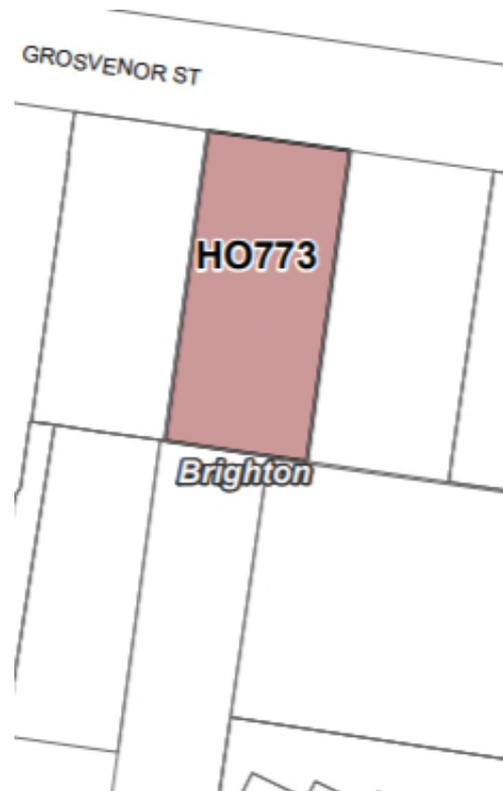


## Statement of Significance: Esme Johnston House

<b>Address:</b> 38 Grosvenor Street, Brighton	<b>Name:</b> Esme Johnston House
<b>Place type:</b> Private	<b>Grading:</b> Significant
<b>PS ref no:</b> HO773	<b>Constructed:</b> 1929



### What is significant?

The house at 38 Grosvenor Street, Brighton designed by Esme Johnston (who also acted as project manager for the works, procuring materials, engaging and supervising the various builders and tradesmen while undertaking some of the work herself) as her own residence and constructed in 1929 is significant.

The house comprises a tall but otherwise simple, volume distinguished by its unusually steeply pitched roof creating tall pointed gables to either end and with two small dormer windows on each side. The external walls incorporate half-timbering on all four sides. The panels between are coarsely stuccoed with a trowelled pattern. Windows are typically timber-framed casements, with diamond-patterned leadlight to the lounge and dining room. The roof is clad in glazed roof tiles, which replaced the original timber shingles of the Johnston design in 1949. The asymmetrical chimney rises through all three levels and provides the focal point of the dwelling as viewed from the street. The front entry on the eastern side of the building adopts the form of a Tudor pointed arch. In the garden some early stone paving survives at the rear of the house

Non-original alterations and additions to the house, the outbuildings and the front fence do not contribute to the significance of the place. The interior of the house is not of significance.

### How is it significant?

The Esme Johnston House is of local historical and aesthetic significance to the City of Bayside.

### **Why is it significant?**

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Historically, it is an example of a house designed by its owner as his or her own residence, which is a recurring theme in the City of Bayside, particularly from the early 1900s onwards. Typical of many of these houses the Esme Johnston House has an unusual and distinctive design, which in this case reflects her interest in (and love of) Old English architecture. This is reflected in the use of authentic materials such as the half-timbering incorporated into the structure of the walls, the Tudor arch timber front door, and in surviving landscape elements such as the stone paving. It demonstrates the emergence of women in the design and architecture fields prior to World War II. Esme Johnston was also a journalist, and her house featured on the cover and in a three page article she wrote in the February 1931 *Australian Home Beautiful*, an influential national journal of the period. **(Criterion A)**

The Esme Johnston House demonstrates characteristics of the Tudor Revival style including the authentic use of half-timbering with trowelled render to all the walls, and the very steeply pitched roof and prominent stepped chimney (which combine with the elevated siting to emphasise the buildings height) contribute to the picturesque qualities of the house and make it a local landmark. **(Criterion E).**

### **Primary source**

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*David Helms Heritage Planning, Esme Johnston House Heritage Assessment 2019*