

NATIONAL NSW

Former NSW treasurer Eric Roozendaal joins Chinese firm that was big donor to NSW political parties

By Sean Nicholls and Kate McClymont

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A Chinese-based property company that hired former NSW treasurer Eric Roozendaal as its vice-chairman after he quit politics was among the largest donors to the NSW Labor and Liberal parties last financial year.

According to election funding returns published by the Australian Electoral Commission on Monday, YuHu Group (Australia) donated \$200,000 to the NSW branch of the ALP during during 2012-13, including \$100,000 in June last year. It also donated \$100,000 to the NSW Liberals during the period.

ICAC NSW EXHIBIT



Eric Roozendaal: Vice-chairman of YuHu at Eastwood shopping centre in December last year.
JAMES BRICKWOOD

YuHu chairman Huang Changren donated a further \$150,000 to the NSW ALP in November 2012 and \$40,000 to the NSW branch of the Liberal party during the financial year, the records show.

Last October a YuHu Group subsidiary, YuHu Property, purchased the Eastwood Shopping Centre complex and has development approval for a \$200 million redevelopment, according to its website.

"The company will invest an estimated \$200 million to redevelop Eastwood Shopping Centre and adjoining properties into a mixed-use site in the future," it says.

"The redevelopment of Eastwood Town Centre will be a major development project determined by the local council of the city of Ryde and supported by the NSW state government."

However, the general manager of YuHu Group (Australia), Holly Huang, said the donations were unrelated to the planned development as approval had been given prior to the company's purchase of the shopping centre.

Ms Huang said after the company entered Australia in May 2013 "a lot of people approached us".

"A lot of Chinese community friends introduced us to the parties to understand how the system runs in Australia," she said.

Ms Huang said she could not comment on Mr Huang's personal donations as she only spoke for the company.

YuHu's website features pictures of Mr Huang and politicians including former prime ministers Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard and former treasurer Chris Bowen.

ICAC NSW EXHIBIT

Mr Roozendaal, a former NSW treasurer who earned a reputation as a prodigious fundraiser while general secretary of the NSW ALP, quit the NSW Parliament in May last year. Two months earlier, in March, he had travelled to China at the invitation of Mr Huang to tour some of YuHu's projects.

"After the inspection, Eric expressed that he would promote international communication and cooperation between YuHu Group and Australia government," the company's website states.

Ms Huang said "a lot" of Australian politicians visited China during the period to meet Chinese investors and the company first encountered Mr Roozendaal at a promotional event in Australia.

She confirmed Mr Roozendaal was working as YuHu's vice-chairman offering advice on "strategic planning". "He works in the office managing the staff," she said. "It's a very early stages for the company. He's quite skilled on HR systems and staff training.

"In strategic planning he can provide a lot of useful information to the company. That's his value."

Mr Roozendaal declined to comment.
