Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says the release of new information about land that was flooded this year in Pelly/Lorikeet Roads, Herbert, shows that a number of blocks should never have been approved for sale by the Development Consent Authority.

Gerry says a contour map and a vegetation map released recently by the Dept of Lands and Planning clearly highlights that the lagoon shown on the original maps drawn by the developer was about half the actual area covered by water.

He says this meant that one block (5211) which was shown not to be subject to any inundation was in fact 75% inundated. Another block (5212) was shown with about 5% inundation also was inundated to about 80% and a neighbouring block (5215) which was shown to have about 50% inundation in fact was inundated over approximately 75% of the land. Block 5213 had no water shown on the block but in actual fact had about 15% and block 5216 had water shown for about 40% when it was more like 55%.

Gerry says that even though the Ombudsman is still to bring down a report on the reason why this mess has occurred it is clear that a number of blocks were sold when they clearly did not meet the requirements of the NT Planning Scheme ie there must be 1 hectare of unrestrained land on each block before approval for subdivision.

Gerry says while he has his own thoughts on who is to blame that will come out in the Ombudsman’s report.

But he says that the Government doesn’t need to wait for the report to see that people who paid over $275,000 for land have been let down by the Government through the planning process and the developer who mapped the layout of this subdivision.

He says that the Government needs to act quickly, get urgent legal advice and sit down with the residents to sort this mess out especially as the Wet season is only about 3 months away. Residents need a decision now so they can plan for the future.

He says that the Government should not be looking at draining the wetland which is something the Dept of Lands and Planning and the developer seem only too keen on to get them out of an embarrassing situation, but instead be looking at alternative forms of compensation which will give block owners a certain future without the environment being used as the cheap and convenient way out.
Attached are three documents

1. Shows the original approved subdivision plan with the lagoon. (DOC170711) Note: block 7 is 5211, block 8 is 5212 and block 11 is 5215 on the contour map.

2. Shows the contour map. The water reaches a level somewhere between 33.4 and 33.6 metres before it flow out over lot 3407. If you follow those contours you get an idea of the real size of the lagoon.

3. The vegetation publication shows the types of vegetation on the affected blocks. If vegetation is used a guide then it is easy to recognise the approximate extent of inundation.

Attached are also photos of flooded blocks; Flood 2 is block 5211 and flood 1 is 5212 Photo of boat is on 5215 – owner in the boat.