



04 AUG, 2019

Brand new building to rock the city's world

Sunday Telegraph, Sydney

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JACK MORPHET

WHILE Elton John was rocking the stage during the final concert inside the old Sydney Entertainment Centre, property developers in the crowd were looking at which beams they could demolish first.

More than three years later, the old concert hall and its carpark have been turned into four hectares of shops, restaurants, offices and

apartments near Chinatown – the final piece of a \$3.4 billion Darling Harbour redevelopment.

Darling Square opened on Thursday without fanfare ahead of an official ribbon-cutting ceremony in November.

The Sunday Telegraph was given an exclusive first look at the landmark Exchange building.

The Exchange building is wrapped in 20km of timber, which

passers-by have likened to a bamboo basket, a beehive or the whirlwind made by Looney Tunes character Taz the Tasmanian devil.

The ground floor is an up-market food court. Outdoor stairs hidden behind the wooden bird nest lead to a mezzanine floor occupied by XOPP, a modern Chinese restaurant.

The Haymarket library will move into the second and third levels in November, while a new long

daycare centre fills the fourth and fifth floors. The top floor is an empty shell that Lendlease wants to rent out to a restaurant and bar.

"We have to be careful of trying to force the personality of Darling Square and need to let it evolve," project director Neil Arckless said.

"We feel a civic obligation to the community. But I won't know it's been a success until my grandkids come here."



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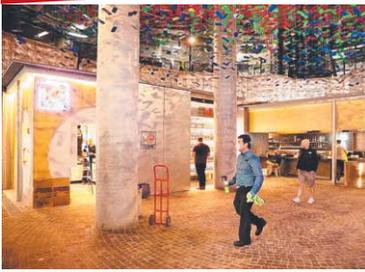
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Lendlease's Neil Arckless is keen to let Darling Square, with its "bamboo basket" Exchange Building, evolve. Right: Finishing touches on upper floors. Pictures: Tim Hunter

FOOD COURT



DAYCARE



TOP FLOOR BAR

