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Upstream, Downstream: Why Riverlabs Ware is a vital asset for the life sciences R&D ecosystem in the Golden Triangle

Riverlabs is a new and exciting 28 acre life sciences campus, ideally situated at the centre of the 'Golden Triangle' in Ware, Hertfordshire. 440,000 sq ft (GIA) will be delivered in three phases.

The campus provides a unique natural environment with a waterfront to the River Lea and 15 acres of open green space, plus a sports club, tennis courts, cricket pitch, five-a-side football and access to water-based activities, like paddle-boarding. Situated 700m from Ware High Street and 0.7 miles from Ware Railway Station, accessed via a beautiful riverside walk, the Campus is highly accessible and perfectly positioned to attract the significant life science talent pool already established in Hertfordshire.

Contract Research Organisations (CROs) are critical players when it comes to getting healthcare products and services to market, yet supply of space to meet their needs is still critically low and a challenge in key clusters.

Liam Nicholls, CEO, Creative Places, specialises in investment, development and asset management of R&D intensive locations. He says real estate plays a critical role in supporting the progression of science-based organisations: *"The life science sector has shown resilience and growth against the backdrop of economic uncertainty and the pandemic and is more determined than ever to address the fundamental healthcare problems of our time.*

"However, we see CROs grappling with issues around rising costs and lack of space at an affordable price point, which puts them in danger of not being able to reach the expansive target markets of pharma, biotech and academic activity in the Golden Triangle."

Despite the best endeavours of a variety of specialist property investors and developments in key markets across the UK, it is difficult to get away from the fact that the time horizon for development of new specialist property for the sector struggles to move as quickly as the tenant base would want given the inherently dynamic and nimble nature of R&D - property development and planning just takes time.

If we consider the fantastic activity in locations such as the southern Cambridge life sciences cluster (Cambridge Biomedical Campus, the Babraham Research Campus, Granta Park etc) and the burgeoning Cell and Gene Therapy cluster in Stevenage, the often voiced issue around lack of space focuses on the next unicorn biotech or large pharma expansion. All too often the property needs of the CRO, as a key part of the downstream outsourcing model for these clusters is overlooked, or at best merged into other occupier types.

Real Estate Built for Collaboration

Increasingly, we see both CROs and CDMOs looking to a collaborative model with clients, with many international firms onshoring activity to achieve this. This is particularly true for novel therapies where discovery and product development need to be close by to problem solve, not only in the development of therapies, but also in process development and manufacturing solutions.

Problematically, newly developed space comes at a cost, and so access to the pharma, biotech and academic target markets for this group isn't easy. This is where projects like Riverlabs come in.

Unrivalled Specification

With highly specified and ready to go lab accommodation - built to corporate standards by its former occupier, GSK - Riverlabs is perfectly placed to provide space to CROs looking to access these markets, at the most affordable price point in the Golden Triangle.

Due to its corporate heritage, Riverlabs enjoys an almost unique position within the market, providing specification levels that are not generally available in speculatively delivered commercial lab properties. Available now:

- **Riverlabs 1** - 141,423 sq ft (GIA) - has in excess of 70 fume cupboards for chemistry work as well as the opportunity to provide high quality CL2 laboratories by 2024.
- **Riverlabs 2** - 219,900 sq ft (GIA) - can be configured to provide up to 30 air changes per hour which makes it suitable for a variety of uses including GMP and clean rooms.

Liam concludes: *“Riverlabs is an exceptional opportunity across the board, but is a particularly interesting business proposition for CROs and the wider life sciences market supply chain, enabling proactive entry or expansion in key growth target markets within this region of the UK at a really affordable price point. Swift and convenient access to London, Stevenage and Cambridge comes as part of the package too. In addition, costs are lower, given that the campus and labs are already developed, creating a genuine plug and play opportunity that is not to be missed.”*

Find out more

Contact the joint agents - JLL and Creative Places - and seize the prospect to secure pre-existing purpose-built lab space at Riverlabs.

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Discover more about Riverlabs here: www.riverlabsware.com

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