




Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 19 February 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Airport Link Tunnel

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (7.11 pm): Three minutes is nowhere near enough time to deal with my concerns about the treatment of constituents of mine, Dr Gerry and Mrs Christine Winter. The Winters live at 1 Lodge Road, Kalinga in the electorate of Clayfield. Their home sits on top of the Airport Link tunnel, built by the Thiess-John Holland consortium, under an agreement entered into with the then Bligh Labor government. That government gave responsibility for overseeing the state's interest during construction to a company called City North Infrastructure, better known as CNI. The tunnel is now operated by Transurban under a lease agreement. Transurban bought the lease of the tunnel from the Airport Link consortium several years ago.

The Winter's problems began in 2011 when a large sinkhole appeared in their backyard. Dr Winter, an engineer himself, suspected the damage had been caused by the construction of the tunnels. He undertook investigations, he reviewed material and he approached many people with evidence supporting his claims, including myself. In 2012 I thought the matter had been resolved. I table a letter from CNI identifying the action taken by that organisation in addressing Dr Winter's then concerns.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 26 July 2012, from the Chief Executive Officer, City North Infrastructure Pty Ltd, Mr David Lynch, to the member for Clayfield, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, regarding Mr Gerry Winter and City North Infrastructure [300].

However, that was not the case and Dr Winter has fought a long and lonely battle to get some form of acknowledgement and redress for the damage he has suffered. I wrote to the department on 8 November last year outlining Dr Winter's claims and requesting action be taken to settle his claim. I table a copy of that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 8 November 2019, from the member for Clayfield, Mr Tim Nicholls MP, to the Director-General, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Mr Neil Scales, regarding Mr Gerry Winter and City North Infrastructure [299].

I have not received a reply to the 8 November letter. Transurban has attempted to broker a resolution but to date there has been none. In my view, the Thiess-John Holland consortium and its successors are shamefully stonewalling. The department apparently accepts Dr Winter has a valid claim and in 2018 asked him to obtain valuations to assess compensation. The department also appears to be stonewalling and no one wants to accept responsibility.

This is shameful treatment of the Winters. Dr Winter is 76. Mrs Winter is suffering stress. This matter has now been strung out for over eight years. It is long past time the Winters received fair and just compensation and the courtesy of decent treatment from the department and the contractors involved. The minister and department must not avoid their responsibility. The minister and the department must act to resolve this deplorable situation and allow the Winters to move on with their lives. To do anything less would be to aid and abet a huge multinational avoid its responsibilities to an ordinary family that deserves better.

There are other issues arising from Airport Link. I will be raising in particular the issues of Ms Christine le Poidevin of Kalinga who is also suffering from a similar treatment. On behalf of the Winters and Ms le Poidevin, I will not be letting this matter rest.