"At last there is certainty in the ongoing land dispute in Palmerston but the situation should never had arisen in the first place", said Gerry Wood, Independent Member for Nelson.

Gerry welcomes the Minister for Planning and Lands’ announcement that the Government has reached an agreement for a land swap with Delfin Lend Lease in their Palmerston development.

"The stand-off between the Government and Delfin lasted many years and has cost both sides much in terms of finances and effort in trying to come to a mutual agreement".

"It has also caused residents much anger".

"But if there was a very clear policy that certain areas are not suitable for development, and therefore not up for sale, the stoush would have been avoided".

Gerry says such a policy would ensure the protection of environmentally-sensitive areas such as creeks or native vegetation that provide habitats for wildlife because they would be exempt from development.

"Then developers will clearly know what lands are suitable for development and what areas must be retained due to environmental issues. Government will not have to contend with opposition to detrimental developments. And the public can be assured areas at risk are protected".

"I appreciate it was the former CLP government who sold the land to Delfin but the current government should learn the lesson and immediately implement a policy exempting specific types of lands for sale in case a similar situation arises again".