

Paved with good intentions and eco-friendly solutions

○ OWEN RAYMOND

Creating driveways and patios with a difference, permeable paving is a forward-thinking and sustainable alternative to conventional paving methods.

"Permeable paving is an exterior hardscape surface, which is porous to allow water to drain through from the paving surface to the substrate below, assisting with subsurface water drainage," Trendsetter Homes Managing Director Michael Agostino said.

"This water is released back to the natural water table below at a controlled rate."

Midland Brick Commercial Sales Manager Chris Williams said the pavers themselves had a similar look to regular pavers in residential areas.

"The texture is a little different but the colours and sizes are almost the same," he said.

Mr Williams said permeable paving was an economical solution for certain builds.

"It is affordable, particularly if you look at the cost of putting it in a longer driveway or an area with extra driveways such as in units or big houses where there's quite a bit of paving," he said.

"It's very cost-effective, rather than having to put in big stormwater sumps and stormwater piping."

Trendsetter Homes recently used permeable paving in a five-unit complex in Nedlands.

"In this particular design, we utilised a mixture of exposed aggregate pads with permeable paving infills to provide a contracting material to break up what was a sizeable driveway," Mr Agostino said. "The overall finish was magnificent."

According to Mr Agostino, permeable pavers were also used in this project to comply with council regulations for drainage containment, as well client briefs and Trendsetter Homes' own specification briefs to provide a soft appearance to hardscaped areas requiring drainage.



Permeable paving can also be a valuable tool if you have existing trees and plants on your block.

"With conventional paving methods or concrete, when the trees get quite established, the roots can come up through the surface, break it up, and create bumps and damage because the water is taken deeper into the ground," Midland Brick Technical Manager Amelia Richardson said.

"If you use permeable paving, roots then tend to stay down, so there's sometimes less maintenance and less damage to the area if you want trees and a garden around your driveway."

According to Mr Agostino, the environmental benefits of permeable paving are a major reason for their growing popularity in new abodes.

"It has great advantages in terms of sustainability and environmental impact," he said. "Aside from its eco benefits, it is an excellent way to provide an architectural finish to what can be a typical solid surface treatment to a home."

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