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The Executive Director  
National Infrastructure Unit  
The Treasury  
PO Box 3724  
WELLINGTON

Dear Sir

### INFRASTRUCTURE: FACTS AND ISSUES PAPER COMMENT PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

Thank you for the chance to comment on the Infrastructure: Facts and Issues Paper. We acknowledge that the paper is the first step towards a National Infrastructure Plan and are only providing general comments.

The starting point of the paper seems to be a list of central government's current large infrastructural projects. However, the rationale for these projects is not always clear. We would like to see more of an emphasis on the purpose of infrastructural assets and consider that this would provide a more long-term basis for planning for national infrastructural assets.

In a related comment, we do not think the Rugby World Cup is itself an infrastructural issue. It may be a driver for improved infrastructure so that New Zealand is well perceived by visitors to the country and viewers of RWC events. However, we hope there is a stronger rationale for improving infrastructure than a one-off event in 2011.

We would like to see more on a partnership approach between central and local government to planning, building, operating and maintaining infrastructural assets. The paper treats these almost as separate processes. However, New Zealand will not get more infrastructure without a partnership between central and local government. As part of this we would also like to see a more co-ordinated approach by central government agencies when they do work with local government. Councils often receive direction for infrastructural work from different government agencies, eg Drinking Water Standards, with little evidence that the agencies have considered the cumulative costs and impact on Councils.

The long-term cost on renewing and maintaining infrastructure needs to be given more emphasis on the paper. We also consider that these long-term costs are part of the reason for the increase in local government costs outlined on paragraph 359 of the paper. Local government in general has improved the way it does asset management planning and this has led to a catch-up in expenditure on infrastructural assets.

We believe a broadband backbone is core infrastructure to New Zealand. The Government funds the State Highways, the National power grid, the core rail network and equally a broadband backbone owned by the nation is core to our economic growth. A backbone running the length of New Zealand would enable service providers to hook off and further develop fibre networks in communities. Affordable and efficient broadband is a key driver.

Please note these comments are those of officers from the Palmerston North City Council and do not represent the official position of the Elected Members. Nevertheless I trust the comments made are of value as the National Infrastructure Unit advances development of the National Infrastructure Plan.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R G Swadel', written in a cursive style.

R G Swadel  
**General Manager City Networks**