

# Media Release

**The Hon Richard Wynne MP**

Minister for Planning  
Minister for Housing



Friday, 30 October 2020

## HERITAGE PROTECTION FOR ESME JOHNSTON HOUSE

The Victorian Government has stepped in to save a Tudor Revival house in Brighton from demolition by granting permanent heritage protection for the local landmark.

The distinctive Esme Johnston House in Grosvenor Street was to be razed last year, after its owners applied to Bayside Council to develop the site.

Johnston – a prominent journalist, writer, actor and broadcaster – played a key role in the design and construction of the house despite no formal training as an architect or designer.

The Council now must consider the site’s heritage values before issuing a planning permit for any future works.

The house was deemed locally significant by an independent planning panel appointed by the Minister, following a community campaign to stop the place being bulldozed.

In February 1931, *Australian Home Beautiful* magazine published an article by Johnston on her newly built home and featured the house on its front cover.

Inspired by an appreciation of old English architecture and the Tudor Revival style, its distinctive appearance has also resulted in the house being a key feature of the Bayside landscape.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Planning Richard Wynne

*“The bayside community rightly values this house for its significant local heritage and it’s appropriate it’s protected for future generations to enjoy.”*

*“This is a timely reminder to councils that they have a duty to their communities to make sure they have their local heritage identified and protected so it doesn’t need saving at the last minute.”*

*“Esme Johnston House is part of Melbourne’s rich cultural heritage and highlights the emergence of women in design and architecture fields after World War One.”*