

Jobs boost with work set to start on new warehouse

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AROUND 20 new jobs could be created as part of biscuit maker Dean's of Huntly's multimillion-pound growth plans.

Construction of a new warehouse for the firm is expected to start this month and is part of an investment programme of around £3 million that will help increase production for the firm.

It is hoped the facility, that will be located off the bypass, will be complete in October. It is planned to then move some activities – such as distribution – to the site to free up space at the firm's existing Depot Road headquarters for added production.

The increased production could start in June 2017.

It comes against a backdrop of increased turnover and pre-tax profit for the business.

Bill Dean (right), managing director of Dean's of Huntly, said: "We are feeling more confident that we can embark on probably one of the most major capital investments that we've made to date.

"We are quite positive that the time is right and that's why we have committed to the project."

The plans include the development and a programme designed to make the business more efficient.

"There's the opportunity of more jobs being created, which is good news for the area," Mr Dean said. "We're probably looking at 20 new jobs."

The work would allow the business to develop gluten-free and chocolate-covered products.

"We want to be in a position where we have a range of premium products that people would choose," Mr Dean said.

Latest accounts for the year ended June 30, 2015 showed turnover increased from £7,792,980 in 2014 to £8,050,843 last year.

For the same period, pre-tax profit almost doubled to £702,504 last year from £377,196 for the previous 12 months.

The firm described it as a challenging year in a strategic report accompanying the accounts, but added the directors were satisfied with the overall performance and remain confident of future growth and prosperity.

The average number of employees for the firm increased from 123 in 2014 to 153 last year. Staff costs increased to £2,416,801 last year from £2,122,520 for the year before.

