



Flood-safe design

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A BRISBANE architect's house design, which could be used to help rebuild flood-stricken homes, has been named the winner of this year's LJ Hooker Home Design competition.

The winning design, by Dion Seminara Architecture of Brisbane, was one of 12 houses entered into the competition, which was co-sponsored by Future Housing Task Force and Archicentre.

"What we have learned in this design competition can be of great use in building and rebuilding in the Lockyer Valley and other flood-prone areas across the country," said LJ Hooker CEO, L. Janusz Hooker, who served as a competition judge.

"We believe the winning design sets new standards in flood-safe home design."

Up to \$63 billion of existing residential buildings, including as many as 247,600 individual buildings, are potentially at risk of inundation in Australia this century, according to Climate Change Risks to Australia's Coast, published by the Australian Department of Climate Change.

Ian Agnew, Queensland state manager of competition co-sponsor Archicentre, said the competition highlighted the important and vital role of architects in solving a major problem of flood-prone

areas and housing affordability through innovative design.

Mr Agnew believes the design competition provided valuable opportunities to look at safer, better ways to rebuild homes in flood-prone areas.

The winning concept home was built in a controlled environment, with the home being taken to the site in two parts and connected down the centre.

This means the building construction can be controlled and costs limited where possible. Such an approach also allows for mass construction.

With more than 20 years' experience in designing new homes and renovations, Mr Seminara's work has been described as some of Brisbane's leading lifestyle architecture.

"One of the main aims of the design was to provide for an easy clean-up after the flood with a flexible multipurpose use of the ground level for vehicles or storage," Mr Seminara said.

"The concept home has a flood clearance level of 4.5 metres to the first floor.

"This zone features materials and finishes which can be hosed down without damage.

"The design itself allows the water to flow through the building without placing pressure on the structure.

"The concept home is built on posts making it suitable for any sloping site and has the flexibility to be expanded through interlocking pavilion extensions.

"The environmentally friendly design features lightweight building materials and the concept home fits into both urban and bush environments."

The winning design will be built as a demonstration project by Ken Mitchell, director of Queensland Lifestyle Development Group.

Mr Agnew said all entries were of a high quality and fulfilled the entry criteria.

Each submission had to: successfully integrate flood resistant, energy efficient and sustainable design; meet or provide a well-substantiated challenge to requirements set by the Building Code of Australia along with local and statutory authorities; provide three bedrooms and not exceed 220sqm in size; provide undercover accommodation for two cars; be able to be constructed on a site with up to a 1:4 slope; be built from 80 per cent lightweight materials; have a construction budget not exceeding \$200,000, excluding consultants and authorities fees and permits, site preparation costs, service connections, site allowances, landscaping works and contingency.



Award winning: A Brisbane architect's flood-safe design allows the water to flow through the building without placing pressure on the structure