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HD Chinese company sponsoring Port Power AFL match in Shanghai is revealed as bidding for Australia's biggest cattle station

AU [John Carney](#)

BY JOHN CARNEY FOR DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA

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LP \* Port Adelaide made multi-million-dollar deal with Shanghai investor

\* Experts warned move may have been motivated by political reasons

TD \* Same investor is part of Chinese group bidding for Kidman cattle stations

\* This currently comprises the largest private landholding in Australia

\* Port Adelaide set to play AFL premiership game in Shanghai next season

Experts have warned that AFL club Port Adelaide's landmark deal with a Shanghai investor may have been motivated by political reasons to help clear the way for significant future business deals to be made in Australia.

Chinese real estate company, Shanghai Cred Real Estate, signed a multi-million-dollar deal with the AFL team that will see them play a premiership-season game in China next season, as well as running school and Auskick programs in various areas there and getting university programs going in Guangzhou.

However, the ABC reports that the same investor is part of a Chinese consortium that is trying to buy the iconic Kidman cattle stations in the Australian outback, which currently comprises the largest private landholding in Australia of 101,000 square kilometres, or almost two per cent of the continent, that includes 16 properties across three states.

Adelaide University's head of Asian Studies Dr Gerry Groot said businessman Gui Goujie, who is general manager of Shanghai Cred Real Estate, may see his stake in Port Adelaide as a way to help his company to invest in the likes of the Kidman cattle stations.

'If he does become the owner of the Kidman properties, and he's a clear supporter of the Australian football culture, that would go a long way I think to muting criticism of that sort of purchase,' Dr Groot said.

'As we know, land purchases in Australia are very political.'

Professor Mobo Gao, from the Confucius Institute at the [University of Adelaide](#), also said there was potential for the Chinese investors to use the Kidman properties deal as a stepping stone towards other deals in Australia they would like to make.

'They might want to know more about Australia, to get them familiar with Australia, and to have a good relations with Australia, but as a business of course they want to find investment opportunities,' Professor Gao said.

Shanghai Pengxin, owned by Chinese billionaire, Jiang Zhaobai, and the Guangzhou-based Donlinks Grain and Oil Company, are reportedly heading the Chinese consortium, and are rumoured to be willing to pay \$350 million for the Kidman properties, reports the Sydney Morning Herald.

The sale stalled in November after the government blocked the sale to foreign buyers on national security grounds.

'Given the size and significance of the total portfolio of Kidman properties... I have determined, after taking advice from FIRB ([Foreign Investment Review Board](#)), that it would be contrary to Australia's national interest for a foreign person to acquire S. Kidman and Co. in its current form,' Treasurer Scott Morrison said in a statement at the time.

But Shanghai Pengxin's revised bid has sought to address the security concerns, and has now made them clear favourites to make a deal.

Prime Minister [Malcolm Turnbull](#), who is on a trade visit to China, was also on hand for the announcement between Port Adelaide and Chinese real estate company on Thursday in Shanghai. He supported the venture between the two.

'I say this as a former mediocre rugby player - AFL is the most exciting football code. An enormous field, extraordinary athleticism, it is the leaping, jumping, flying game,' he said.

'Of course this Chinese involvement in AFL is far from new. In 1908 the first Chinese AFL player, Wally Koochew, whose father was from Huangpu south of Guangzhou, made four senior appearances for the Carlton Football Club.'

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