

Responses from Cameron Brewer – National Party candidate

1. Significant challenges faced in the Upper Harbour electorate

What do you believe are the three most significant challenges facing our Electorate?

Why

are these issues important to local residents? What practical steps would you take to address them if elected?

1. **Taxes:** When I've been out door knocking in Upper Harbour, I've heard significant concern from constituents about new taxes that Labour and their potential coalition parties are planning to introduce, to pay for Labour's \$18.8 billion hidden bill. National won't introduce any new taxes if re-elected, because we believe that the best place for your money is in your back pocket.
2. **The economy:** New Zealanders have been doing it tough the last few years, due to the previous Labour government's destructive economic mismanagement. The good news is that thanks to National's hard work in government, the economy is growing at a faster rate than Australia, the UK, the USA, Canada, and the EU, 220,000 more jobs are set to be created over the next four years, and wages will grow faster than prices over that period.
3. **Healthcare:** Our healthcare system has been battling one of the worst flu seasons in a generation, and we've been seeing hospitalisation numbers double any peak in the last 3 years. There's still plenty of work to do, but by investing a record \$34.2 billion in health, reinstating targets, and funding 66 new medicines through Pharmac – 33 for cancer – we are seeing lower wait times and more treatments across the country, including here in Upper Harbour

2. AI Data Centres

Within this current government's term, New Zealand's AI Strategy has been launched with a clear mandate to invest \$25-35 billion in data centres. Currently there is no requirement for environmental disclosure and no regulator monitoring energy or water use or water and light pollution, or mitigations regarding social impact. What is your view/parties view on this? Does your party intend to implement a national policy for data centres in NZ – and if so, what will it include?

AI Data Centres offer a significant new opportunity for economic growth and enhanced productivity for New Zealand. Our abundant renewable energy, cool climate and political stability put us in an enviable position to take advantage of this opportunity, but there needs to be a sensible framework in place to make sure Data Centres actually benefit New Zealanders.

Data centres are very large electricity users requiring uninterrupted supply, which is why a re-elected National-led government will require that new data centre projects are accompanied by new, firm generation, by applying an “additionality” test. Requiring new firm generation alongside new data centres means the development of digital infrastructure doesn’t raise power prices for households and businesses, while giving energy developers the committed customers they need to finance new generation.

3. Land-use and urban planning

Under the Planning Bill recent amendment, urban trees are no longer protected, unless they have significant historic heritage value. This means that 6,000 trees in Auckland are now vulnerable and no longer protected due to their ecology, amenity and ecosystem support.

Whenuapai, just recently included in this Electorate, has only 8% tree canopy, when 30% has been shown to be required for healthy environmental and social outcomes. Auckland Council's Urban Ngahere strategy sets an overarching target of reaching a 30% tree canopy cover across Auckland's urban area by 2050.

In the face of high intensification and climate change, Upper Harbour is experiencing the urban heat island effect, mental and social health impacts and greater flooding risk. Trees have been proven to help mitigate these impacts. What is your position on this – and what will you do to protect the Electorate's mature tree coverage?

National absolutely values mature trees, flora, and our natural heritage. Our reputation as a clean green country is in part inspired by the large number of trees in our cities.

At the same time, we need a planning system that allows Auckland and New Zealand to grow, build much needed infrastructure, and keep housing affordable for future generations.

National’s plan is for Auckland to be among the most liveable cities in the world. That means plenty of both tree cover and affordable homes all across the city. Auckland Council has a strategy for reaching a 30% tree canopy, and by cutting red tape and allowing the council to get on with planting trees without worrying about costly consent, we’re helping them achieve it.

That’s why our new planning system gets the balance right – protection of heritage and the environment while allowing for growth and building the infrastructure that we need to build a brighter future for New Zealand.

In addition, what is your position on continuing the Fast Track Approvals Act and Private Plan Changes, particularly on Future Urban Zones? How would you ensure this aligns with Council infrastructure delivery programmes and blue green spatial network plans?

We to it to be easier, cheaper and faster to build the infrastructure and housing that New Zealand needs. That's why Fast-Track as a one-stop consenting shop is so important for New Zealand's development. Since the Fast Track Approvals process began, 32 projects that would have otherwise been caught in prolonged, costly consenting processes have been approved. This means more jobs, homes and money going into local economies across the country.

To make sure that infrastructure funding matches development, we are updating the development levy system to give councils greater flexibility to recover the capital costs associated with fast tracked housing developments. The changes are intended to address situations where developments proceed ahead of infrastructure planning or create infrastructure impacts across council boundaries.

Do you support or oppose the RMA reforms (including the recent proposed amendments) regarding;

- *Regulatory Relief*
- *Removal of Council placing Environmental caps*
- *Hauraki Gulf Tikapa Moana Protection Act 2025*
- *Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008*

The old RMA has held New Zealand back for a generation. It has been the single law that has strangled growth and stunted the infrastructure projects New Zealand needs to get ahead the most. We've replaced it with a planning system that's more predictable, more consistent, and built for growth. It'll save ratepayers and taxpayers \$13.3 billion over 30 years, grow housing stock and increase our renewable energy generation.

The new planning system protects property rights through regulatory relief when councils restrict what landowners do with their property. This will force councils to confront the costs of many restrictions on private property that for too long have been costless to them. National believes in cutting red tape and respecting property rights, an approach incompatible with the reality of the RMA.

However, the new system also protects areas with high natural and historic value from development, based on clear, science-based limits. Economic growth does not mean eliminating environmental protections for the Hauraki Gulf or Waitākere Ranges. The intentions of the legislation protecting these significant areas have been maintained and incorporated into the new planning system.

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