

OFFSET
OFFSET
HOUSE

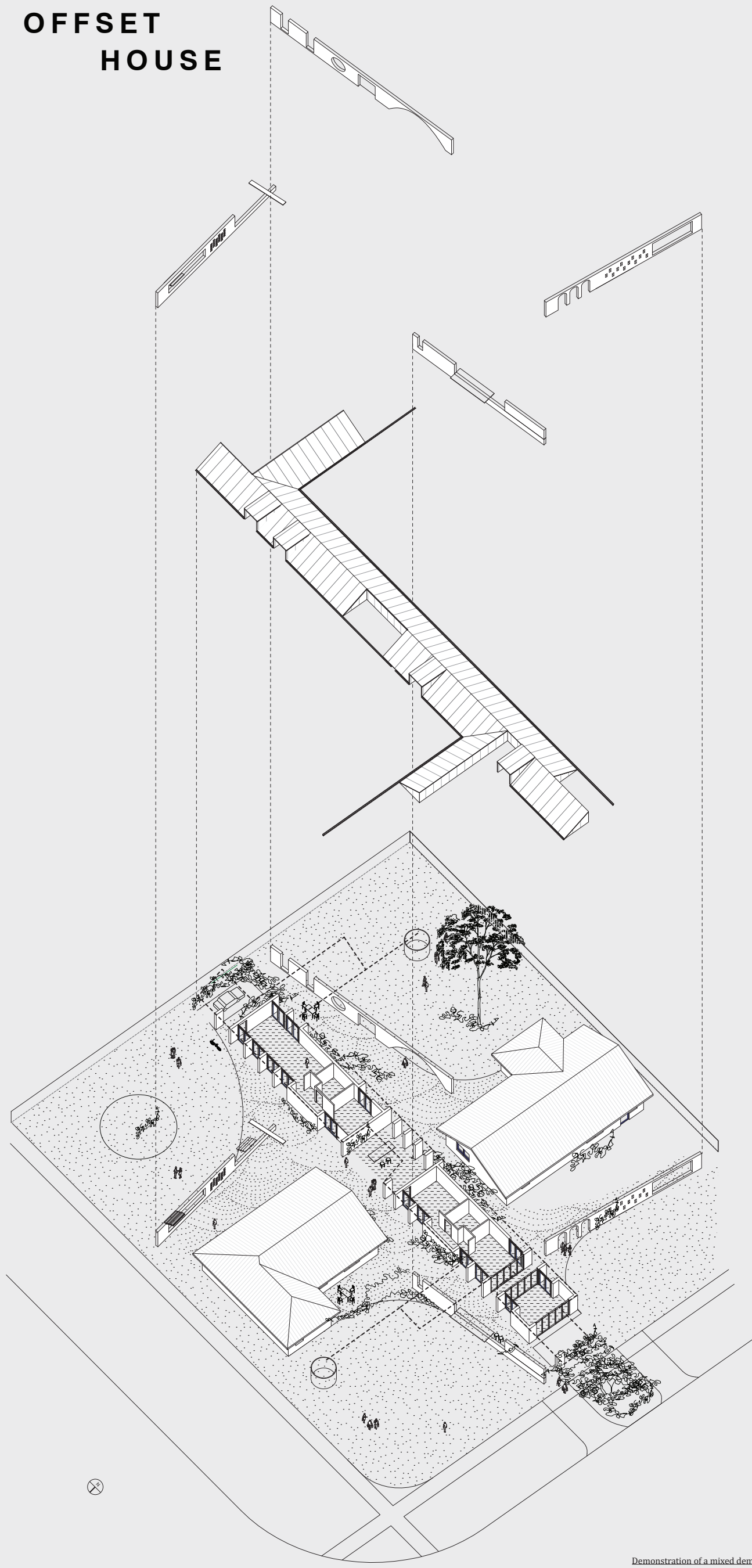
Demographic
Current housing models need to be re-addressed as the population's needs grow and change. Young adults and retirees shifting housing aspirations are notably acute. Young adults' transition into independence is now typically delayed compared to previous decades. This demographic are now more likely to be living with their parents, studying full time and are marrying later in life. 31% of young adults now move out of home only to return a few years later. Reasons for returning include a change in circumstance or to save money to buy their own home. The typical pattern of first home buyers has shifted from buying a new home to buying an older, established property. This trend suggests the desire to locate within an established suburb, which provides proximity to family and urban nodes. Retirees' habits have also changed. The current retirement village model needs a new approach which focuses on social interaction, shared open space and resources, as well as mutual caring and support. Through a new spatial approach reconsidering the relationship between the internal and external space, the needs will be better met.

Concept
Canberra suburbs offer fantastic opportunities to increase density amongst established existing housing stock whilst maintaining and enhancing its unique character and community. The proposal suggests a reclamation and activation of the spaces between existing dwellings that have been generated by planning regulations. These 'offsets' and their language of fence and hedge, are tangible representations of disconnection between neighbours and communities. The first move is to consolidate two or more blocks. This removes the boundary, reveals the dormant 'offset' and provides an opportunity for densification and better utilization of large characteristic landscape. Within the 'offset' space, an insertion of affordable modular housing is made from front to rear boundary. This insertion generates 2-3 more dwellings dependant on the site area.

The new arrangement and subsequent open space creates the opportunity for new forms of community sharing, cooperation and dwelling. The dwellings all face and back onto a gradient of private - communal open space. To mitigate these relationships and to fully utilise the retention of the large back and front yard spaces, a further insertion of brick infrastructure wall is 'offset'. This wall is located to accentuate certain relationships between dwellings and provide an infrastructure of fully and utility to alleviate the size of our generous blocks. These walls subtly encompass private open space and suggest a sense of connection to the increased site proportion. Landscape is still the accepted boundary between all dwellings, however the language shifts from that of boundary and fence, to that of garden room and utility zone. An 'offset' of connection rather than separation.

Architecture
The dwellings are a contemporary response to the traditional character of the neighbouring setting. This is achieved by interpreting the formal qualities of the existing, as modular expressions of form and material. The result is a flexible aesthetic/kit of parts that communicates a diversified and harmonious built fabric. Applied to this is a durable and raw material palette reminiscent of the surrounding fabric. Brick is selected for its flexible visual and construction modularity and for its ability to comply with an overall building system. Sustainability & Affordability
• The dwellings are designed to be passive solar, utilizing a Northern Orientation where applicable to minimise ongoing utility costs.
• Shared water collection and grey water reticulation is indicated as an obvious communal object. This system is much more affective across a shared development with community participation.
• Timber glazed doors are located at corresponding locations across the living modules to promote maximum opportunity for natural ventilation.
• Adaptable, simple modular design maximises efficiency and economy of scale.
• Reduced land costs through increased density

and subsequent lower land costs.
• Thermal Mass and cross flow ventilation to balance the thermal performance of the dwellings.
An indicative price tier 1 (Affordable Housing Action Plan - Phase 3) is nominated for the proposal of 1-2 bedroom dwellings (<80m²). The conceptual intent of the proposal is aligned with many of motivations the AHAP indicates. A more refined cost estimate is difficult given the variability of the proposed scheme and notional site plan.
The Territory Plan
The proposal suggests an experimental gradient of private - shared open space in an attempt to promote an improvement of community and affordability within a suburban context. The scheme purposely provides no clear demarcation of private open space to challenge the varying POS regulations of the Territory plan.



Demonstration of a mixed demographic site. This configuration represents a diverse mix of program and site activation. The dwelling at the rear contains retirees, semi dependant on relatives who are living in one of the existing dwellings. At the front of the site a young couple utilizes the reduced cost of a compact dwelling and shared spaces to accommodate an additional module of home office/studio.

