Pre-empting an infrastructure boom coming off major investments in defence, maintenance and construction, iPilot Holdings managing director Anthony Squire is pitching his team’s skills at bespoke engineered solutions.

“We have a particular capability regarding structural steel” and demanding of all extractive industries. The lesson you take from this is that you do it once, do it well, and do it safely. “The consequences of failure can be catastrophic and so there is a day-to-day treatment, where we leverage the capability of a trusted partner.”

Many years’ experience in the construction of rail-mounted machines, among others, had equipped the team with expertise in sustaining capital works processes – including the application of market-leading technologies, Mr Squire said.

“We also have a particular capability regarding structural steel – whether it be design, outsourced fabrication, procurement, or erection,” he said. “We are keen to expand our value-added services capability.”

Regarded as one of 2520 sq m automated entry systems and maintenance facilities. The company’s BIGDoor® offer is part of our value-added services capability,” Mr Squire said. “Many years in oil and gas, construction and mining has exposed the iPilot team to the most complex construction, operations and maintenance processes.

“Energy is the biggest, most dangerous demand for bespoke engineered solutions. ‘We offer full EPC(M) services or can collaborate with your team and contractors to fill specialist gaps in operational, construction and maintenance capabilities.’

“We can also design, procure, install/ construct and commission targeted non-process infrastructure. “Our MP capability extends to water treatment, where we leverage the capability of a trusted partner’”

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Find out more at www.ipilotholdings.com.

Pajingo Gold Mine is owned and operated by Minjar Gold and is located 10km south of Charters Towers in North Queensland. Pajingo currently operates an underground mine, open cut operation and a processing plant. Pajingo vision for the future is to grow its business and 2019 will be an exciting year as it aims to achieve this.

**WHAT MINJAR OFFERS YOU**

- Great culture and team on site
- One Team – Work in a supportive, diverse team environment.
- High Performing – A workplace that lives and breathes a strong safety culture
- Career Development - Genuine career development opportunities.
- We offer good salary and entitlements, our EBA staff accrue completion of 10 years’ service.
- We offer long service leave upon completion of 10 years’ service.
- One Team - Work in a supportive, diverse team environment.
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**WORKING AT PAJINGO**

Pajingo is set to embark on an exciting year for 2019. We hope you will be a part of this journey and consider Pajingo as a potential employer in the future.

If you are interested in job opportunities at Pajingo and if you believe that you have the necessary attitude and skills to work in the mining industry, visit our website and review the jobs we have available or submit your CV to our talent pool.

**Minjar Gold’s Pajingo operation is heading down a new path to what is being dubbed ‘Pajingo 2.0’**

A key element of the transition is a plan to sink the site’s first decline in 20 years, providing access to a host of known gold deposits beyond the Vera-Nancy system that has been the mainstay of Pajingo production.

“It is a stepping stone to developing a brand new mining region,” general manager – Pajingo operations Kerry Payne said. “We’re looking at targeting not just the Lynne deposit but at least five other orebodies from that single decline.

“It enables us to establish a brand new mine almost separate to the old Pajingo – that’s why we’re calling it Pajingo 2.0.”

The ‘old Pajingo’ has a mighty history, operating for more than 30 years and producing as much as 320,000 ounces a year at its peak.

It currently employs more than 355 people, including contractors, compared to about 245 people two years ago.

Recent numbers have been swelled by a new focus on a string of surface mining opportunities to make the most of mill capacity at the site, 50km south of Charters Towers.

“We have spent a lot of time and resources developing open-cut opportunities and we’re having some reasonable success,” Mr Payne said. “We know they are not going to be as big as the underground operations. They are intended to be part of the transition – so as the old underground winds down and the new one winds up we have a buffer there to smooth out production.” As well as drawing on these small pits to boost mill operations, Pajingo has been lining up third-party ore agreements to process material from other gold projects in the region.

Mr Payne said that for much of its recent history Pajingo had only had a short horizon in terms of mine life, with various owners falling to invest in a longer-term vision.

“But that has changed.

“It’s a very exciting time,” he said.

“It is really good to see that Minjar Gold has backed us on our growth strategy and that the operation is finally getting strong support in developing that longer-term potential.

“The impression people may have held of Pajingo as an operation on its way out was a challenge in terms of attracting people to Charters Towers and giving the local community, including suppliers, confidence, he said.

“One of the key things is for us to demonstrate, not just to Minjar and the industry but to the community, that we are here long term,” Mr Payne said.

“We are at a very interesting point in the life of the operation. Strategically we are thinking beyond the 2-3 year window and our key objectives are delivered upon then the full potential of Pajingo 2.0 should be realised.

I wouldn’t be surprised if in 10-plus years’ time there is still a mining operation here given the opportunities we see in front of us.”
**Intense drill program paves way for further opportunity**

More than 65,000m of drilling is expected to be completed at the Pajingo mining lease this calendar year as the geology team builds the picture that will determine the operation’s future.

Six surface rigs and one underground rig were hard at work at the peak of activity, geology manager Andrew Beaton said.

A major thrust of that work has been building the case to develop a decline to mine the Lynne deposit.

“This move would pave the way for further underground drilling that could open up a raft of exciting economic potential targets, as we’d like to bring on another two pits next year and keep the open-pit mining going,” Mr Beaton said.

“More than a few holes from surface out there, but once we’re underground there is a much shorter drilling distance and it’s much cheaper to drill them out.”

Mr Beaton said the operation hoped to start developing the decline in the first quarter of 2019 and be drilling underground by the last quarter.

“The other thing we’ve done from a resource development point of view in the last 18 months is to really focus on some shallow open-pit-able targets on surface,” he said.

“We’ve had a rig here pretty much all of last year and from April 1 this year (focused on that task). We spent a fair portion of last year drilling out three main open-pit targets - Janine, Janine North-West and Orichid.

“We have now finished mining Orichid and we are still mining the others. That rig has been drilling out other potential targets, as we’d like to bring on another two pits next year and keep the open-pit mining going.”

On the underground front, recent drilling work had focused on pushing into a new deposit for mining known as Cambert, he said.

Mr Beaton said Charters Towers-based contractors Eagle Drilling NQ had ramped up to provide the surface rigs Pajingo had required as drilling intensified while Mitchell Services had been carrying out the underground drilling.

**“We’d like to bring on another two pits next year”**

Andrew Beaton

**Eagle Drilling NQ invests in:**

- Top shelf capabilities
- Partnerships with stakeholders
- Specialist regional knowledge
- Developing local expertise

**Broader package to explore**

The area immediately around Pajingo mine may have been abuzz with drilling activity this year, but Genesio Circosta has sights on further horizons.

Minjar Gold holds more than 1000sq km of exploration tenements in the Pajingo region as well as a 774sq km package about 100km to the south-east centred on Wirralie.

It is that under-explored ground, particularly at Wirralie, that has Minjar’s exploration manager for Queensland excited.

“Next to Pajingo, the Wirralie mine historically is the second largest gold deposit in the Drummond Basin and the area had been unexplored for much of the last 20 years,” Mr Circosta said.

Mr Circosta personally worked on the application for the permit to explore the Wirralie ground while Pajingo was still under Evolution Mining ownership.

“So it’s good to see some work being done there,” he said.

Mr Circosta said Minjar was applying fresh ideas and modern geochemical work to the site. And while Wirralie is based on a major epithermal gold system, the exploration team has honed in on a breccia system on the tenements.

“The sort of things we are coming up with, the target we are testing now is something completely different - so that’s the exciting thing about it all,” Mr Circosta said.

“We’re only just drilling it now and it’s a different style of mineralisation. A breccia system, it’s something that has not been previously recognised in the area. There’s a long way to go but it’s looking very interesting.”

At the same time work on the Pajingo regional tenement package is picking up.

“There hasn’t been much expenditure on the more regional prospects in the last 12 years or so,” Mr Circosta said.

“It has just been ignored essentially and we intend to start looking at that a bit more.”

Regional exploration has recently focused on the Wahines prospect, and Mr Circosta said a drill program was planned there next year.
Blast from the past in news print

Confirmation of another major gold discovery in North Queensland called the Pajingo prospect headlined in 1985.


The publication later merged with Minerals Gazette to be Gold and Minerals Gazette before dying about four years ago.

Many miners would have walked past the tell-tale quartz outcrops of the Pajingo deposit during the 1880s gold rush years in the Ravenswood and Charters Towers area.

It took a Kiwi to recognise their true value in the 1980s, according to Pajingo geology manager Andrew Beaton.

“Those old timers would have walked across this country and they would have seen that quartz but because the gold is so fine they couldn’t have seen any of the gold in there and their gravity-type methods of dollying up or panning would not have revealed it,” he said.

“The Pajingo system was discovered in the mid-80s by (Duval Corporation’s) World-class ore body discovery Battle Mountain Gold. It was the first epithermal discovery of its type in this province and it was actually a Kiwi geologist, Ralph Porter, who discovered it.

“Epithermal (gold systems) are quite common in New Zealand and the quartz has unique textures. He recognised those textures in the rocks at one of the local stations when he was there - a rock in their garden. They pointed him in the right direction and he found the outcrops and that’s how they discovered Scott lode - the first one open-pit mined here by Battle Mountain.”

Mr Beaton said the find, on the northern end of the Drummond Basin, was undoubtedly a world-class ore body.

“The field has now produced around the 4 million-ounce mark – so it really is a spectacular deposit. It’s a great place for geos to work,” he said.

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Photo: Roslyn Budd

Driller assistant Damien McGrath with diamond drill core.

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World-class ore body discovery

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Photo: Roslyn Budd

Driller assistant Damien McGrath with diamond drill core.
Minjar is opening up its Pajingo processing plant to third parties, making the most of spare capacity and giving regional miners the chance to convert otherwise ‘stranded’ gold resources into cash.

Pajingo operations – general manager Kerry Payne said taking third party ore was a plank in the site’s strategy, as it transitioned from traditional workings to the new Pajingo 2.0.

“Given that transition period there’s an opportunity for us to leverage off some of the other assets in the region that have been stranded without a processing facility,” he said.

“There’s an opportunity here for the next one or two years for other miners to get a leg up and get some cash flow into those assets without them having to invest in a processing plant themselves.”

At the moment the Pajingo underground operations can’t fully utilise the capacity in that plant and until recently the plant was run on a campaign milling basis.

“That is not the best way to run a plant and it is not the best way to optimise the capital that you have invested – so the question that I had is ‘why don’t we open the up to other parties?’

“It enables us to get our unit costs down and to help develop the region as one of the only processing plants in NQ.”

Cannindah Resources has been the first company to take up the offer, entering an agreement for Minjar to purchase and treat ore from the Piccadilly gold project – 60km north of Charters Towers.

GBM Resources has also reached an agreement to truck ore from its Mt Coolon gold project for processing by Minjar and a private company with a project north of Pajingo has also been in discussions about using the processing facilities.

“Small quantities of Piccadilly ore have already been successfully processed this year and Mr Payne said additional opportunities for other companies would be made available in 2019 and 2020.

“We have had other expressions of interest and we are also trying to encourage people who may not have thought there was an opportunity to develop their gold project to look at the asset and consider working with another company,” Mr Payne said.

“For a small company or one with limited funds it’s a very strategic way of developing and moving their assets forward.”

Boost for processing plant as open-cut material rolls in

Minjar has ramped up processing operations at Pajingo after boosting its mill feed from two new sources.

The site has been bringing a string of small open-cut operations online to supplement feed from the Vera underground workings, which has been the main feed source for more than two decades.

It is also encouraging small gold miners from around the region to make the most of spare capacity at the mill by entering toll treatment agreements.

Mill manager Laura Logan said the site began full-time processing in August, requiring the recruitment of a further eight operators and three maintenance personnel.

“We were operating from 6am Monday to 6am Friday and shutting down over the weekend,” she said.

“But having the open-cut material has allowed us to go full-time again for the first time since September 2013.”

The processing circuit has the capacity to process about 700,000tpa and Pajingo operations alone are able to provide enough feed for 650,000tpa at this stage.

It is a conventional crush-grind-CIP processing circuit that produces gold-silver doré.

Mr Logan said one novel part of Pajingo’s processing regime was the grinding.

“We grind to 38 micron – which is quite fine for a gold operation,” she said. “That is basically because our material is grind sensitive – we have to grind it quite finely to liberate the gold.”

Back up operations at Pajingo gold mine has acted as an anchor for Charters Towers business Eagle Drilling NQ through industry ups and downs.

Eagle Drilling is in its 13th year as a contractor at the mine, successfully tendering for a string of drill programs.

But this year saw a spike in activity as the firm operated six rigs around the clock during a major surface drilling campaign from May to October.

“The Pajingo work has always been important to us – that’s why we always strive to win the tenders,” Eagle Drilling business manager Sally Forgan said.

“It’s in our backyard. We’re a family-owned company in Charters Towers, so for us to service clients around us in the region and to do a good job of it is very important to our business.”

Eagle Drilling’s business manager Sally Forgan said.

“Small businesses in small towns need to be supported. They employ people in the community and that brings dollars to the community and keeps it viable,” Mr Ryan said.

“Supporting other businesses in the region pays forward. It helps the community remain a good size and that means (maintaining) good government services, council services, doctors and dentists, for example.”

She said local industry had proven capacity and capability, having long supported an active mining sector in the region.

Businesses interested in winning work at Pajingo could speak to the relevant technical experts or supply the purchasing department with information about the goods and services they could offer, she said.

Potential suppliers can contact procurement superintendent Eddie Connor at eddie.connor@minjargold.com.au.

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“Having the open-cut material has allowed us to go full-time again”

Laura Logan

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SUMMER 2018

PAJINGO Feature

Third party ore option to help fill the mill
Leading Pajingo operations through exciting times

“What people were looking for was stability”

Kerry Payne

General manager – Pajingo operations Kerry Payne has found himself at the helm at an exciting time for the Charters Towers gold mine.

But the events that have unfolded were not exactly what he signed up for when he took the role more than three years ago.

After working a stint as a mining consultant on the Gold Coast, where he still lives, Mr Payne was attracted to Evolution Mining.

“Evolution had an interesting and dynamic business model that I thought would be good to be part of,” he said.

Minjar Gold acquired the Pajingo gold mine and surrounding exploration tenements from Evolution Mining in September 2016 for up to $52 million in cash and royalties.

Mr Payne faced the challenge of leading the Pajingo team through the transition to Minjar ownership.

“What people were looking for was stability – so that was a key thing I was trying to maintain through the transition – business as usual,” he said.

“It was important for people not to get distracted, so to make sure that the safety and also the performance culture was maintained where it needed to be.”

At the time Minjar Gold, a private company, only had one operational site in Australia and the Pajingo workforce knew little about the new owners.

Minjar Gold now operates the Southern Cross mine and Golden Dragon mine in Western Australia, and the Pajingo workforce knew little about the new owners.

Minjar Gold now operates the Southern Cross mine and Golden Dragon mine in Western Australia, where it also holds other exploration tenements.

It has clear ambitions to be a mid-tier Australian gold producer.

Mr Payne said the transition at Pajingo had been incredibly smooth.

“Normally you would expect some bumps in production and possible safety records, but we’ve actually improved on both those in that transition period – so I’m quite proud of the way we did that,” he said.

It was a humble high school careers day that steered Mr Payne into his mining career. “You get asked different things about what your interests are and your strengths and I went through that process and one thing that came out for me was the mining industry,” he said.

“So I learnt more about it and the more I understood that role the more I thought that suited where I wanted to be as a profession.”

Mr Payne completed his degree as a mining engineer through the University of South Australia and did his early work in base metals mining in Tasmania.

From there he moved to Kalgoorlie in 2000 and worked in the Western Australian gold industry, including stints as general manager of the Southern Cross and Gwalia gold mines under St Barbara.

Mr Payne believes the key to good leadership in the mining industry is to make sure the business plan is well developed, well understood and then well executed.

And he says it is an exciting time to be in a leadership role at Pajingo as it enters its next big transition.

“One of the things I want to achieve here is to have Pajingo realise its full potential,” he said.

“It has been going for 30 years and I think it has been (seen as) shutting down for 27 of those 30 years.

“It is a hard asset for companies to fully grasp and to understand.

“What I want to do for the people who work here and the local community is to really get out to a five-year life so people can really start seeing this as a long-term operation.”

Golden career opportunity

Pajingo gold mine offers career progression for its employees and a great work-life balance, according to human resources manager Penny Stratford.

Pajingo gold mine offers career progression for its employees and a great work-life balance, according to human resources manager Penny Stratford.

The Charters Towers district gold operation employs more than 355 people including contractors.

Ms Stratford said Pajingo had a good record of promoting within its ranks and fostering people’s leadership qualities.

“Our culture promotes a positive and engaging workforce, offering career progression and training development within the mining industry,” she said.

“We offer our employees autonomy and the ability to be innovative.

“Our career progression opportunities are available to all staff and are truly outstanding – offering mentoring, training and development, and we have a study assistance program.”

Minjar Gold had purchased the Pajingo mine from the previous owner, Evolution Mining.

Mr Payne shared the example of an employee who started his career at Pajingo as a trainee ‘nipper’ and progressed his career to mine superintendent.

“Pajingo fosters a strong commitment to leadership and we pride ourselves on effective performance management, supporting our workforce to truly succeed and achieve our business goals and objectives,” she said.

That approach is part of a workplace culture at Pajingo that aligns with the five core values owner Minjar Gold promotes:

1. Integrity
2. We care
3. One Team
4. Leadership
5. Commitment to Excellence

The Pajingo operation offers residential and FIFO opportunities on flexible rosters.

These include even-time rosters with seven days on/lawen days off as well as 8/6, 8/5 and 4/3 options.

“The site recruits from Charters Towers and the North Queensland region wherever possible,” Ms Stratford said.

“Locals from Charters Towers experience the best work-life balance as they are home every night with their family.”

She said Pajingo offered competitive salary and entitlements above the industry award standards.

“Our entitlements include a bonus scheme and our EBA offers three weeks’ long service leave upon completion of 10 years’ service,” Ms Stratford said.

“We’re there for all Australia.

Brett crushed his foot at 11am in a mining accident at Moranbah.

We were there at 12.50pm.

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CoreStaff has proudly partnered with Minjar Gold Pajingo Mine since 2014

CoreStaff would like to congratulate Minjar Gold on the continued growth and support to the local community.

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Local lifestyle a selling point

Mill superintendent Matt Lowe came to Pajingo 16 years ago with experience from a string of gold mine jobs under his belt.

Among the greatest selling points for him is Pajingo’s location near Charters Towers – the town he has called home since he was five, apart from a ‘miserable’ two-and-a-half-year stint of big city life in Canberra.

“To some people out there living in Charters Towers may not seem an attractive option, but for those local to the area it’s a good little town and it’s a really attractive proposition to work here,” Mr Lowe said.

He enjoys the freedom and community benefits of living in an area like Charters Towers.

Being able to jump on a motorbike and go for a ride in the bush, throwing a ‘tinnie’ on the 4WD and spending a few days camping and fishing on the Burdekin River.

These are examples of the options the Charters Towers region offers that a big city cannot match.

“To some people out there living in Charters Towers about working here as an option might be a mistake,” he said.

Focus on community

Minjar Gold’s Pajingo mining operation provides about $60,000 to support community groups and events in the Charters Towers area each year, in addition to employee wages and spending on local goods and services.

It is part of an approach that embraces the operation’s role as a pillar of the local economy.

“Pajingo celebrated 30 years of operation in November last year and we are a big part of the Charters Towers community,” HSBC manager Tony Shearman said.

“We spend quite a lot of money in local business and local sponsorship.

The majority of the mine’s workforce lives in Charters Towers and travels to and from the site by bus for shifts.

Mr Shearman said Minjar Gold sponsored sporting groups, school programs, the PCYC, and events as diverse as rodeos, markets and the annual Charters Towers Charity Ball.

“The program we started this year was to provide a fresh fruit scheme for the Charters Towers Central State School, for example,” he said.

“We were looking for something different to contribute and thought we would provide fresh fruit three times a week – and that is sourced from the local Foodworks.”

Mr Shearman said recruitment efforts centred on the local area and included a focus on involving people from the Kundjala and Birriah native title groups.

“We specifically employed two people from these Indigenous groups in our geology area as field technicians and advertise Indigenous scholarships each year,” he said.

“Forming a relationship with these groups is not only a legislative requirement but we wish to do extra to ensure we work together.”

Charters Towers Mayor Liz Schmidt acknowledged the importance of mining to region and said the Pajingo mine had been a major contributor to the local economy since it began gold production in 1986.

Roster a cut above others

The lifestyle benefits of Pajingo’s roster are crystal clear for 21-year-old trainee process plant operator Majella Mara.

Ms Mara is a qualified butcher who was working six days a week at a Charters Towers business before taking a job opportunity at the gold mine.

“Here at Pajingo I’m on seven days on-seven days off – it’s a great lifestyle roster for me,” she said.

“Previously I was working six days a week every week, with Sunday off.

“This is much better for my social life, and my family lives away from Charters Towers (Mum is in Townsville) – so it’s better to be able to visit them more often and for good amounts of time, and you can have a good break after working seven days. Also, the people out here are great. I have a really good crew, which makes work life enjoyable and that is important.”

Ms Mara got into butchery after experience with livestock growing up and a school-based training opportunity.

She started her new role at Pajingo in June, but said she had always been interested in the resources industry and the opportunities it offered.

“When I did my interview I asked them if there were career options to go forward and they explained the different parts of the mine you can get into and the training they offer,” she said.

“This gives me the opportunity to gain skills that I can take with me if I want to travel within Australia or overseas.”

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