

Harvey Norman goes to bat for Bylong

BY DON MAHONEY

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Harvey Norman executive chairman Gerry Harvey has spoken out against the proposed coal mining of the Bylong Valley.



"WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY THINKING?": Harvey Norman Executive Chairman Gerry Harvey has slammed plans to mine coal in the Bylong Valley.

Mr Harvey said proposals to mine the valley, including to Peter Andrew's "Tarwyn Park", home of Natural Sequence Farming, were "sheer lunacy".

"Tarwyn Park is a living case study of how we can get it right when it comes to water use and sustainable agriculture. The place should be a bloody shrine, not a hole in the ground," Mr Harvey said.

"The irony - and stupidity - of possibly losing a place like Tarwyn Park to mining is simply breathtaking. What the hell are they thinking?"

"Tarwyn Park" is regarded as a leading example of how degraded landscapes can be restored and

natural water systems replenished.

If the coal mine goes ahead, the results of Mr Andrew's revolutionary farming practices may be lost as the property lies wholly within the boundaries of the current exploration area.

Anglo American Coal Corporation has onsold its exploration authorities to the The Korea Electric Power Corporation (Kepeco) for \$403 million and Australian miner Cockatoo Coal has authority to explore over the property.

The deal is subject to final approval by the Foreign Investment Review Board.

Peter Andrew's son Stuart said yesterday the Andrews family were very pleased that a prominent businessman such as Gerry Harvey had gone public in condemning proposals to mine Bylong Valley.

"Our family has been at Tarwyn Park for more than 36 years," Stuart Andrews said.

"We are not just farmers, after the many years we have lived here we have an emotional attachment to this land.

"To mine this area is a terrible waste of some of the best agricultural land in Australia.

"I hope that Gerry Harvey can get the authorities to see sense and keep the Bylong Valley free of coal mining."

"Tarwyn Park" was previously the home of champion racehorses such as Herioc, whose footprint can still be seen in the cement in the stable.

Dual Melbourne Cup winner Rain Lover also stood at Tarwyn Park for most of his stud career and is buried on the property..

At the height of its use as a thoroughbred stud "Tarwyn Park" was rated in the top three stud properties in the country and supplied up to half the draft of foals on the yearling sales.