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HD Perth firm behind buy into Aquila

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LP MINERAL Resources' daring raid on the register of iron ore takeover target Aquila Resources has left analysts and investors scratching their heads over the mining group's motives.

The Perth company, which was yesterday confirmed as the mystery buyer of a \$192 million strategic 12.8 per cent stake in Aquila, snapped up the 52 million-plus tranche on the Chi-X exchange on Wednesday at prices of between \$3.72 and \$3.75 a share.

TD That's a significant premium to the \$3.40-a-share \$1.4 billion takeover bid for Aquila lobbed by Chinese steelmaker Baosteel and rail operator Aurizon late last month.

Baosteel, which owns 20 per cent of Aquila, and Aurizon have teamed up in the hopes of relaunching the stalled \$10 billion West Pilbara Iron Ore Project.

IG Markets' analyst Evan Lucas said the fact that the nation's fifth largest iron ore producer was buying into Aquila at a 35c premium to that bid indicated it wasn't going to be easily persuaded to let the deal go through.

"They're either going to block it, that's Plan B, or have a crack at it themselves. Either way, they're now a serious sitter at the table." The company's managing director, [Chris Ellison](#), yesterday said the miner had the skills to build, own and operate key infrastructure on the project, which is to include mine, rail and port facilities. Mr Ellison said his company had the capacity to make a meaningful capital contribution towards the project and would talk with major stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcome.

CO aquires : Aquila Resources Ltd.

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