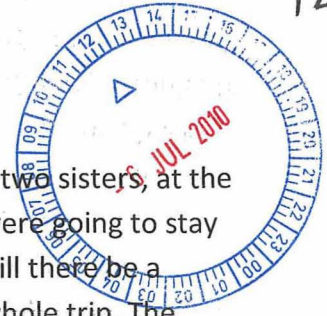


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To whom it may concern,

Eleven years ago I remember heading off on a holiday with my father and two sisters, at the time I was only 9. When we asked Dad where we were going he said we were going to stay in a friends shack at Grey for a week. My first question at the time was "will there be a television?" and funny enough there was but I did not watch it once the whole trip. The shack was dirty, full of sand and I refused to sleep on the bed because I was afraid of snakes so I slept in the car instead, by the end of the trip I was sleeping in the shack. My first trip to Grey was the most memorable, and from that day on I have returned every year and we now own our shack the 'Pepsi shack'.

The memories I have created during the eleven years I have been going to Grey have made me the young woman I am today, independent, ambitious, enthusiastic, mature and responsible. It is easy to say that the shacks at Grey have influenced this, but I am certain it has influenced the person I have become. During my time at Grey I experienced both frightening and joyful events, seeing snakes and sharks, catching my first fish, meeting new people and creating new friendships. These are the memories I will always cherish. What worries me the most is the thought that they will not be here in the years to come, for me to show my children.

I hear a lot of discussion in the local and national news about children becoming obese, obsessed with television and video games and lazy. I find it almost amazing that the government takes little responsibility and blames it on the parents. Similarly destroying the shacks at Grey will create the same affect. By removing the shacks so many children will miss out on the experience to 'rough it a little' and appreciate the country we live in for what it is and the heritage it holds. Parents find it hard to motivate children these days and with increasing access to technology it becomes a bigger challenge every day. The Shacks give families the opportunity to interact and reconnect, and also provide the opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the city life. As a child I remember horrified at the thought there was no shops, no internet, no mobile phones, but I began to like it and chose outdoor activities instead like swimming and fishing. As an adult I now appreciate being able to escape technology at the end of a uni semester even more than I did as a child.

A certain percentage of people believe that shack owners are selfish in believing that Grey should be just for them, and not be turned into a camping site, but that is not the case. Who is stopping the general public from using the Grey area to camp, no one! We do not have a negative attitude to campers or the general public and more than often shack owners will invite them in for a beer, or some smoked fish. Grey is a social community and a sharing community. I could list over one hundred people who have used our shacks over the years, and I think same goes for every other shack owner, think about the tourism we have created ourselves? The shacks at Grey have a long extending history which every person who has been to Grey is now a part of. The Grey community is warm and welcoming, hospitable and

always happy to lend a hand, which is known by most who have visited. I believe it would be a disaster to lose such a great part of Australian history.

The day I found out we would be losing the leases at Grey, I remember coming to tears at the thought. I had always imagined one day being able to bring my own children to the place where I spent significant amounts of my school holidays, and teach them the values I learnt from my time at Grey as a child. The thought of Grey not being there in years to come still brings a lump to my throat, and tears to my eyes. If I could beg for Grey to not be taken away from those who cherish it, and for those who it awaits in the future, I would. But unfortunately it is not a case of begging, but influencing and convincing those who takes it away, that it is safe, fair, historical and valuable to Australia's culture. To the person reading this letter, I do suggest one thing, stay in Grey for just one night and experience it yourself. You will leave breath taken, inspired and most of all relaxed, I am now Twenty and whenever I return to the Shack I still feel that way every time I arrive and leave.

Thank you for your time.

Kind Regards,

Georgia Matters