

News

**Project a beacon of new hope**

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IT has been a pretty ordinary few weeks in Townsville.

The fear and worry brought about by the coronavirus pandemic is hitting all of the region with jobs lost and businesses struggling.

Yesterday Townsville recorded its 18th positive case of COVID-19, and while it's still the major news event happening around the world, it was comforting to see something positive for North Queensland announced.

A \$700 million hydro-electricity project has cleared a major hurdle and now looks set to go ahead creating hundreds of new jobs.

The site of the development, a derelict mining settlement in the middle of nowhere, will become an innovative renewable energy hub.

A pumped storage hydro-electricity power station will be built by Genex Power after the company finalised an energy supply agreement.

What's even better news is that Genex director Simon Kidston believes the project will not be impacted by coronavirus and will hopefully start by the end of the year.

The plus for Townsville is that the city will be the logistics and fly-in fly-out hub with most workers being based in town while the port would become the gateway for the imported equipment.

While this will be little comfort to people doing it tough right now the project is a shining light on the horizon for the region.

With the economy taking a hit, it is projects like this and others similar to the Copperstring venture, taking powerlines from this region to Mt Isa, that will help lift the North out of the economic doldrums when we eventually beat COVID-19.

What you can do now, however, is go to Pages 12 and 13 in today's Townsville Bulletin and check out some of the local businesses that are rolling up their sleeves and having a go in these troubled times. Then get out there and support them to help keep their business dreams alive.