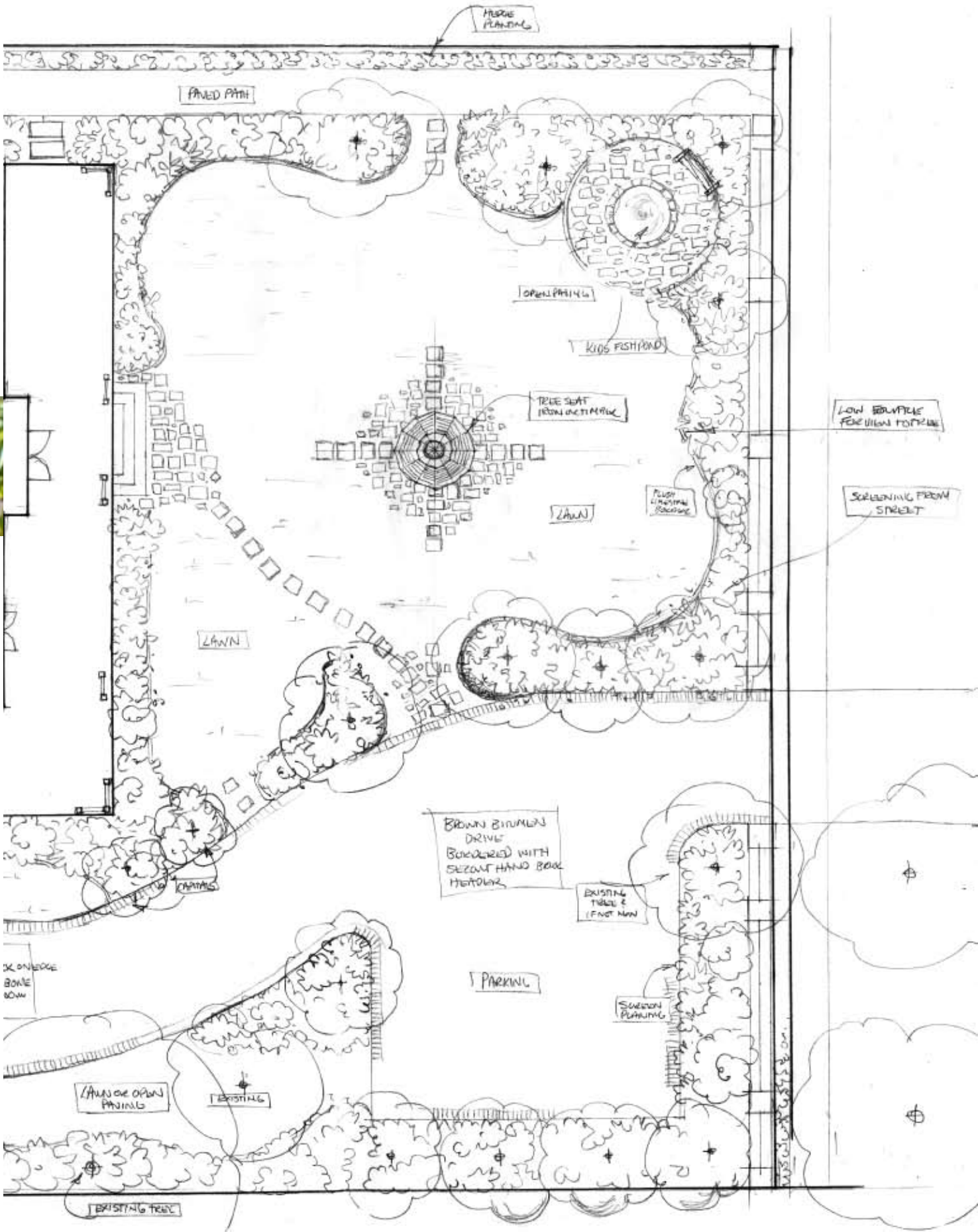


PLAN FOR GROWTH

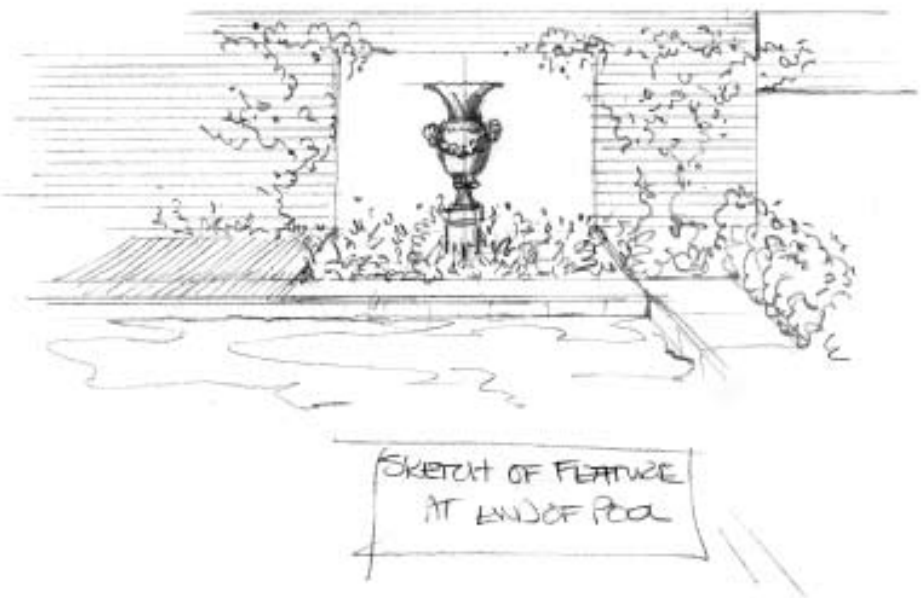
When creating a new garden avoid soil compaction and protect existing trees by fencing off the root zone: roughly the size of the canopy. If you don't, you could lose the tree.

EXPERT TIPS

To add interest to the big driveway, we used a combination of bricks, bitumen and hardwood. Most of the driveway is bitumen but we've used jarrah beams and red brick to create a feature and we've softened the edges with spilling ground covers such as carpet geranium, silver bush and spindrift.







In the back yard, our biggest job was to put together a very functional space where the family could indulge their active lifestyle. The challenge was to fit everything in and to make sure it suited the architectural style of the rear of the property.

The lap pool, lined with sparkling glass Bisazza tiles, is an inviting haven in the summer and a beautiful water feature in the winter.

That this property successfully moves from ultra-traditional to ultra-modern is a significant achievement. Being able to design, draw and create a garden from beginning to end gives us as designers the greatest satisfaction.



*The gardens and grass tennis court are watered using a mixture of bore and rain water.*







**WATERWISE TIP**

The water used in this garden is collected in tanks under the garage, where the bore and rain water are mixed and then distributed around the grounds. This way the impact on the water supply is minimised.



*We planted a poinciana in the front of the house to balance the existing lilly pilli. Eventually it will grow to create a shady canopy over the driveway where visitors can park their cars. We've given this tree plenty of space to grow because there is nothing worse than not allowing a tree to reach its full potential.*