Murchison explorers have a clear path to gold production

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The sun is shining on the Murchison region as gold explorers push towards development. Pic: Getty Images

Murchison in focus after shedding old bottlenecks

Existing mills open fast-track route as gold boosts economics

- **Juniors eye gold production lift-off**

Western Australia is well known as a gold powerhouse that is underpinned by the well-known Eastern Goldfields region around the mining town of Kalgoorlie.

This conclusion is well supported given that the region has produced over 200Moz of gold over its entire history.

However, it is far from being the only region that is highly prospective for the precious metal.

The state's Murchison region is another area known for its gold endowment, though it has received significantly less attention despite producing some 30Moz since the 1890s.

While the Murchison shares the same geology that makes the Eastern Goldfields so successful, it has been constrained by limited water supply, ore processing capability and transport.

All of these limitations have largely been resolved, with the region now served by several mills with processing capacity in excess of a million tonnes per annum and access provided by the Great Northern Highway and the Port of Geraldton.

Current activity in the Murchison is anchored by **Westgold Resources (ASX:WGX)** and **Ramelius Resources (ASX:RMS)**, which are forecast to collectively produce over a million ounces of gold per annum towards the end of this decade.

Following in the footsteps

The Murchison is also home to a number of junior resource companies that are looking to follow in the footsteps of the two mid-cap producers, an ambition that is fuelled in no small part by a supportive gold price.

Gold prices have eased from their peak of US$5417/oz in January 2026 to about US$4248/oz as of September 25, but financial advisor Leeuwin Wealth flagged that structural supports for gold remain intact, with central bank purchases rising to their highest three-month rolling average this year through July.

Geopolitical risks are sustained by the ongoing Middle East conflict while European countries have been steadily relocating their gold reserves from the US to London.

Leeuwin Wealth adds that current gold prices remain high by historical standards and are enough to make lower-grade ounces economic.

Amidst this favourable environment, explorers have been generating and drilling targets before moving to feasibility studies and then achieving production by choosing capital-light, toll treatment through existing processing plants.

New Murchison Gold (ASX:NMG) is one such example.

The company secured approval to mine its Crown Prince project in late June 2025 and moved quickly to first blast on June 30, 2025.

First ore sales were made in September 2025, with material trucked to Westgold's Bluebird gold processing facility just 36km to the south by road.

Cash generated from gold sales was initially used to strengthen the company's balance sheet and boost exploration, an investment that has delivered returns after its second open pit gold mine, Cloudkicker, was cleared for development in June 2026.

This activity has proven to be lucrative, with the company reporting an after-tax net profit of $146.95m for the transitional nine-month period to June 30, 2026, from revenue of $272m.

It also allowed the company to pay out a maiden fully franked dividend of 0.25c per share.

New Murchison Gold continues to invest heavily in exploration, with the company noting recently that reverse circulation drilling at the Airstrip prospect within its

20m intersection at 2.51g/t gold from 50m.

Drilling has also more than doubled the strike of Airstrip East mineralisation from about 310m to about 730m.

Starting on the road

While New Murchison Gold is certainly well on the production path, there are several other companies that are still very much at the early stage of exploration.

Newly-listed **Parbo Resources (ASX:PRB)** holds 21 tenements – nine of which are still at the application stage – covering about 1226km2 in the Murchison and Bryah Basin.

It listed on September 22, 2026, following a successful IPO of shares priced at 20c that was fully underwritten by Leeuwin Wealth and raised $5m.

This included a cornerstone investment of $1m from New Murchison Gold, which along with a pre-IPO investment of another $1m, gives it a major stake of about 17.5%.

Parbo wasted no time and immediately got to aircore drilling at its Brians Mill copper-gold prospect in the Bryah Basin.

It also plans to carry out systematic testing of multiple, high-priority gold targets at its Mount Padbury project in the Murchison.

Mount Padbury consists of eight tenements covering about 765km2 and has seen no meaningful exploration to date, as its potentially extensive and underexplored concealed greenstone system is largely concealed beneath granite and shallow cover.

What makes it stand out is the interpreted extension of the Mt Maitland Greenstone Belt and a possible continuation of the broad Plutonic-Marymia greenstone structure that hosts Catalyst Metals' Plutonic gold mine.

Modern geophysical interpretation has delineated potentially concealed greenstone architectures and refined priority targets.

This has allowed Parbo to define multiple targets for testing, with diamond and RC drilling planned to test a prospective orogenic gold system.

Another early-stage explorer is **Golden Dragon Mining (ASX:GDR)**, which is advancing the 80%-owned Cue project that sits about 1.5km from Westgold's 2.3Moz Big Bell mine.

No resource has been defined to date, a shortcoming the company is looking to address through resource definition drilling that's currently underway.

Three reverse circulation programs drilled to date have returned promising results, with re-sampling at Coodardy returning 11m grading 6.42g/t gold from 45m, while Behring Bore returned a new quartz lode of 4m at 6.98g/t gold from 36m.

Coodardy and Behring Bore, which are 400m apart, are now interpreted as being a single system.

On the road to gold

Great Boulder Resources (ASX:GBR) has two routes to production, with one of the two already possessing a processing solution and is being fast-tracked.

While the Peak Hill project still doesn't have a defined ore reserve, it does have a resource of 481,000oz gold at an average grade of 1.6g/t, about 78% of which is in the higher confidence indicated category.

Resource and extensional drilling is underway, while mining studies, approvals and pre-feasibility work will begin in Q1 2027, with production targeted for Q4 2027.

An ore purchase agreement provides processing capacity at one of Westgold's three Murchison mills, removing the capital burden and approval timeline of a standalone build.

Meanwhile, **Horizon Gold (ASX:HRN)** is progressing its Gum Creek gold project near the town of Sandstone that has an ore reserve of 18.2Mt at 1.24g/t gold, or 728,000oz of contained gold.

It is also the subject of an attractive definitive feasibility study that outlined a pre-tax NPV of $1.3bn and IRR of 53.1% on pre-production capital of $350m.

Horizon is targeting a final investment decision in Q2 2027, with first production scheduled for H2 2028.

Operating close to Horizon is **Albion Resources (ASX:ALB)**, which recently expanded its Gidgee project as drilling momentum accelerates.

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