

'I won't resign': Disgraced MP Daryl Maguire refuses to quit after ICAC appearance

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Disgraced Wagga Wagga MP Daryl Maguire has refused to quit NSW politics, as the opposition called for a wide-ranging audit into his activities.

Mr Maguire confirmed he will remain in parliament until the March 2019 state election, [staring down mounting calls for his resignation](#) on Monday, after a corruption inquiry exposed his attempts to broker property deals and seek commission on behalf of a Chinese developer.



Daryl Maguire leaves the ICAC hearing on Friday night. Photo: Janie Barrett

Mr Maguire was defiant in a video statement he released on Monday.

"I won't resign. I'm not going to resign," he said in the statement.

"I've removed myself from the Liberal Party. I've resigned from the party only, but I won't resign as a member of parliament."

A byelection could cause a rift between the coalition, with senior National Party members eager to contest the Wagga Wagga seat, an electorate which they regard as traditional Nationals country.

Under the coalition agreement struck between the two parties, the Nationals cannot run candidates in Liberal seats.

However, in the event of a byelection it is understood the agreement does not prevent the Nationals from fielding a candidate and making it a three-way contest against the Liberal Party and Labor.

"Why would we ever give that seat up to the Nats?" a Liberal minister told the *Herald*.

Mr Maguire, who also resigned his post as parliamentary secretary for counter terrorism, said he had "breached a very strict code of conduct for parliamentary secretaries, but I still can continue to work on behalf of the Wagga Wagga electorate".

He said he had already planned not to recontest the seat, but said "these events had brought forward a decision I had already made".

Among his reasons for not quitting, he said it would be "unreasonable" to trigger a byelection, describing it as a "cost the taxpayer doesn't need."

Instead, he will now move to the cross-bench as an independent, where he will continue to be paid an MP's base salary of \$165,066 per year until March.

Shortly after he finished giving evidence before the Independent Commission Against Corruption inquiry on Friday, Mr Maguire quit the NSW Liberal Party and his position as parliamentary secretary.

The [ICAC played tapped phone conversations he had with Michael Hawatt](#), a Liberal Canterbury councillor, during which he boasted about his "mega client", Chinese property developer Country Garden.

In one conversation, Mr Maguire told Mr Hawatt that Country Garden might put him on retainer and pay him a "couple of grand a day."

However, Mr Maguire also told the ICAC that while he had sought deals, none had eventuated.



Daryl Maguire quit the Liberal party after it was revealed at ICAC that he had tried broker deals for a "mega big" client with a former Canterbury councillor.

It has since emerged that NSW Planning Minister Anthony Roberts met with Country Garden executives on August 9, 2017, at Mr Maguire's request.

According to notes of the meeting, seen by the *Herald*, Mr Roberts held a "meet and greet only" with Country Garden executives Mr Baiyuan Su and Mr G.T. Hu, and their Australian head of investment Tim Lakos, and Mr Maguire.

The notes refer to the meeting as an "introduction through Daryl Maguire" and "not to discuss a specific project." The meeting was disclosed on Mr Roberts' ministerial diaries register.

Addressing the issue on Monday, Mr Roberts said it was a 15-minute introductory meeting.

"I have a rule in my office - that is part of a strengthened policy around planning - and that is I will not talk about individual planning issues with anyone in meetings," he said.

Acting opposition leader Michael Daley called on Premier Gladys Berejiklian to conduct a "full and complete" audit of all meetings brokered by Mr Maguire with government MPs.

"What other meetings has he arranged?" Mr Daley said. "We want Gladys Berejiklian now to shine a light on all of Daryl Maguire's dealings over many years.

"Who he met, what ministers he met with, what actions came out of the meetings, what deals were done, what deals were offered, what promises were made."

[In a statement on Sunday, Ms Berejiklian said](#) Mr Maguire had "let down his constituents, the people of NSW and the NSW Liberal Party" and called on him to "think carefully as to whether he can effectively represent the people of Wagga Wagga from here on in."

Acting Premier John Barilaro doubled down on her comments on Monday, saying "in my view, Mr Maguire hasn't thought long enough or hard enough about this."

In [comments to the Australian Financial Review](#), Country Garden Australia chief executive G.T. Hu said "Country Garden is a responsible company and we have zero tolerance for any illegal things [by] any employees."

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