

# Australian residential architectural styles

*Suburbia is where the developer bulldozes out the trees, then names the streets after them.*

**Bill Vaughan, US columnist and author**

## Aim

To investigate the architectural styles of Australian suburbia in order to date the built environment

## Outcome

Having completed these fieldwork-based activities, students will have a good understanding of the residential architectural styles commonly found in Australian cities and the period during which such houses were built. They will also develop the skills of observing, recording and mapping data related to urban landuses and residential densities.

## Equipment

- Paper and clipboard (or journal)
- Pen and/or pencil
- Base map of study area
- Street directory
- Coloured pencils

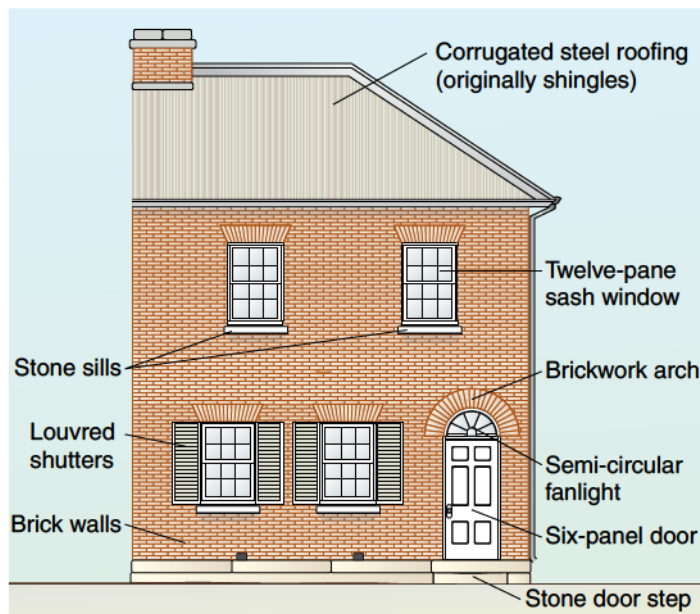
## Introduction

In this activity we investigate Australia's built environment with a specific focus on residential architectural styles.

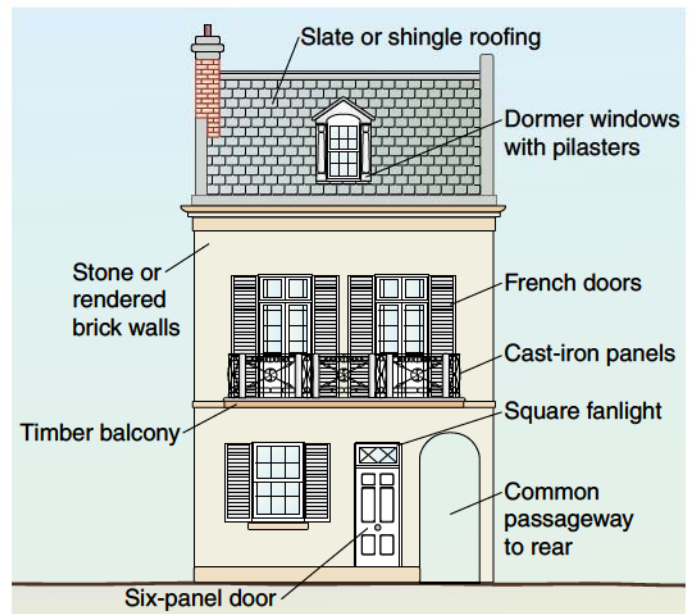
## Background

The homes in which we live have an architectural style that is characteristic of the era in which they were built. By classifying the residential architectural styles found in a community we can determine the era in which the built environment was developed. Australian distinctive residential architectural styles are listed in [3.20]. Some of these styles are shown in [3.14] to [3.18] on page 88–9 and [3.20] to [3.26] on page 90–1.

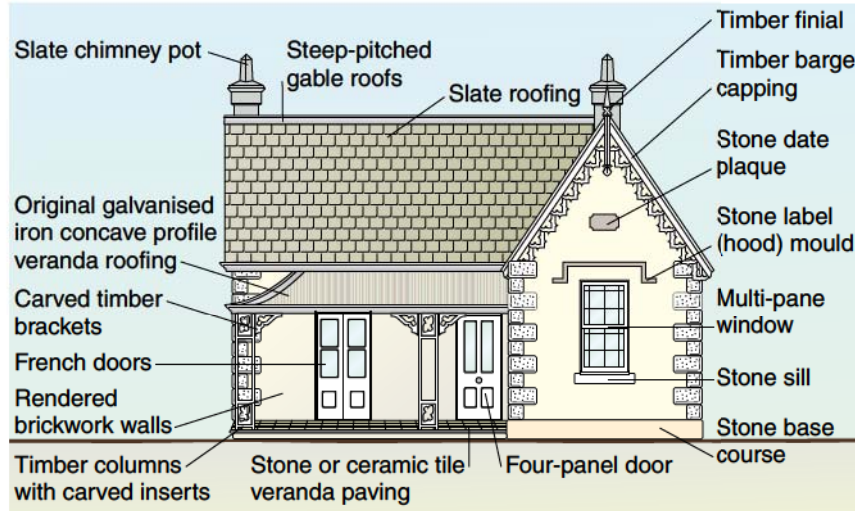
[3.14] Colonial (1788–1850)



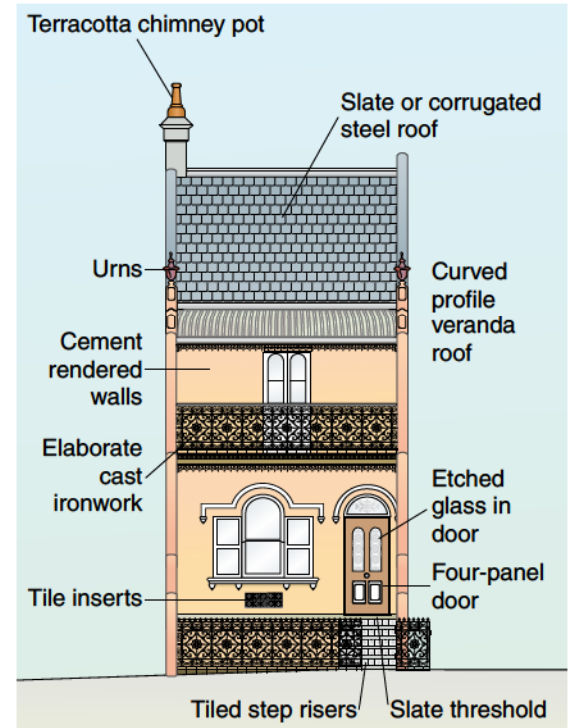
[3.15] Colonial Regency (1820–1860)



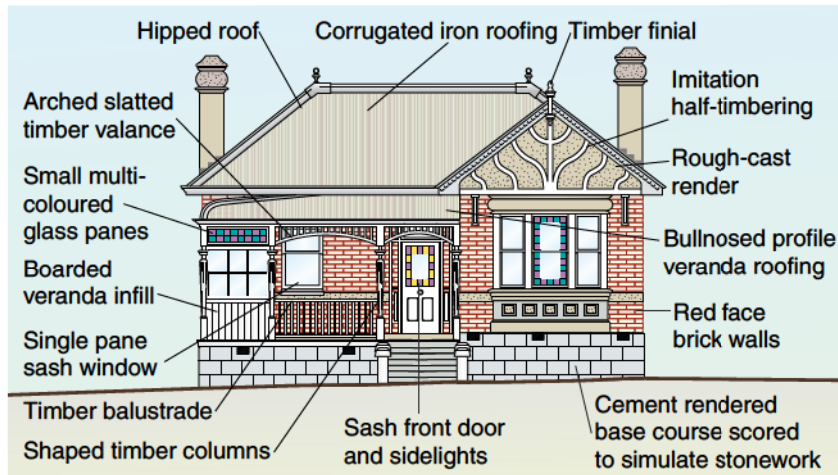
[3.16] Gothic revival (1840–80)



[3.17] Italianate (1865–90)



[3.18] Queen Anne (1885–1910)

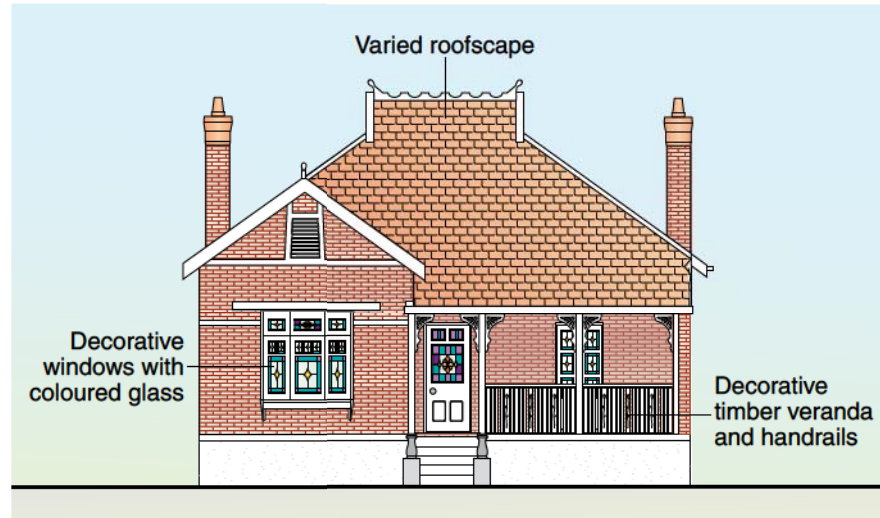


[3.19] Australian residential architectural styles and the era in which they dominated

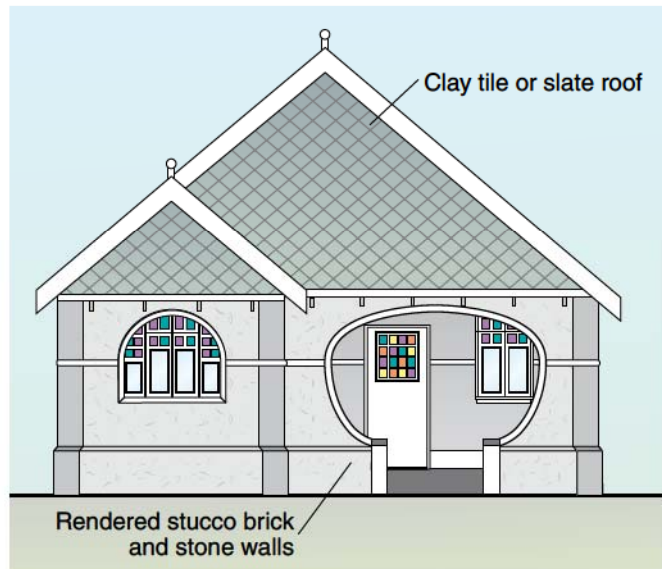
Period	Era	Period	Era
<b>Pre-colonial period</b>	30 000 BCE–1788 CE	<b>Inter-war period</b>	c.1915–c.1940
<b>Old colonial period</b>	1788–c.1840	• Californian bungalow	1915–1940 (see [3.22])
• Colonial	1788–1850 (see [3.14])	• Art Deco (including P&O style)	1920–1939 (see [3.23])
• Georgian	1800–1850	• Spanish Mission	1925–1939 (see [3.24])
• Colonial Regency	1820–1860 (see [3.15])	• Early modern (including fibro cottages)	1930–1940 (see [3.25])
• Greek revival	1830–1850	<b>Post-war period</b>	c.1940–1960
<b>Victorian period</b>	c. 1840–c.1890	• Waterfall (including late Art Deco)	1940–1950
• Gothic revival	1840–1880 (see [3.16])	• L-shape	1945–1955
• Early Victorian	1845–1865	• Triple-front (cream brick)	1950–1960 (see [3.26])
• Mid Victorian	1865–1880	<b>Late twentieth century</b>	1960–2000
• Late Victorian	1880–1900	• 1970s	1970–1980
• Italianate	1865–1890 (see [3.17])	• 1980s (eclectic)	1980–1990
• Boom style	1885–1892	<b>Twenty-first century:</b>	
<b>Federation period</b>	c. 1890–c.1915	• Federation revival	1990–2000
• Queen Anne	1885–1910 (see [3.18])	• Environmental	1995–
• Edwardian/Federation	1895–1914 (see [3.19])	• New modern	2000–
• Arts and Crafts style	1910–1920 (see [3.21])		



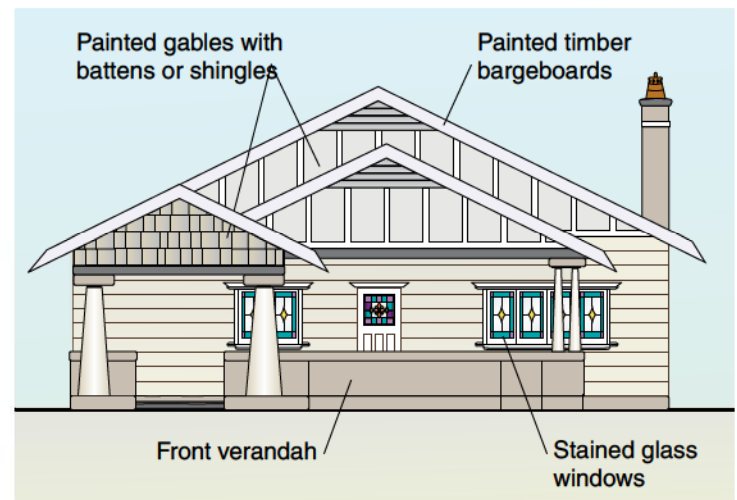
[3.20] Edwardian/Federation (1895–1914)



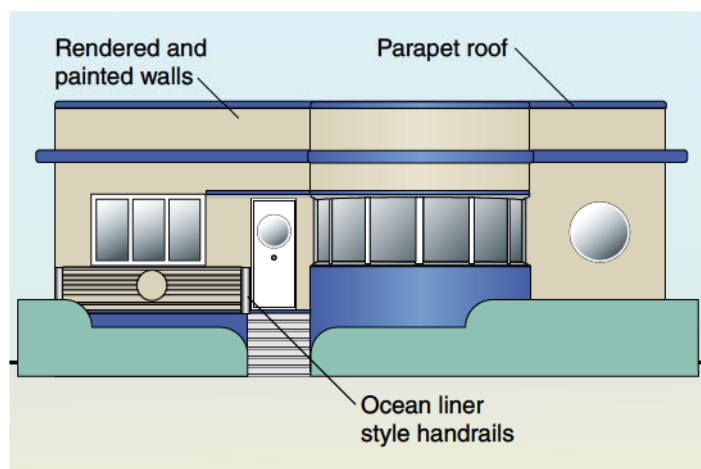
[3.21] Arts and Crafts style (1910–1920)



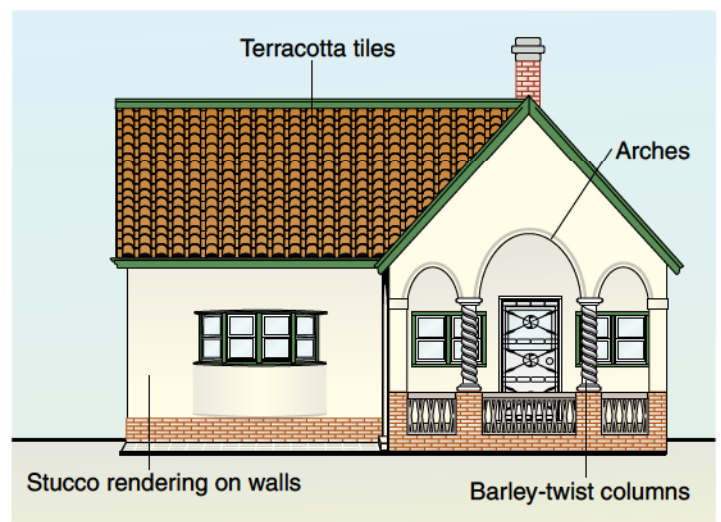
[3.22] Californian bungalow (1915–40)



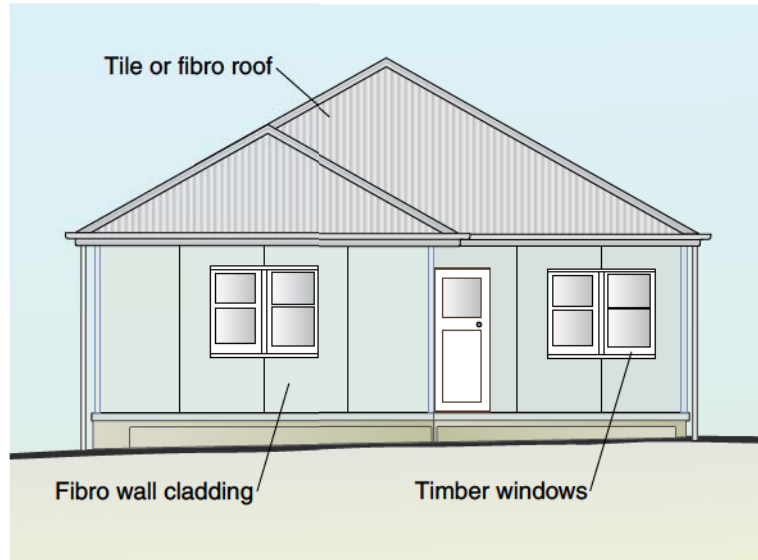
[3.23] Art Deco (including P&O style) (1920–39)



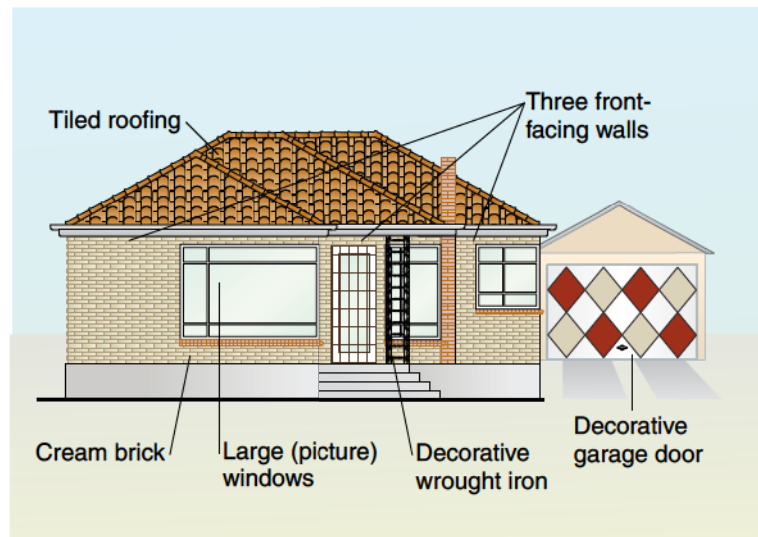
[3.24] Spanish Mission (1925–39)



[3.25] Early modern (1930–1940)



[3.26] Triple-front (cream brick) (1950–60)



## Fieldwork tasks

### Task 1 Identifying residential architectural styles

In this task you will develop your ability to identify the various residential architectural styles found in a selected urban area. This, in turn, will allow you to determine when the area was developed.

#### Procedure

- 1 Undertake research to find pictorial examples of the architectural styles listed in [3.19] (see page 89), but not illustrated in this fieldwork unit.
- 2 Visit three areas: an older inner-city suburb, a suburb established between World War I and World War II, and an urban area that has been developed since World War II. Use figures [3.14] to [3.18] and [3.20] to [3.26] on pages 88–91 to identify examples of specific residential architectural styles in each of these areas. Photograph examples of the styles you identify.
- 3 Date each area using the information collected.

- 4 Mount a wall display featuring the different architectural styles identified.
- 5 Select five different residential architectural styles identified during your fieldwork and then complete a copy of the following table [3.27].

[3.27] Residential architectural styles

Features	Style 1	Style 2	Style 3	Style 4	Style 5
Name of architectural style					
Building materials and external wall treatment					
Roofing materials and roofline					
Windows and their surrounds					
Distinctive decorative features					









## Task 2 Investigating landuse in your local community

All urban areas feature a mix of landuses. The way in which these are organised makes a major contribution to the character and physical appearance of the area. In this task you will undertake a landuse survey of your local area and construct a landuse map.

### Procedure

- 1 Obtain a base map of your local area. Your teacher may provide this or you can obtain it from the local council or a street directory of your area. Use the map to conduct a landuse survey of the landuses of your area.
- 2 Working in groups, divide the local area into smaller areas and allocate each group one of these smaller areas. Each group should be given a copy of the base map. Visit the area allocated to your group and observe the landuses present there. Using the classifications shown in [3.28] and [3.29] (pages 92–3), plot on your map the landuses you have identified. For example, a detached dwelling would be plotted in red and coded A1.
- 3 Use the colours of the land utilisation key [3.28] to colour-code your map. Add a further level of coding by making reference to the urban landuse key [3.29].
- 4 When you return to class, combine each group's data onto a master landuse map of your local area.

[3.28] Landuse key

Colour	Landuse
	Vegetation (scattered, medium and dense forest)
	Grassland
	Vacant (cleared): derelict and wasteland
	Agricultural landuses (e.g. market gardens, orchards)
	Commercial (retail, bulky goods wholesaling and retailing)
	Residential
	Industrial (e.g. utilities)
	Recreational open space (e.g. parklands, sporting fields, golf courses)
	Transport-related infrastructure
	Quarries, mines, landfill sites
	Water features

## [3.29] Urban landuse key

<b>Residential</b>	
A1	Detached dwellings (low density)
A2	Apartments, villas, townhouses, etc. (medium density)
A3	Residential tower blocks (high density)
A4	Hotels, motels, B&Bs, guesthouses
A5	Emergency accommodation (e.g. women's refuges, centres for the homeless)
<b>Retail</b>	
B1	Food retailers (e.g. supermarkets, butchers, bread shops, greengrocers)
B2	Fast-food outlets
B3	Convenience stores (e.g. chemists, newsagents, post offices)
B4	Specialist retailers (e.g. footwear and clothing, sporting equipment, florists, photographic stores, bookstores, music and DVD shops, jewellers)
B5	Consumer durables (e.g. electrical goods, computer stores)
B6	Household shops (e.g. manchester, kitchenware, hardware, furniture, fabrics)
B7	Personal services (e.g. drycleaners, shoe repairers, beauticians, hairdressers, travel agents)
B8	Department stores
B9	Other
<b>Professional and commercial</b>	
C1	Banks, credit unions, building societies
C2	Motorist organisations (e.g. NRMA)
C3	Insurance
C4	Legal services
C5	Accountants, tax agents
C6	Health services (e.g. doctors, opticians, dentists, chiropractors)
C7	Car parking stations
C8	Vacant commercial buildings
<b>Public buildings</b>	
D1	Hospitals, medical clinics
D2	Places of worship (e.g. churches, mosques, synagogues)
D3	Educational institutions
D4	Libraries, art galleries, museums
D5	Police, fire, ambulance
D6	Court houses
D7	Local government (e.g. town halls, tourist information centres)
D8	Public toilets
D9	Transport infrastructure (e.g. railway stations, bus terminals)
D10	Other
<b>Recreation and leisure</b>	
E1	Hotels, clubs, nightclubs, restaurants, bars, cafes
E2	Leisure centres (e.g. aquatic centres, gyms)
E3	Social clubs, community centres
E4	Cinema complexes, theatres
E5	Other
<b>Industrial</b>	
F1	Manufacturing plants
F2	Storage and distribution centres
F3	Business parks
F4	Utilities (e.g. electrical distribution centres, telephone exchanges, sewerage works, water-storage facilities)
F5	Vacant industrial buildings
<b>Open space</b>	
G1	Parks, gardens
G2	Sporting grounds, golf courses
G3	Agricultural land
G4	Roadways, open car parks
G5	Other



## Task 3 Investigating residential densities in your local community

In this task you will identify and map different residential densities.


### Procedure

- 1 Obtain a base map of your local residential area. It may be possible to obtain a map featuring individual blocks of land in an area from the relevant local government authority. Use the map to conduct a residential-density survey of your local residential area.
- 2 Working in groups, divide your local residential area into smaller areas and allocate each group one of these smaller areas. Each group should be given a copy of the base map. Visit the area allocated to your group and observe the residential densities present there. Take one block at a time and mark off, as accurately as you can, the residential density of each block of land. Each block is usually defined by fencing. Using the classifications shown in [3.30], plot on your map the densities you have identified. For example, a townhouse would be shaded orange.
- 3 When you return to class, combine each group's data onto a master residential-density map of your local residential area.
- 4 Observe the map of residential densities. Are any patterns evident? For example, is there a concentration of medium-density and/or high-density housing in specific areas? If so, can you identify any reason why such a clustering might occur? Is there a relationship between the provision of public transport and residential density?


[3.30] Residential-density key

#### Colour Landuse


##### *Low density*

-  Detached housing (bungalows with gardens)

##### *Medium density*

-  Villas
-  Dual occupancy
-  Townhouses
-  Terrace-style housing
-  Three-storey walk-up apartments or flats

##### *High density*

-  Multistorey residential tower blocks

## Acknowledgements

Source: Australian Geography Teachers Association. (2008). *Keys to Fieldwork*. Macmillan Education Australia. 88–94. Reproduced by permission of Macmillan Education Australia.