

RMS Traders in Steffen Welsch Architects’ Life Cycle House

Words Deborah Cooke
Photography Tatjana Plitt



Santos Quartz Crazy Paving creates harmony between Life Cycle House’s interior and exterior spaces.

Traditionally, crazy paving has been primarily associated with the outdoors. But for Life Cycle House, an extension to a weatherboard home in suburban Melbourne, Steffen Welsch of Steffen Welsch Architects opted to think outside the box and laid RMS Traders’ Santos Quartz Crazy Paving throughout the entire ground floor. It was an inspired choice, not only imbuing the space with a sense of robust earthiness but also reflecting the firm’s deeply rooted sustainable practices.

“Sustainability, functionality and comfort are the three cornerstones of our designs and material choices,” says Welsch. “For the new floor of Life Cycle House, we wanted a solid material that could soak up heat and provide thermal comfort. Being low maintenance and suitable for a variety of uses were also important considerations.

“Although natural stone pavers are usually more associated with outside applications, they give the space a very warm feel, and the Santos Quartz flooring is crafted and beautiful.”

The two-storey extension comprises a kitchen, living and dining on the ground floor and children’s spaces upstairs. The crazy paving not only grounds the living space but continues into the garden, amplifying the indoor-outdoor connection. “Crazy paving as flooring is practical in a busy kitchen, as well as casual in a dining and warm in a lounge area,” says Welsch. “In addition, it can continue to the outside to extend the living room into the garden. Also, circling back to sustainability, it has a much lower carbon footprint than, say, polished concrete or concrete pavers.”

RMS Traders’ director Shaun Palkhiwala was delighted to see Santos Quartz paving – which is designed and made from organic stone pieces rather than broken tiles – utilised in Life Cycle House. “Most people commonly experience crazy paving done externally, so seeing it inside adds an unexpected element of visual interest,” he says. “Over the years, we have done many crazy paving jobs both internally and externally and it’s always a gorgeous way to showcase the stone.

“Life Cycle House has an earthy and warm colour palette, a very naturalistic feel – having a stone that is typically associated with being outdoors adds to that. The stone’s colours also perfectly match the aesthetic. Additionally, the Santos Quartz delivers seamless integration between inside and out, harmonising the home’s interior and exterior spaces.”

For Welsch, RMS Traders was the perfect partner in stone. “They are committed to climate action and have the right environmental policy in place, which is important to us,” he says. “We see all our projects as collaborative efforts and love to work with people who have good technical knowledge and are very good at their craft. RMS Traders are highly skilled, and we feel they gave our project the right attention and care to achieve such a satisfying outcome.”

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