



Downtons Dry Cleaners Ltd

Unit 3, Southgate Technology Park
Pennygillam Industrial Estate
Launceston PL15 7ED

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Introduction

From their base in Launceston, Downtons Dry Cleaners Ltd have been offering a range of cleaning and linen services across Cornwall since 2013. As the business grew, they relocated from Launceston town centre in 2019 to a purpose-built commercial unit on Southgate Technology Park, part of the Pennygillam Industrial Estate to the west of Launceston. Now, continued growth has led to a requirement for additional equipment to meet the needs of their growing client base.

This application seeks approval to extend the company's existing steel-framed industrial unit to allow for the installation of new specialist cleaning equipment, as well as providing a new storage area and formalising current arrangements for incoming commercial laundry.

The proposals will provide an additional 347 m² of floor space, allowing the company to continue its current growth into the medium term, and create 13-15 new jobs as a result of increased business.

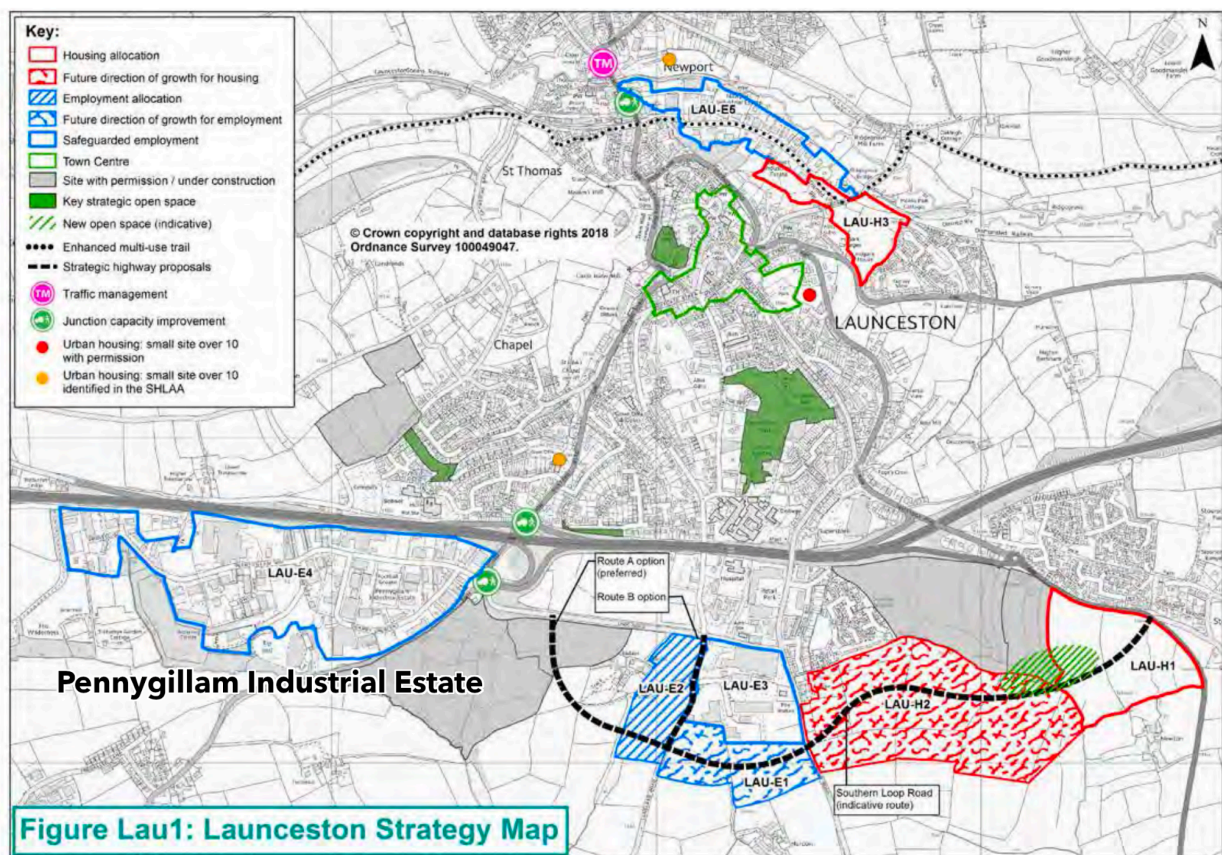
Site Location and Use

Southgate Technology Park is a development of four commercial units split between three metal-clad, steel-framed structures. The development was completed in 2005 (Planning Application E1/2004/00826) and is situated to the eastern end of the Pennygillam Industrial Estate, surrounded by a wide range of other commercial properties, from factories and retail units, to places of worship and Launceston Football Club's ground.

Downton Dry Cleaners Ltd is located in Unit 3 of the development. This unit is part of a larger building which also contains Unit 2 to the west. Unit 2 is currently home to Firebrand Brewing Company. These units face Unit 4 to the south of the development plot, separated by a hardstanding area for parking and deliveries. Unit 4 is currently leased by Oriel Ministries.

Unit 1 is situated to the north backing onto the proposed development site, and is occupied by a commercial print company. This unit faces away from the development site, and is accessed directly from Pennygillam Way.

The site lies within the Employment Safeguarded Site of Policy LAU-E4, as set out in the Cornwall Site Allocations DPD. The proposed extension of a B2 General Industrial building is therefore in line with the aims of the policy.



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Development plan document | 269

Extract map from Cornwall Site Allocations Development Plan Document with Pennygillam Industrial Estate highlighted - Cornwall Council, 2019

Amount

The ground floor of the Downtons Unit 3 currently measures approximately 430 m² internally at ground floor level, with 340 m² of open plan space used for laundry operations, and a further 90 m² of reception, welfare, and administration spaces. At first floor level there is a further 70m² of office space. In addition, a mezzanine first floor has been installed measuring 334.5 m². The mezzanine is a self-supporting system that is not tied to the main building structure, but is substantial and an integral part of the business' operations.

Externally, two 40' long shipping containers have been installed on an area of hardstanding to the east of the building to provide additional secure storage. A simple timber structure has been formed over these containers to allow staff to access them while remaining relatively dry.

This proposal seeks to provide an additional 236.5 m² of internal ground floor area, and 111 m² of mezzanine first floor area. This proposed extension will provide sufficient space to replace the existing informal external storage area, and allow for the installation of additional cleaning equipment, including a specialist item which will increase the laundry's capacity to clean and dry duvets by approximately 600%.

Layout

The internal layout has been developed in conjunction with the applicant and their staff, and has primarily been arranged around the proposed new equipment. The duvet cleaner requires sufficient working space, and has been positioned to comply with the manufacturer's recommendations on this matter. Other new equipment has been located as close as possible to the existing internal drainage.

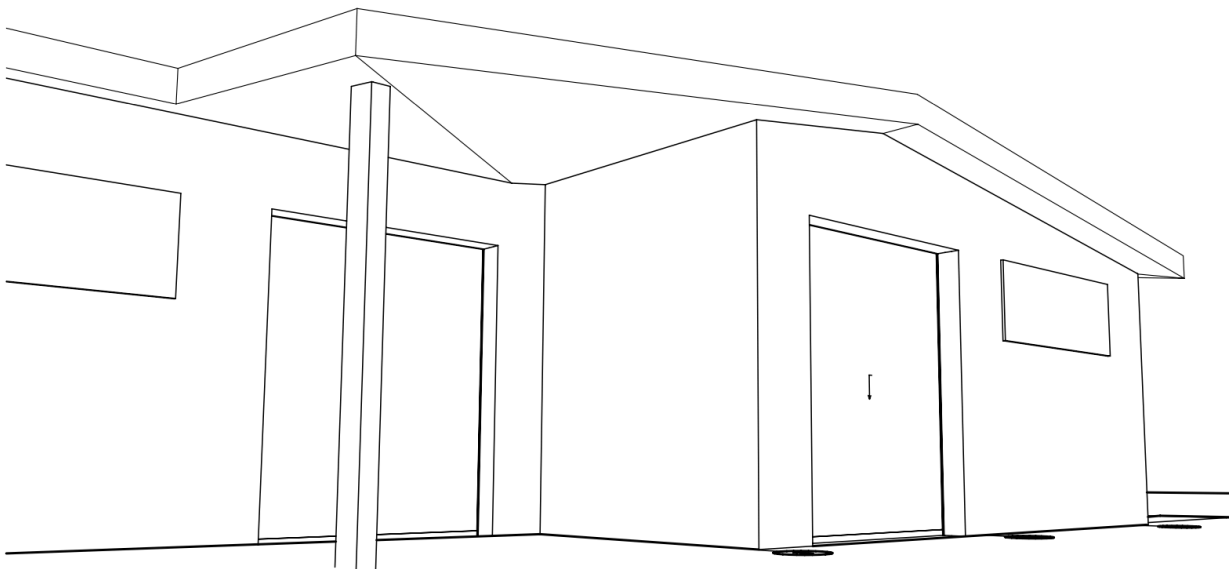
The applicants advised us the nature of the business' operations can lead to high air temperatures, and the proposal is to allow for two large roller shutter entrance doors to allow for deliveries/ drop-off as well as incidental purge ventilation.

Scale

The existing building has an overall length (including Units 2 and 3) of 41.5 m, and a depth of 21.5 m, standing 8.2 m high to the eaves with a ridge height of approximately 10.5 m. Unit 3 forms half the length of this existing structure.

The proposal has been designed to complement the scale of the existing building and wider development. The two-storey proposed extension will measure 12 m in length and 22 m in depth, with eaves and ridge height matching the existing structure. This section of the proposed extension will be set forwards from the existing front elevation by 5.5 m in response to the site boundary.

To the rear of the extension, a single storey store, measuring 11.5 m wide by 5.5 m deep, is proposed in the space between the two storey extension and the line of the rear elevation of the existing building.

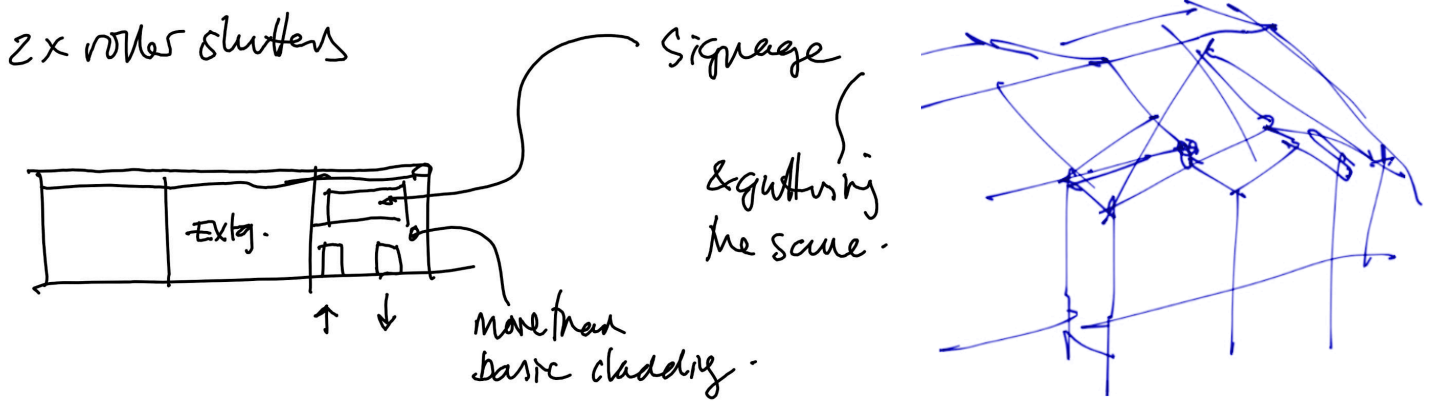


Concept model exploring scale of new building form

Appearance

The existing development was originally designed and constructed in 2005 with finishes selected to be of a higher quality than many of the surrounding commercial and light industrial buildings. The developers sought to make the buildings stand out from their surroundings, and attract businesses seeking a property with more visual impact than a typical profiled steel-clad building.

This proposed extension will seek to continue this approach, with cladding specified from the same ranges as the existing structures. Detailing over the existing external roller shutter door will be echoed in the new extension, and illuminated signage will be installed to make the property more easily recognisable from the junction with the highway. The proposal has been designed to set the new extension forwards from the existing main building line with a gable.



Early concept sketches of front elevation

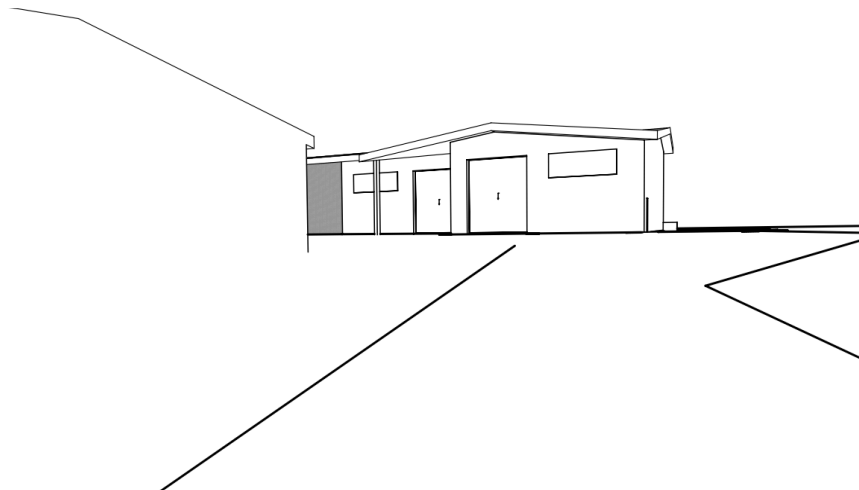
Access

The layout of the new extension has been arranged to allow workers to safely move around the new items of equipment. As mentioned previously, the layout has been informed by both equipment suppliers' recommendations, and staff consultation.

Access to the mezzanine level will be via a new staircase to ensure that this area can be evacuated promptly in case of emergency. The office and welfare section of the existing building provides level access to the reception area, office space and accessible staff welfare facilities.

Access to the building is via the existing access road off Quarry Crescent, a distributor road on the Pennygillam Industrial Estate. The proposed new building form and illuminated signage will help customers and delivery drivers, who may not be familiar with the site layout, immediately recognise the laundry and orientate themselves.

The technology park benefits from adequate car and bike parking, and manoeuvring space for both delivery and emergency vehicles.



Concept model exploring ease of visitor navigation from the site entrance

Parking and Travel Statements

At present Downton's Dry Cleaners have 18 spaces allocated on the technology park. The proposals will reduce that number to 17. Any workers arriving by bicycle store their bikes inside the compound to the east of the building. This space will be reduced by the proposed new extension, but there will still be adequate space for secure bike storage adjacent to the pumping station.

Travel to the site is unlikely to be increased by the proposals. The new equipment is

A bus stop serving the Pennygillam Industrial estate is situated at the A30 junction roundabout.