The humble Australian house was once the object of the Australian dream. Today, it is caught in a web of ever-widening financial speculation, a world where ‘housing’ is no longer a verb (to house), but a commodity. Our houses are increasingly the most overextending purchases of our lives, and increasingly an unachievable fantasy for the next generation.

So how do we accommodate ‘affordability’ in an environment where affordability is itself an incomplete taxonomy of potential room modules.

Houses and housing typologies are an amalgamation of rooms, in different combinations and in different conventions, but what if we saw the room as the base, financial, and base social unit of housing?

We propose a taxonomical approach to housing, whereby each individual house and housing typology is an exercise in modular house construction from an additive combination of a potential infinite selection of carefully crafted rooms.

For example, while a traditional nuclear family might suit an ‘off-the-shelf’ typological approach, what about a single work-from-home father with two children? What combination of rooms would be most suitable here?

By reducing the base financial and social unit to ‘the room’, developers and clients can work together to produce a unique, small-house type for every new client. A single father, a same-sex couple, an immigrant family, or a couple with no children can select only the rooms they want, and new housing typologies emerge from unique, case-by-case, modular construction exercises, and a plan for succession built into the planning of the microsuburb community. Microsuburbs could be proposed as small collections of small houses existing in infill or greenfields sites, alongside traditional development forms or in key, strategic locations.

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The microsuburb eventually reaches full saturation, as an over-time additive process. Each house is a unique typological experiment, combining modular rooms and modular constructions to present a dense, amenable and affordable lifestyle.