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Mine production likely for 2017

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A graphite mine near Geraldton could begin production towards the middle of next year, a conference in Perth was told this week.

Anson Resources Limited is the proponent of the US\$56 million Walcott project at Ajana, about 130 kilometres north of Geraldton.

Addressing the inaugural Paydirt 2016 Australian Graphite Conference, Anson managing director Bruce Richardson said heritage clearance on the project would begin next month.

This would be followed up by a drilling program in May.

"The capital requirements for Walcott of US\$56 million for a 25,000 tpa graphite concentrate operation, are the second lowest of the current nine major Australian owned graphite developers pushing new projects here and overseas," he said.

"Critically, Walcott is close to all existing road, rail and port infrastructure at Geraldton - an existing export port and that is a considerable economic advantage for bringing Walcott into production.

"Obviously there is much work to initiate and sign off on over the coming 12 months or so but our target remains first production towards June next year." In a statement, the company said the deposit had four regional targets, with rock chip samples grading up to 18 per cent TGC.

It said further metallurgical test work was to be carried out on samples from the pending May drilling program, which was designed to confirm the width, grade and flake size of the graphite logged in earlier drilling of the deposit by CRA in 1993.

A spokesman said it was too early to speculate on how many jobs would be created by the project.