

Architect homes - from \$85,000

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ARCHITECT-designed homes, until now the preserve of only the top 5 per cent of the new-house market, will soon be within reach of families, first-home buyers and retirees operating on a low budget.

Max Pritchard, winner of a multitude of awards and one of our state's leading architects, has teamed up with the Hickinbotham Group to produce a series of standard houses that will combine the principles

of energy efficient, sustainable design in a range of affordable houses priced from as low as \$85,000.

The new designs, which Hickinbotham expects to be able to offer within the next couple of months, will be available in the firm's so-called "volume" building brands which make up most of the housing market.

"They're still being developed but we're confident they'll be priced around \$85,000 to \$150,000," Michael Hickinbotham said.

The partnership has

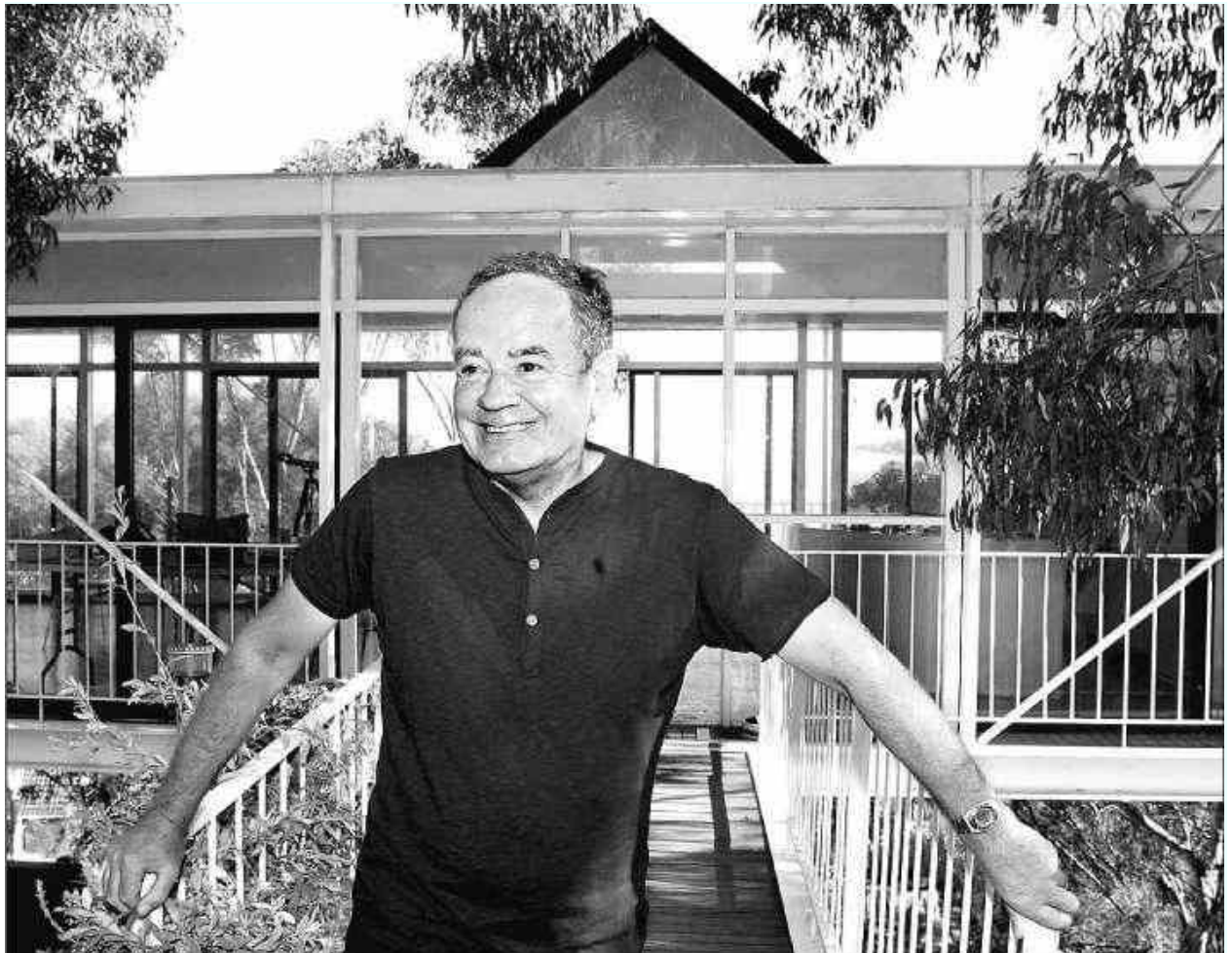
allowed Mr Pritchard to realise a long-held goal of improving on

the aesthetic and energy efficiency of houses at the lower end of the market. "If you're interested in affordable housing it's hard for an individual to have much impact because we just can't get one-offs built for anything like the price that the volume builders can," he said.

"That's one of the big advantages of teaming up with Hickinbotham," he said. "With their buying power and their whole organisation

they're able to build more cheaply, and if we can get those benefits of economical construction with some good design then I think we've got something unique that hasn't been offered by anyone else."

The houses will be built of lightweight materials, taking full advantage of the available space, unlike most project homes which tend to be rectangular structures that sit squarely on ever-smaller blocks.



VISION: Max Pritchard ... "something unique that hasn't been offered by anyone else".

Picture: SARAH REED