Gerry Wood, the Independent Member for Nelson, says he supports the concept put forward by the Leader of the Opposition that prison farms should be built throughout the Territory.

Gerry says that while he believes the existing prison needs to be upgraded that doesn’t mean that we need a great big prison.

He says we need alternatives and one of those alternatives is prison farms. Another alternative is work camps both permanent and mobile.

Gerry says that with the majority of people in prison are aboriginal with low education standards and skills and the idea of prison farms is one way to improve this poor situation.

Gerry says that annexes to these farms may also be considered for people requiring compulsory alcohol rehabilitation programmes. There is a need to develop facilities for people who are continually in and out of rehabilitation programmes and are not able to change their life style.

He says that we need alternatives because the existing systems are failing as can be seen by the ever increasing numbers in our jails and the numbers of people affected by alcohol abuse.