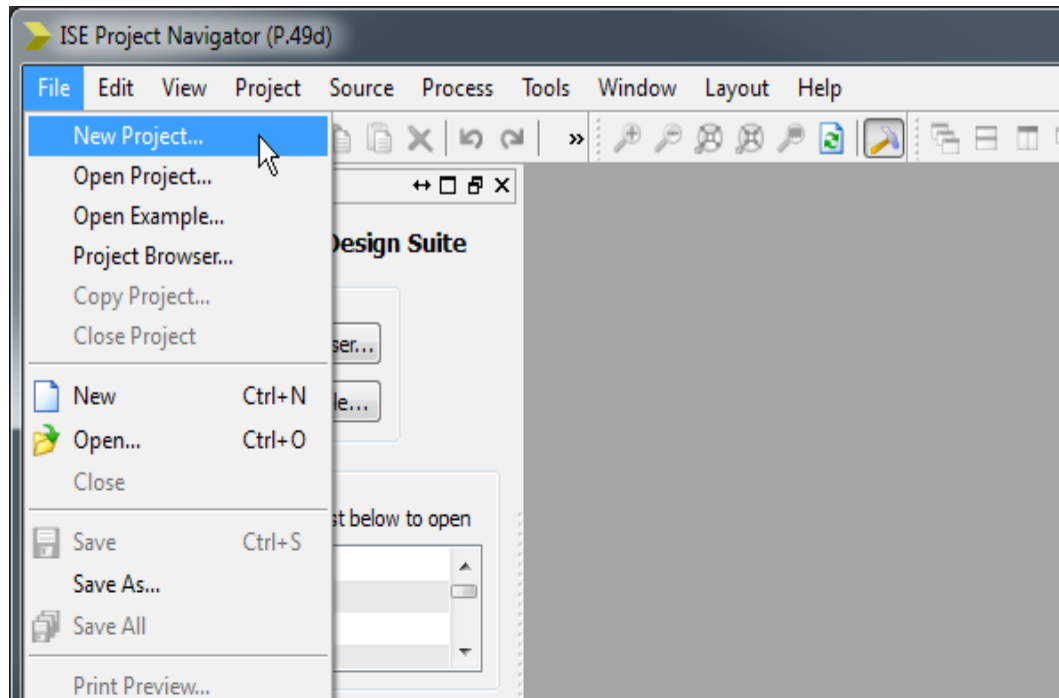


C.1 ***“Microblaze! Now What!?”***

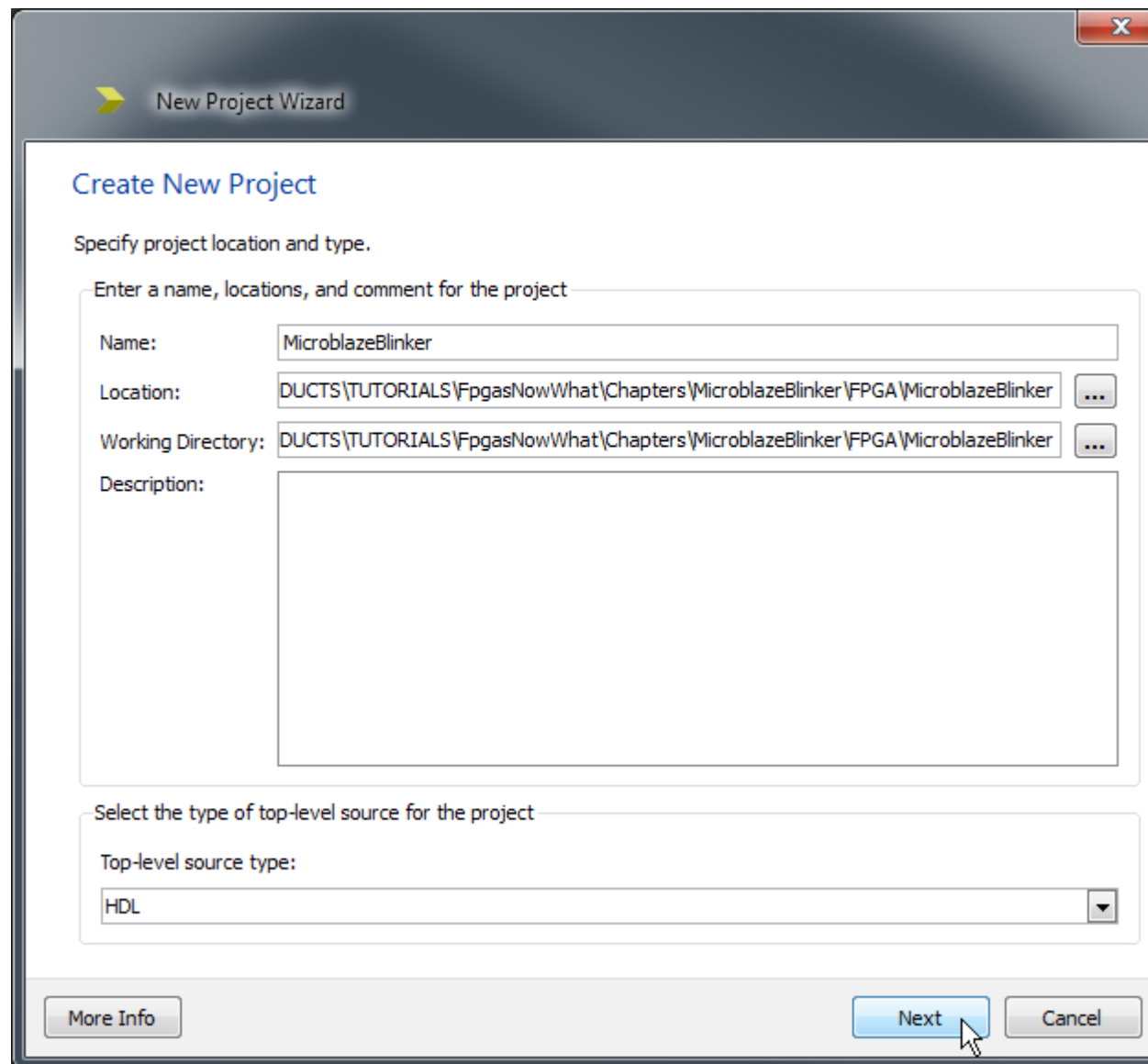
Start with the ISE

Start the Xilinx ISE tools. In this example, I'm using the ISE System Edition with a 30-day evaluation license so I can have full access to the Embedded Development Kit (EDK).

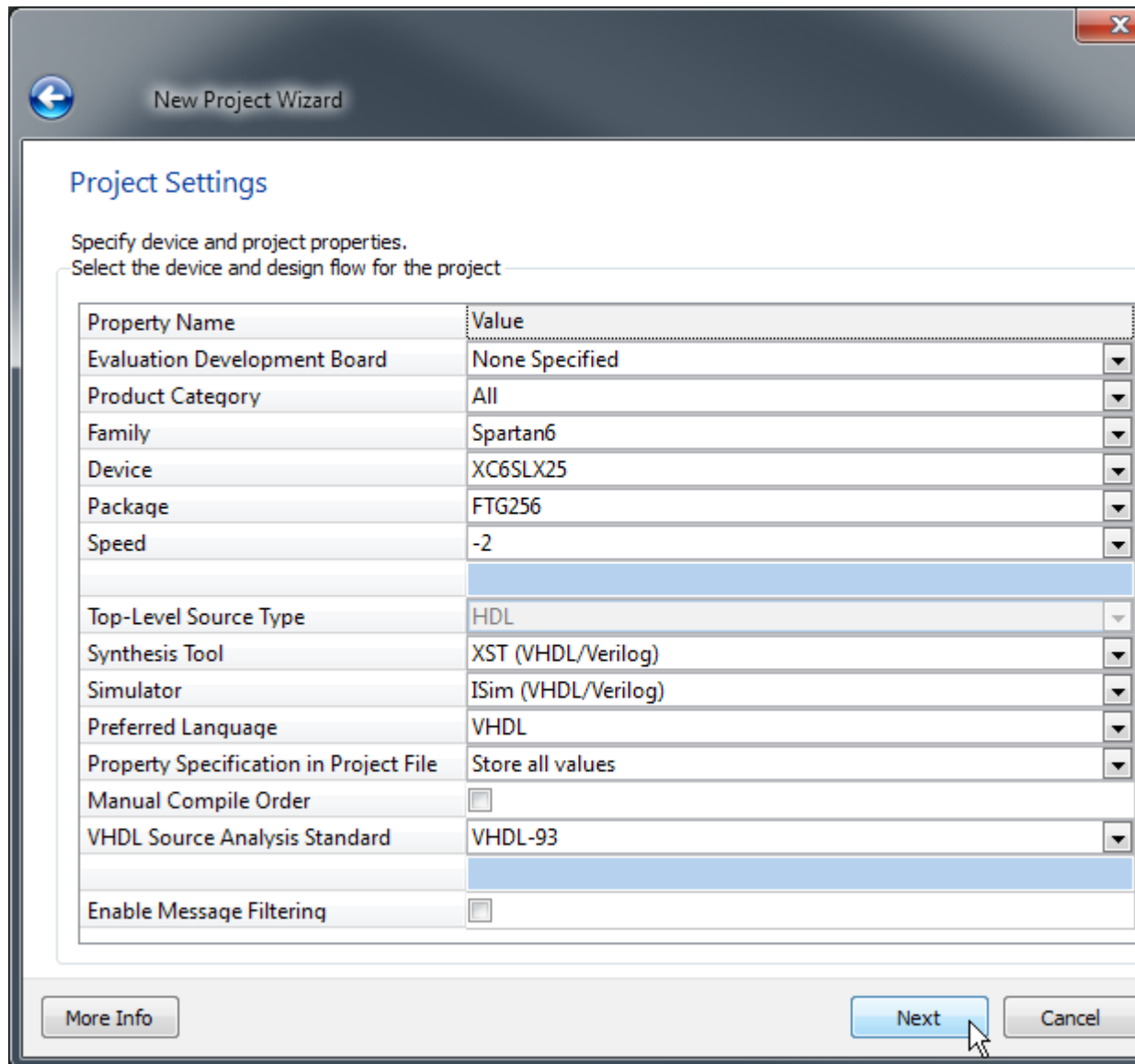
As usual, I begin by starting a new project:



I selected a directory to store my project and gave it a title. (I chose "MicroblazeBlinker".)



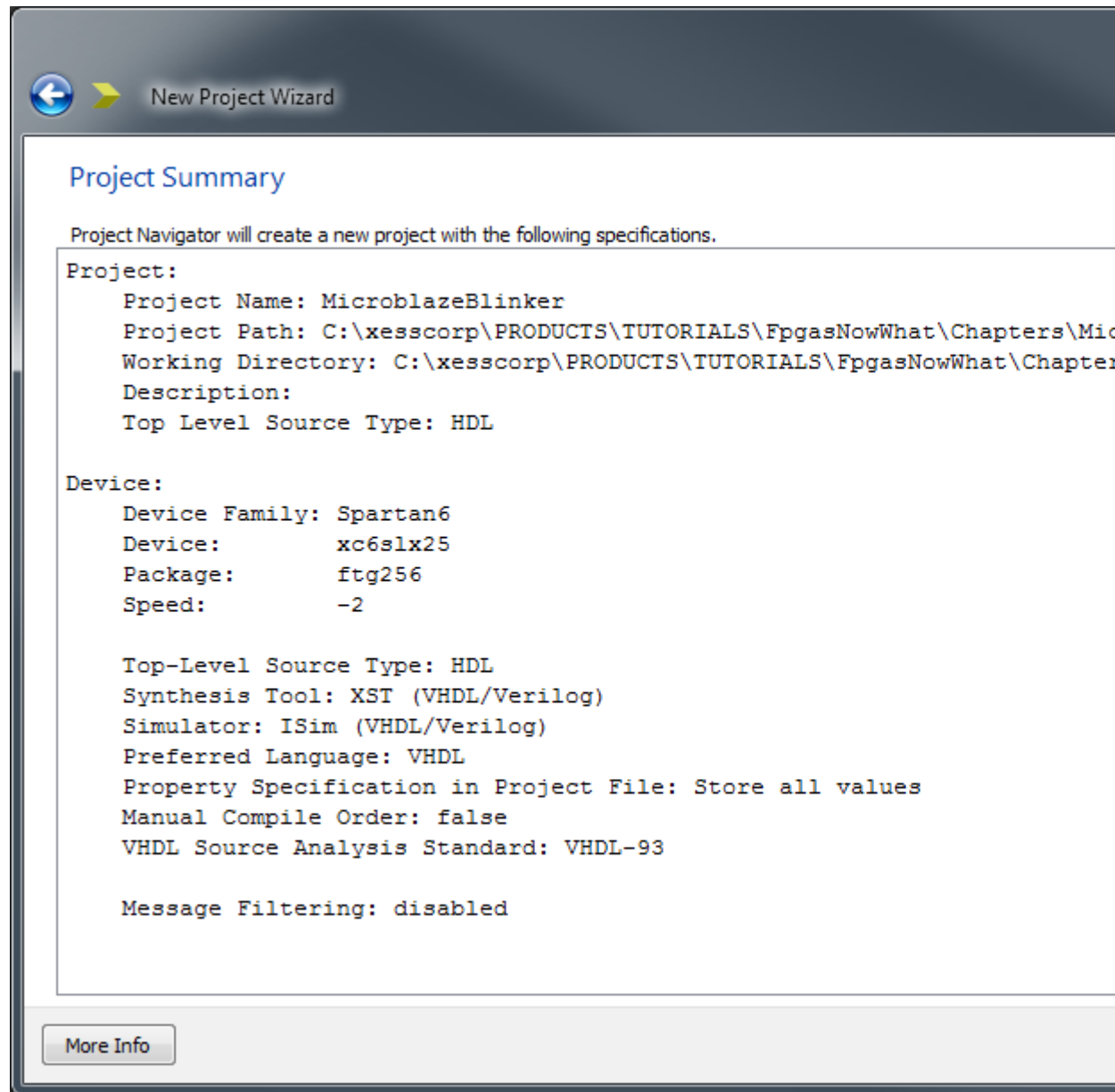
Here are the project settings for a XuLA2 FPGA board:



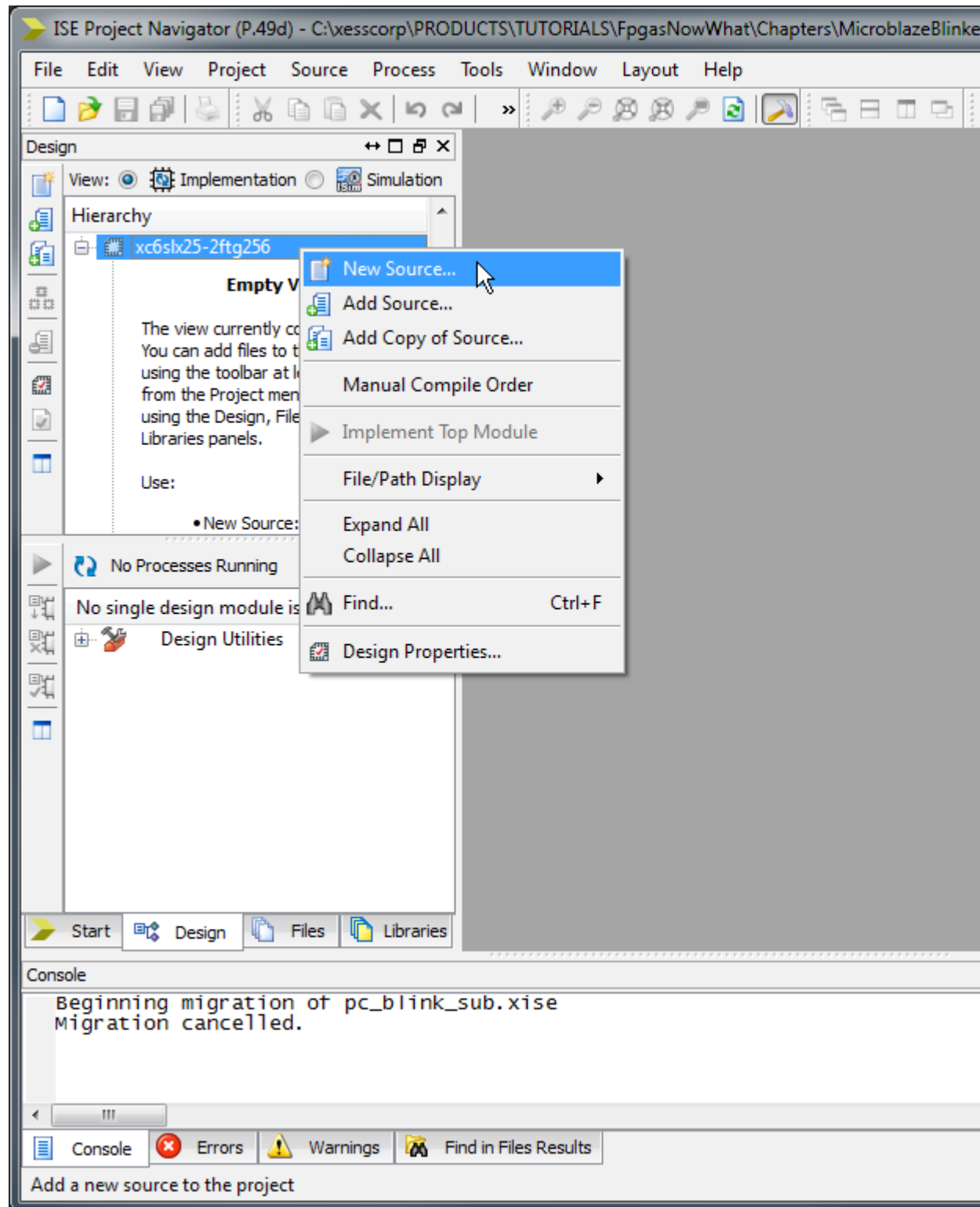
The image shows the 'New Project Wizard' dialog box, specifically the 'Project Settings' step. The dialog has a title bar with a back arrow and the text 'New Project Wizard'. Below the title bar, the section is titled 'Project Settings' in blue. A subtitle reads: 'Specify device and project properties. Select the device and design flow for the project'. The main area contains a table with two columns: 'Property Name' and 'Value'. The table lists various project settings, most of which are dropdown menus. At the bottom of the dialog, there are three buttons: 'More Info', 'Next', and 'Cancel'. A mouse cursor is pointing at the 'Next' button.

Property Name	Value
Evaluation Development Board	None Specified
Product Category	All
Family	Spartan6
Device	XC6SLX25
Package	FTG256
Speed	-2
Top-Level Source Type	HDL
Synthesis Tool	XST (VHDL/Verilog)
Simulator	ISim (VHDL/Verilog)
Preferred Language	VHDL
Property Specification in Project File	Store all values
Manual Compile Order	<input type="checkbox"/>
VHDL Source Analysis Standard	VHDL-93
Enable Message Filtering	<input type="checkbox"/>

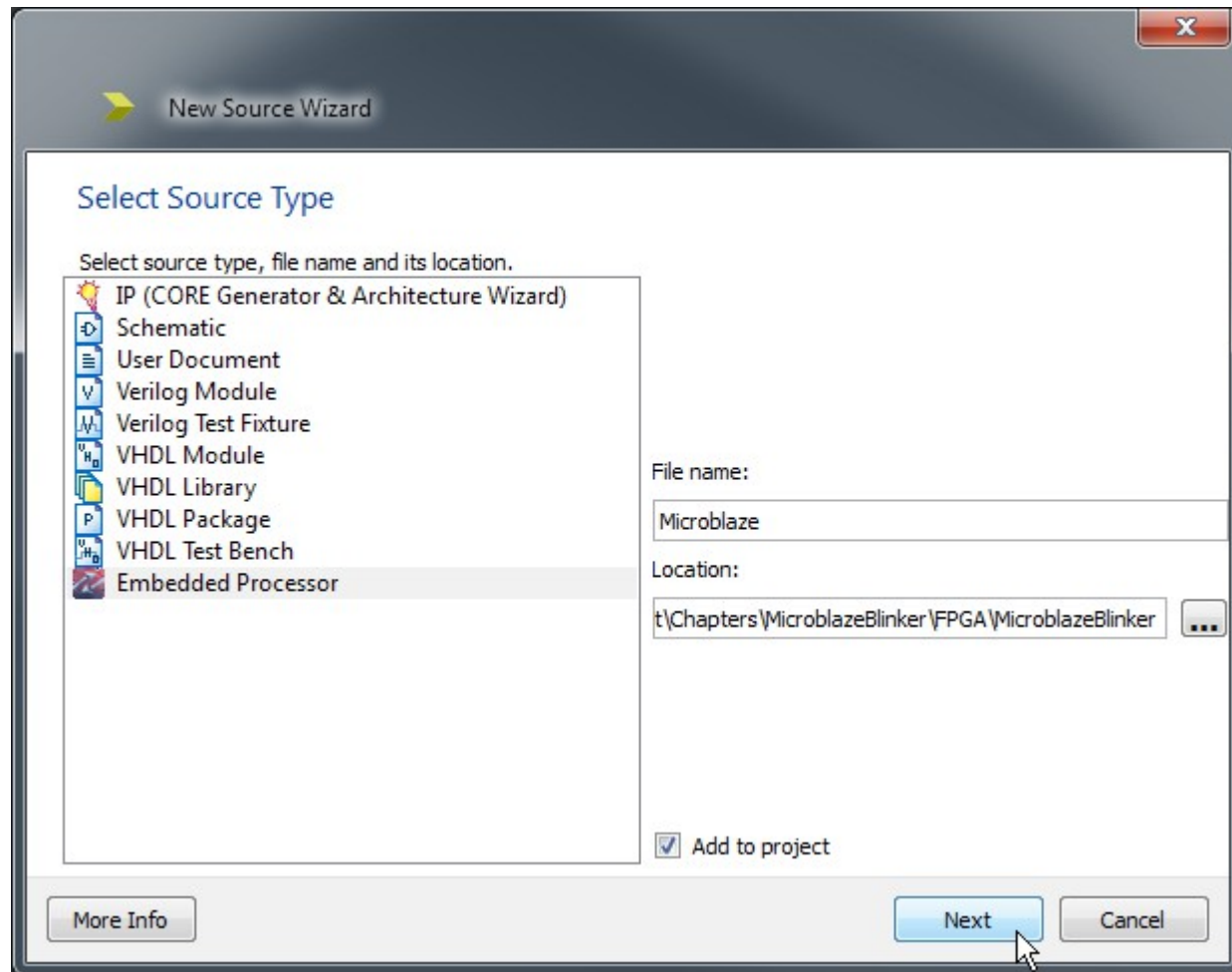
Here's the project summary after clicking the Next button:



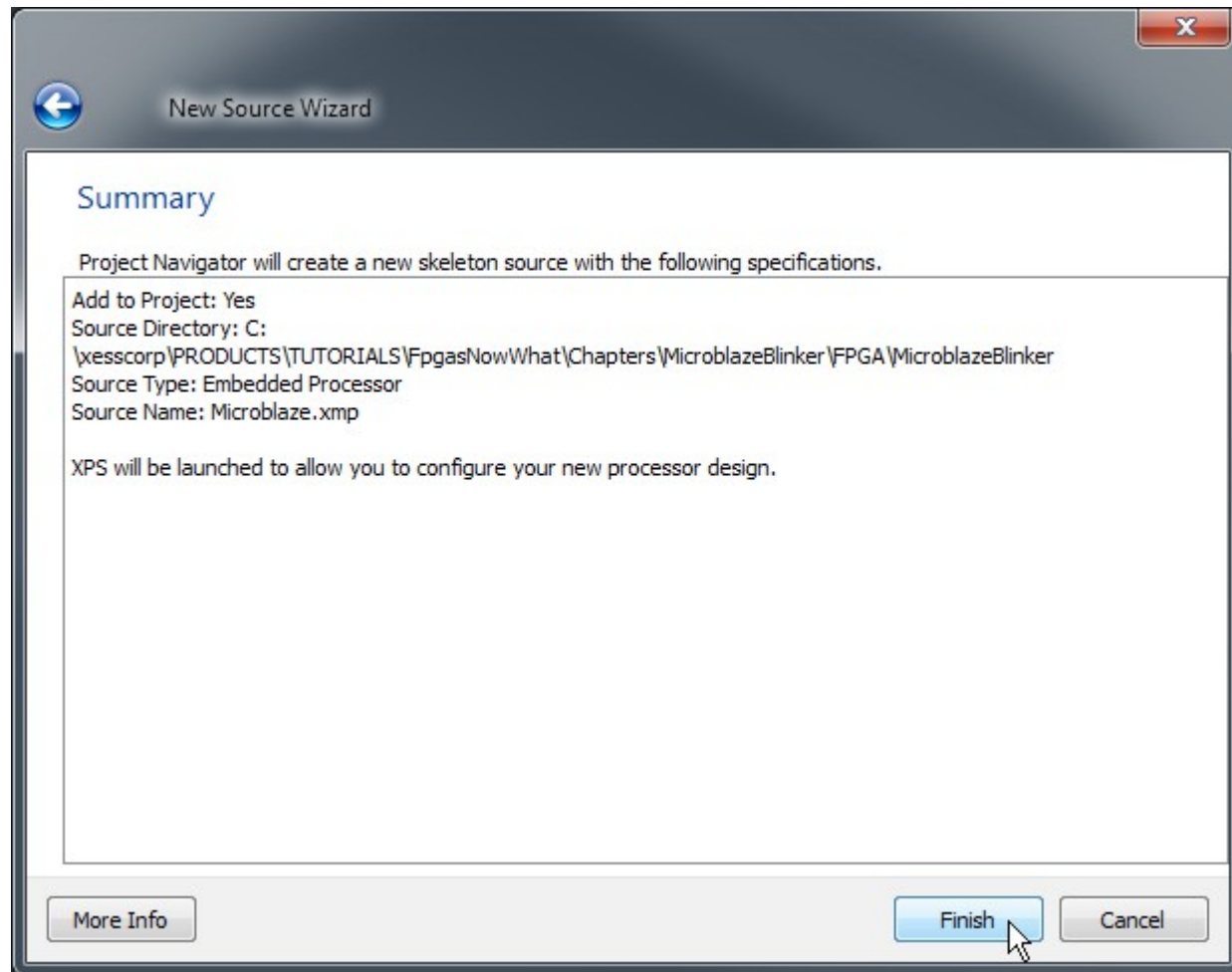
Now that the project is started, I'll add a Microblaze processor to it:



I chose "Embedded Processor" and gave it a name. (I chose "Microblaze because I'm so damn creative.)

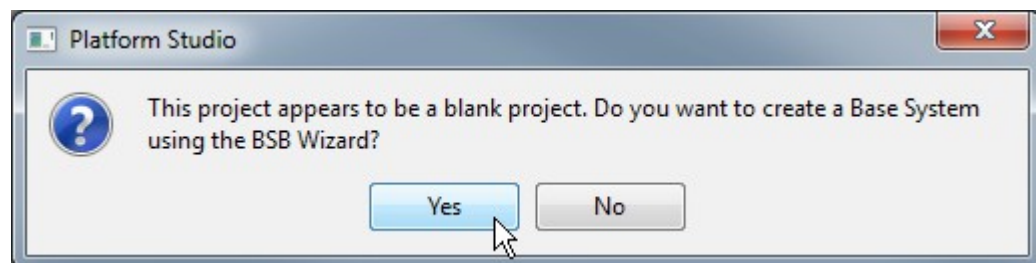


Here's the summary for the Microblaze processor that I added. That was simple! But it gets more complicated from here.

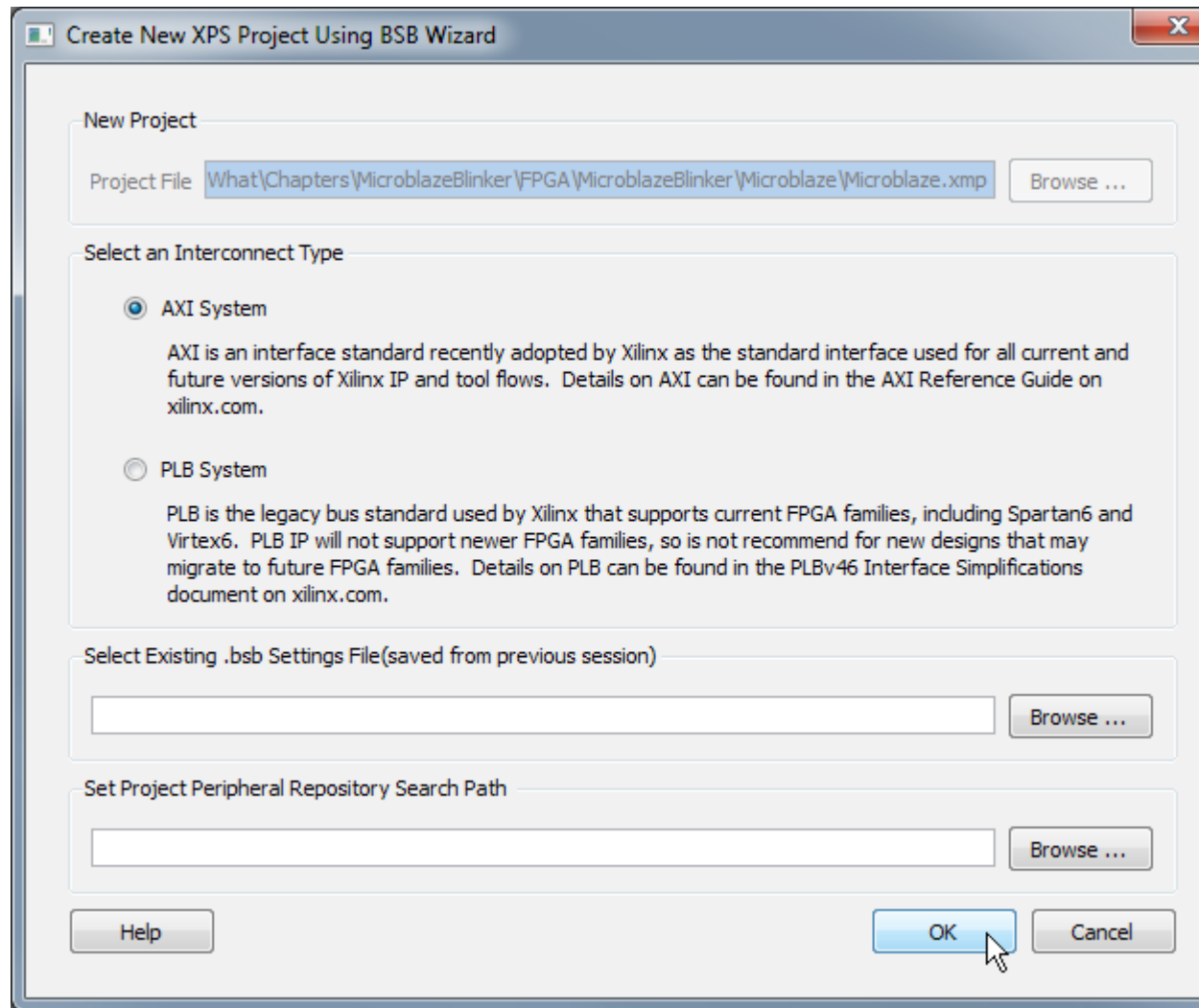


In the BSB

The tools notice the Microblaze processor hasn't been augmented with any program memory, data memory or peripherals so it offers to start the Base System Builder (BSB) for me. Thanks, ISE, you're so nice!



The default settings in this dialog were cool, so I just clicked OK and moved on:



The XuLA2 isn't one of Xilinx's anointed boards, so I needed to create a custom board. I set the reference clock to 12 MHz because that's what's on the XuLA2 board. Other than that, I left everything else as it was. (Take note that the reset for the Microblaze is active low; I'll need that later on.)

Base System Builder -- AXI flow

Board and System Selection
Select a target development board and a System Template.

Board

There are no boards available for the device:
spartan6 xc6slx25 ftg256 -2
Please use the custom board option.

☒ Create a System for a Custom Board

Board Configuration

Architecture Device Reference Clock Frequency
Package Speed Grade Reset Polarity ☐ Use

Select a System

Single MicroBlaze Processor System
Dual MicroBlaze Processor System

System Information

This system consists of one instance of MicroBlaze with ext commonly used peripherals such as UART, GPIO, IIC, Ethern connected on a shared AXI interconnect, while DDR memory interconnect configured as a crossbar. Click Next to modify Custom boards do not have default peripherals and need to next page. Custom boards do not have default peripherals selected on the next page.

Optimization Strategy

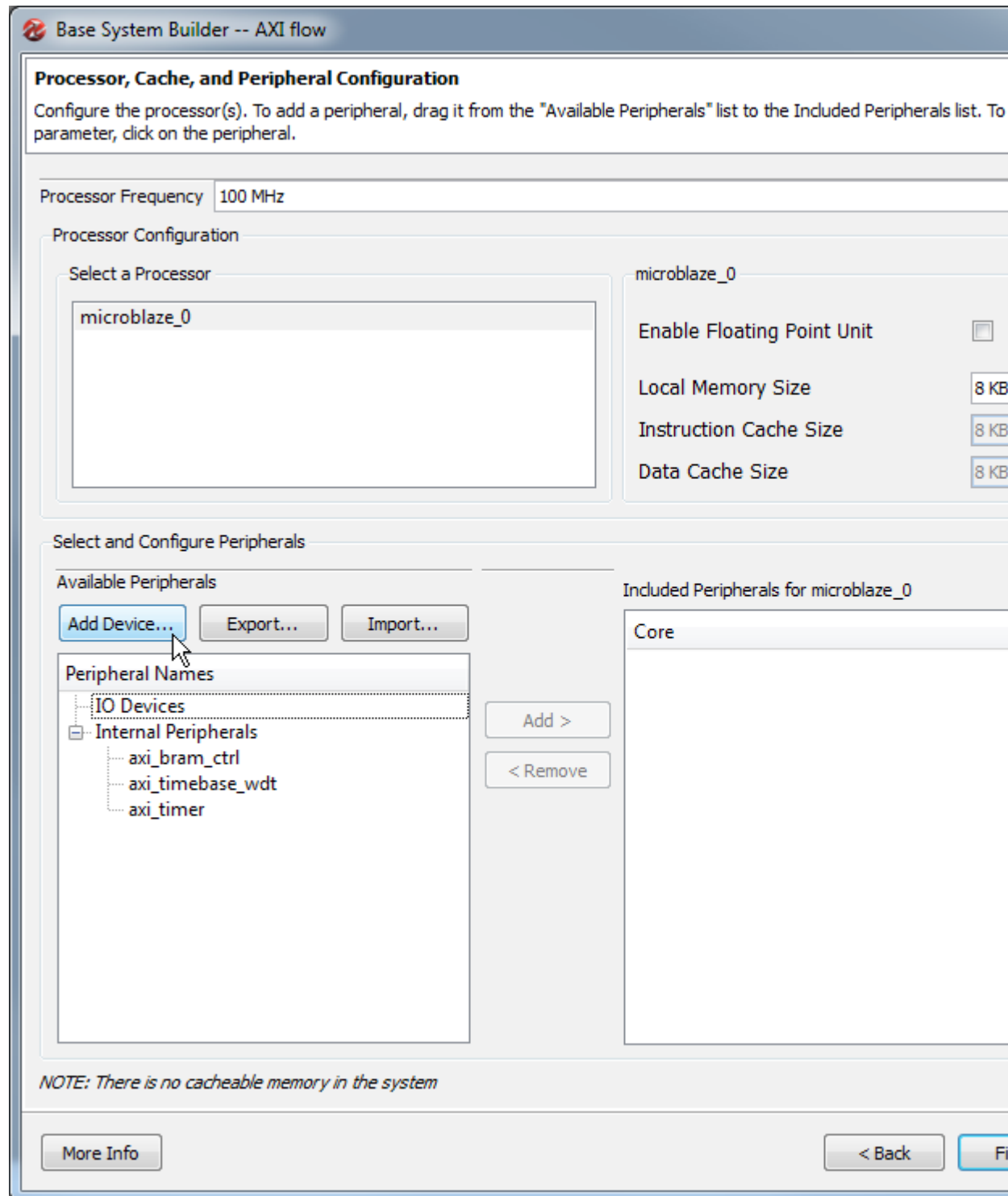
☐ Area ☒ Throughput

Related Information

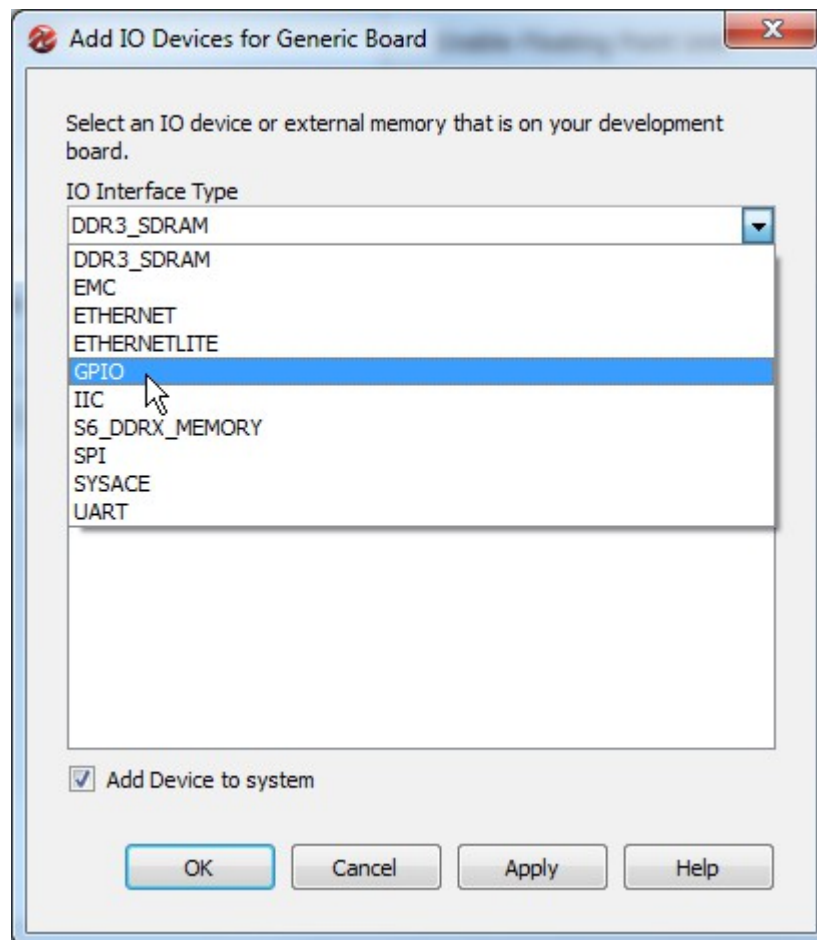
This option allows you to rapidly and easily create a base or starter design that does not require a specific target board. U must specify the FPGA device you will be using and external memories and I/O devices that are on your board. Supported and SDRAM memory controllers, 10/100 Ethernet, GPIO, and serial devices such as UARTs, IIC, and SPI. The generated s run simulations. If you would like to download this system onto your hardware, you will have to add the FPGA pin location generated UCF file.

I left the top portion of the next screen as it was with the single Microblaze core set to run at 100 MHz with 8 KB of memory. (I'm just flashing an LED! How much memory can that take?)

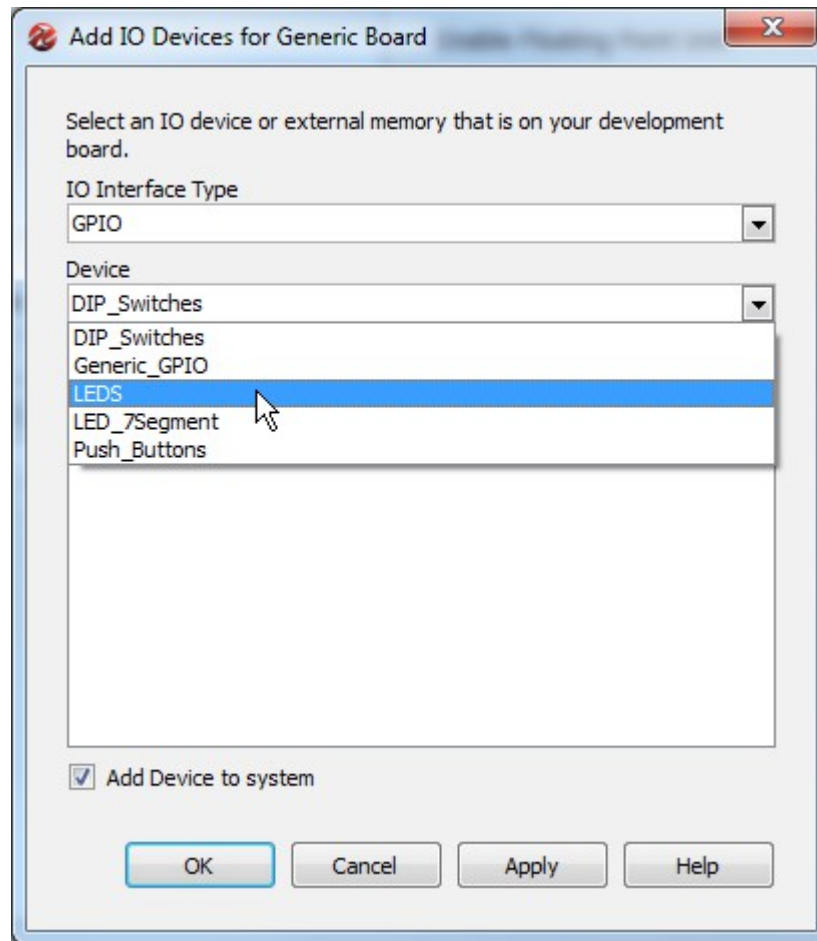
Since I'm flashing an LED, I needed a single output pin that the processor could drive high and low. So I click on the "Add Device..." button to begin that process.



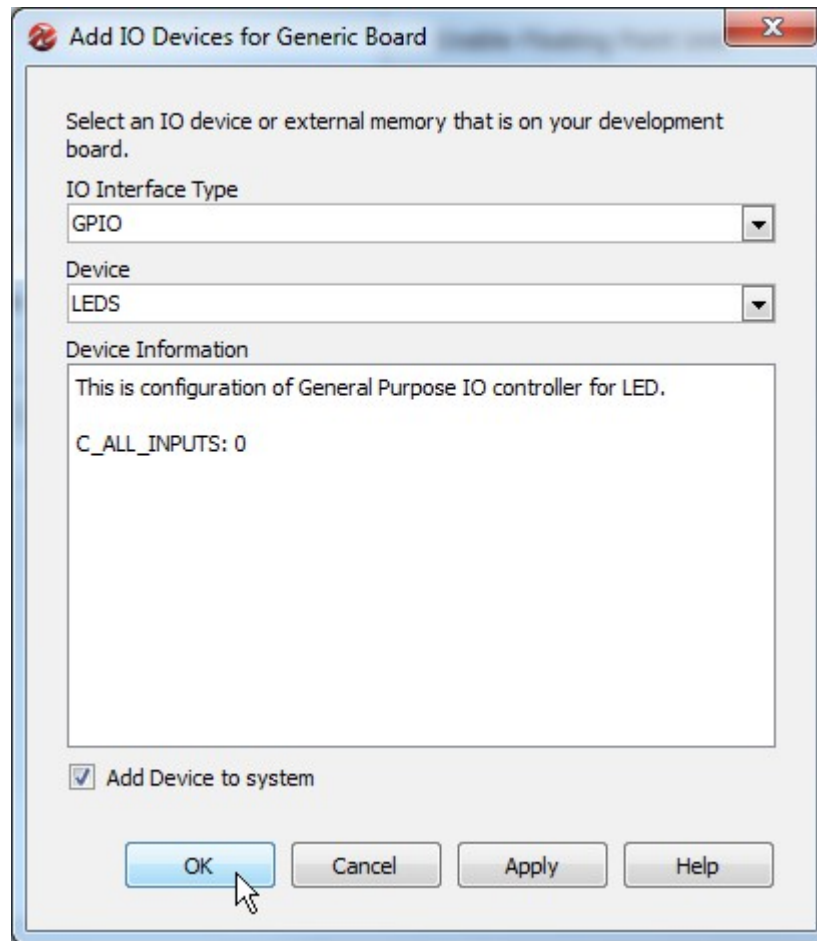
I select "GPIO" from the list of I/O types.



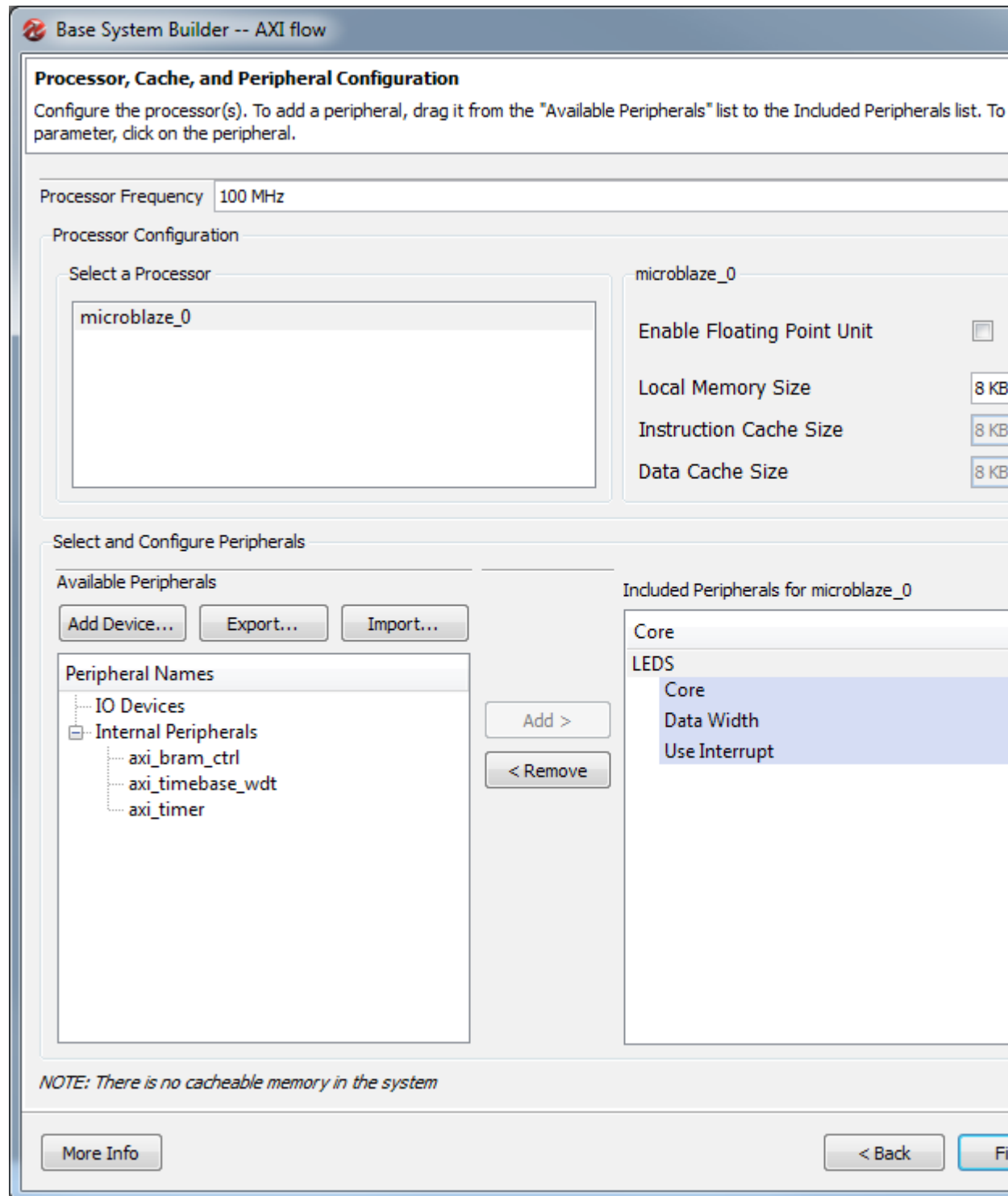
Then I select an LED driver as a specific type of I/O:



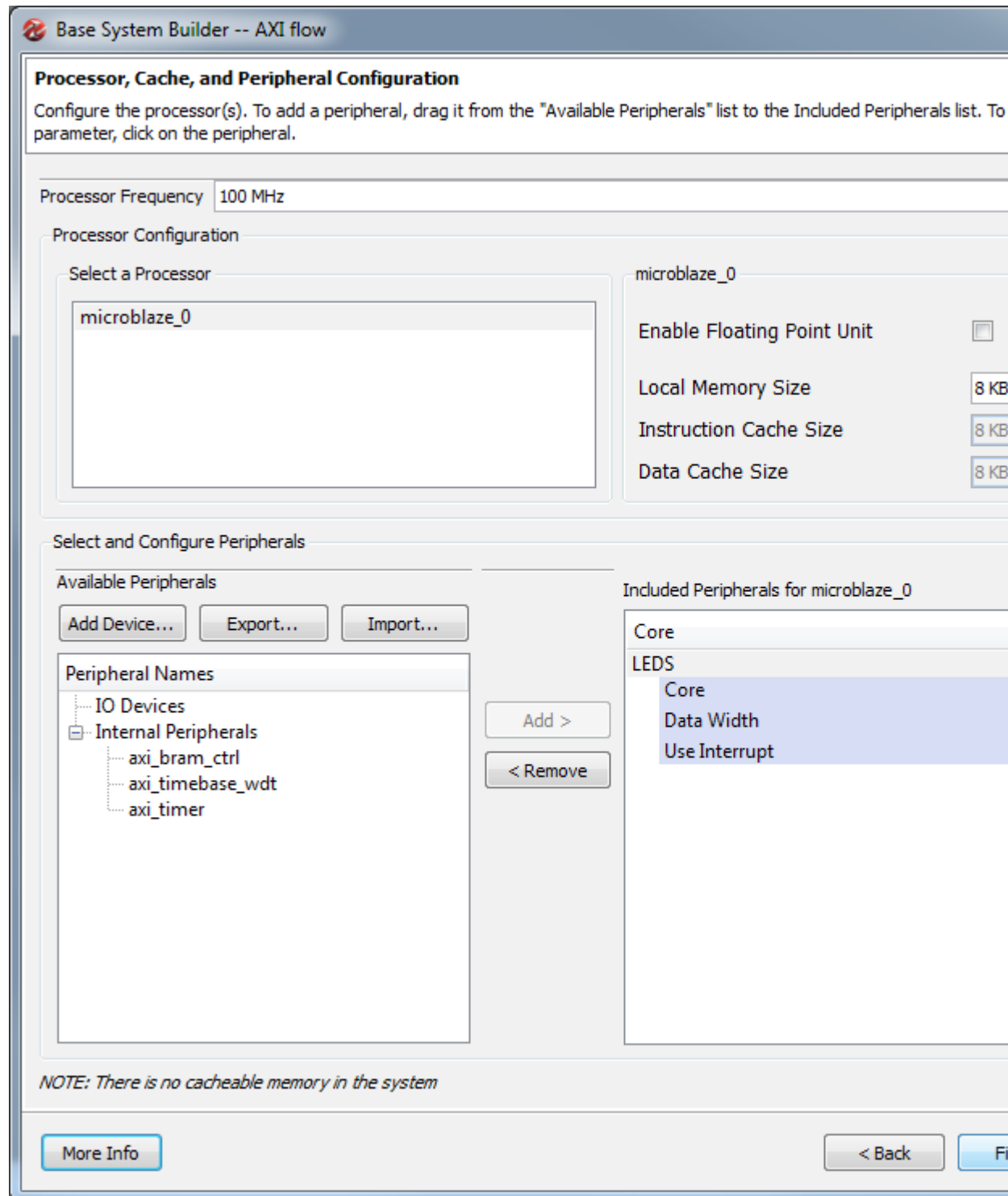
After that, I clicked the OK button to instantiate the GPIO.



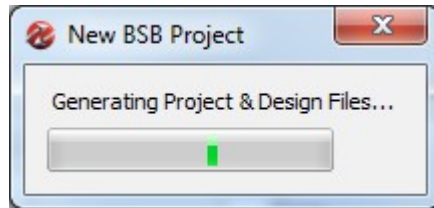
The LED driver was added to the "Included Peripherals" pane. I clicked on the "Data Width" field and set it to a single bit since I'll only be blinking a single LED.



That was the only peripheral I needed, so I clicked Finish.

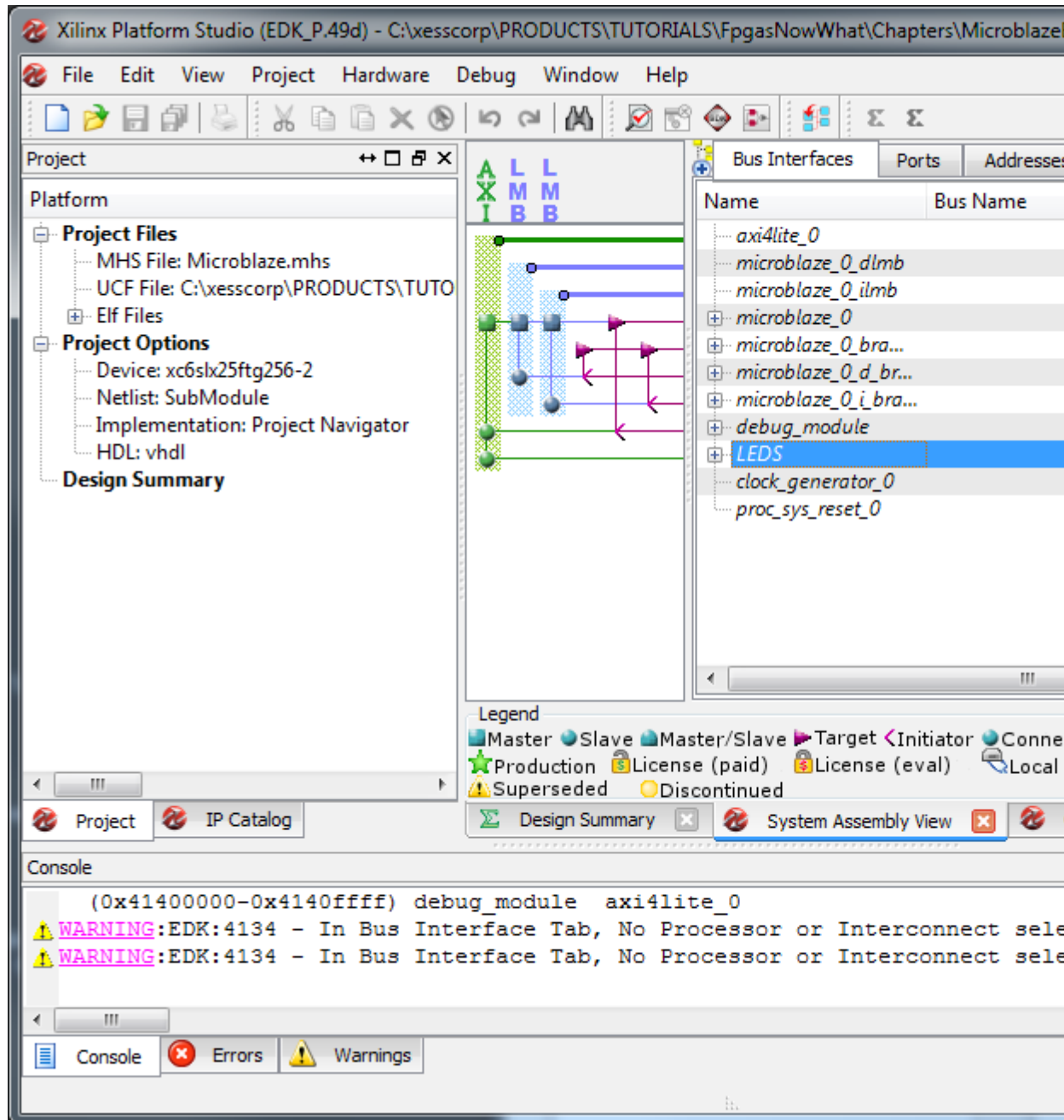


Now the BSB generates all the necessary file for the processor core, memory and peripherals.

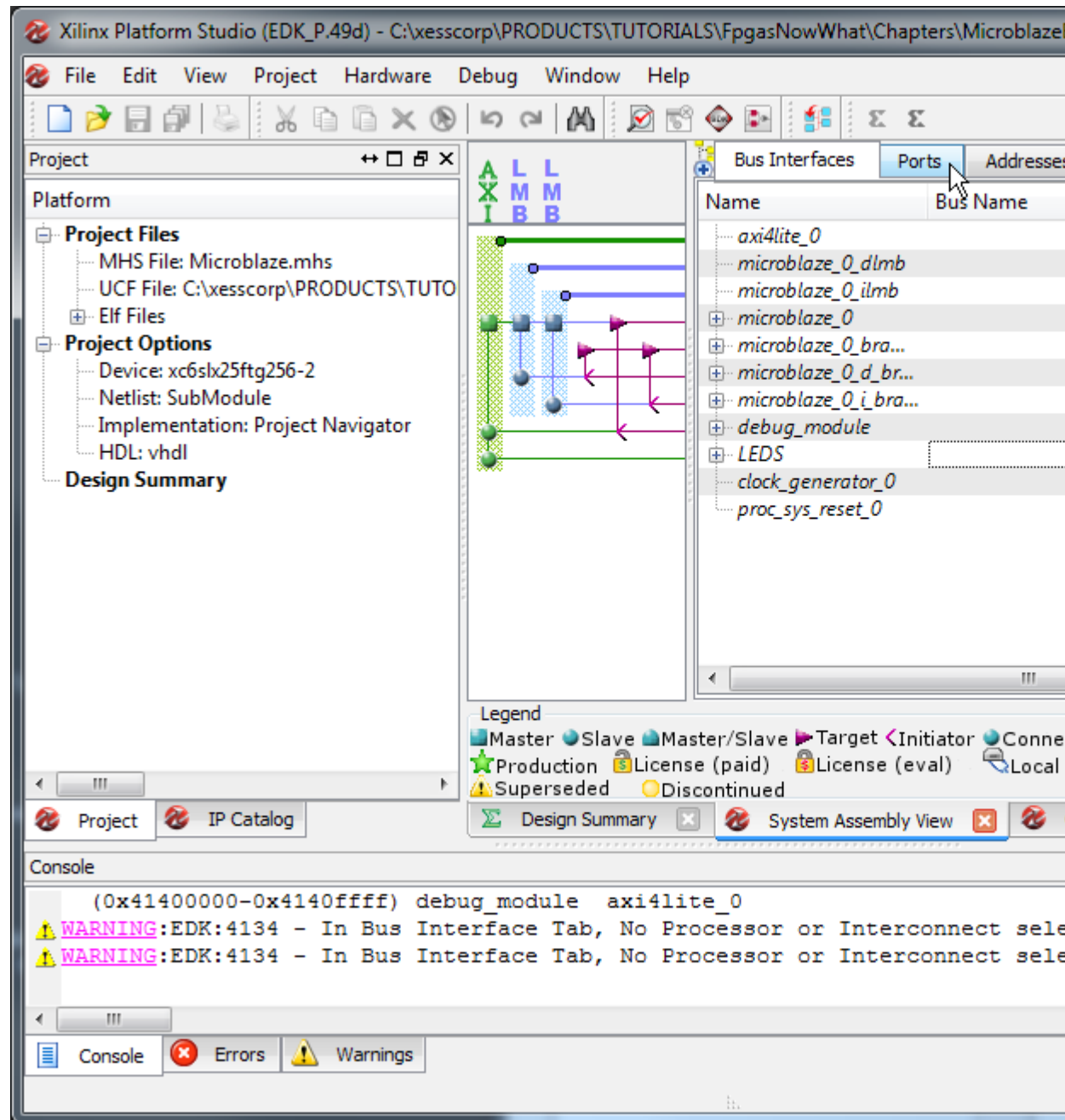


Over to the XPS

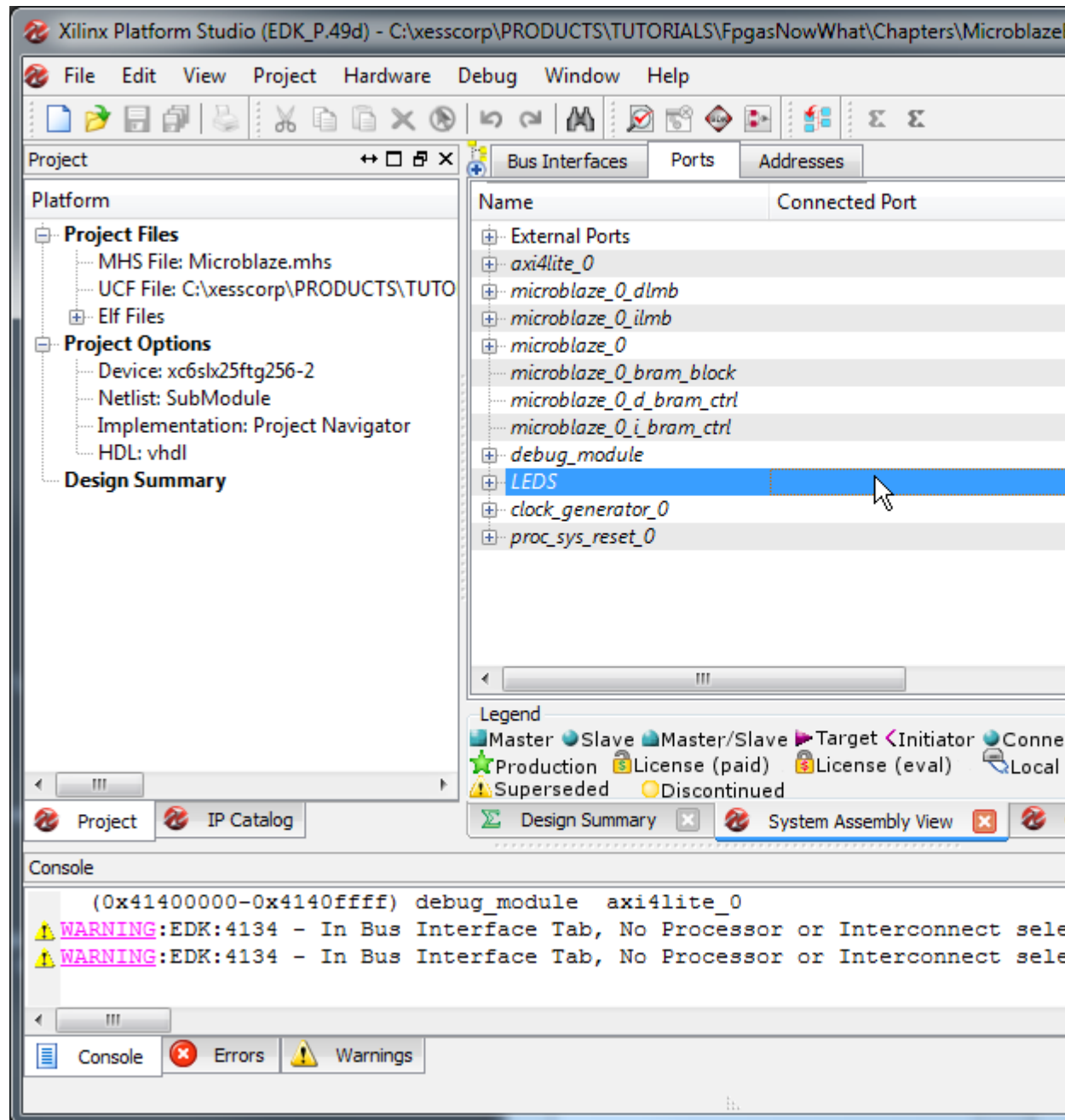
After the BSB is finished, it automatically starts the Xilinx Platform Studio (XPS) where I can finish configuring the Microblaze. (Thanks again, ISE!)



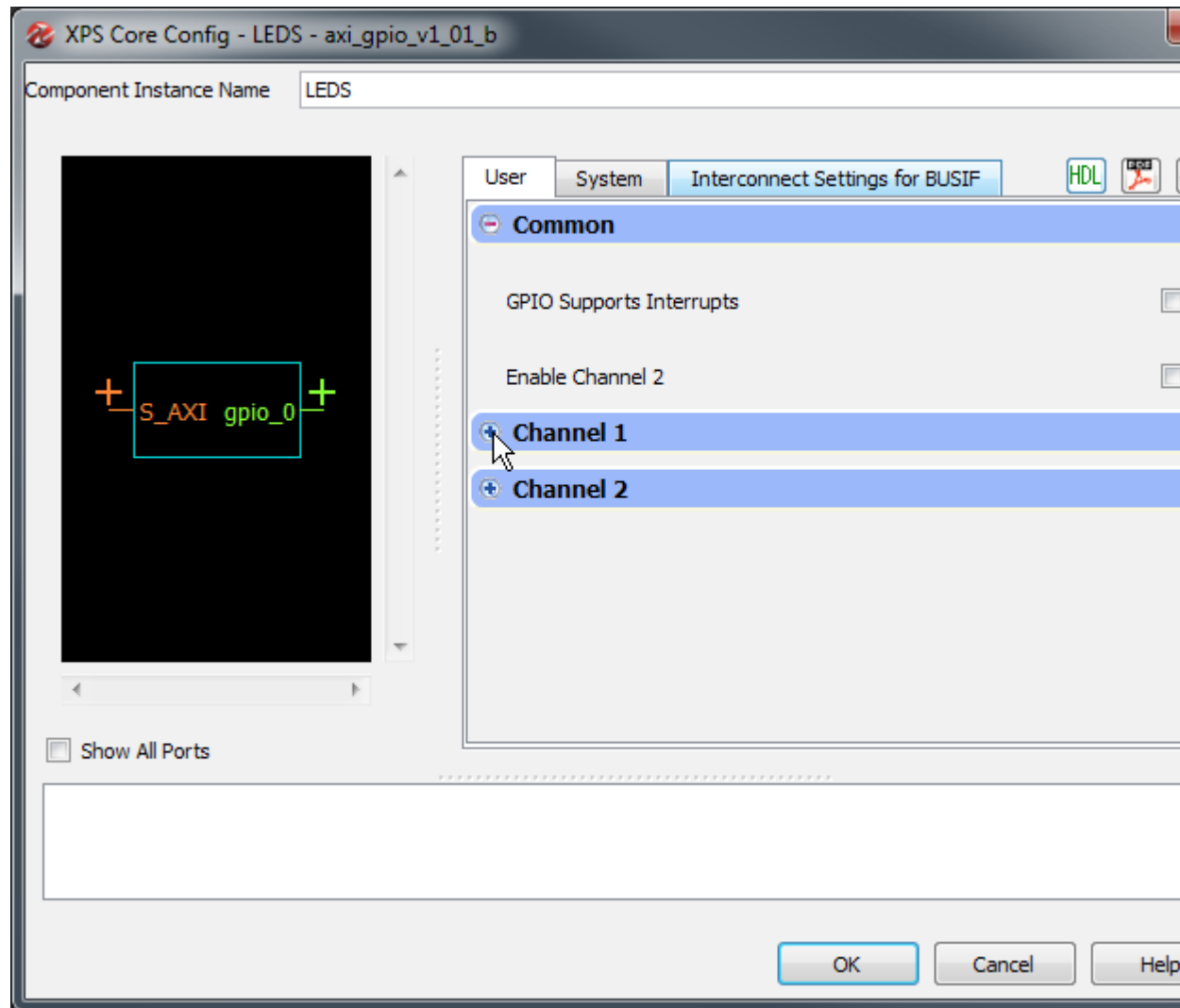
What I need to do is get the LED driver connected to an external pin and attach the external clock signal to the processor. To do this, I switch to the "Ports" tab:



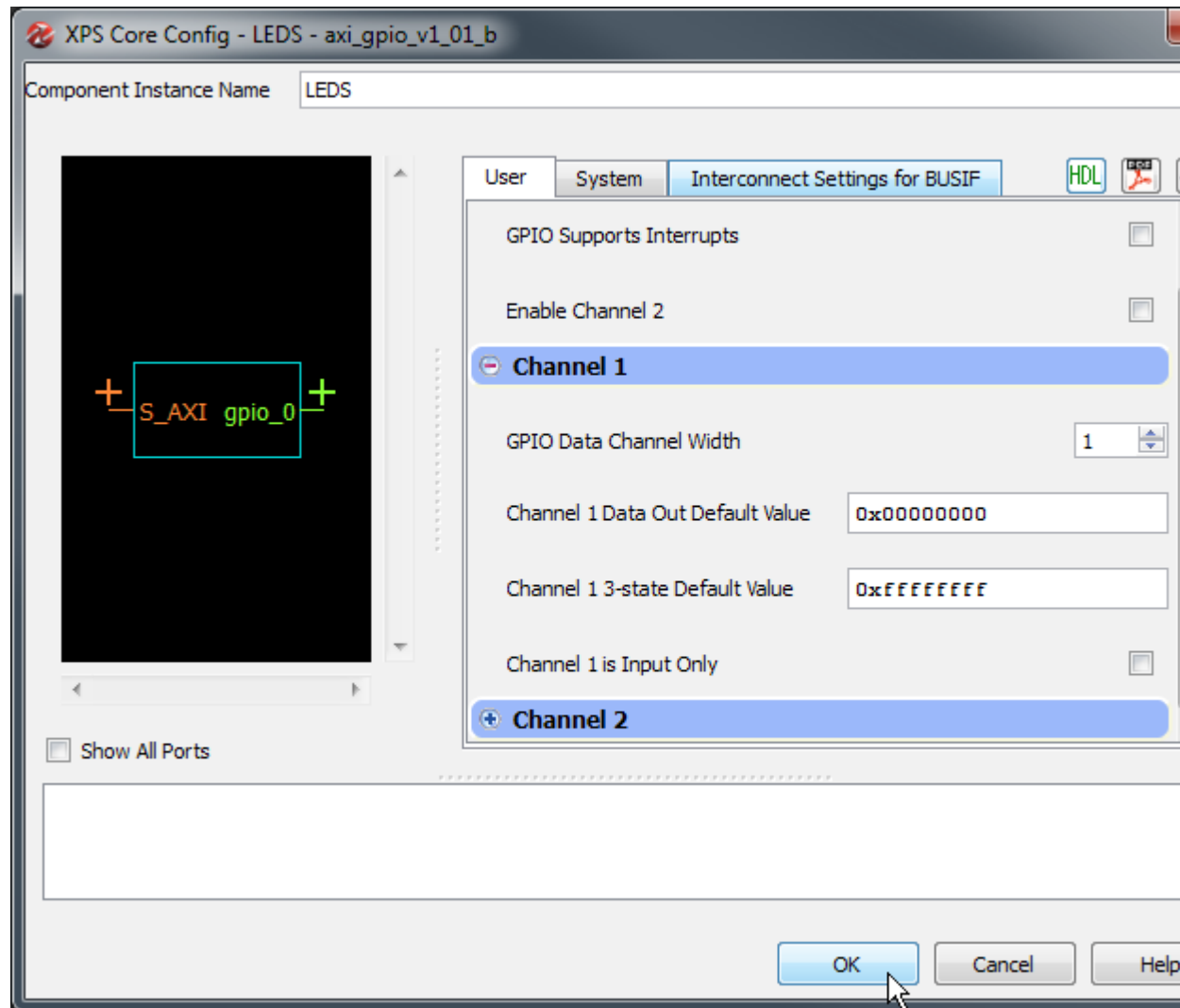
In the Ports tab, I double-click the LEDES device to bring up its configuration screen:



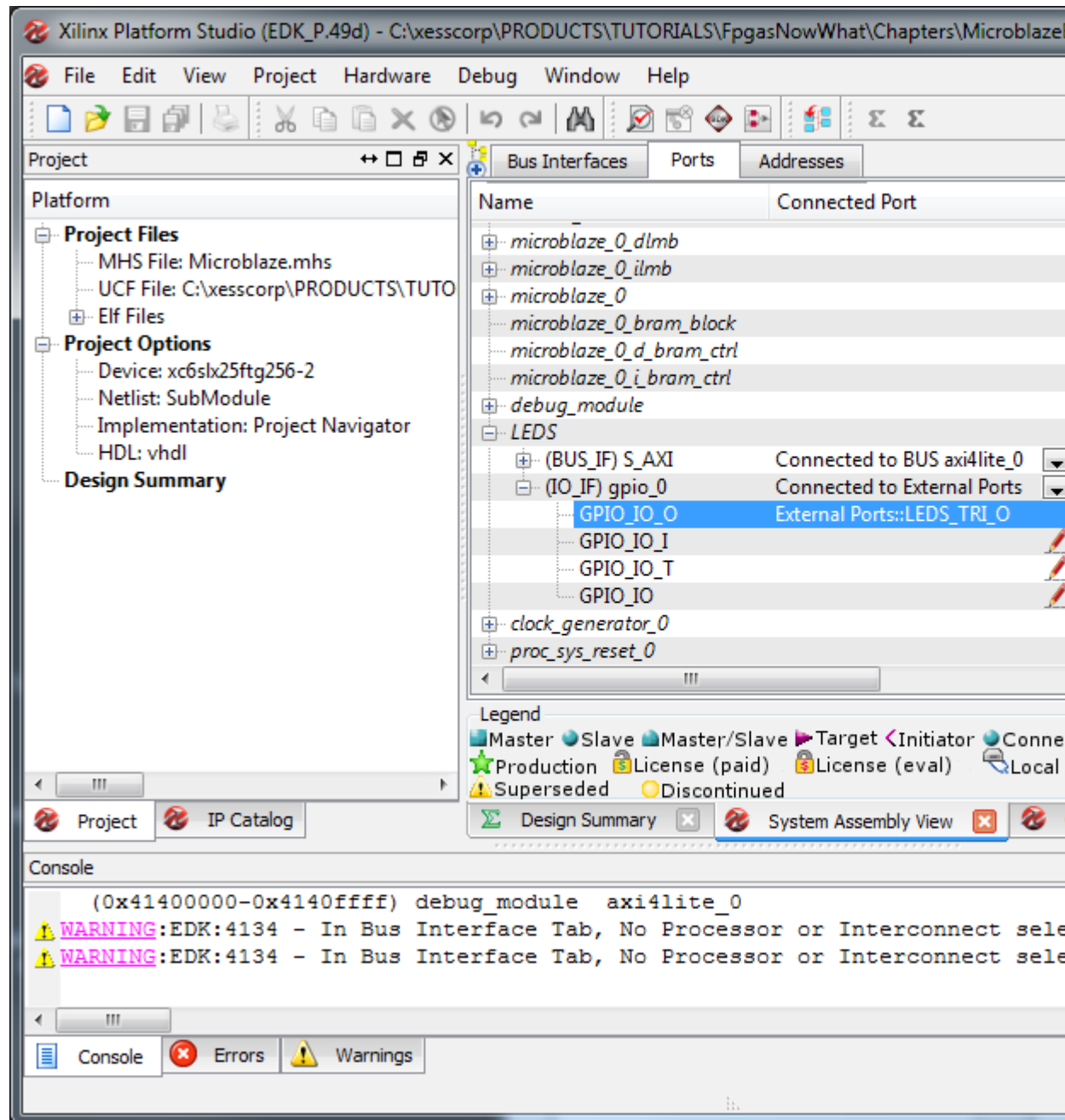
By default, the LED driver I/O doesn't generate interrupts to the processor. It also provides only a single I/O channel. There's no need to change these.



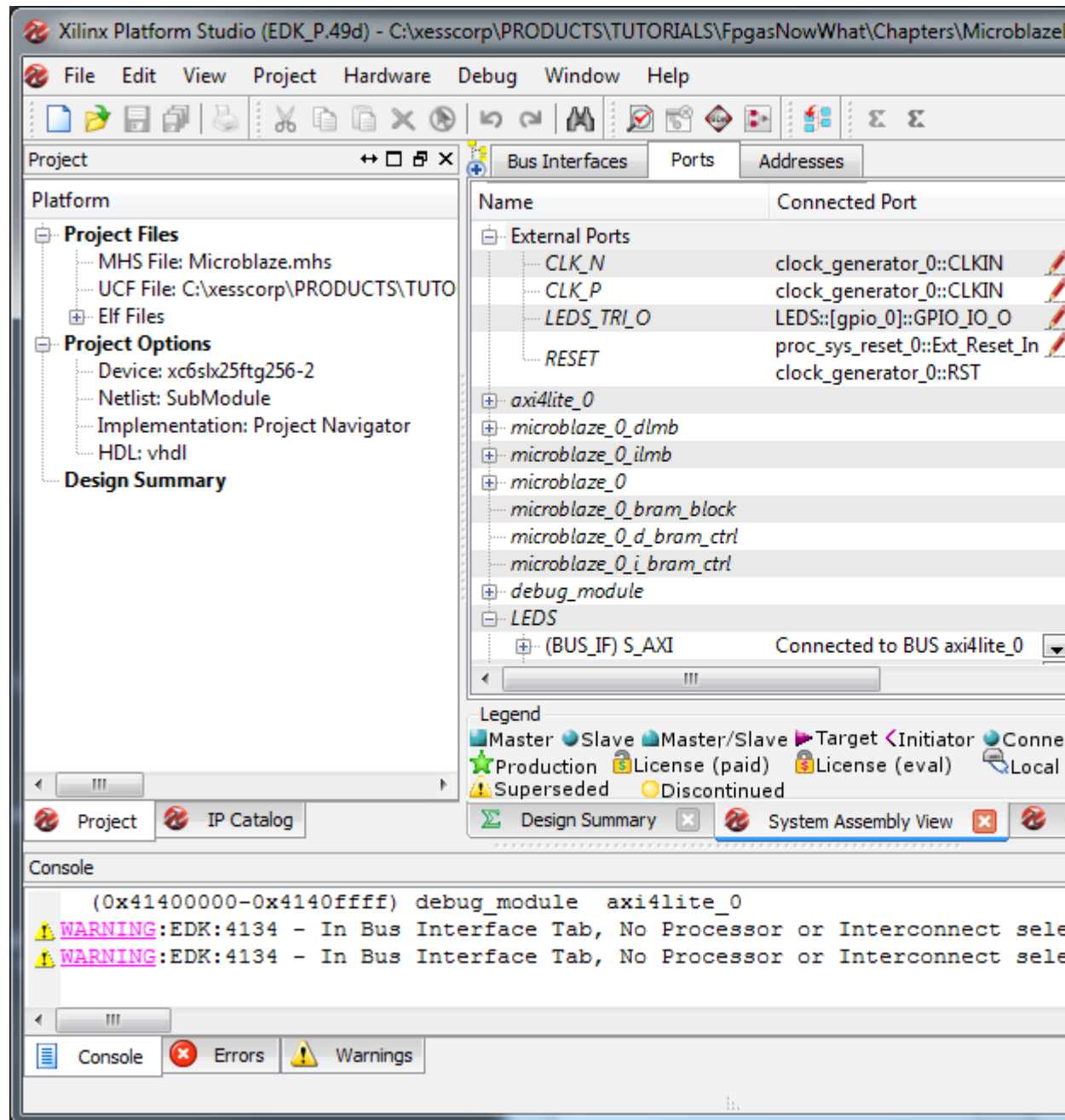
I clicked on the "+" symbol of Channel 1 so I could see its configuration. It's a single bit wide as I specified it in the BSB. That's all I needed to see, so I clicked on OK to close the configuration screen.



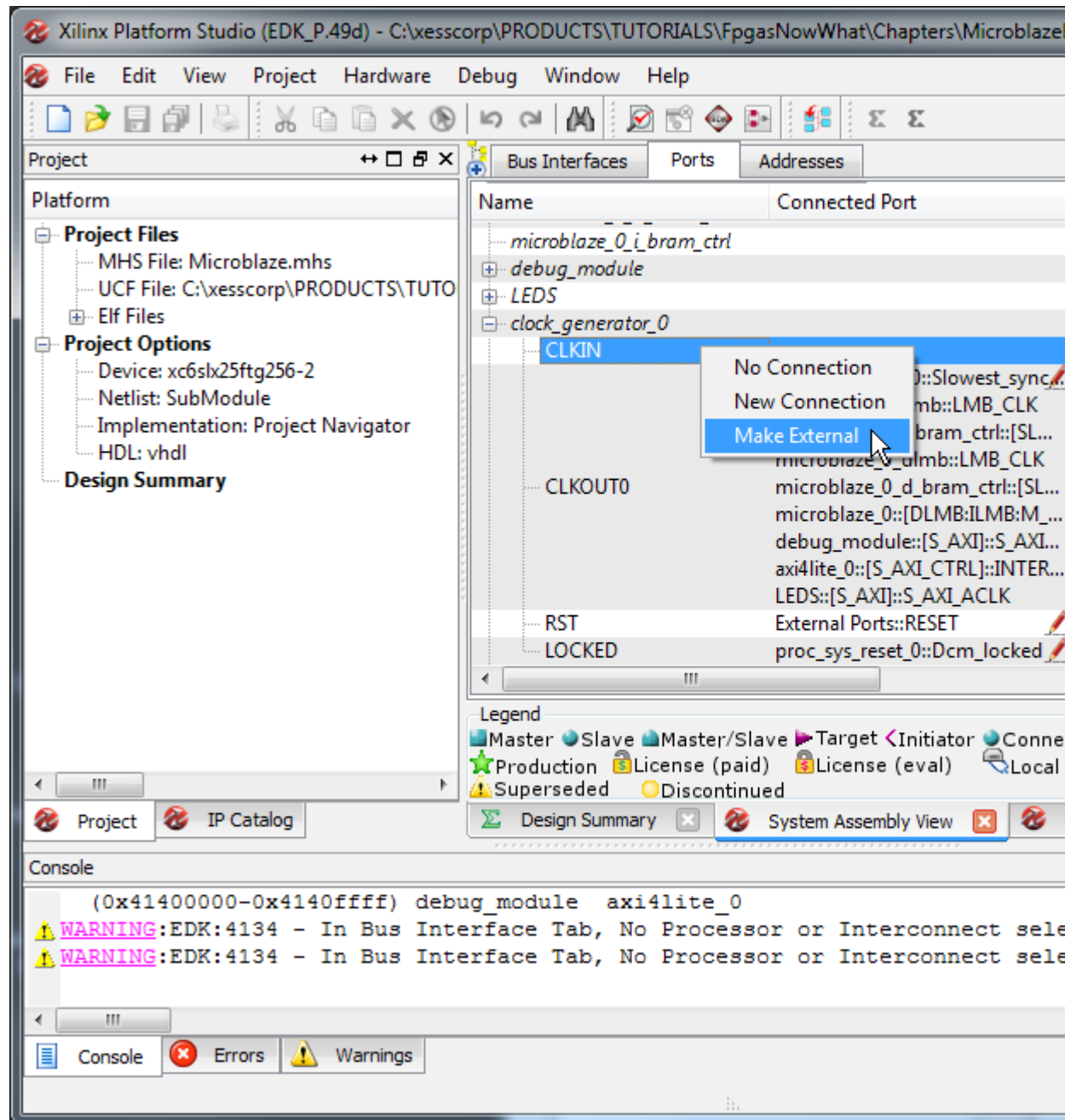
Returning to the XPS main screen, I expanded the LEDS entry in the Ports tab. Further expanding the I/O interface (IO_IF) shows there is a single output attached to an external port.



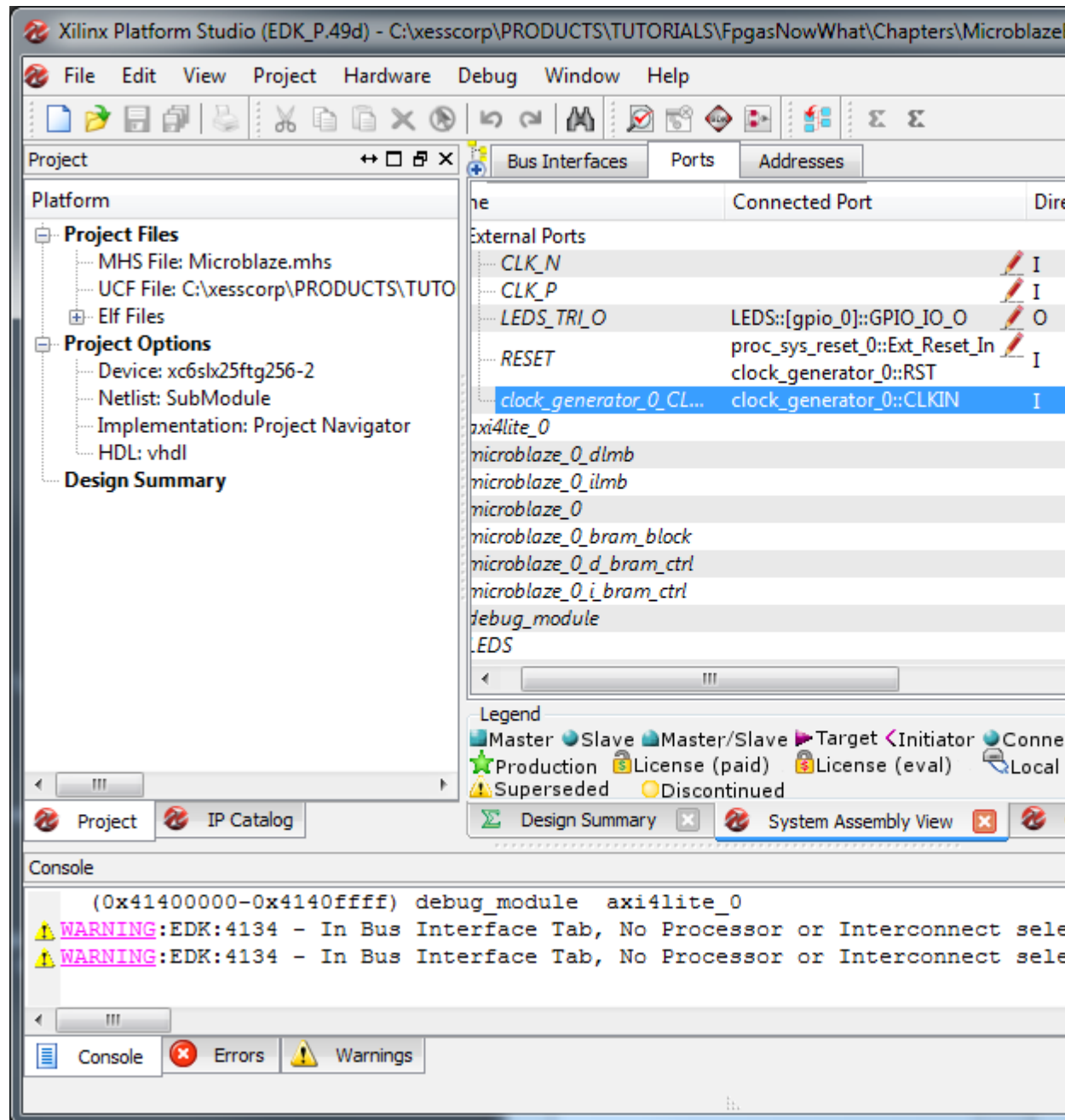
Expanding the External Ports entry shows a one-bit-wide bus (LEDs_TRI_O) that's connected to the LED GPIO output. That's what I expected, so everything's good so far.



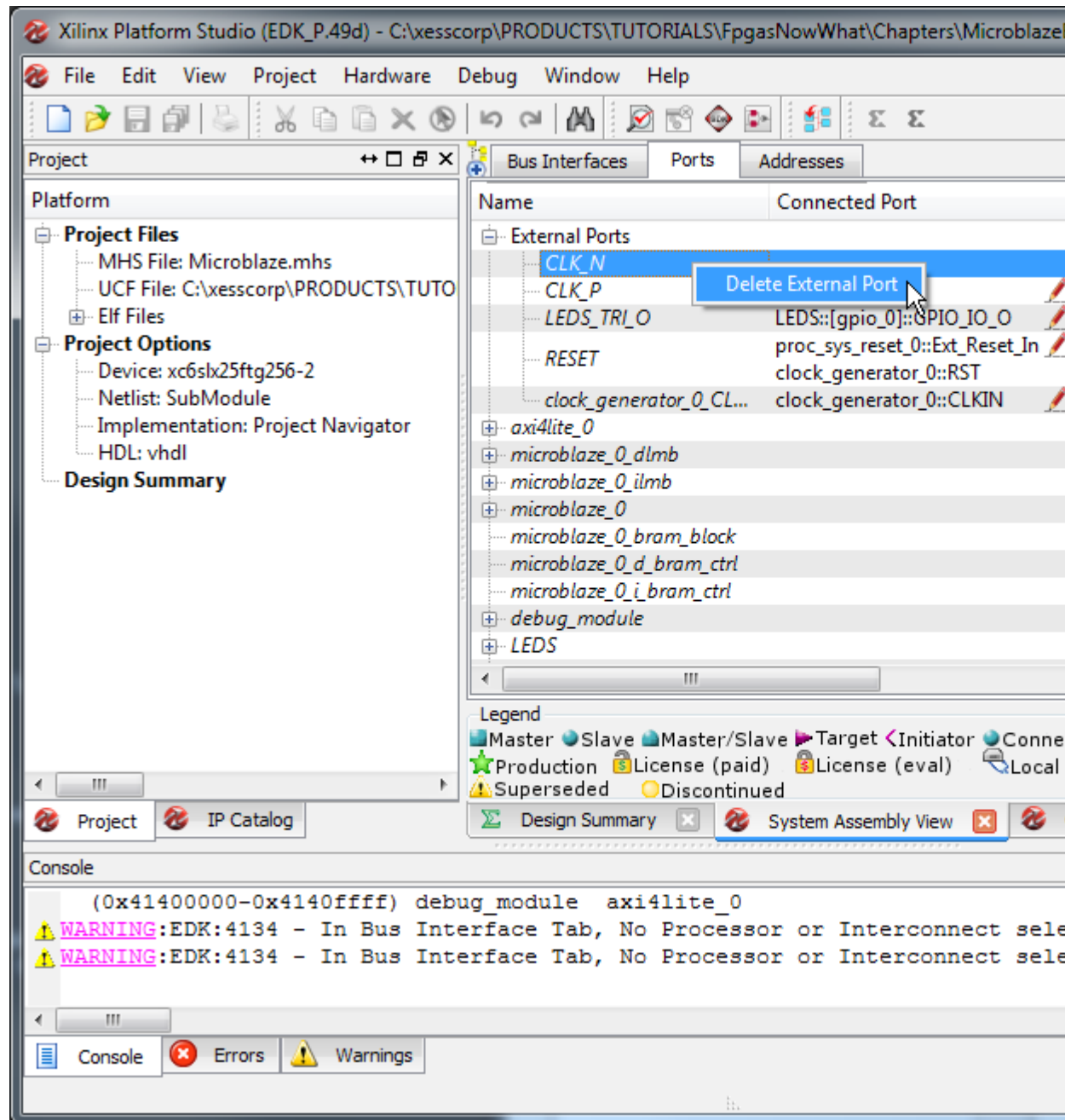
Next, I want to attach an external clock to the input of the clock generator. (The clock generator will create the 100 MHz system clock from the 12 MHz clock on the XuLA2 board.) Expanding the clock generator entry and right-clicking on the CLKIN connection, I select "Make External" to connect this input to an external pin.



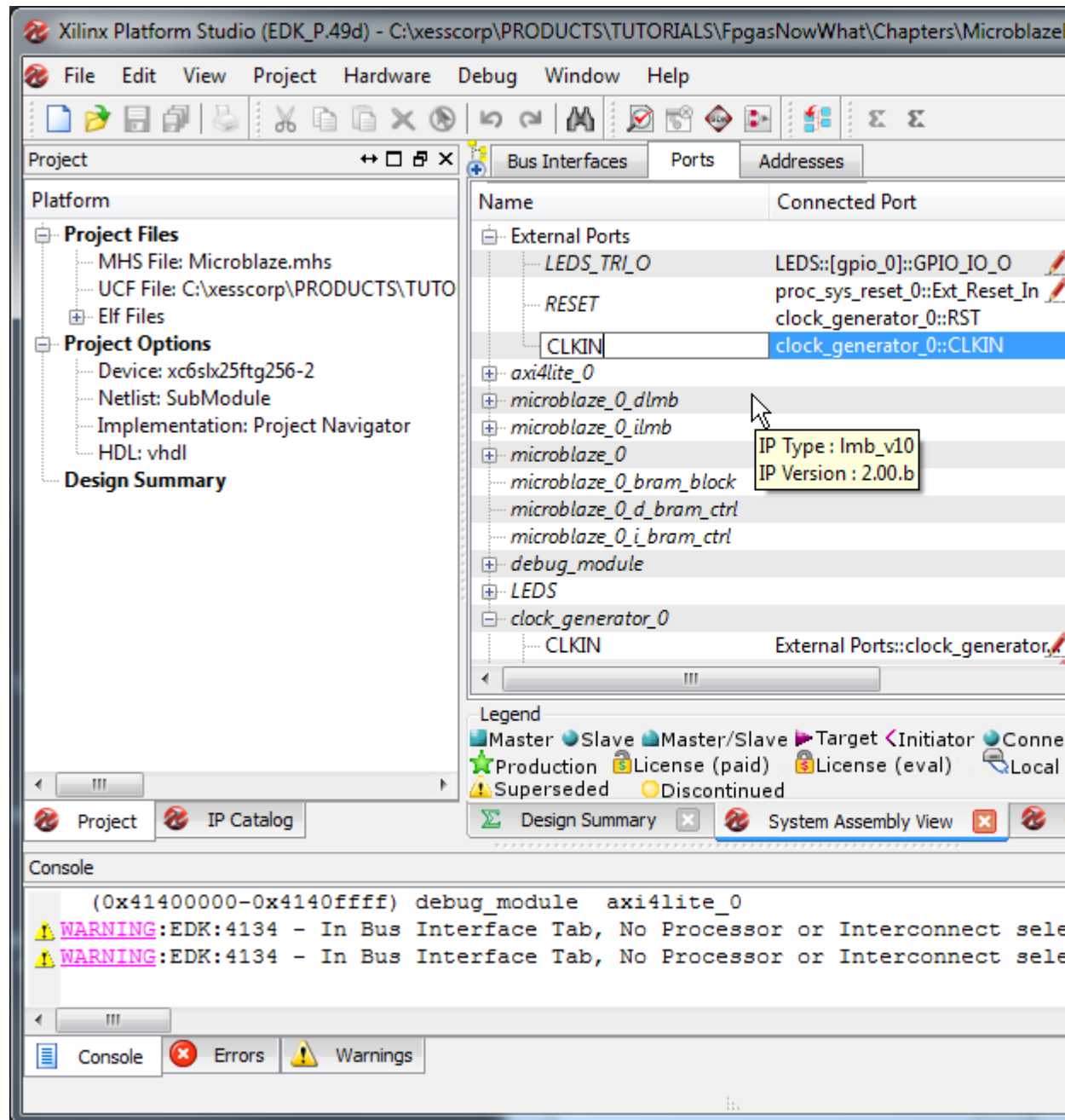
Looking back in the External Ports list, I see that a new port has been connected to the clock generator input:



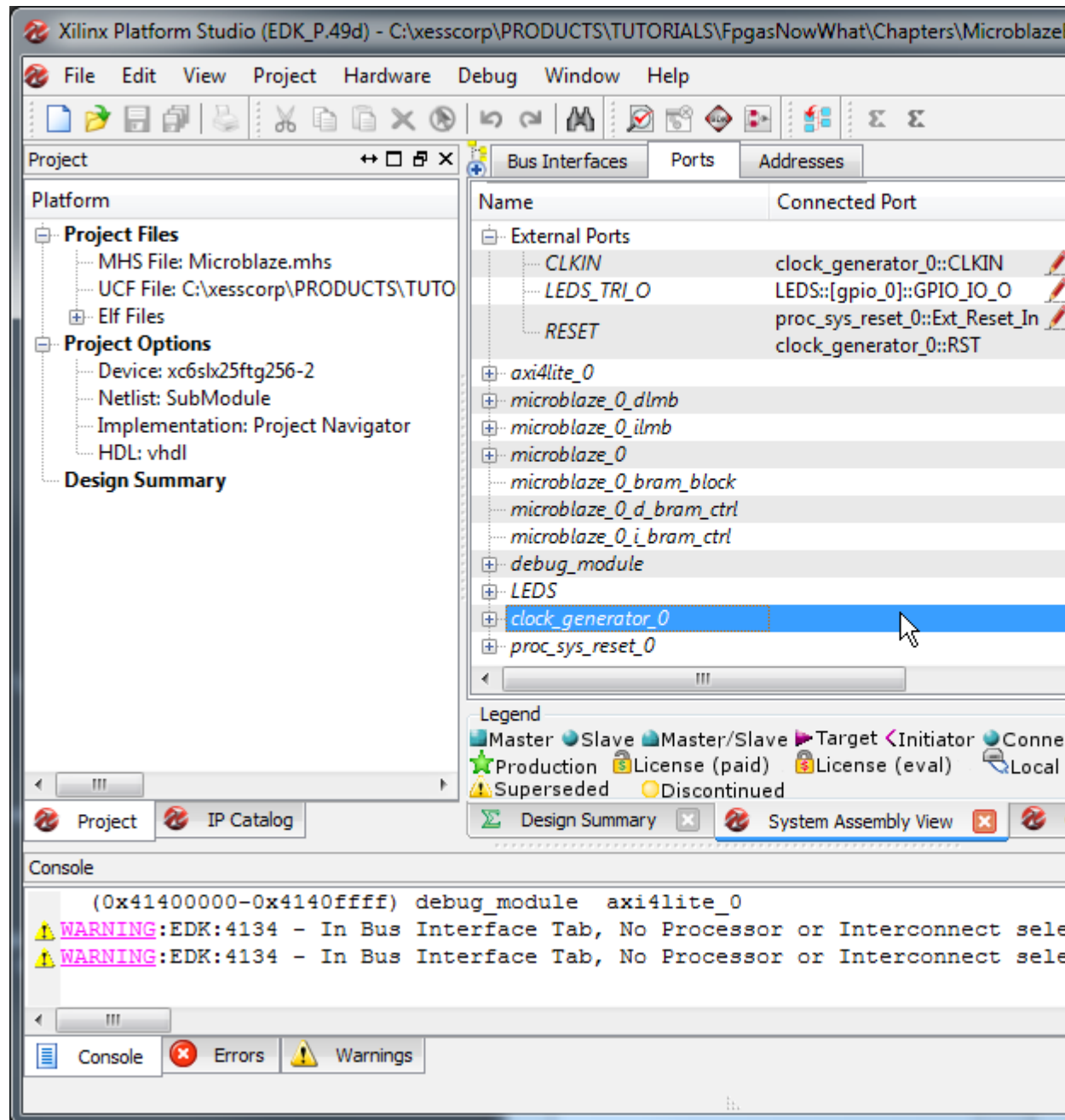
Now I notice that I don't need the differential clock inputs (CLK_N and CLK_P), so I right-click on them and delete them:



Finally, I click on the name field of the newly-created clock input and simplify its name to CLKIN:

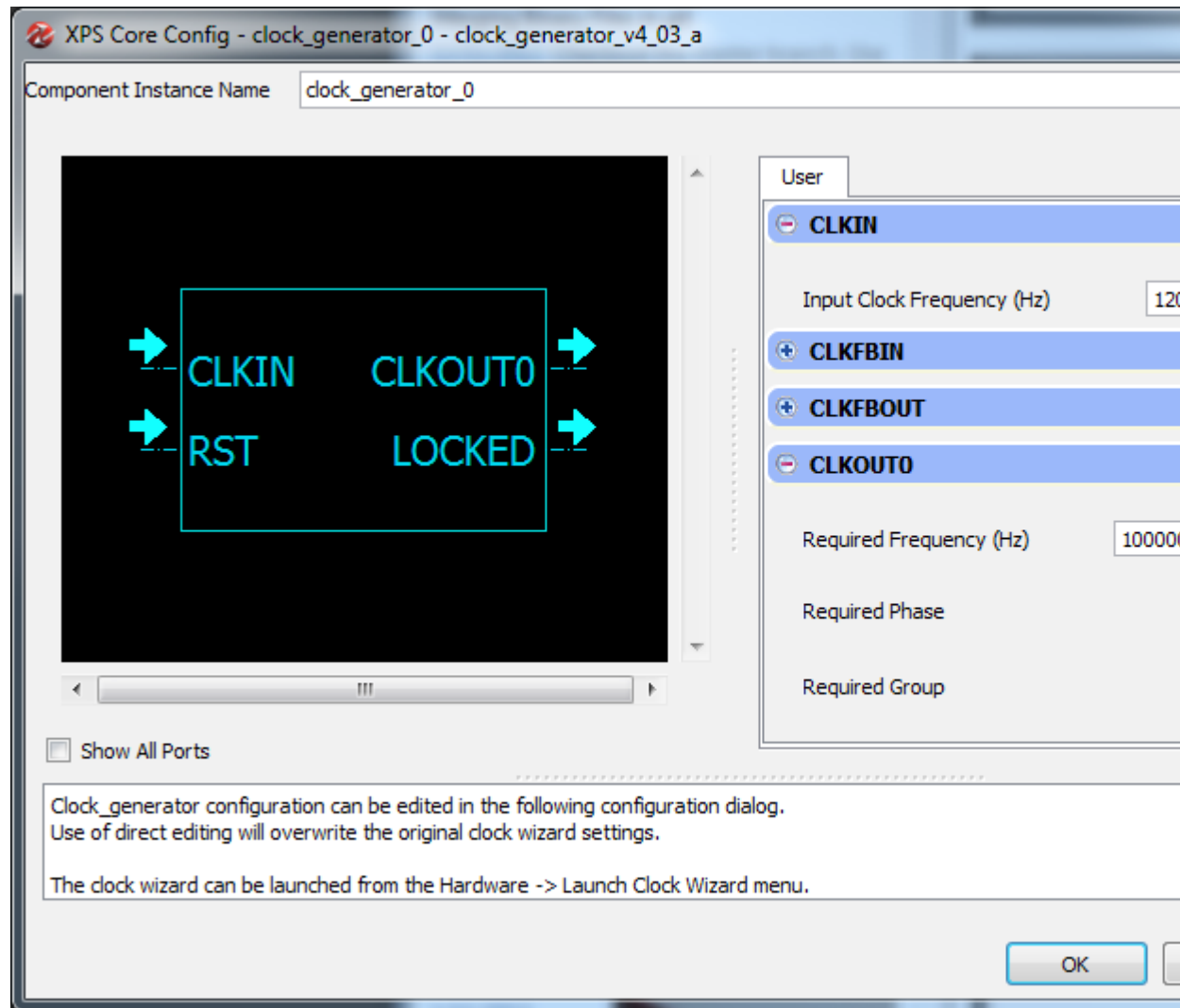


Finally, I need to do a little work on the clock generator. I double-click the clock generator entry in the Ports tab and that opens the configuration window for that device.

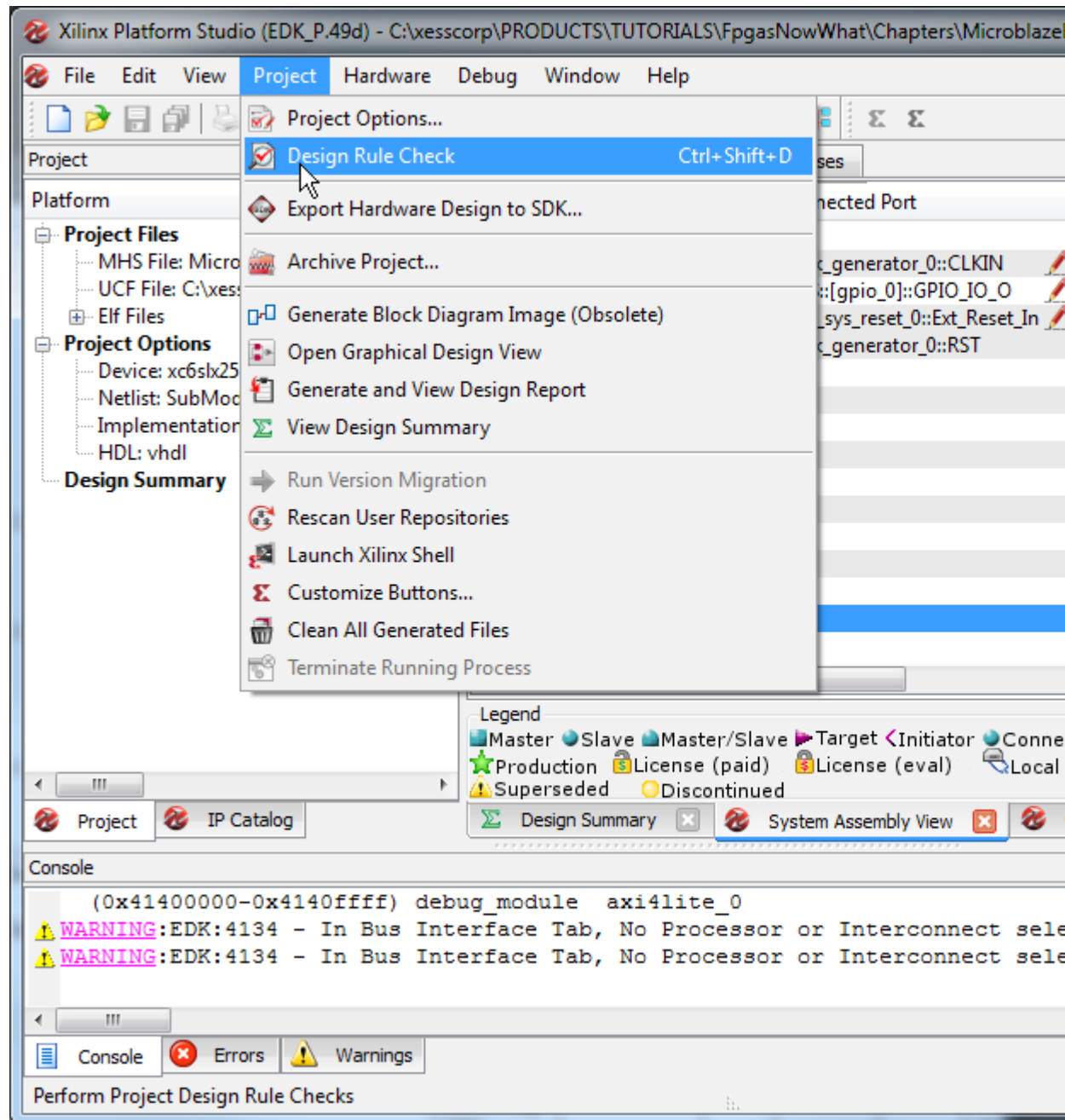


In the configuration window, I expand the CLKIN and CLKOUT0 entries and see their frequencies are 12 and 100 MHz, respectively. That's what I specified when I was back in the BSB, but this is where I could change those if I needed to.

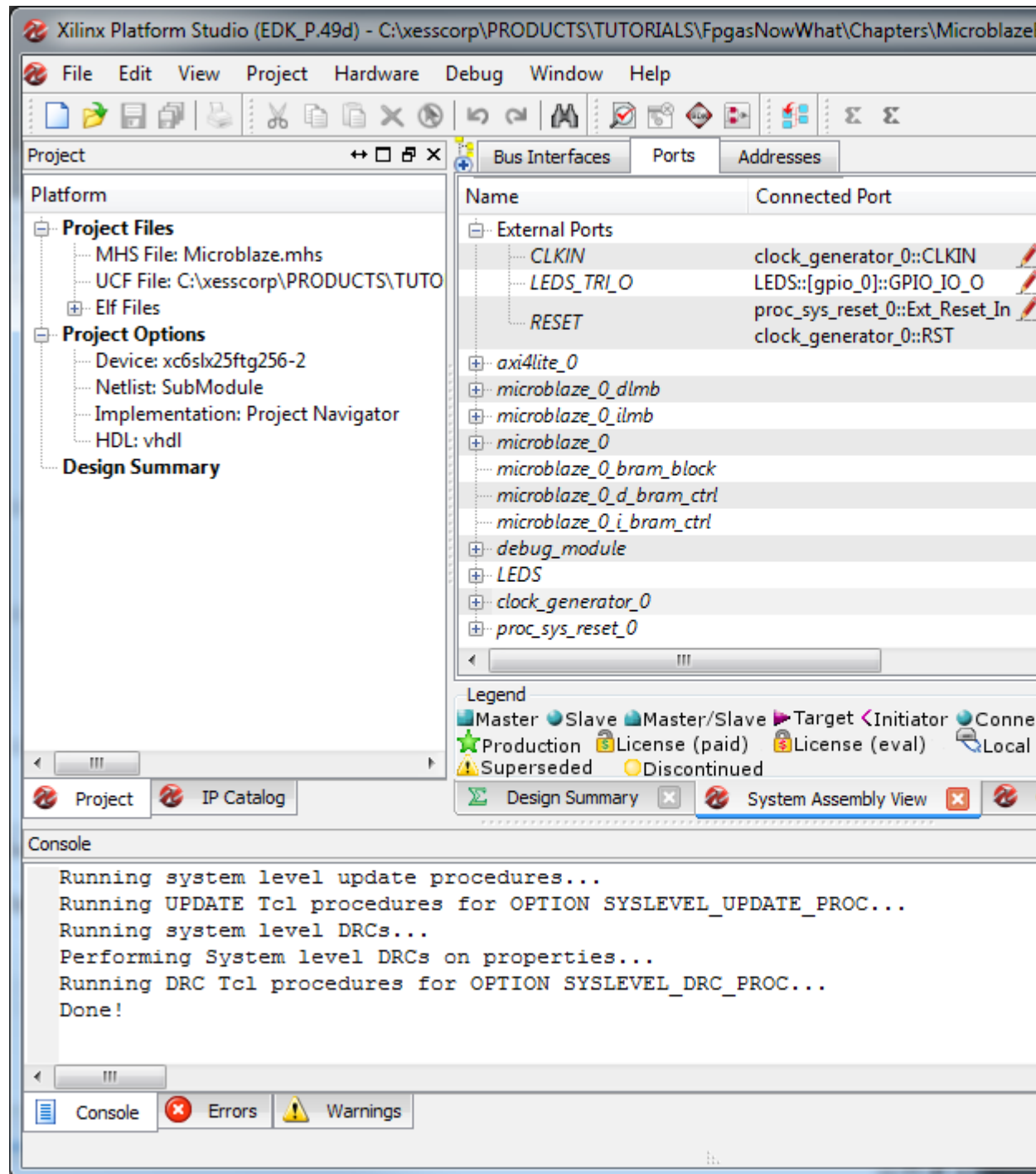
In addition, I change the "Required Group" entry from "NONE" to "DCM0". If I don't do this, ISE will complain that the 12 MHz input clock frequency is too low to be used with the Spartan-6 phase-locked loops (PLL). Forcing ISE to use a Digital Clock Manager (DCM) with looser input requirements avoids this problem.



After everything has been configured, I run the design rule checker (DRC) to see if any obvious errors exist...

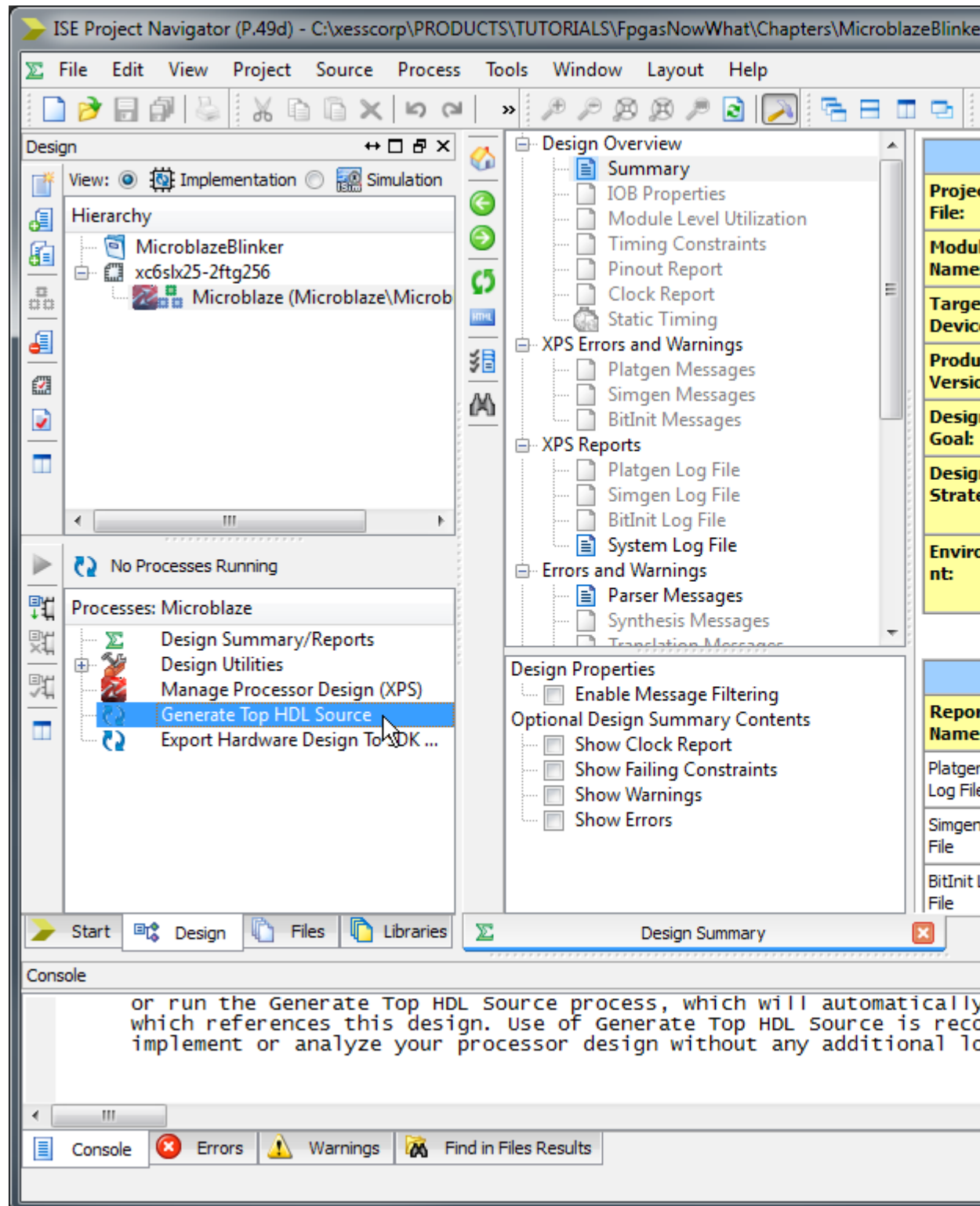


The DRC doesn't find anything, so it looks like I'm good to go! Clicking on File => Exit takes me back to ISE.

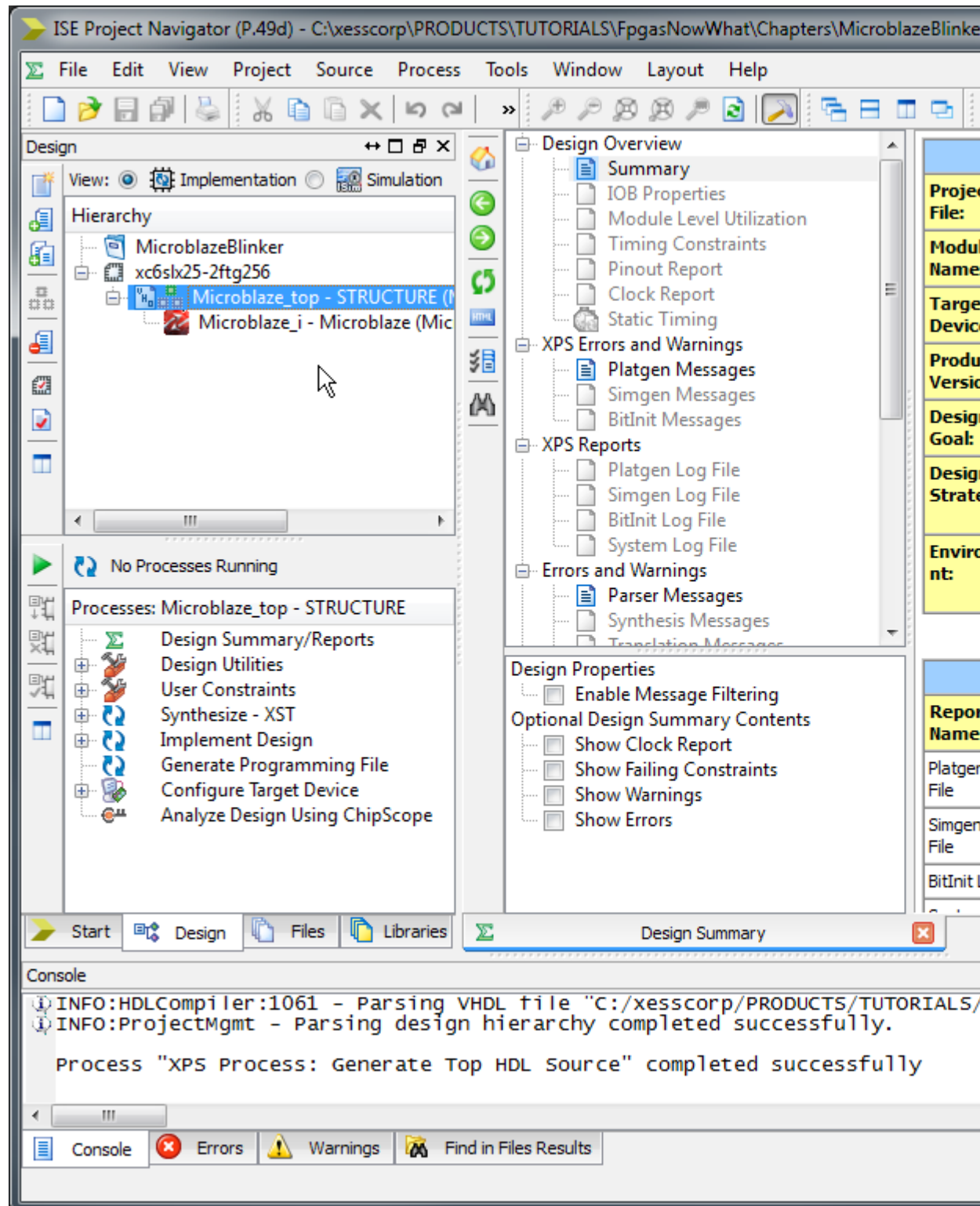


Back to the ISE

After configuring the Microblaze with XPS, There's still some work to do in ISE before an FPGA bitstream can be generated. First of all, a top-level VHDL module has to be wrapped around the processor core. This is done by highlighting the Microblaze module in the Hierarchy pane and then double-clicking the "Generate Top HDL Source" entry that appears in the Processes pane:



After a few seconds, the top-level module appears with the Microblaze core as its child:



Double-clicking the Microblaze_top module displays the following VHDL source in the editor. Note that there are three I/O signals on the top level and these connect directly to the Microblaze core I/O:

RESET: The active-low reset input.

LEDS_TRI_O: A single-bit bus output that drives an external LED.

CLKIN: The 12 MHz input clock from the XuLA board.

```
-----
-- Microblaze_top.vhd
-----

library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_1164.ALL;

library UNISIM;
use UNISIM.VCOMPONENTS.ALL;

entity Microblaze_top is
    port (
        RESET : in std_logic;
        LEDS_TRI_O : out std_logic_vector(0 to 0);
        CLKIN : in std_logic
    );
end Microblaze_top;

architecture STRUCTURE of Microblaze_top is

    component Microblaze is
        port (
            RESET : in std_logic;
            LEDS_TRI_O : out std_logic_vector(0 to 0);
            CLKIN : in std_logic
        );
    end component;

    attribute BOX_TYPE : STRING;
    attribute BOX_TYPE of Microblaze : component is "user_black_box";

begin

    Microblaze_i : Microblaze
        port map (
            RESET => RESET,
            LEDS_TRI_O => LEDS_TRI_O(0 to 0),
            CLKIN => CLKIN
        );

end architecture STRUCTURE;
```

That's OK, but I want to simplify it a bit. I remove the RESET input from the top-level entity declaration, and then I force the RESET input high in the instantiation of the Microblaze core. This makes the Microblaze start executing as soon as it gets loaded into the FPGA. It also means I don't have to bother with pulling the RESET input high externally to the FPGA.

```
-----
-- Microblaze_top.vhd
-----

library IEEE;
use IEEE.STD_LOGIC_1164.ALL;

library UNISIM;
```

```
use UNISIM.VCOMPONENTS.ALL;

entity Microblaze_top is
  port (
    LEDS_TRI_O : out std_logic_vector(0 to 0);
    CLKIN : in std_logic
  );
end Microblaze_top;

architecture STRUCTURE of Microblaze_top is

  component Microblaze is
    port (
      RESET : in std_logic;
      LEDS_TRI_O : out std_logic_vector(0 to 0);
      CLKIN : in std_logic
    );
  end component;

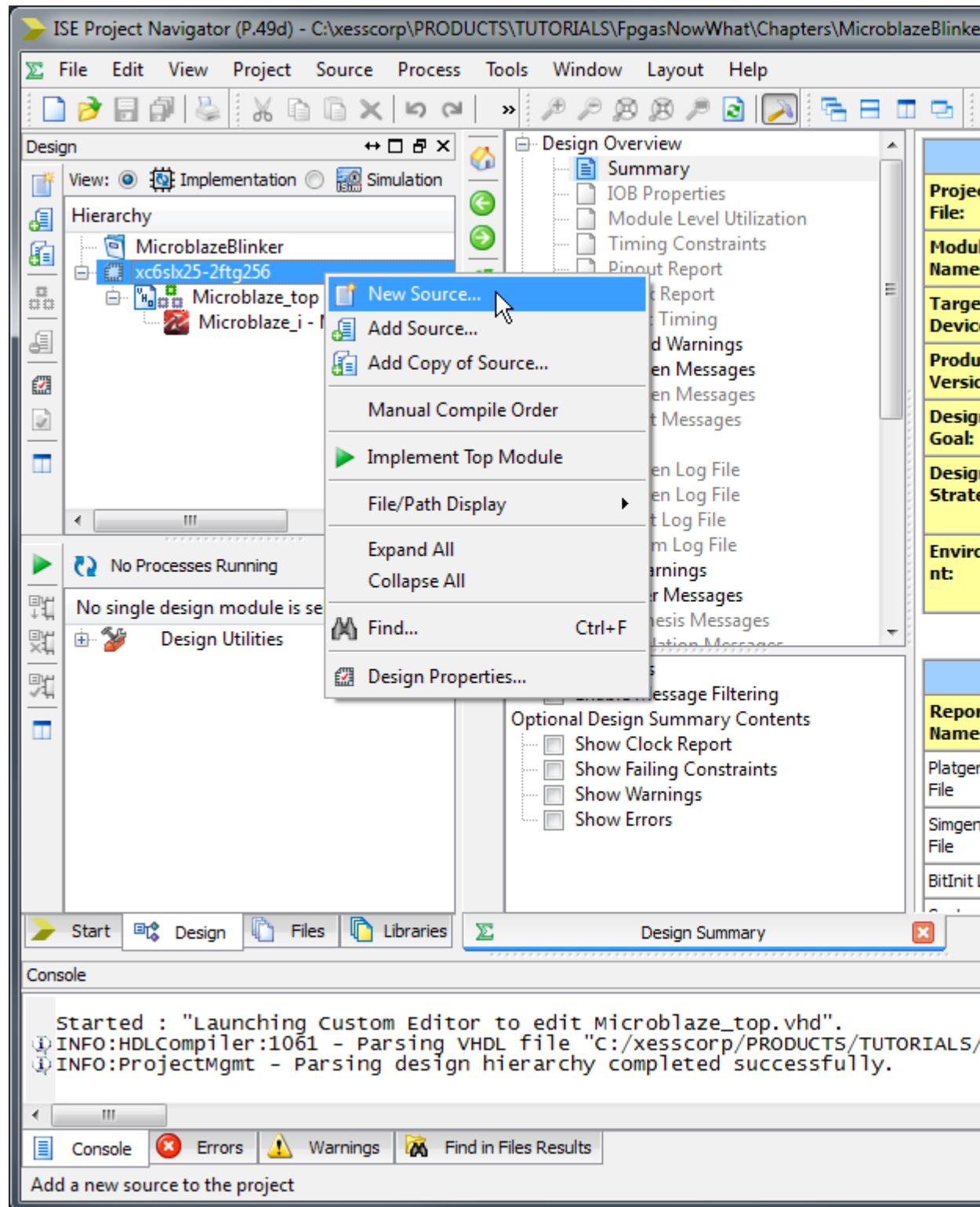
  attribute BOX_TYPE : STRING;
  attribute BOX_TYPE of Microblaze : component is "user_black_box";

begin

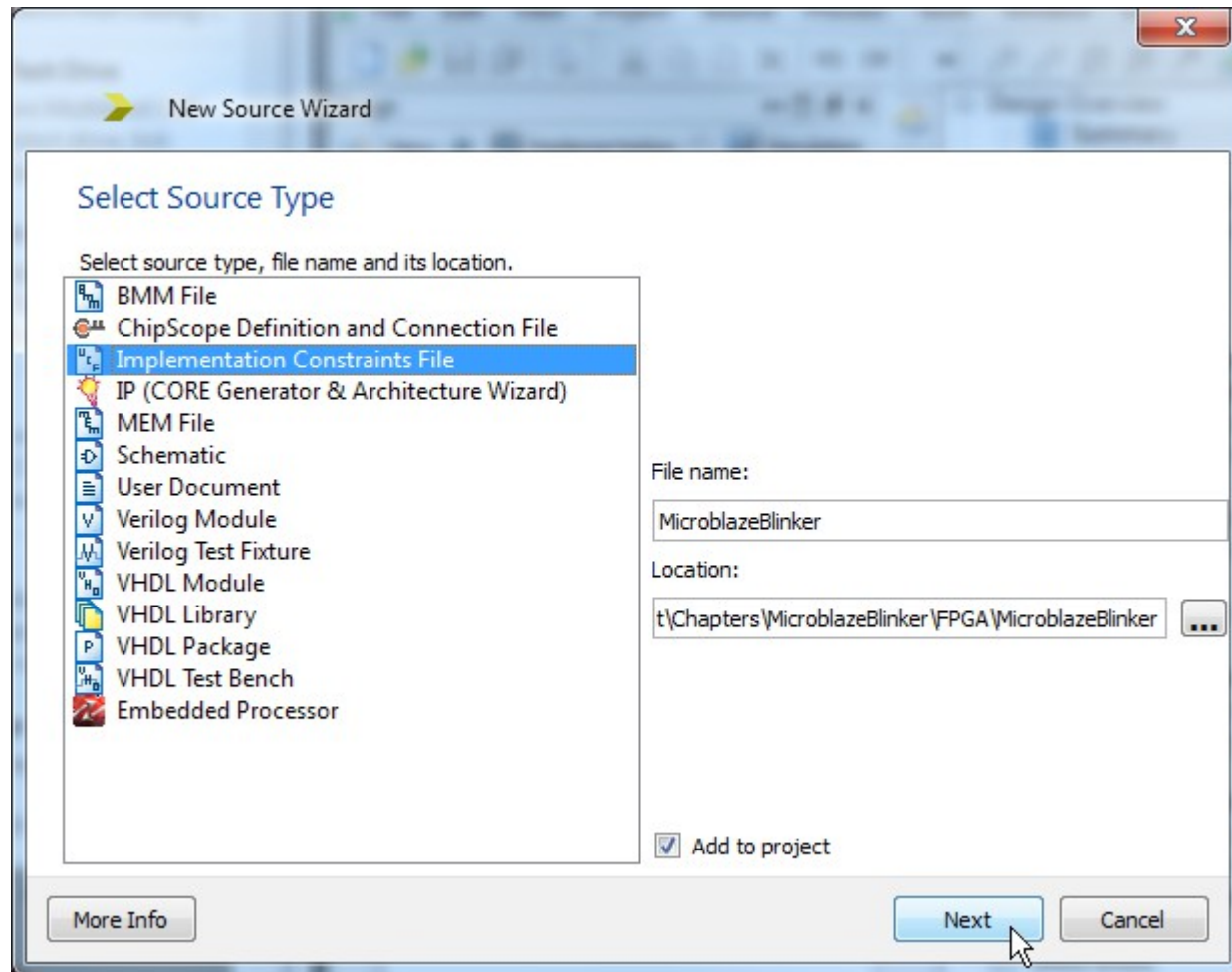
  Microblaze_i : Microblaze
    port map (
      RESET => '1', -- Enable uBlaze by forcing active-low reset high.
      LEDS_TRI_O => LEDS_TRI_O(0 to 0),
      CLKIN => CLKIN
    );

end architecture STRUCTURE;
```

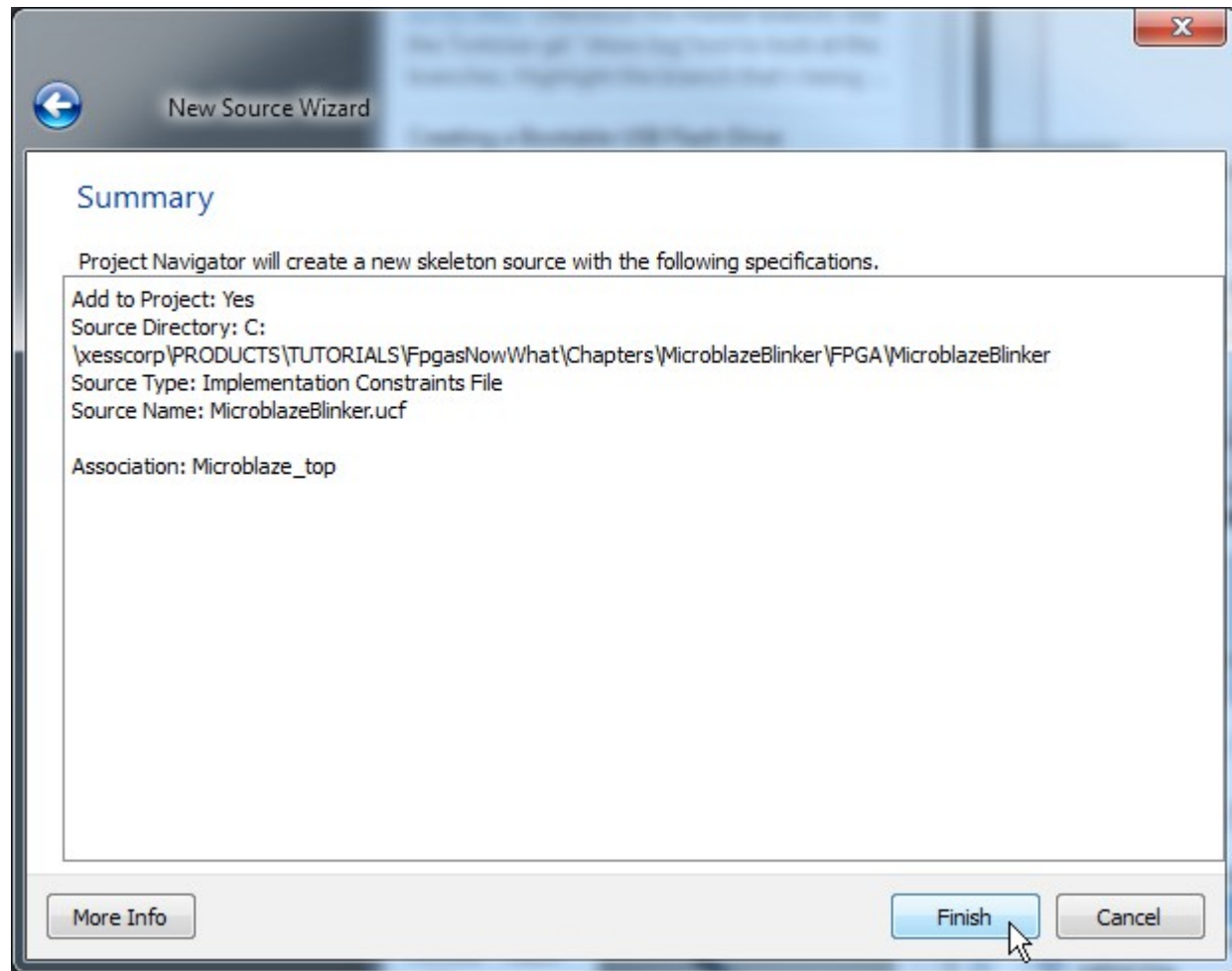
Now I just have two I/Os to worry about: the LED driver and the input clock. I need to create a UCF file to map these I/Os to specific pins of the FPGA:



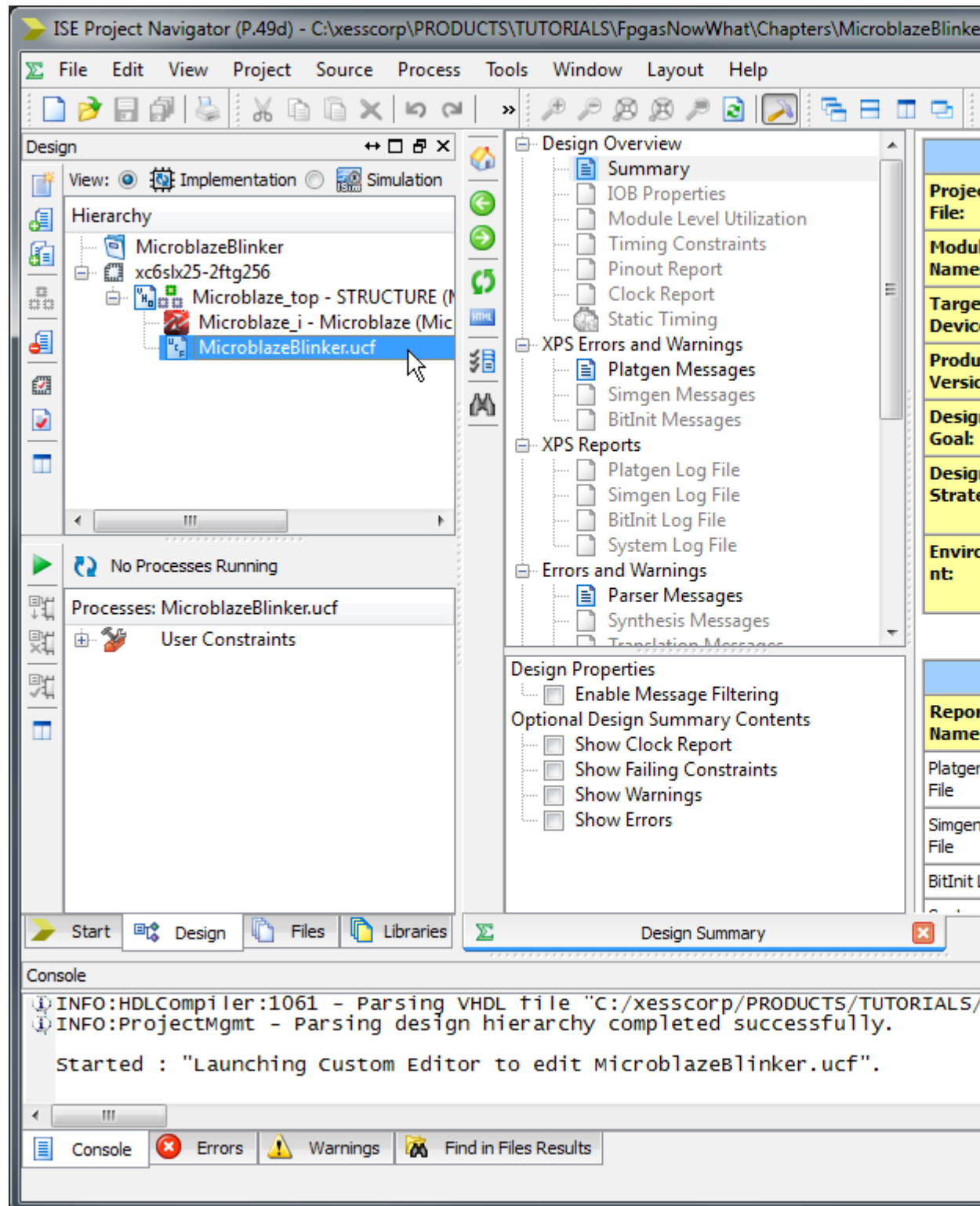
I select an "Implementation Constraints File" type and call it "MicroblazeBlinker" (thus maintaining my streak of creative file names):



I go through the usual hoo-hah with a confirmation screen telling me what I've just finished doing:



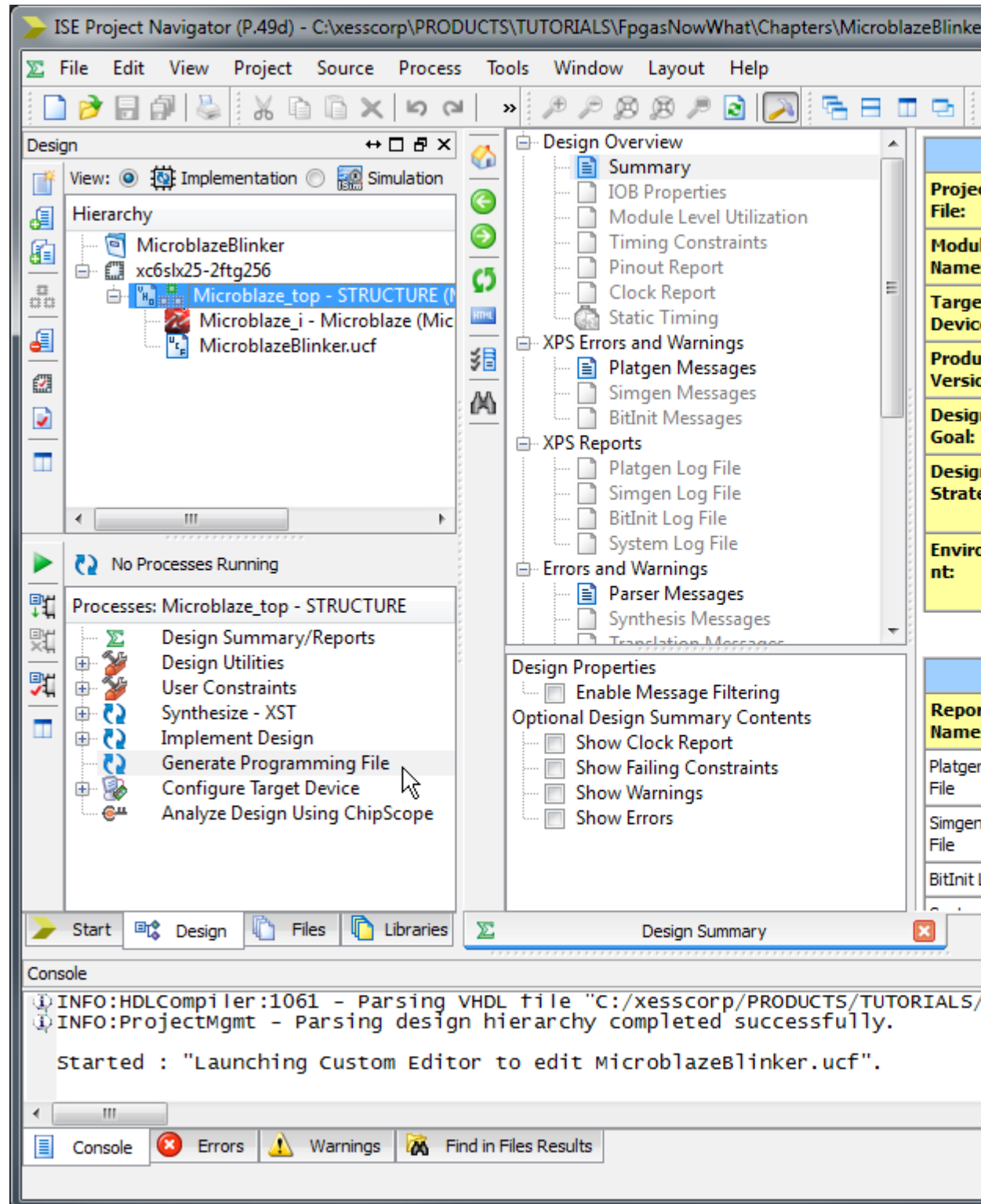
Once the constraints file has been added to the ISE project, I can double click it so I can enter the pin assignments:



Here are the pin assignment constraints I used for the XuLA2 board:

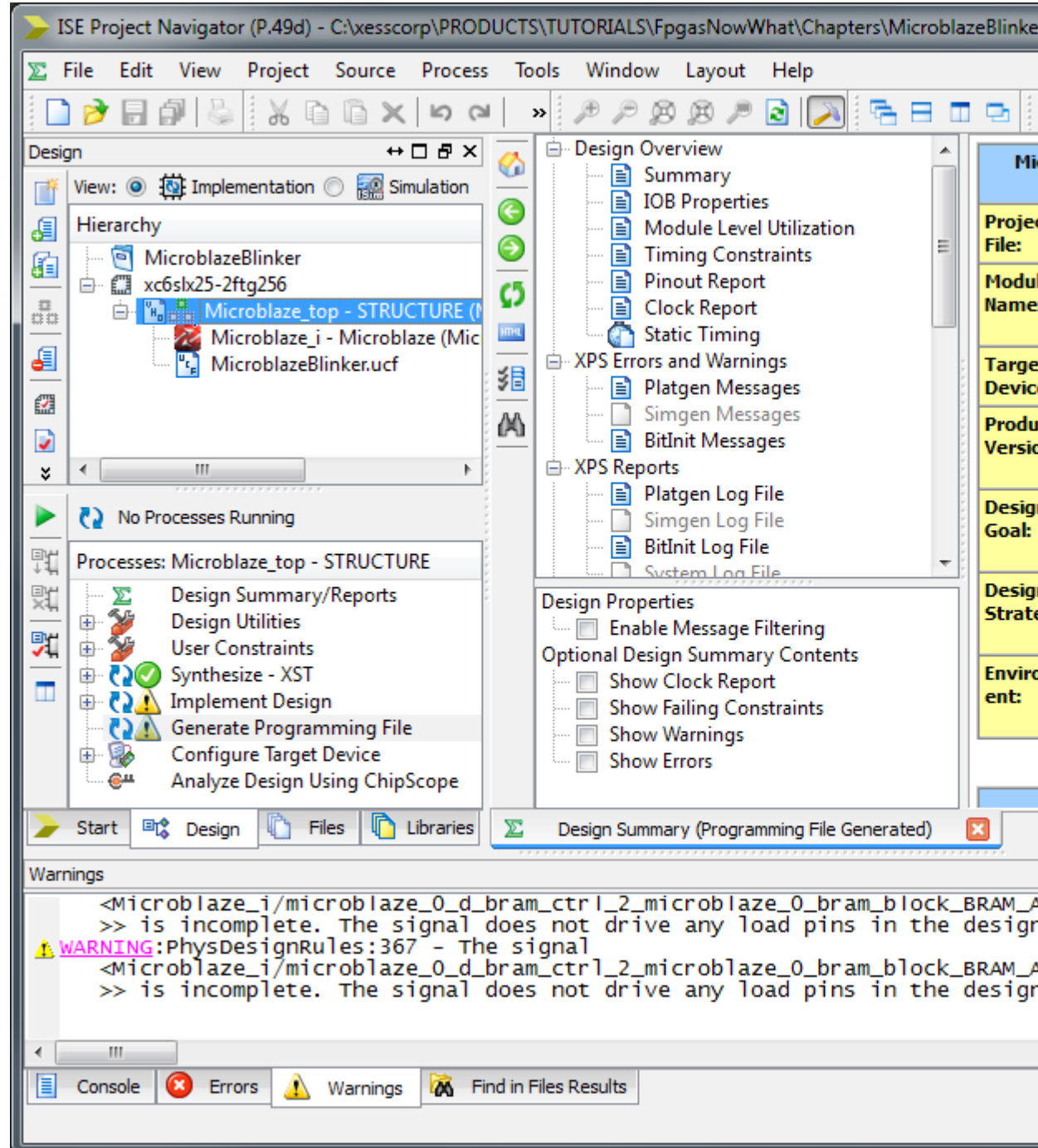
```
net CLKIN          loc = A9; # 12 MHz clock on XuLA2.
net LEDS_TRI_O<0> loc = R7; # Channel 0 on XuLA2.
```


After closing the constraints file, I'm finally ready to generate a bitstream. I highlight the top-level module and double click "Generate Programming File".



The design is compiled into a bitstream after a few minutes (the Microblaze is *big*!). A lot of warnings get generated because much of the Microblaze core I/O isn't connected to

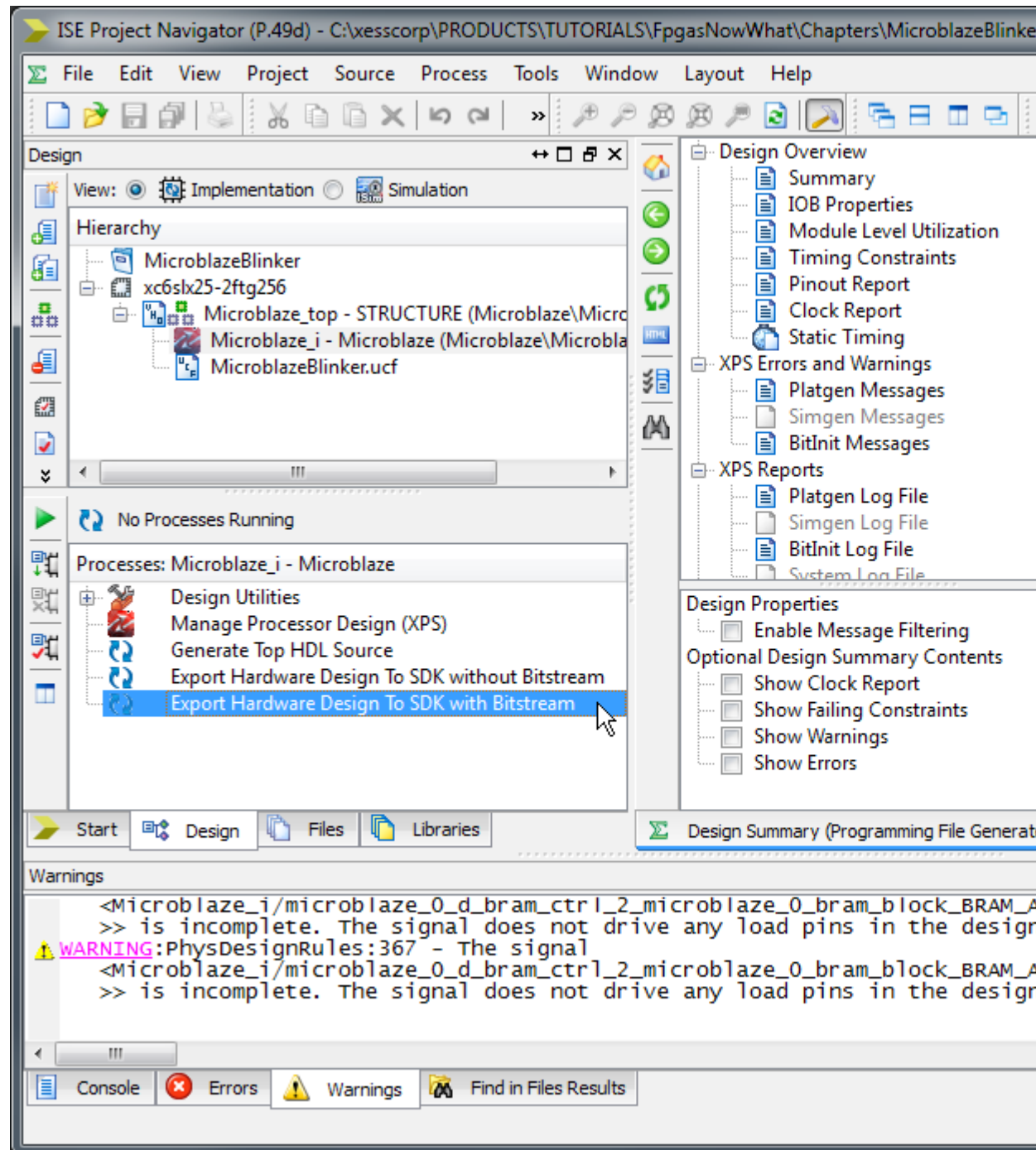
anything in such a small system. The main thing is that no errors were encountered that would prematurely halt the bitstream generation.



So now there's a bitstream containing a Microblaze processor with a couple of I/O pins tied to the external world. But it seems like I'm forgetting something; what could it be? Anybody know? *Anybody!?*

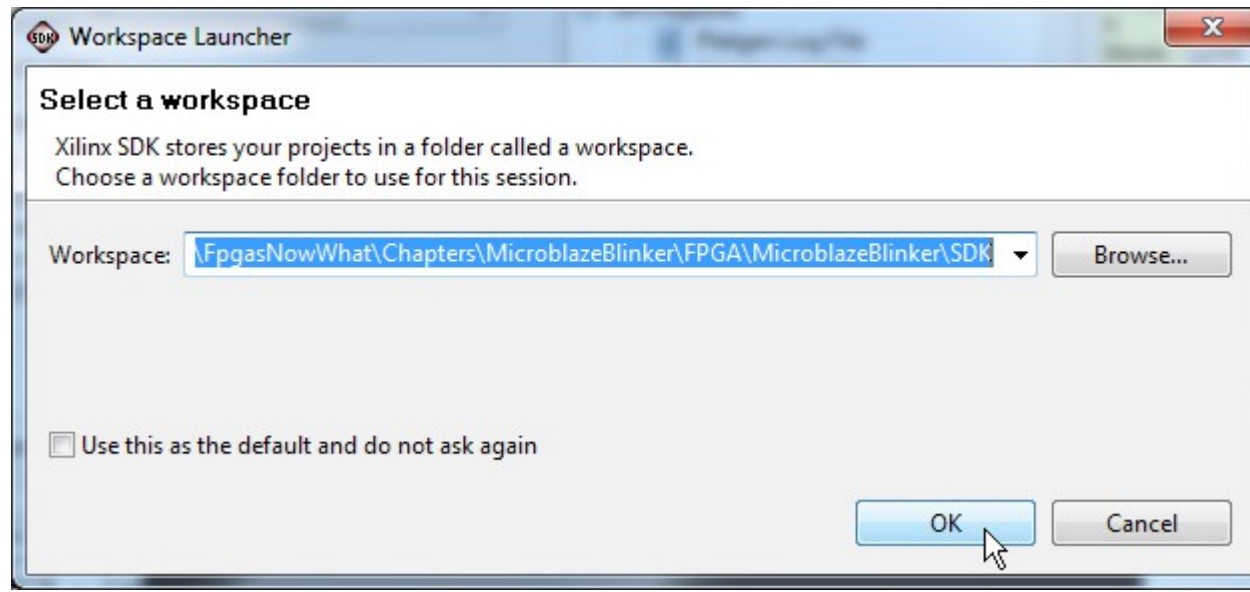
How about a program for the processor to run? In order to write the processor code, I have to start the Software Development Kit (SDK) by highlighting the Microblaze module in the Hierarchy pane and then double-clicking the "Export Hardware Design to SDK with

Bitstream" in the Processes pane.

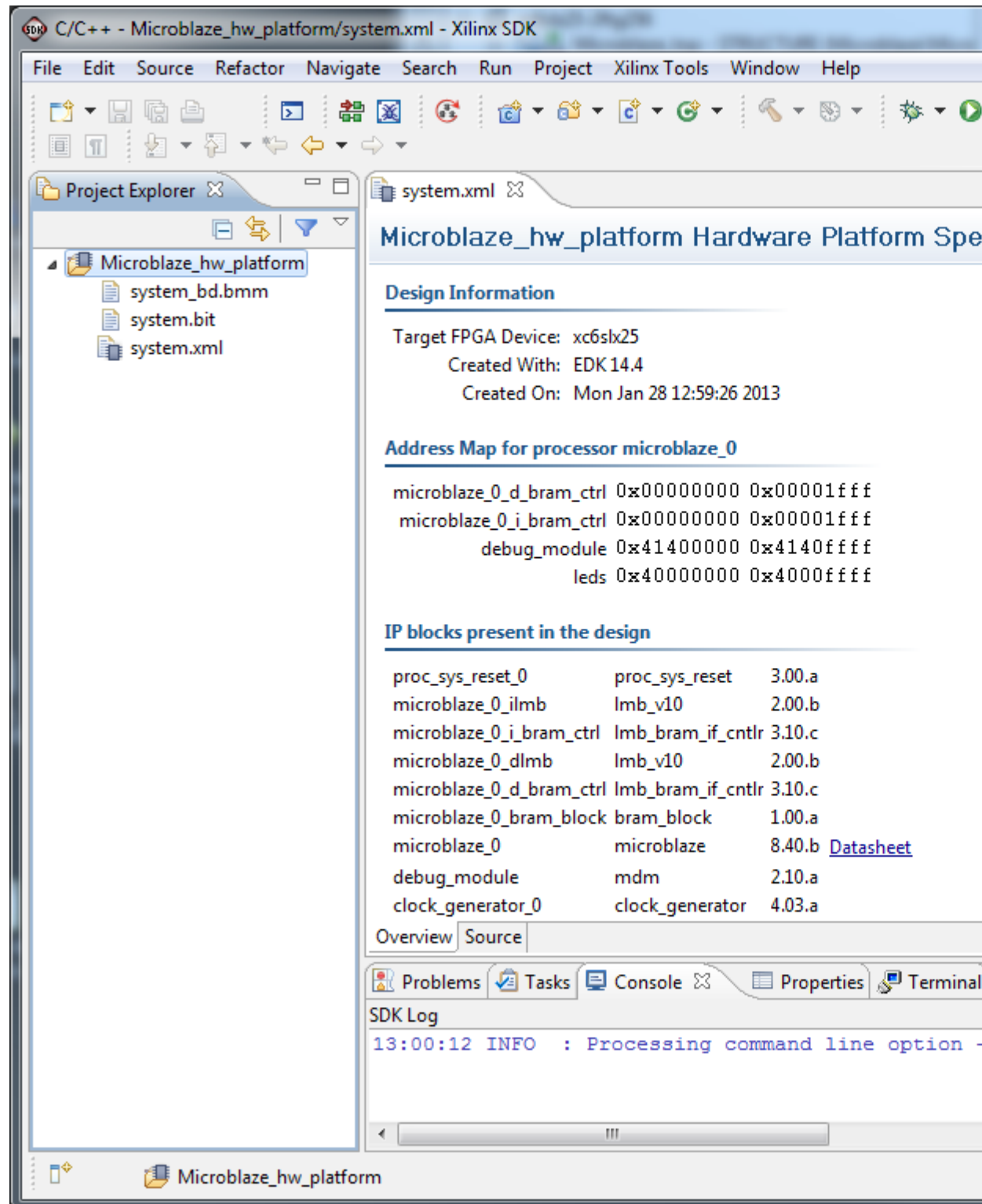


Finishing Off with the SDK

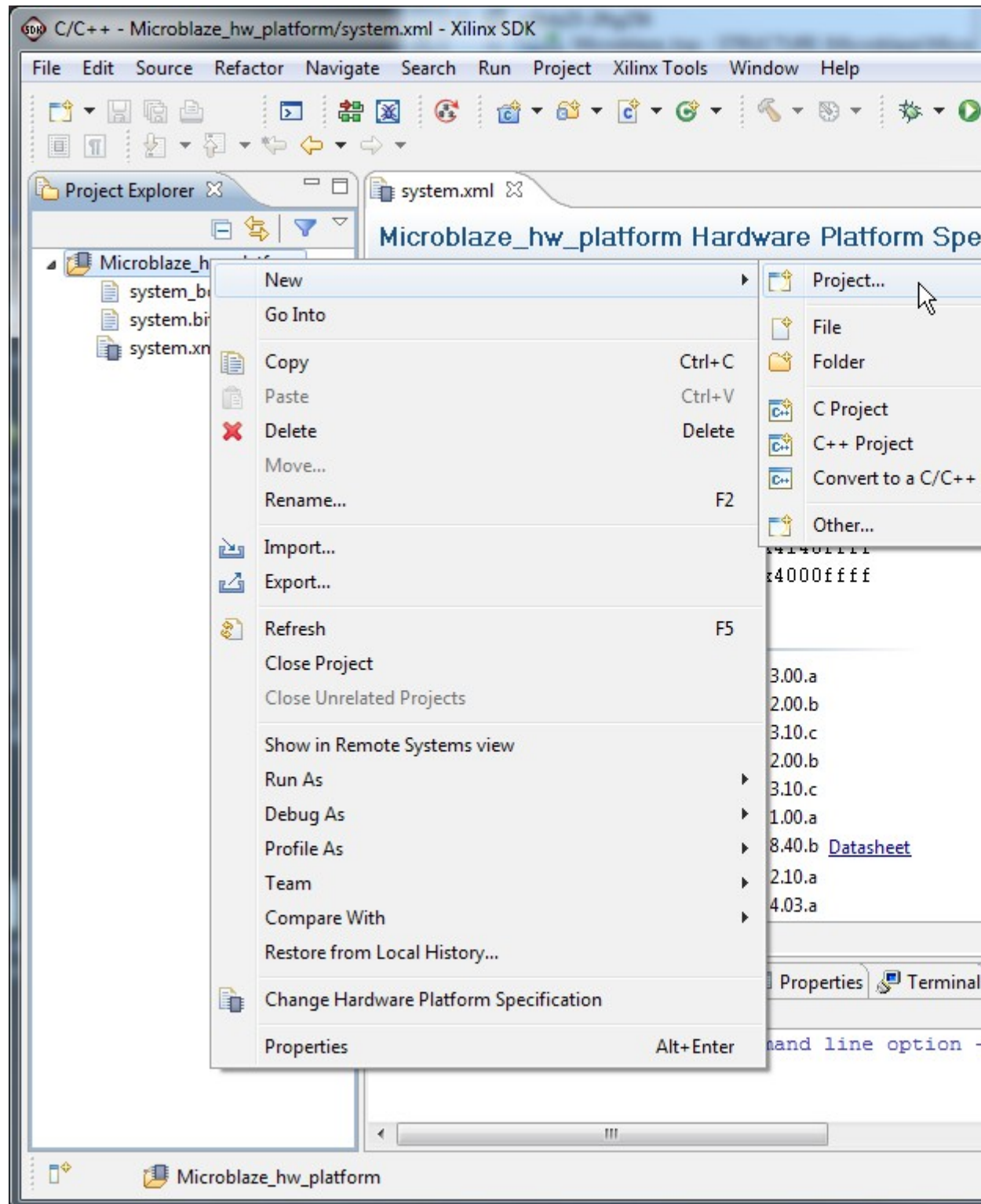
Once the SDK has started, it asks me where I want to place my software project. By default, it's placed in the SDK subdirectory within the main ISE project directory, and that's fine with me so I just click on the OK button:



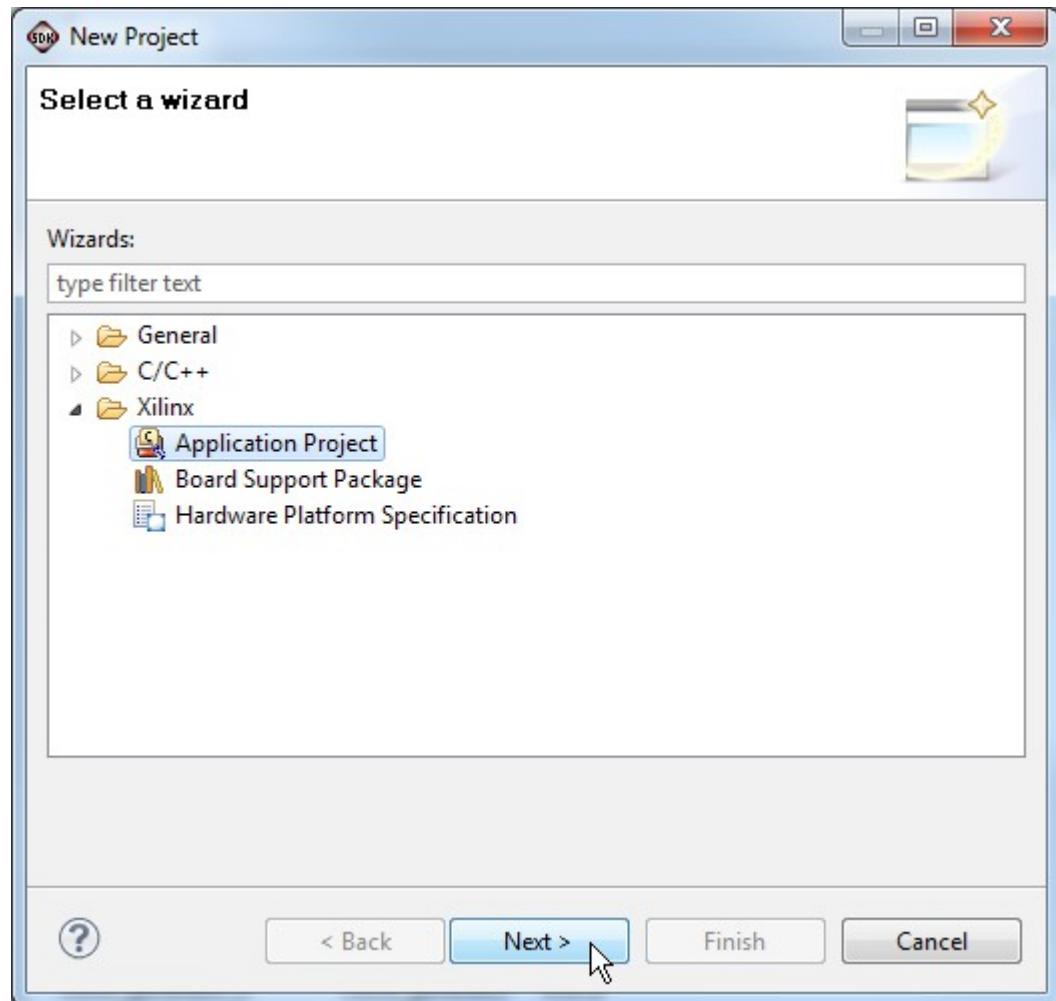
That brings up the main SDK window with just the hardware system description files:



First, I need to create a software project for the code the Microblaze will run. Right-clicking on the Microblaze_hw_platform entry in the Project Explorer tab, I select the "Project..." item in the pop-up menu:

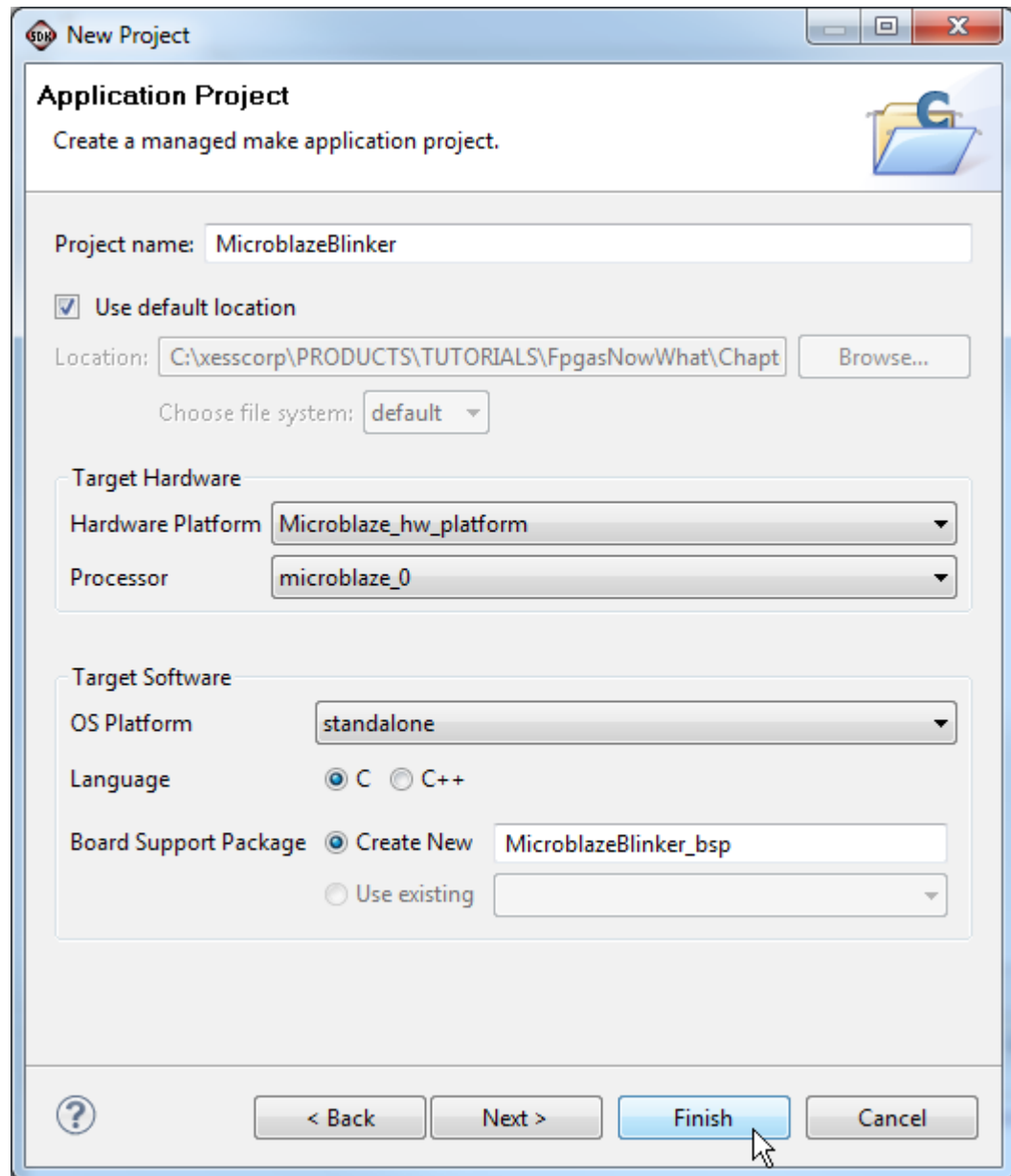


In the New Project window, I elect to begin a Xilinx Application Project:



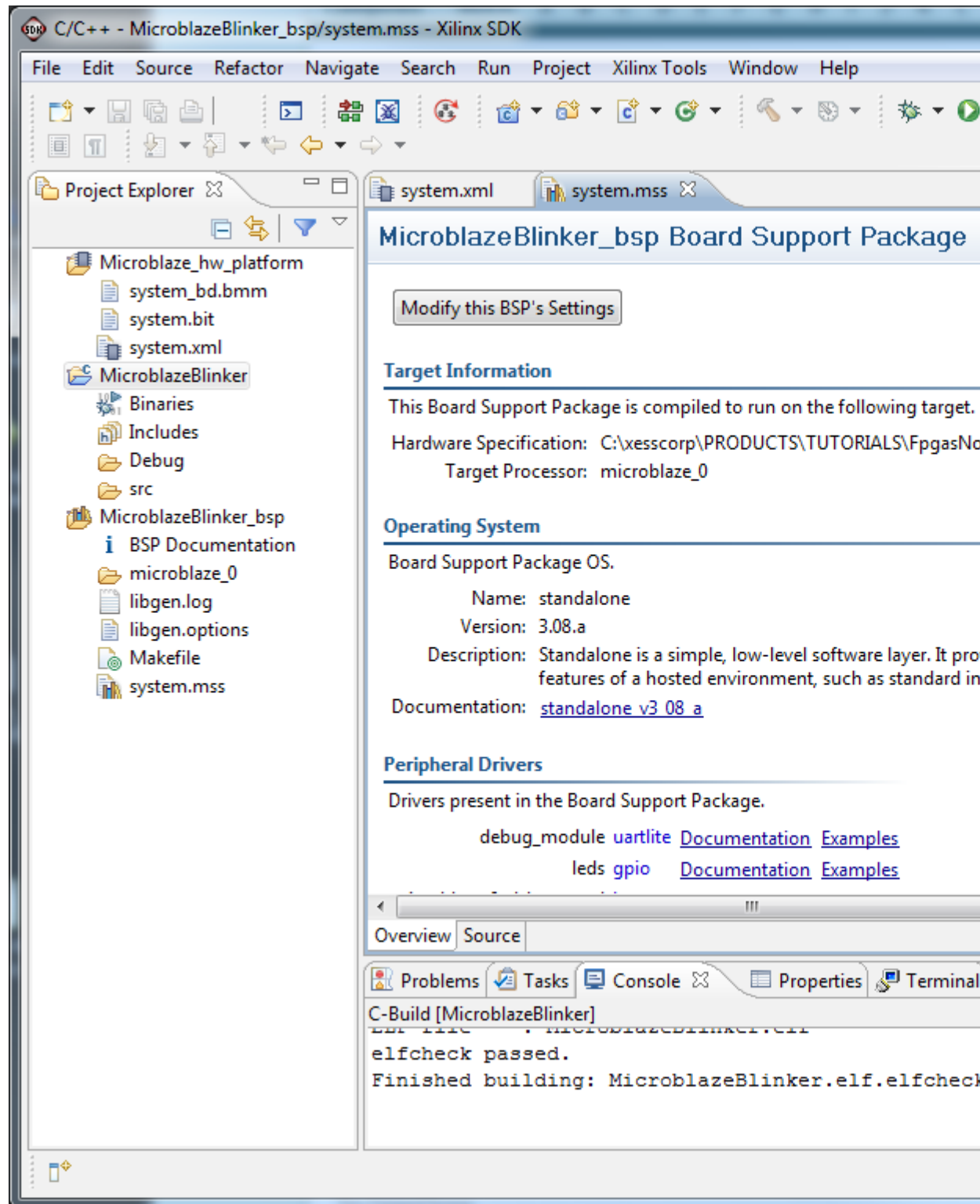
Once again, another project requiring another project name. I'll just follow tradition and name it "MicroblazeBlinker".

I don't need an operating system to blink an LED, so I select "standalone" in the OS Platform field. And I elect to write the code in C since I don't really want to build and instantiate an LED object C++ class.

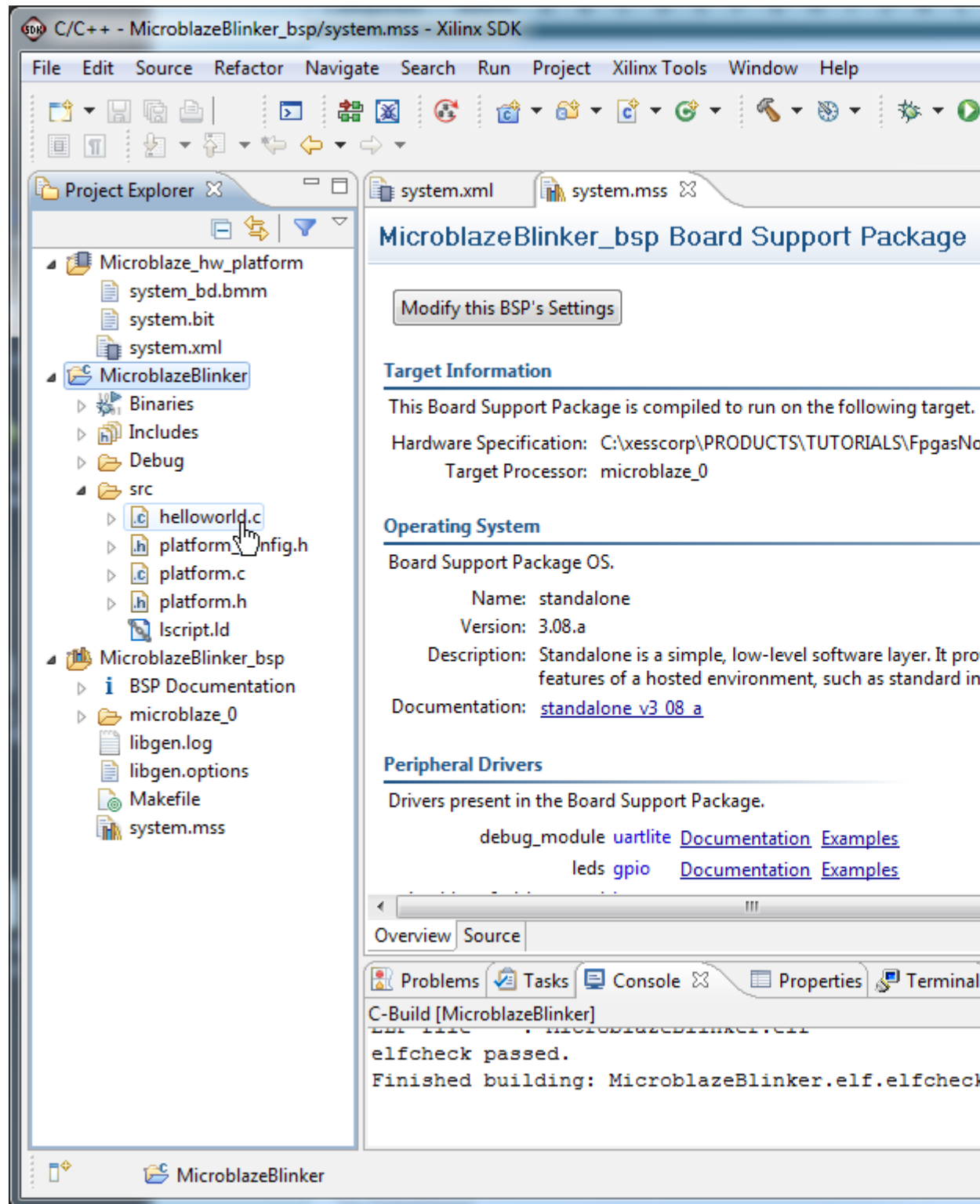


After clicking Finish in the New Project window, two new things enter the Project Explorer pane:

- A Board Support Package (BSP) that contains a bunch of header files, library code and documentation for the Microblaze core and peripherals I've included in my ISE project.
- A default software project for the Microblaze.



Expanding the MicroblazeBlinker software project, I can double-click on the helloworld.c source file to see what the default program does.



The default program is certainly simple enough, but it doesn't do anything I want. There's nothing about blinking an LED in there, and I don't even have a way to display anything that might be printed. Obviously, there's some work to be done here.

```
#include <stdio.h>
```

```
#include "platform.h"

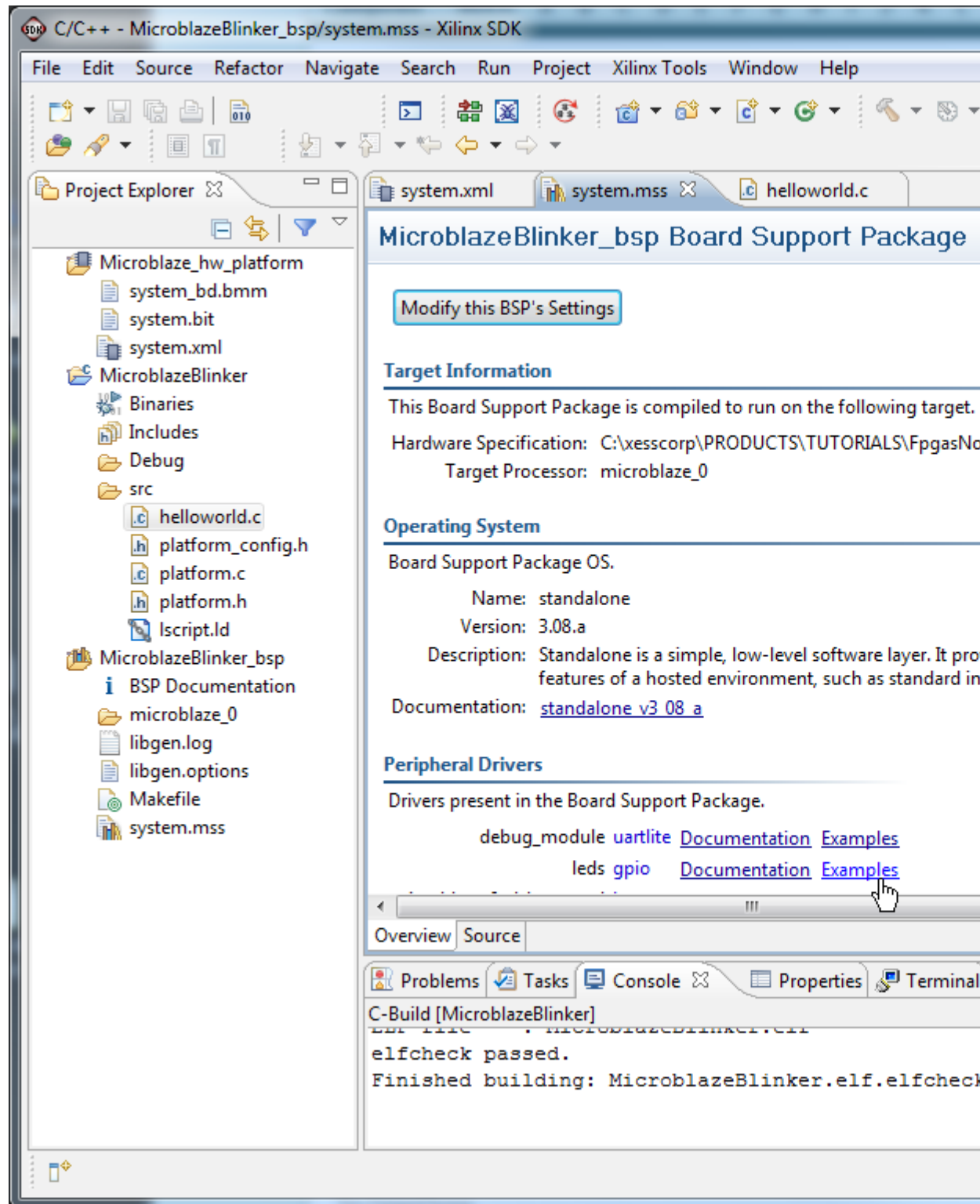
void print( char *str);

int main()
{
    init_platform();

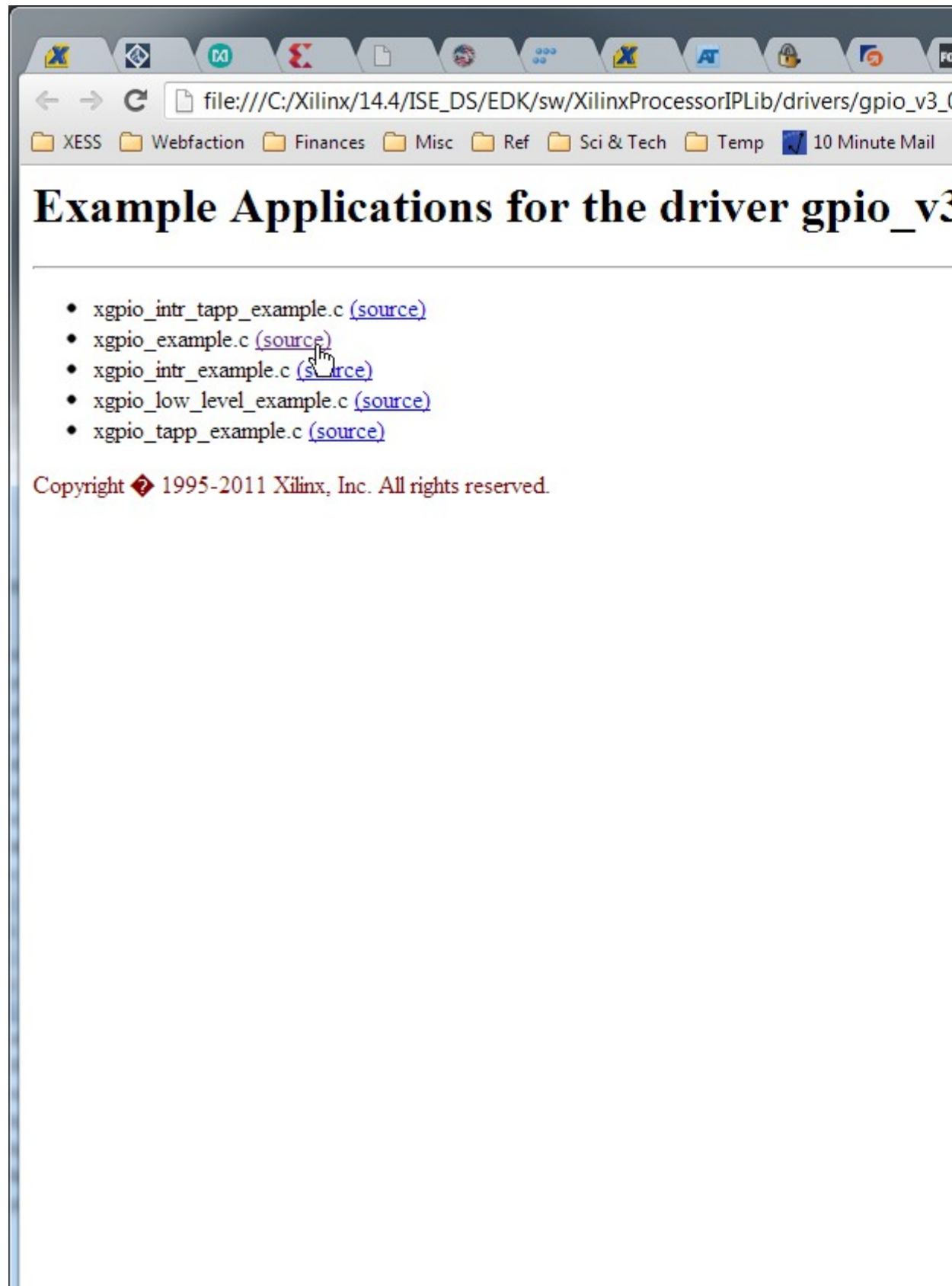
    print("Hello World\n\r");

    return 0;
}
```

Looking in the system.mss file in the BSP, I see that the I/O driver for the LED has some links for documentation and example code. Since "monkey-see, monkey-do" has always worked for me, I decide to click on the Examples link.



On the webpage that comes up, I select the xgpio_example link since it doesn't use interrupts (which I don't even have in my system) and it's not too low-level (I hope).



The meat of the code in the example is shown below (minus an big licensing header that I'm sure nobody reads). This code actually shows two ways to blink an LED!

```
#include "xparameters.h"
#include "xgpio.h"

/***** Constant Definitions
*****/

#define LED 0x01  /* Assumes bit 0 of GPIO is connected to an LED */

/*
 * The following constant maps to the name of the hardware instances that
 * were created in the EDK XPS system.
 */
#define GPIO_EXAMPLE_DEVICE_ID  XPAR_LEDS_POSITIONS_DEVICE_ID

/*
 * The following constant is used to wait after an LED is turned on to make
 * sure that it is visible to the human eye.  This constant might need to be
 * tuned for faster or slower processor speeds.
 */
#define LED_DELAY    1000000

/*
 * The following constant is used to determine which channel of the GPIO is
 * used for the LED if there are 2 channels supported.
 */
#define LED_CHANNEL 1

/***** Variable Definitions
*****/

/*
 * The following are declared globally so they are zeroed and so they are
 * easily accessible from a debugger
 */
```

```

XGpio Gpio; /* The Instance of the GPIO Driver */

/
*****
*****/

/**
 *
 * The purpose of this function is to illustrate how to use the GPIO level 1
 * driver to turn on and off an LED.
 *
 * @param      None
 *
 * @return      XST_FAILURE to indicate that the GPIO Intialisation had failed.
 *
 * @note       This function will not return if the test is running.
 *
*****
*****/

int main(void)
{
    u32 Data;
    int Status;
    volatile int Delay;

    /*
     * Initialize the GPIO driver
     */
    Status = XGpio_Initialize(&Gpio, GPIO_EXAMPLE_DEVICE_ID);
    if (Status != XST_SUCCESS) {
        return XST_FAILURE;
    }

    /*
     * Set the direction for all signals to be inputs except the
     * LED output
     */
    XGpio_SetDataDirection(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, ~LED);

```

```
/* Loop forever blinking the LED */

while (1) {
    /*
     * Read the state of the data so that only the LED state can be
     * modified
     */
    Data = XGpio_DiscreteRead(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL);

    /*
     * Set the LED to the opposite state such that it blinks using
     * the first method, two methods are used for illustration
     * purposes only
     */
    if (Data & LED) {
        XGpio_DiscreteWrite(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, Data & ~LED);
    } else {
        XGpio_DiscreteWrite(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, Data | LED);
    }

    /* Wait a small amount of time so the LED is visible */

    for (Delay = 0; Delay < LED_DELAY; Delay++);

    /*
     * Read the state of the data so that only the LED state can be
     * modified
     */
    Data = XGpio_DiscreteRead(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL);

    /*
     * Set the LED to the opposite state such that it blinks using
     * the other API functions
     */
    if (Data & LED) {
        XGpio_DiscreteClear(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, LED);
    } else {
```



```

        XGpio_DiscreteSet(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, LED);
    }

    /* Wait a small amount of time so the LED is visible */

    for (Delay = 0; Delay < LED_DELAY; Delay++);
}

return XST_SUCCESS;
}

```

I extracted the code from the example, transferred it to the helloworld.c file, and then cut it down and simplified the main loop until it looks like this:

```

#include <stdio.h>
#include "platform.h"

#include "xparameters.h"
#include "xgpio.h"

/***** Constant Definitions *****/

#define LED 0x01    /* Assumes bit 0 of GPIO is connected to an LED
*/

/*
 * The following constant maps to the name of the hardware instances
that
 * were created in the EDK XPS system.
 */
#define GPIO_EXAMPLE_DEVICE_ID XPAR_LEDS_POSITIONS_DEVICE_ID

/*
 * The following constant is used to wait after an LED is turned on
to make
 * sure that it is visible to the human eye. This constant might
need to be
 * tuned for faster or slower processor speeds.

```

```

*/
#define LED_DELAY      1000000

/*
 * The following constant is used to determine which channel of the
 * GPIO is
 * used for the LED if there are 2 channels supported.
 */
#define LED_CHANNEL 1

/***** Variable Definitions *****/

/*
 * The following are declared globally so they are zeroed and so
 * they are
 * easily accessible from a debugger
 */

XGpio Gpio; /* The Instance of the GPIO Driver */

/
*****/
/**
 *
 * The purpose of this function is to illustrate how to use the GPIO level 1
 * driver to turn on and off an LED.
 *
 * @param      None
 *
 * @return      XST_FAILURE to indicate that the GPIO Intialisation had failed.
 *
 * @note       This function will not return if the test is running.
 *
 *****/
int main( void)
{

```

```
u32 Data;
int Status;
volatile int Delay;

/*
 * Initialize the GPIO driver
 */
Status = XGpio_Initialize(&Gpio, GPIO_EXAMPLE_DEVICE_ID);
if (Status != XST_SUCCESS) {
    return XST_FAILURE;
}

/*
 * Set the direction for all signals to be inputs except the
 * LED output
 */
XGpio_SetDataDirection(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, ~LED);

/* Loop forever blinking the LED */
while (1) {

    /* Turn off the LED by clearing the bit. */
    XGpio_DiscreteClear(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, LED);

    /* Wait a small amount of time so the LED is visible */
    for (Delay = 0; Delay < LED_DELAY; Delay++);

    /* Turn on the LED by setting the bit. */
    XGpio_DiscreteSet(&Gpio, LED_CHANNEL, LED);

    /* Wait a small amount of time so the LED is visible */
    for (Delay = 0; Delay < LED_DELAY; Delay++);
}

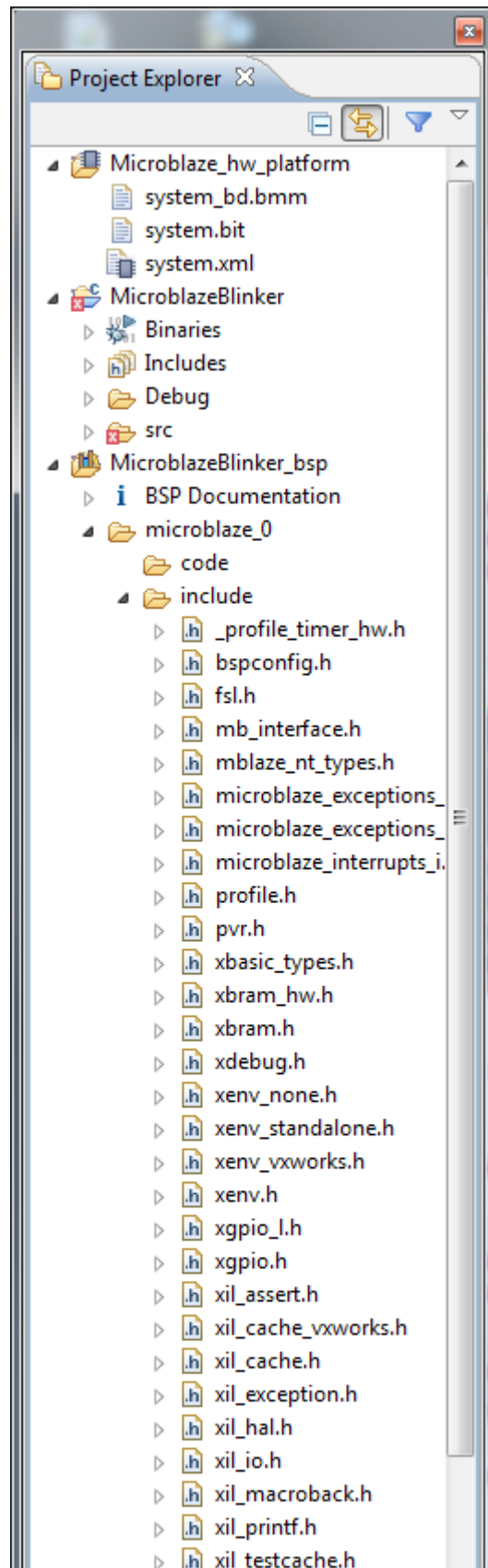
return XST_SUCCESS;
```

}

As soon as I saved the modified helloworld.c file, the C compiler kicked off and flagged this error:

```
../src/helloworld.c:84:42: error: 'XPAR_LEDS_POSITIONS_DEVICE_ID' undeclared (first use in this function)
```

So obviously I'm missing some definition in a header file. Since it's related to the LED driver, possibly it's in the BSP. Expanding the include folder in the BSP, I find a file called "xparameters.h" That seems like a likely candidate for what I need.



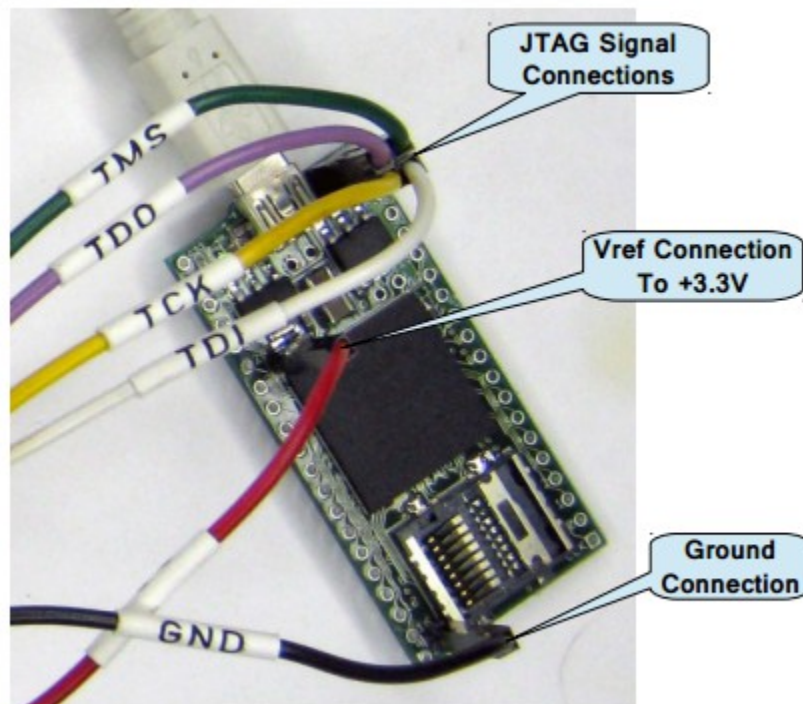
Opening the xparameters.h file, I find the following definitions inside:

```
/* Definitions for driver GPIO */  
  
#define XPAR_XGPIO_NUM_INSTANCES 1  
  
/* Definitions for peripheral LEDS */  
  
#define XPAR_LEDS_BASEADDR 0x40000000  
#define XPAR_LEDS_HIGHADDR 0x4000FFFF  
#define XPAR_LEDS_DEVICE_ID 0  
#define XPAR_LEDS_INTERRUPT_PRESENT 0  
#define XPAR_LEDS_IS_DUAL 0
```

Going back to the helloworld.c file, I substitute `XPAR_LEDS_DEVICE_ID` in place of `XPAR_LEDS_POSITIONS_DEVICE_ID`. After saving the modified file, the project compiles successfully and an ELF file is produced.

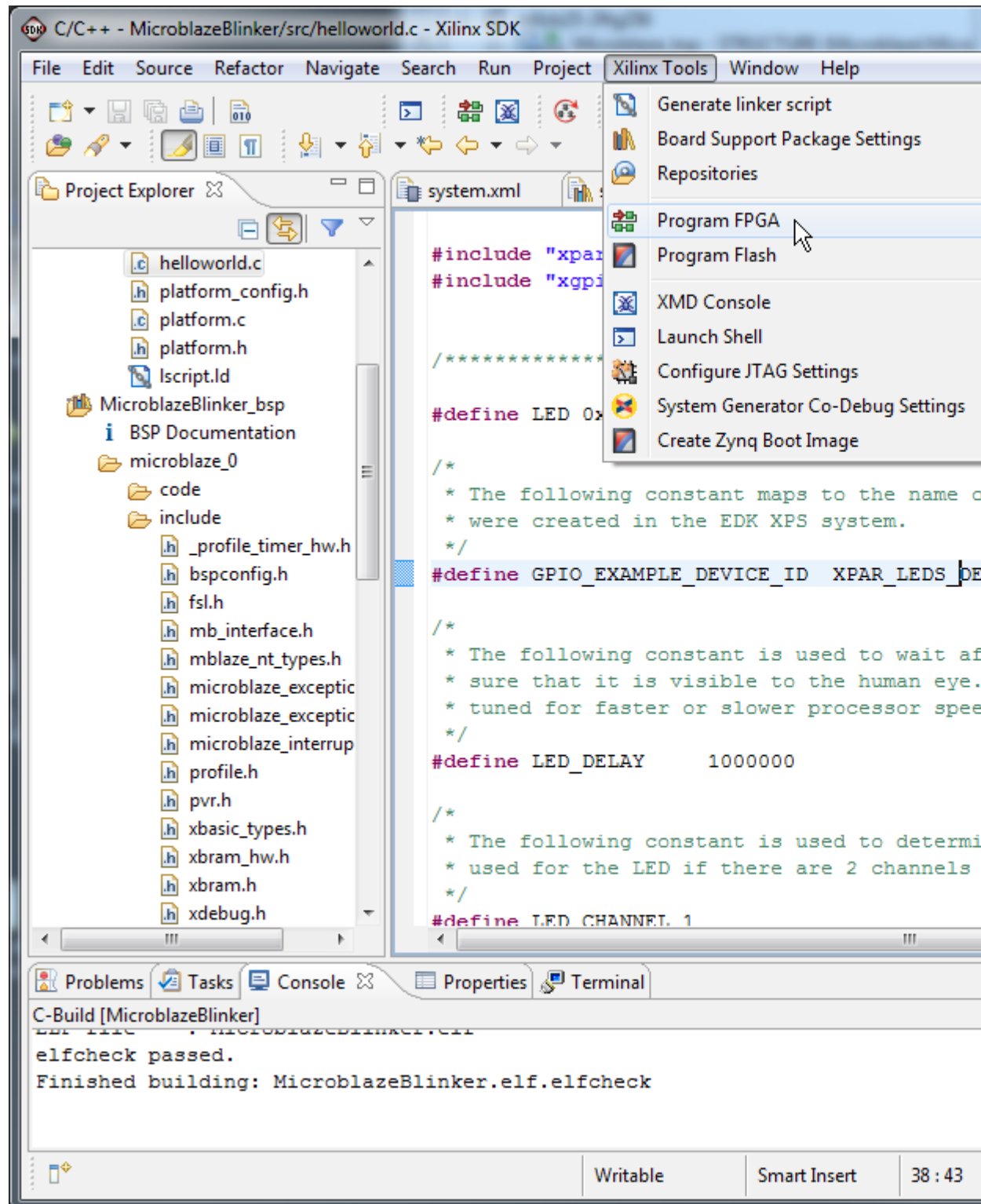
At this point, I setup a XuLA2 board to run the LED blinker project as follows:

1. I connect the XuLA2 to a USB port and use the GXSFflags utility to enable the auxiliary JTAG port.
2. I connect the flying leads of a Xilinx USB cable to the XuLA2 board as follows:



3. I connect an LED + resistor from Channel 0 of the XuLA2 prototyping header to ground.

Once the hardware is ready, I click on the "Xilinx Tools => Program FPGA" menu item.



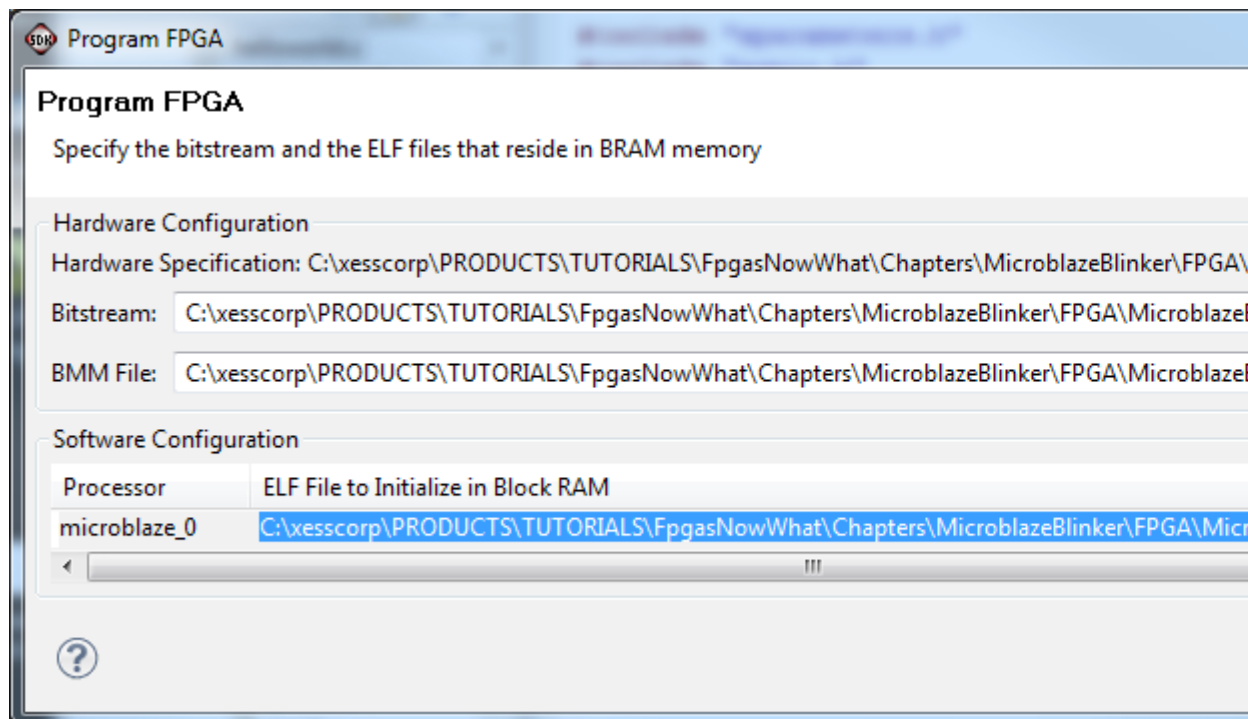
The Program FPGA window appears. There are three files that are needed to program the FPGA (and which should be automatically filled-in when the window appears):

1. The FPGA bitstream file for the unprogrammed Microblaze hardware (system.bit).

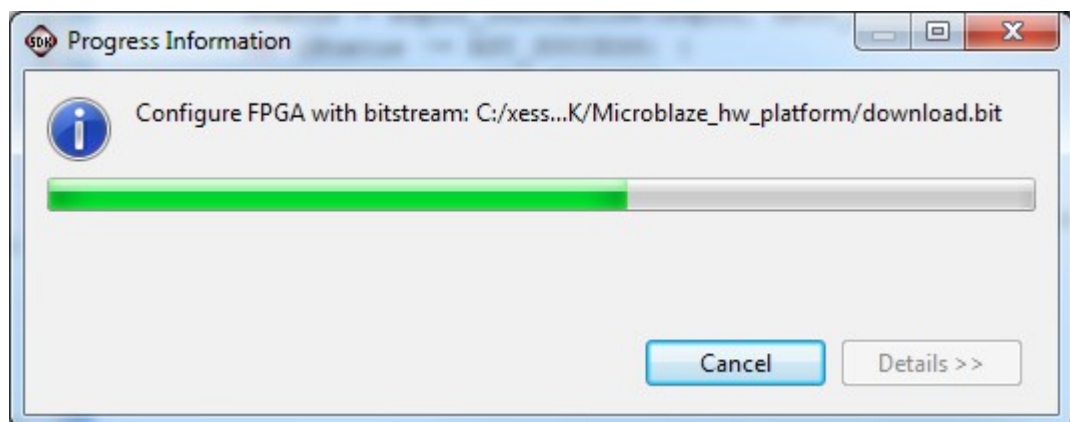
2. The block memory map (BMM) file that shows where the contents of the block RAMs are stored in the FPGA bitstream.
3. The ELF file containing the compiled machine code for the helloworld.c project.

After specifying these files, clicking the Program button sets in motion the following sequence of events:

1. The binary code in the ELF file is inserted into the FPGA bitstream under the direction of the BMM file.
2. The Xilinx USB cable is detected.
3. The combined FPGA bitstream and ELF file are downloaded into the FPGA on the XULA2 board through the USB cable.



The download process should take a few seconds:



After the download completes, the LED should start blinking several times a second. At least it does for me. Hopefully you will get the same result!