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## Why New Zealand is Suddenly on every Australian Property Investor's Radar

*As Australia's landmark budget ruffles investors' feathers, Auckland investor and developer Darren Brown says the interest from across the Tasman is already tangible.*

When Australia's May budget was announced, Darren Brown - the developer behind Auckland's Chelsea Rise Apartments - was watching closely. As an experienced investor and award-winning developer, he'd seen the signs building for months.

*"We quickly started seeing increased interest from across the ditch in our apartment development on Auckland's North Shore" says Brown. "And when you look at what's changed in Australia, it makes complete sense."*

Australia's federal budget has fundamentally altered the investment property calculations for millions of Australians. The existing 50% capital gains discount has been replaced with an inflation-indexed model carrying a minimum 30% tax on gains. Negative gearing on established rental properties purchased after budget night has been curtailed.

New Zealand, by contrast, has changed nothing.

*"We have no broad capital gains tax. No stamp duty. And with the Australian dollar as strong as it is right now, New Zealand property is looking very attractive to Australian buyers," says Brown. "The fundamentals are as compelling as I've seen them."*

The sentiment is echoed across the industry, with economists and forecasters pointing to the exchange rate shift and the absence of foreign buyer restrictions for Australians as a recipe likely to drive demand. Real estate agencies are already reporting it, with inquiries from Australian investors increasing noticeably since the budget announcement.

### Australians can buy in New Zealand Without Restrictions

A factor that surprises some Australians is just how straightforward it is to purchase property in New Zealand. Australian citizens can buy New Zealand property in virtually the same way a New Zealand citizen can, with no foreign buyer restrictions, no special exemptions required, and no additional hurdles. It's a very clear path to ownership for Australian investors exploring their options.

### A Once-in-a-Generation Buying Window

Taxes are only part of the story. While property prices in many Australian cities are reaching record highs, Auckland property prices are still currently more than 20% below their 2022 peak - and with the Australian dollar buying approximately NZ\$1.22, the value proposition really stacks up. Softer Auckland prices teamed with a strong Australian dollar hasn't been seen for a long time, and Brown believes it's unlikely to last.

*"This is an unusual alignment of conditions," he says. "Lower Auckland prices, a strong Australian dollar, and tax settings swinging in New Zealand's way - all at the same time. That combination doesn't come around often, and it won't stay this way indefinitely."*

## The New Build Advantage

For Brown, the opportunity is about what type of property makes sense in this environment, just as much as it is about tax settings.

*"New builds are where the smart money is going," he says. "Brand new, low maintenance, no legacy issues - and in New Zealand, the bright-line test is just two years. For an Australian investor weighing up their options, that's a significant consideration."*

His own development, Chelsea Rise, ticks a lot of boxes for investors on both sides of the ditch. A premium apartment development in Birkenhead on Auckland's North Shore - 8km from the CBD, perched on a sunny ridge above the harbour with sweeping views - it represents exactly the kind of asset Brown believes Australian buyers are now seeking.

*"I keep coming back to the Sydney comparison," he says. "People ask me what Auckland feels like right now, and I tell them: it feels like buying in inner Sydney ten years ago. The location, the lifestyle, the growing demand...but at a price point Sydney left behind long ago."*

Chelsea Rise offers one, two and three-bedroom apartments from NZ\$729,000 (approximately AUD\$597,000 at current exchange rates) with construction well underway and completion on track for early 2027. Buyers can secure off the plans with a 10% deposit, with nothing further to pay until settlement.

*"The window to buy from the plans at today's prices won't be open forever," says Brown. "Construction is progressing. The Australian dollar is strong. And New Zealand's tax settings remain pretty straightforward. For Australian investors who've been watching the budget fallout and asking themselves what to do next, we're worth a serious look."*

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*Prospective investors should seek independent financial and tax advice before purchasing. Australian residents remain subject to Australian tax law on overseas investments.*