

Steam or smoke?

The white plumes that can be seen coming from the top of the building running along Botany Road are steam.



The paper making process requires:

- Wet pulp to be dried in a long, continuous sheet.
- After vacuum and mechanical pressing of the pulp to remove water, the sheet is then dried through evaporation over steam-filled cylinders.
- The evaporation of this water from the pulp is the steam that can be seen coming out of the stacks at the top of the building.

The Botany Mill is a 100 per cent recycled paper mill. Pulping of waste paper and cardboard is done with water and mechanical energy only – there is no chemical pulping.

All glues, plastics and other non-fibre materials that come in with the waste cardboard are removed through screening at the beginning of the recycling process. There is no heating or evaporation of the plastics or glues with the steam.

Smoke is not produced in any part of the manufacturing process at the Botany Mill site – only steam is produced and released.

Odour

Understanding the impact of odour on the local community is an important area of focus for the Botany Mill and achieving a better understanding of community perceptions on this remains a priority for Opal.

Odour study

Botany Mill monitors odours associated with the recycled paper-making process, and recently engaged an odour consultant to complete a study, sampling 33 air emission locations around the site.

The samples were tested for odour concentration, character (what it smelt like) and hedonic tone (was it pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral).

Sampling and testing were undertaken independently, with modelling of the odour impacts undertaken by Todoroski Air Sciences.

The decanter building was identified as contributing 40 per cent of the odour impact at the site. This is where water is removed from water treatment biomass before it is taken to farmland for use as an organic fertilizer.



A project is underway to significantly reduce the odour, which involves:

- Designing the most effective method of odour treatment for the decanter building to minimise impact on the local community.
- An air systems expert was engaged to check the ventilation and exhaust systems and the Mill is ensuring ventilation and exhaust systems are working effectively to reduce odour impacts.

Opal Botany Mill has a 24-hour Environment Hotline **1800 072 734**. If you have any questions, would like more information on an odour study, or want to report an issue or complaint related to the Mill's operations such as odour or noise, please call **1800 072 734** to enable us to immediately investigate. You can also request instant feedback, if you choose.