

E-Valley's warehouse city will transform tenant experience

IMAGINE a town made of warehouses, with all the ancillary services you'd expect in a community — a kindergarten, allotments for growing produce, a job centre, repair workshops, digitally connected offices, supermarkets and even a hotel and leisure facilities — and you have a sense of the ambitious vision for E-Valley.

Located in the Hauts-de-France region, in a strategic spot between Lille and Amiens, E-Valley is the brainchild of CEO Daves Taieb, a retail distribution entrepreneur whose decades of experience in the rag trade have made him a considerable expert in warehousing and logistics.

"We bought this incredible brownfield site covering 3.2 million sq m, a former French army base whose ownership had been returned to the surrounding towns," said Taieb. "It's in a strategic location for the French logistics corridors, but also has easy access to Luxembourg, Bel-

gium, the Netherlands and even the UK.

"From my experience in logistics, I realised that it's high time the warehouse sector was offered the level of services which is now being rolled out for offices. So E-Valley provides a wealth of resources and amenities on-site, including serviced offices, so that the warehouse tenants can work much more effectively." Set to become one of the biggest quadrimodal facilities in Europe, Taieb noted that the unique location and local plans for new infrastructure would insure that the site is served by road, rail, waterways and also drones.

"As a former French air base, the site has the right permits for air traffic, and we've found a way to use the surrounding network of canals as 'roads' for drones to reach nearby towns, solving regulatory issues over flight paths," Taieb said. In February, the French government signed



Daves Taieb plans to transform warehouse provision on the E-Valley site

off on the building permits for E-Valley and Taieb said he was at MIPIM to meet potential co-investors, as well as spread the word about this unique logistics resource to future tenants. "We're going to be building over 700,000 sq m of warehouses, 550,000 sq m of which we'd like to hold as an investor, but we're also ready to sell some 200,000 sq m to interested parties. The first warehouses will be ready in summer 2020, so the time is right to get involved."

REPORT PREDICTS A YEAR OF RAPID CHANGE

THE NEXT 12 months may be a year of adjusting to rapid changes arising from a variety of sources, including environmental, social and governance-related (ESG) risks; geopolitical uncertainty; and disruptive technology, according to Will Robson, global head of real estate research at MSCI.

In its latest report, the company has identified five emerging real estate trends most likely to impact investment decisions during the year.

Real estate investors are increasingly integrating ESG considerations into their portfolio decisions as climate change has a direct impact on the ownership and management of property.

Coastal property may be especially impacted, according to an estimate in MSCI's ESG Trends To Watch In 2019 report.

Many real estate investors who have diversified globally are encountering geopolitical risk. The increasingly international nature of real estate capital markets means that investors may not be able to escape these global risks. Global gateway cities are particularly exposed to such capital flows and MSCI anticipates that political uncertainty will remain a top risk for real estate investors.

MSCI says that technology's ongoing impact on the real estate industry is fundamentally changing the role real estate plays within tenants' business models and hence the amount and nature of the space they seek to occupy.



DELEGATES to the Lake Geneva Region (LGR) conference on Thursday morning heard about the attractions of investing in the area around the lake in the heart of Europe. A number of expert speakers talked on the theme of Housing Construction: Partnership Between Developers And Public Authorities. The various development opportunities are showcased on the LGR and Swiss Circle stands in the Espace Riviera. The session was sponsored by Horizon Leman, Swiss Circle and Svit Romandie.