

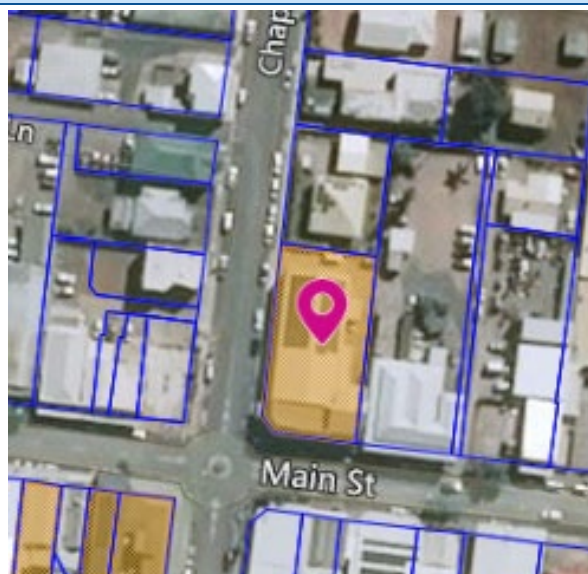
## ELDORADO IRONSIDE BUILDING

<b>Address</b>	59 Main Street, Proserpine
<b>Lot Plan</b>	1RP715144
<b>Coordinates</b>	(E: 665231 N: 7743278)
<b>Integrity</b>	Fair
<b>Condition</b>	Good
<b>Statutory Listings</b>	Nil
<b>Non-Statutory Listings</b>	Nil
<b>References</b>	<p>Historical information provided by Proserpine Historical Museum.</p> <p>Kerr, John, 1997. Crystal Century. The History of Proserpine's Sugar Mill, its Farms and its People, Proserpine Cooperative</p> <p>Sugar Milling Association, Proserpine.</p> <p>Townsville Daily Bulletin, 17 August 1916.</p> <p>David Scobie Architects, 2005. Proserpine Main Street Study &amp; Datasheets</p>

### Street View



### Location Map



### Physical Description

The Eldorado Ironside Building is prominently located in Proserpine's business district on the corner of Main and Chapman Streets.

The two-storey building has a curved rendered concrete parapet which extends from the shops and second storey flat on Main Street around the corner and is truncated on Chapman Street. The parapet is two tiered, with the tallest section located directly over the corner.

The parapet is rendered white with maroon detailing. The detailing includes a rectangular grid around the two windows above the chemist entrance on Main Street, three circles on Chapman Street façade, contrasting edging and small vertical lines evenly spaces along both facades. Vertically orientated lettering of "ELDORADO" is on the curved corner of the parapet. Above this wording the parapet extends another meter (approximately) higher, with this higher section wrapping around the corner and extending along the Chapman and Main Street frontages for a

few meters. The Main Street façade also has lettering of “IRONSIDE BUILDING” which is outlined by horizontal lines above and below.

The upper storey of the Main Street façade comprises a former residence with 1950s grid windows. Two aluminum-framed horizontal windows are located above the entrance to the chemist.

The ground floor of the Main Street façade comprises two shop fronts with angled glass display windows and timber framed glass entrance doors.

The entrance to the former theatre is set back from the street and the original doors have been replaced by sliding aluminum doors. The corner shop has contemporary glass windows with chrome window frames and double timber framed entrance doors. At the end of the Chapman Street corner there is a chrome framed poster holder on the external wall. The walls along this ground floor section are tiled in a style consistent with the period.

The interior of the former picture theatre (the current chemist) has been extensively modified. However, there is still evidence of the original curved timber ceiling, project windows in the front wall, toils at the former stage area and the ticket counter in the main foyer area.

## Historical Context

The Proserpine district was first settled by European pastoralists in the 1870s. One property, Glen Isla, was set aside for a 3000-acre sugar plantation in 1882 but was later subdivided under the auspices of the Crown Lands Act 1884 which provided for the resumption of larger pastoral runs and conversion to small selections. Proserpine township and district developed quickly after the establishment of the Proserpine Central Sugar Mill in 1897. The mill, which was financed under the provisions of the Sugar Works Guarantee Act 1893, was located in the centre of town, with frontage on Main and Mill Streets. In the early 20th century, Proserpine evolved developing commercial and entertainment facilities along Main Street.

The growing popularity of films in the early twentieth century led to the construction of many open-air theatres or simple shed-like buildings as permanent venues for showing film. Picture theatres or ‘picture palaces’ were owned by theatre chains in capital cities, but most small picture theatres in regional Queensland were independently owned. Although The Townsville Daily Bulletin notes that there was a showing at the Eldorado Picture Theatre in Proserpine in August 1916, the Proserpine Historical Society found that the first Eldorado Theatre on the corner of Main and Chapman Streets was open to the public on 16 December 1922. This picture theatre had a prominent concrete and brick façade facing Main Street with an angled entrance area to provide for advertising posters. Behind the façade the single storey corrugated iron auditorium with timber buttresses extended along Chapman Street.

The Ironside family purchased the Eldorado building in 1935 and took over the lease for the town’s other theatre, The Grand Theatre, which was located on Chapman Street to the south of Main Street. The Ironside family members were long term Proserpine residents who operated both theatres until 1957 when the Grand Theatre’s owners, the Deicke family, resumed running the business. In addition to running the picture theatre, Bill Ironside worked at the Proserpine Mill where he eventually became a director. This link with the sugar industry extended to the Eldorado Theatre being continuously used for meeting of farmers and the cooperative until 1984, when Proserpine’s new cultural centre was constructed. In 1958, the Ironside family rebuilt the Eldorado, placing the old picture theatre within a new building which could incorporate modern facilities and equipment and compete with its rival. New features included a larger screen, room to house approximately 800 people, a “cry room” for mothers with babies, a new cafeteria, two shops on the ground floor and a modern flat above the shops. Designed by Guy Crick and Associates, it was built by local builders Bob Shaw & Son and painted by the Ironside family. The new shops included a dental practice next to the cafeteria. Joe Ironside also operated an electrical business in the other shop until 1970. Changing patterns of entertainment, including the advent of television and new styles of cinemas and theatres developed from the mid-1960s, such as twin theatres and multiplex theatres (that were integrated into shopping centres) saw many smaller, regional theatres close. The Eldorado closed on 8 December 1984.

Much of the old furnishings and equipment is now housed at Proserpine Historical Museum. The building has remained a major feature of the Proserpine business district and has since been home to a number of businesses. In 1986, the theatre was used as a showroom for Burnup’s furniture by Dennis MacLean of Bowen, with AB Realty using the foyer. Late in 1988 LJ Hooker operated in the cafeteria section, an area which was later used for a short time by Joanne Newbery as the Eldorado Gallery before becoming a curtain and soft furnishings outlet in 2005. The main theatre building was redeveloped by Rob McKay and became a chemist and photographic centre c.2010. Although the interior has been extensively renovated, particular features of the old cinema remain intact.

## Historical Significance

**Criteria A** - the place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history

Constructed in 1958 as a purpose-built picture theatre on the site of the former Eldorado Theatre, the Eldorado Ironside Building contributes significantly to our understanding of how the region's leisure and entertainment history has evolved.

**Criteria D** - the place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places

The Eldorado Ironside Building is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a 1950s picture theatre in the region. Intact features include a cantilevered awning, associated commercial shopfronts, chrome window frames, and a ticket office.

**Criteria E** - the place is important because of its aesthetic significance

The Eldorado Ironside Building is a prominent building in Proserpine's commercial precinct and its curved rendered concrete parapet, angled commercial shop fronts and chrome framed windows contributes significantly to the aesthetics of the streetscape.

**Criteria H** - the place has a special association with the life or work of a particular person, group or organisation of importance in the region's history

The Eldorado Ironside Building is significant for its special association with the Ironside family, particularly William Ironside, who was a prominent local businessman, and director of Proserpine Mill. The building, and the former Eldorado Picture theatre that it replaced, is also significant for its association with the region's sugar industry, being used as a venue for industry cooperative meetings until 1984.









