

Use Vivado to build an Embedded System

Introduction

This lab guides you through the process of using Vivado to create a simple ARM Cortex-A9 based processor design targeting the Zybo board. Where the instructions refer to both boards, choose the board you are using. You will use Vivado to create the hardware system and SDK (Software Development Kit) to create an example application to verify the hardware functionality.

Objectives

After completing this lab, you will be able to:

- Create a Vivado project for a Zynq system
- Use the IP Integrator to create a hardware system
- Use SDK to create a standard memory test project
- Run the test application on the board

Procedure

This lab is separated into steps that consist of general overview statements that provide information on the detailed instructions that follow. Follow these detailed instructions to progress through the lab.

This lab comprises 5 primary steps: You will create a top-level project using Vivado, create the processor system using the Vivado IP Integrator, generate the top-level HDL and export the design to SDK, create a Memory Test application in SDK, and finally, test in hardware.

Design Description

The purpose of the lab exercises is to walk you through a complete hardware and software processor system design. Each lab will build upon the previous lab. The following diagram represents the completed design (Figure 1).

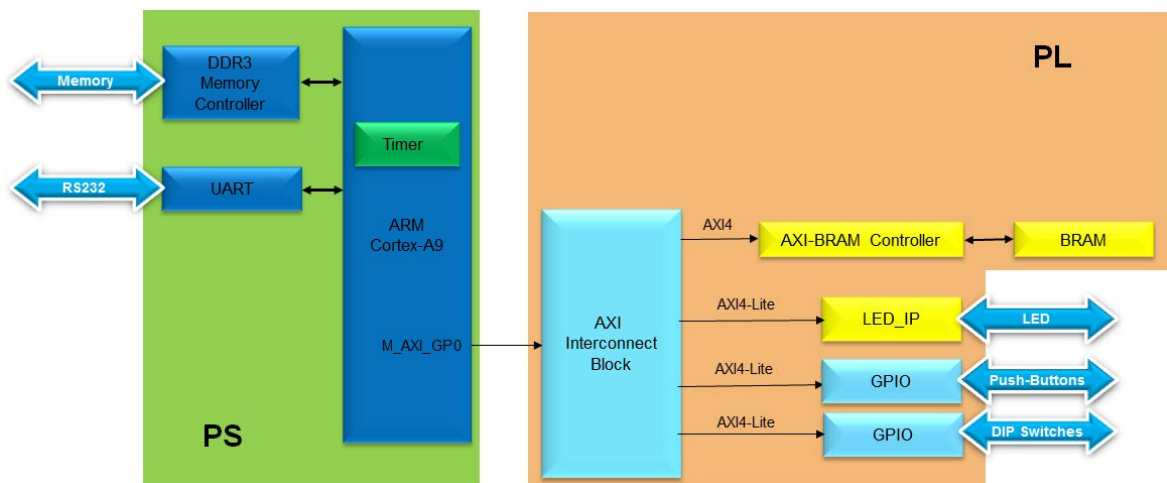


Figure 1. Completed Design

In this lab, you will use IP Integrator to create a processing system based design consisting of the following (Figure 2):

- ARM Cortex A9 core (PS)
- UART for serial communication
- DDR3 controller for external DDR3_SDRAM memory

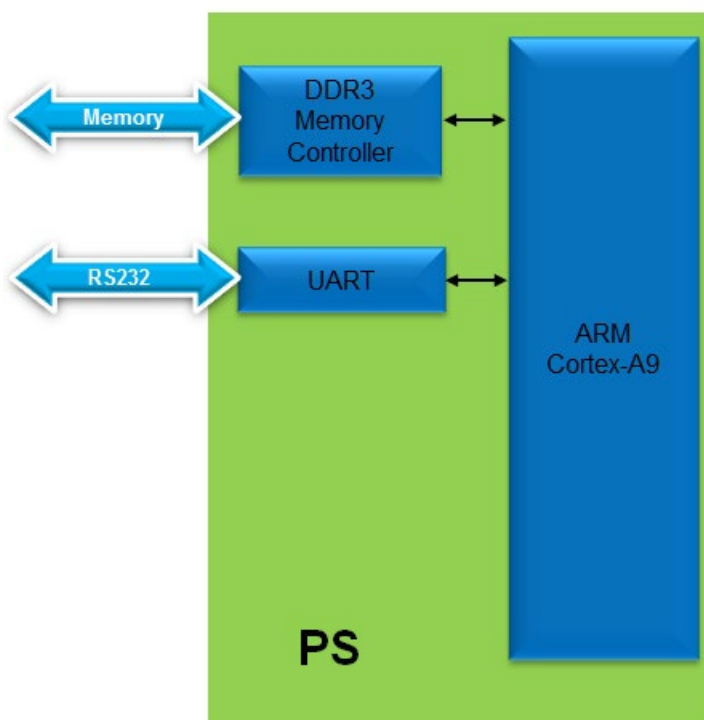
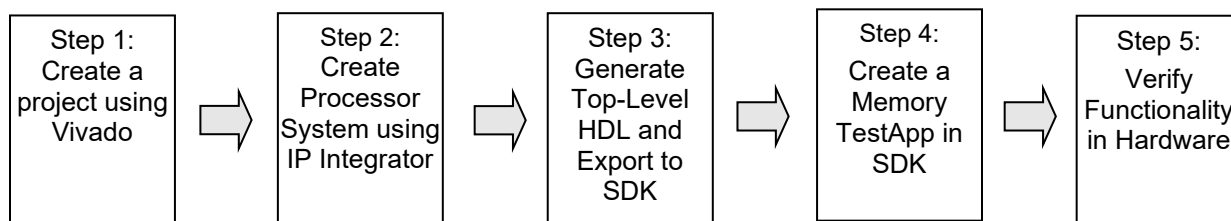


Figure 2. Processor Design of this Lab

General Flow for this Lab



Create a Vivado Project

Step 1

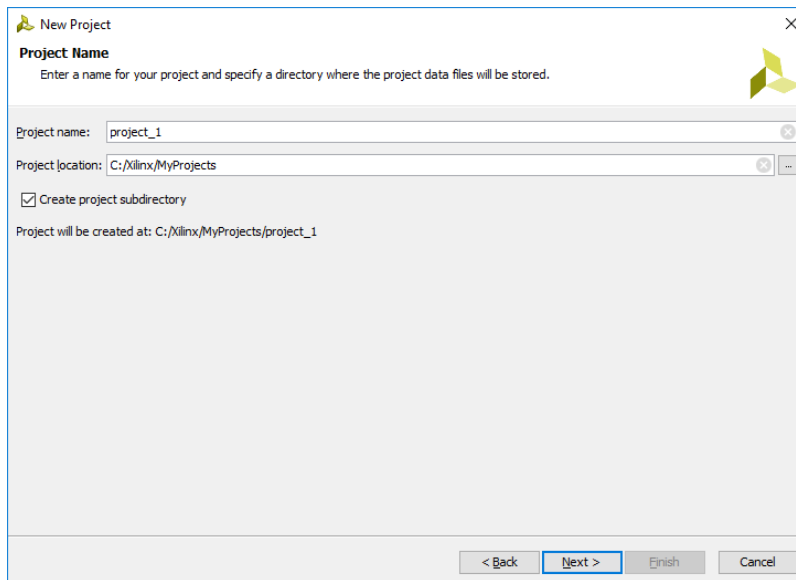
1-1. Launch Vivado and create an empty project targeting the Zybo, using the VHDL language.

1-1-1. Open Vivado by selecting **Start > All Programs > Xilinx Design Tools > Vivado 2018.3**

1-1-2. Click **Create Project** to start the wizard. You will see the *Create a New Vivado Project* dialog box. Click **Next**.

1-1-3. Click the Browse button of the *Project Location* field of the **New Project** form, browse to **C:/Xilinx/MyProjects**, and click **Select**.

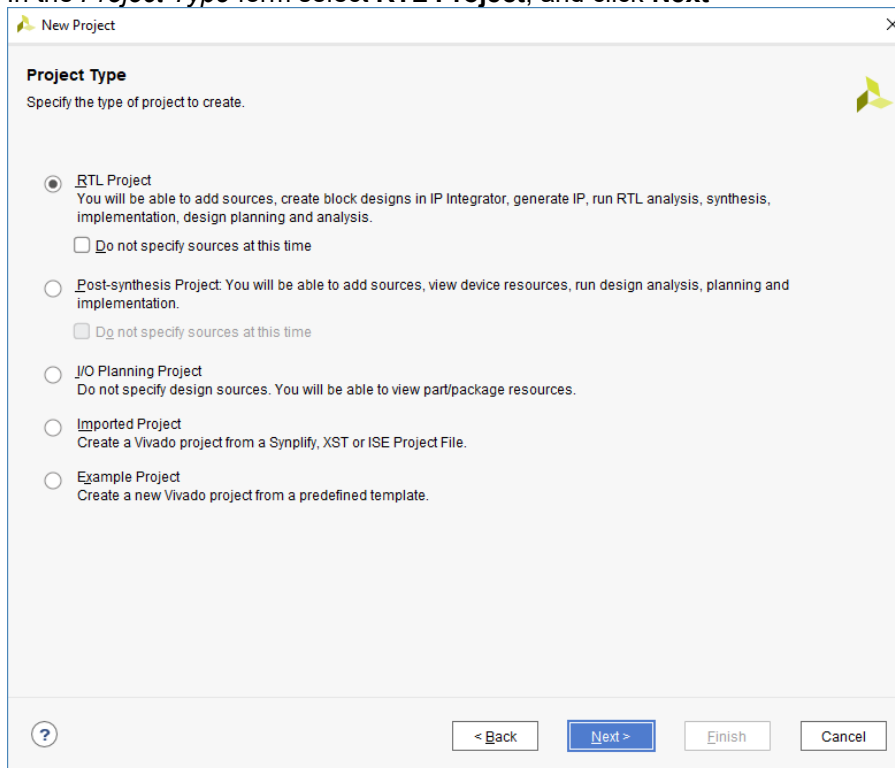
1-1-4. Enter **project_1** in the *Project Name* field. Make sure that the *Create Project Subdirectory* box is checked. Click **Next**. **Make sure there is no space in the path.**



The 'New Project' dialog box is shown at the 'Project Name' step. The title bar says 'New Project'. Below the title, it says 'Project Name' and 'Enter a name for your project and specify a directory where the project data files will be stored.' There are two text input fields: 'Project name:' with 'project_1' entered, and 'Project location:' with 'C:/Xilinx/MyProjects' entered. A checkbox labeled 'Create project subdirectory' is checked. Below this, it says 'Project will be created at: C:/Xilinx/MyProjects/project_1'. At the bottom, there are four buttons: '< Back', 'Next >', 'Finish', and 'Cancel'. The 'Next >' button is highlighted with a blue border.

Figure 3. Project Name Entry

1-1-5. In the *Project Type* form select **RTL Project**, and click **Next**



The 'New Project' dialog box is shown at the 'Project Type' step. The title bar says 'New Project'. Below the title, it says 'Project Type' and 'Specify the type of project to create.' There are five radio button options: 1. 'RTL Project' (selected): 'You will be able to add sources, create block designs in IP Integrator, generate IP, run RTL analysis, synthesis, implementation, design planning and analysis.' Below it is a checkbox 'Do not specify sources at this time' which is unchecked. 2. 'Post-synthesis Project': 'You will be able to add sources, view device resources, run design analysis, planning and implementation.' Below it is a checkbox 'Do not specify sources at this time' which is unchecked. 3. 'I/O Planning Project': 'Do not specify design sources. You will be able to view part/package resources.' 4. 'Imported Project': 'Create a Vivado project from a Synplify, XST or ISE Project File.' 5. 'Example Project': 'Create a new Vivado project from a predefined template.' At the bottom left is a question mark icon. At the bottom right are four buttons: '< Back', 'Next >', 'Finish', and 'Cancel'. The 'Next >' button is highlighted with a blue border.

1-1-6. In the *Add Sources* form, select **VHDL** as the *Target language* and **Mixed** as the *Simulator language*, and click **Next**

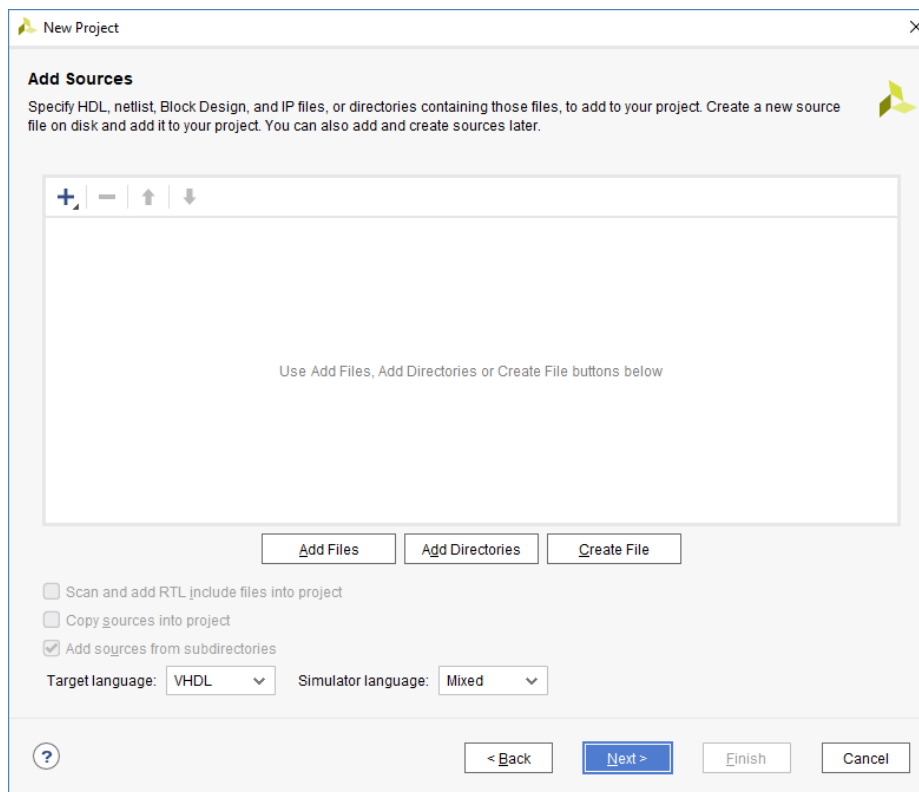


Figure 4. Add sources to new project

1-1-7. Click **Next** two more times to skip *Adding Existing IP* and *Add Constraints*

1-1-8. In the *Default Part* form, select *Boards*, and select *Zybo* and click **Next**.

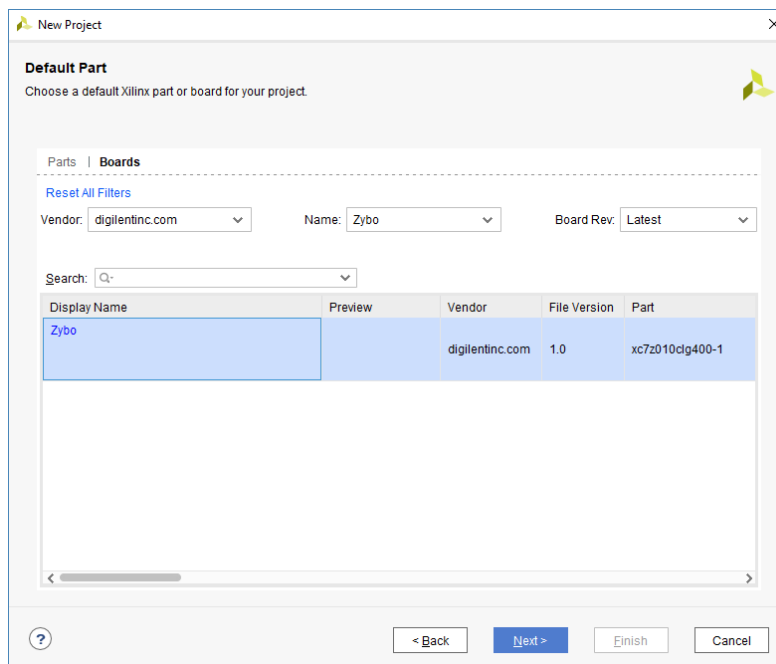
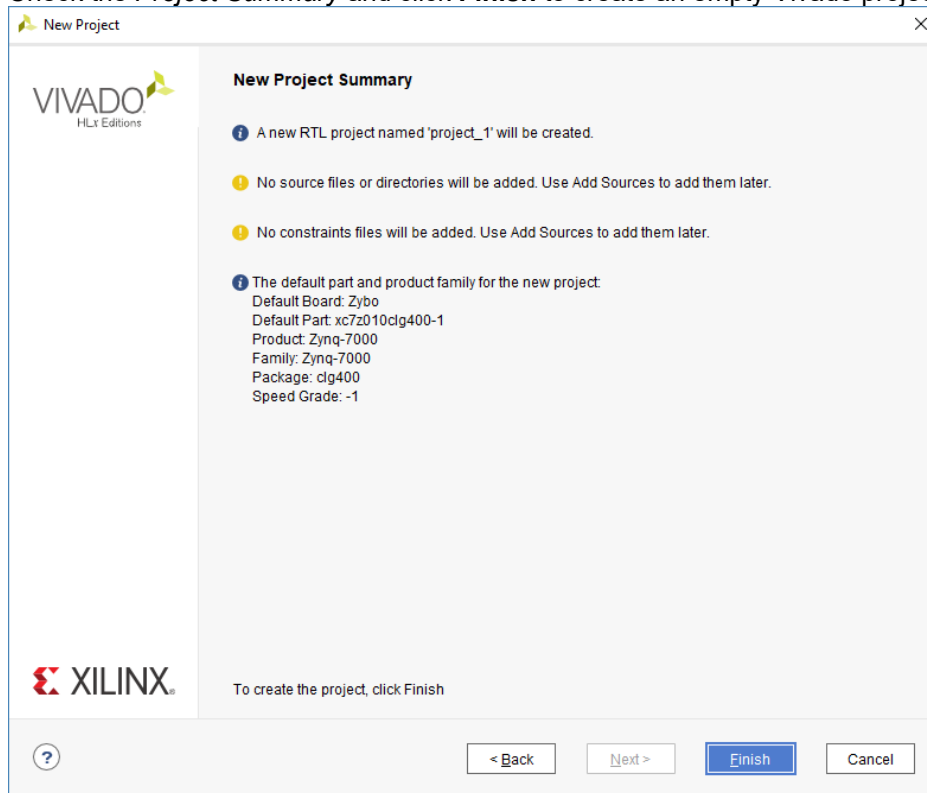
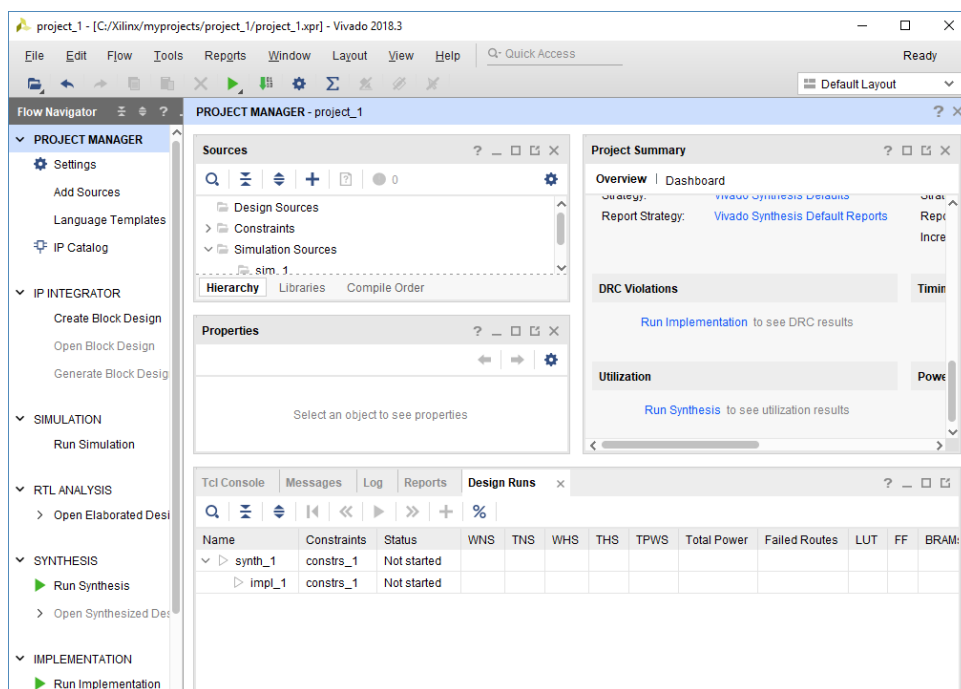


Figure 5. Boards and Parts Selection

1-1-9. Check the *Project Summary* and click **Finish** to create an empty Vivado project.

Then you will see the following window.



Creating the System Using the IP Integrator

Step 2

2-1. Use the IP Integrator to create a new Block Design, add the ZYNQ processing system block, and import the provided xml file for the board.

2-1-1. In the Flow Navigator, click **Create Block Design** under IP Integrator

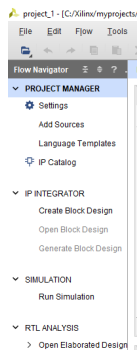


Figure 6. Create IP Integrator Block Diagram

2-1-2. Enter **design_1** for the design name and click **OK**

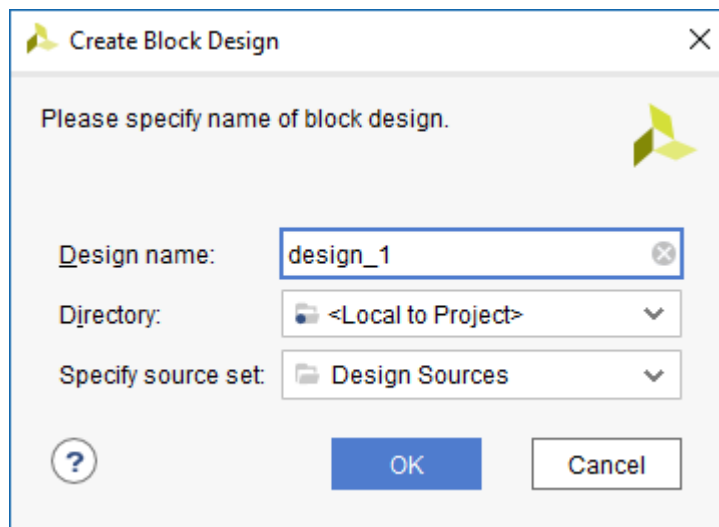
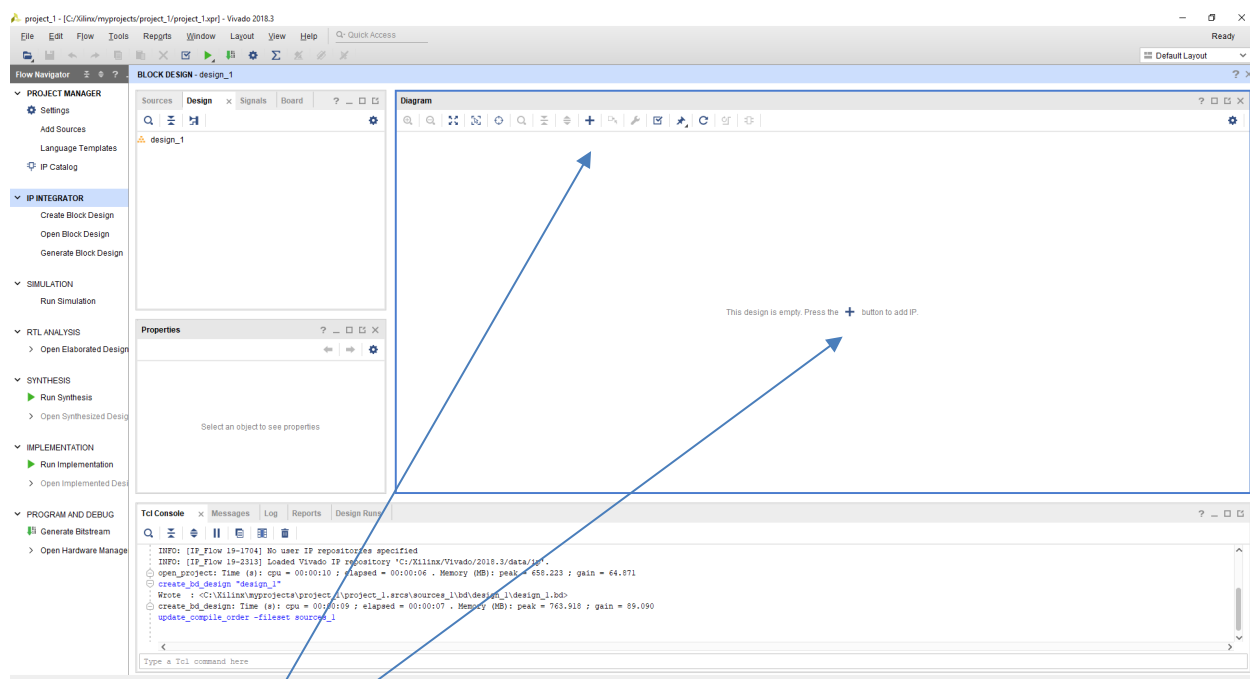


Figure 7. Create New Block Diagram



2-1-3. IP from the catalog can be added by pressing the “+” button on top of or in the middle of the diagram window.

2-1-4. Once the IP Catalog is open, type “z” into the Search bar, find and double click on **ZYNQ7 Processing System** entry, or click on the entry and hit the Enter key to add it to the design.

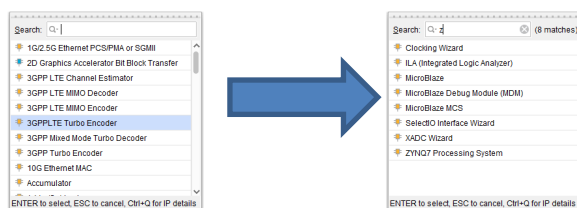


Figure 8. Add Zynq block to the design

2-1-5. Notice the message at the top of the Diagram window that *Designer Assistance* available. Click *Run Block Automation* and select *!processing_system7_0*

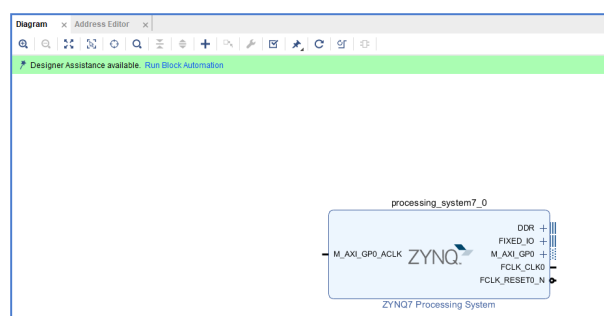


Figure 9. Run block automation

- 2-1-6.** In the *Run Block Automation* window, leave the default settings, including *Apply Board Preset* checked, and click **OK**

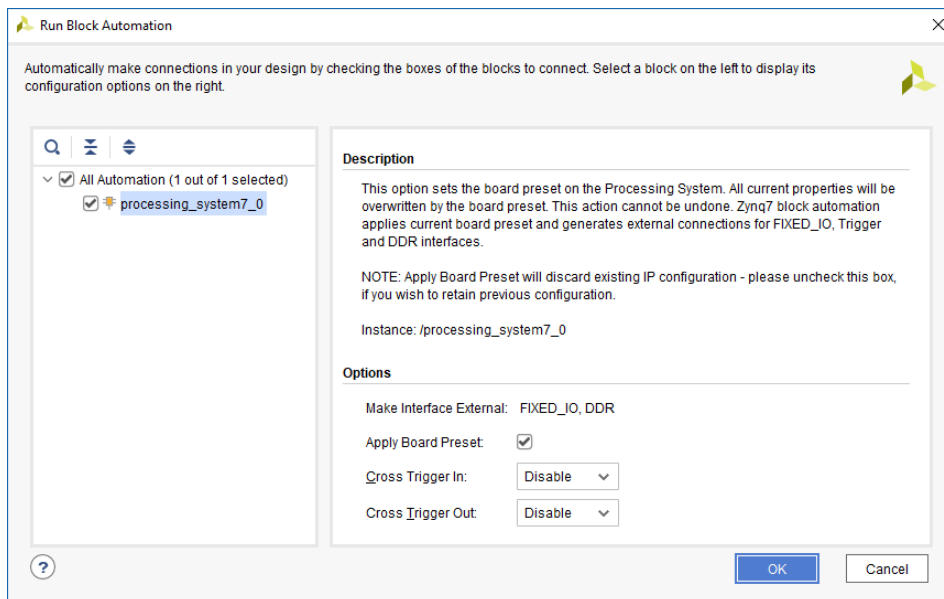


Figure 10. Block Automation settings

Once Block Automation has been completed, notice that ports have been automatically added for the DDR and Fixed IO, and some additional ports are now visible. The imported configuration for the Zynq related to the Zybo board has been applied which will now be modified.

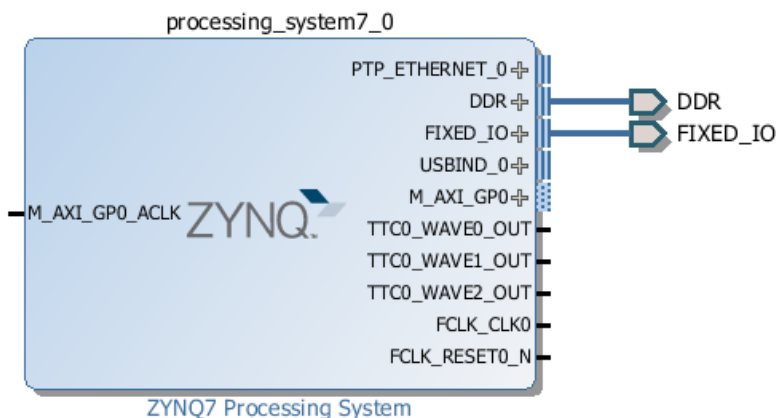


Figure 11. Zynq Block with DDR and Fixed IO ports

- 2-1-7.** Double-click on the added block to open its *Customization* window.

Notice now the *Customization* window shows selected peripherals (with tick marks). This is the default configuration for the board applied by the block automation.

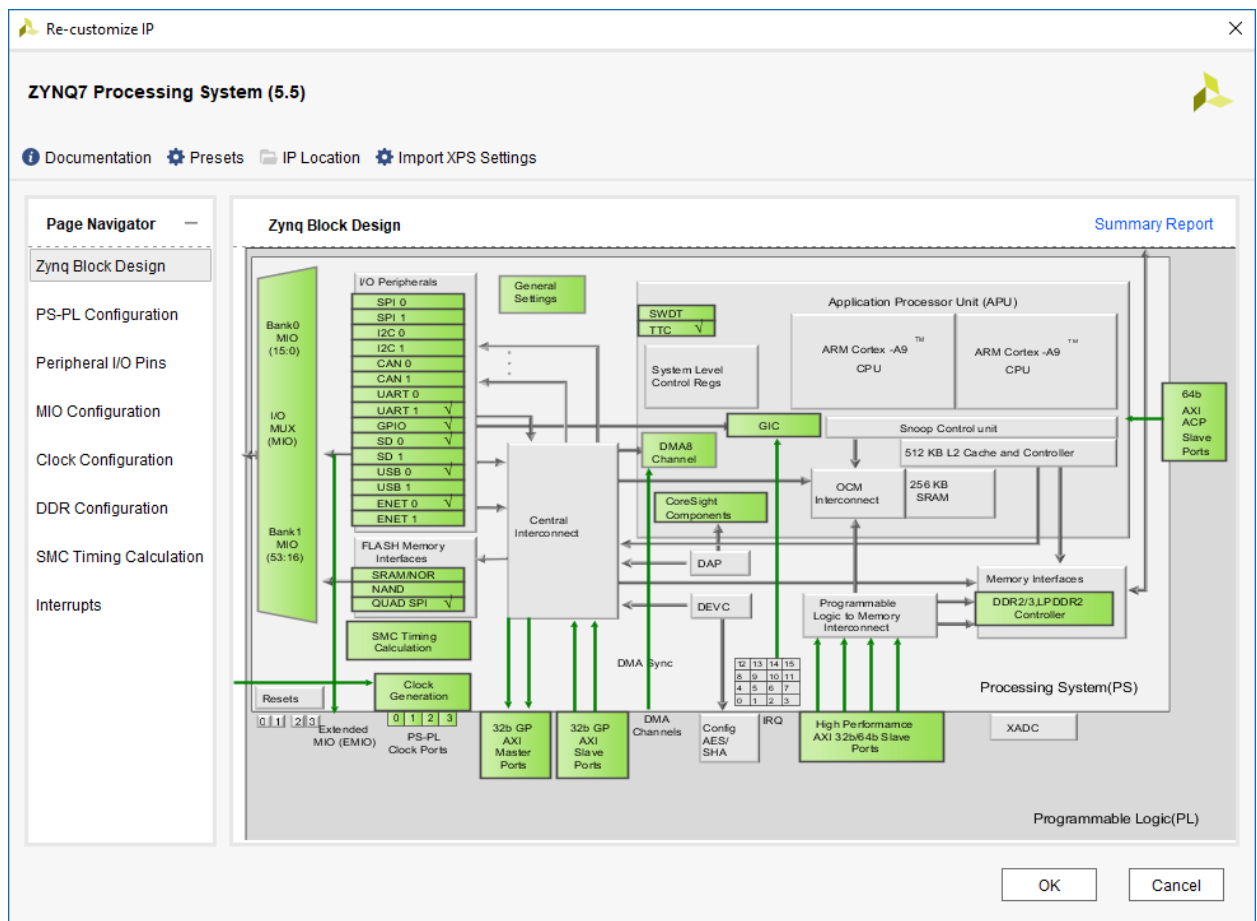


Figure 12. Imported peripherals settings

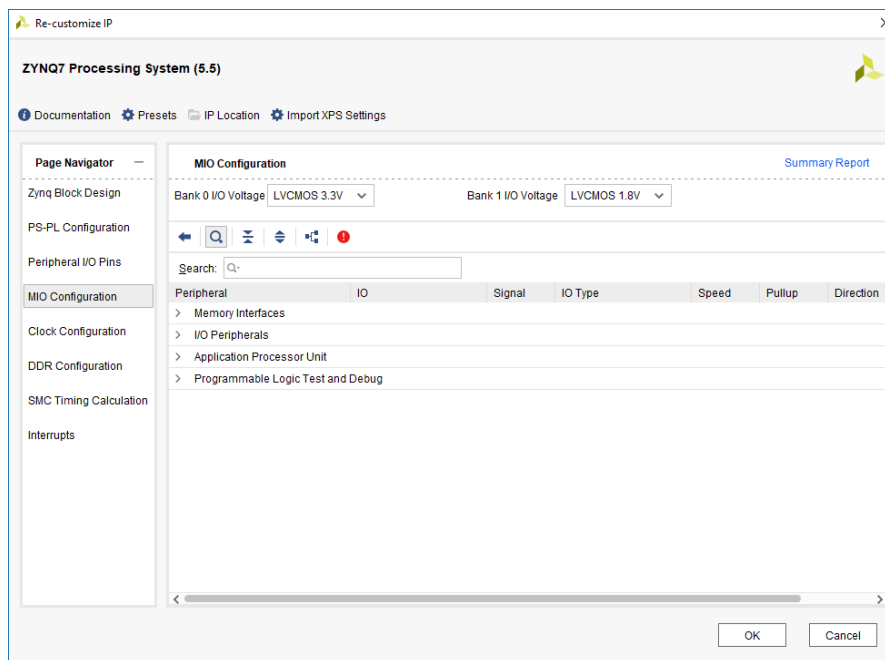
2-2. Configure the processing block with just UART 1 peripheral enabled.

2-2-1. A block diagram of the Zynq should now be open again, showing various configurable blocks of the Processing System.

At this stage, the designer can click on various configurable blocks (highlighted in green) and change the system configuration.

Only the UART is required for this lab, so all other peripherals will be deselected.

2-2-2. Click on one of the peripherals (in green) in the *I/O Peripherals* block, or select the *MIO Configuration* tab on the left to open the configuration form



2-2-3. Expand I/O peripherals if necessary, and ensure all the following *I/O peripherals* are *deselected* except *UART 1*.

i.e. Remove:

ENET 0

USB 0

SD 0

Expand **GPIO** to deselect *GPIO MIO*

Expand **Memory Interfaces** to deselect *Quad SPI Flash*

Expand **Application Processor Unit** to disable *Timer 0*.

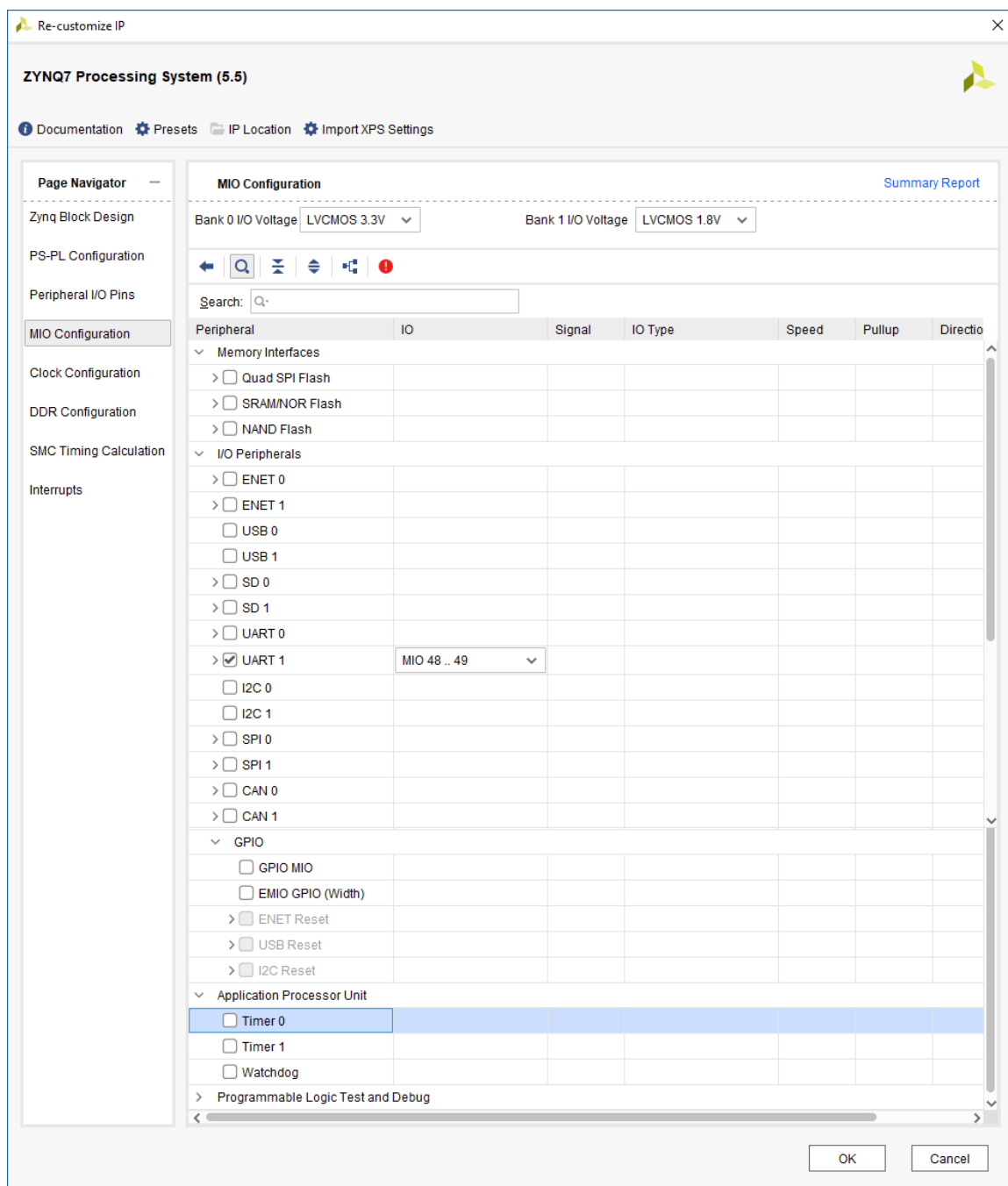
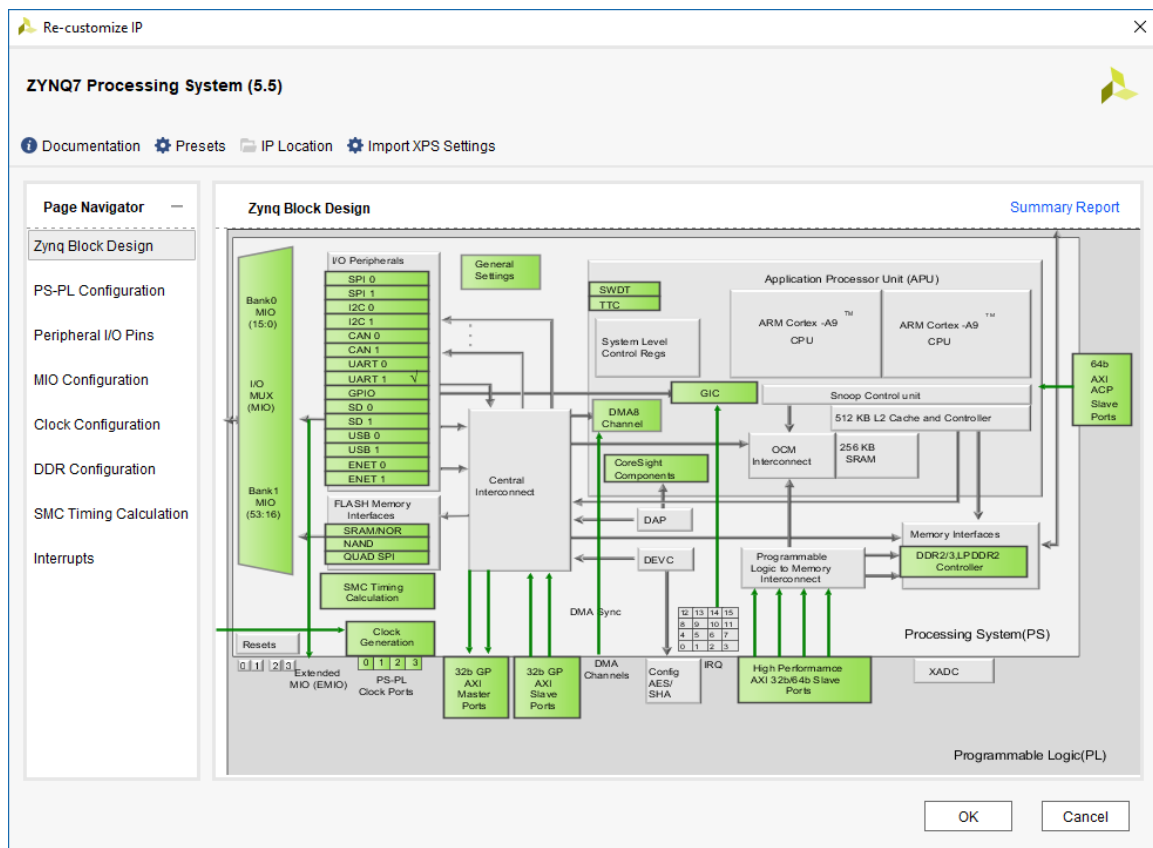
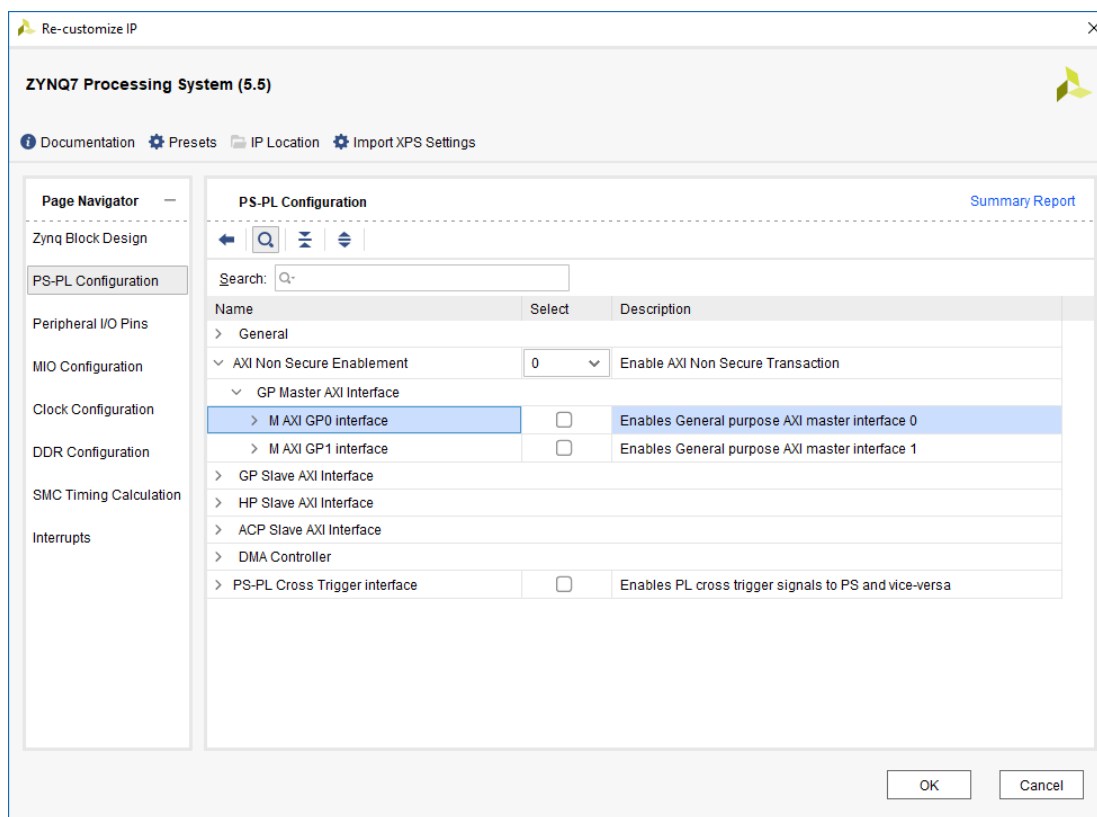


Figure 13. Selecting only UART 1

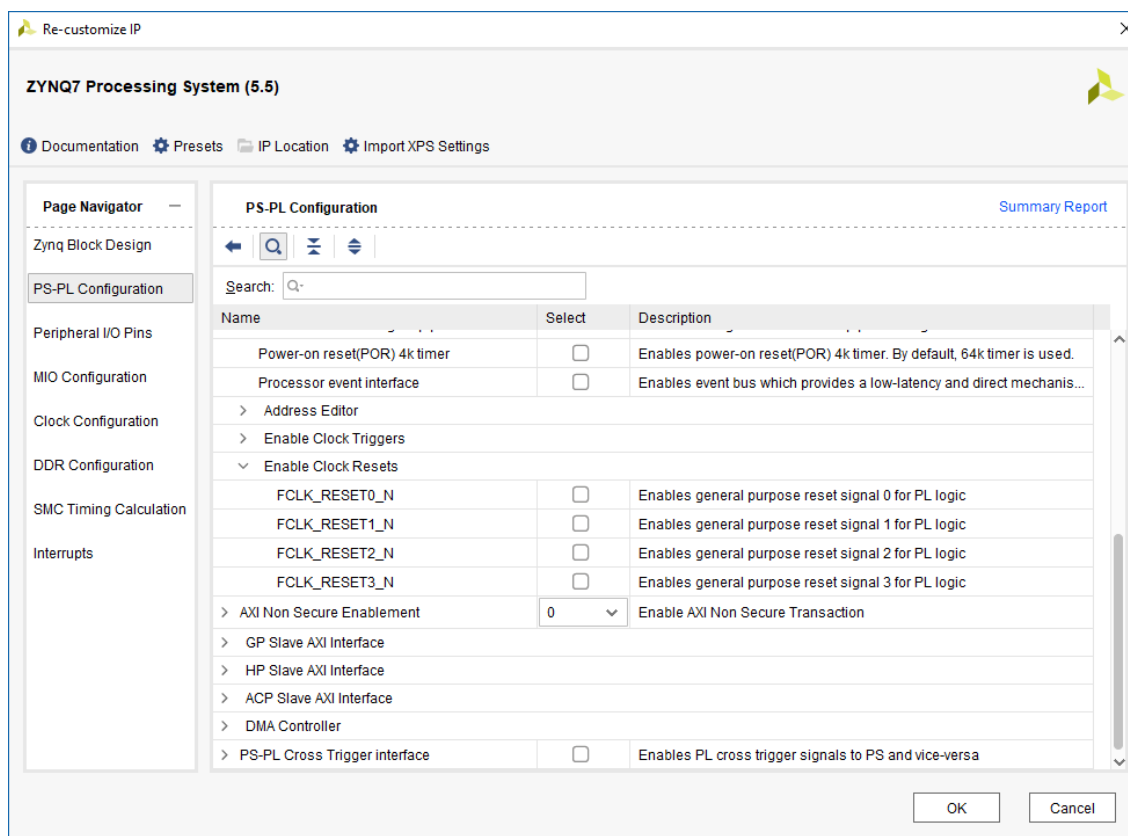


2-2-4. Select the **PS-PL Configuration** tab on the left.

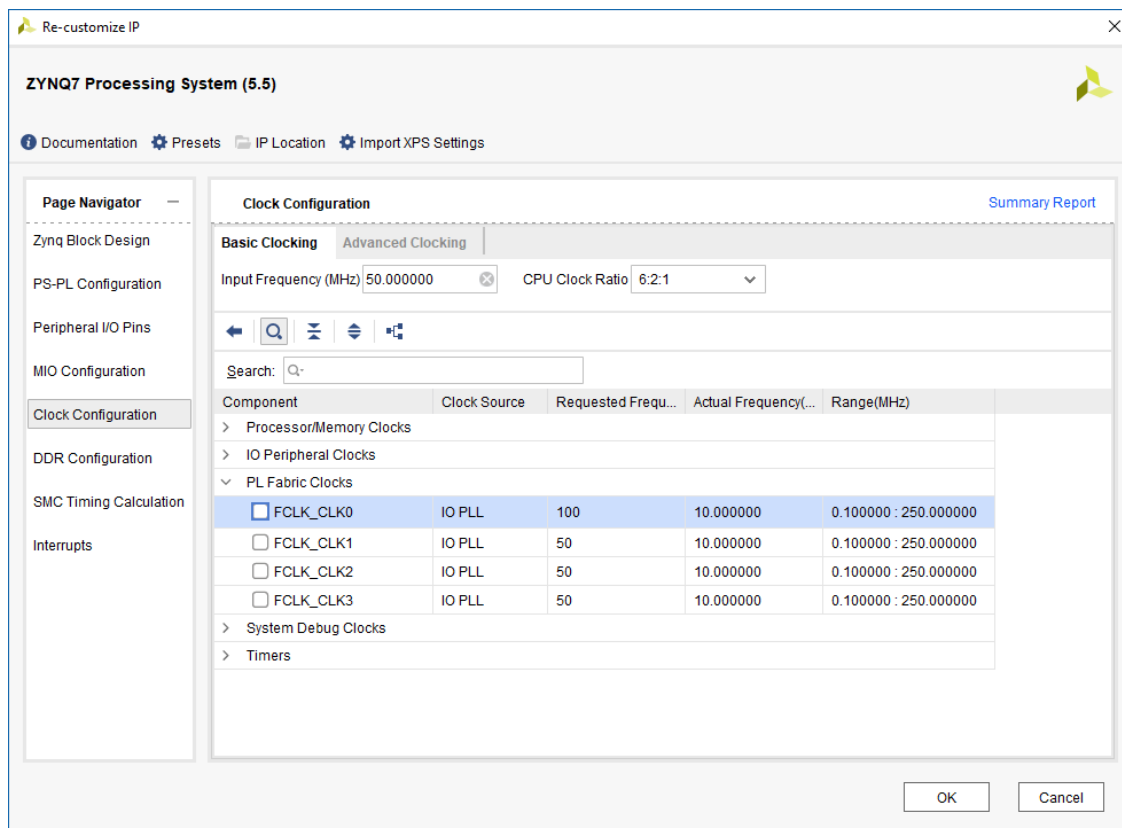
2-2-5. Expand *AXI Non Secure Enablement* > *GP Master AXI interface* and deselect **M AXI GP0** interface.



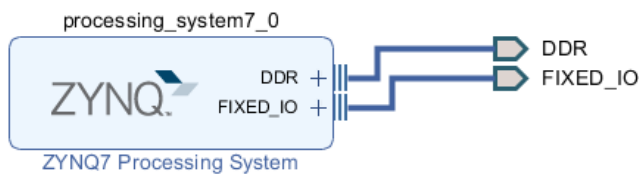
2-2-6. Expand **General > Enable Clock Resets and deselect the **FCLK_RESET0_N** option.**




2-2-7. Select the **Clock Configuration** tab on the left. Expand the **PL Fabric Clocks** and deselect the **FCLK_CLK0** option and click **OK**.



Then your block diagram should look like this:



Right click the **Zynq7 Processing System** block on the Diagram window to bring up the options, then Click on the  (Regenerate Layout) button

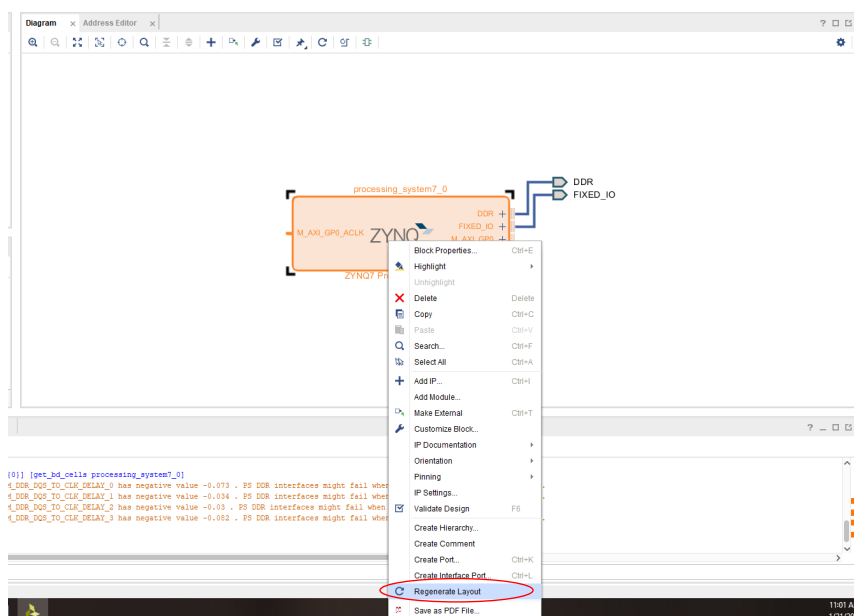
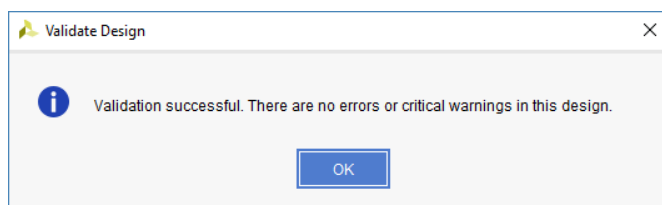
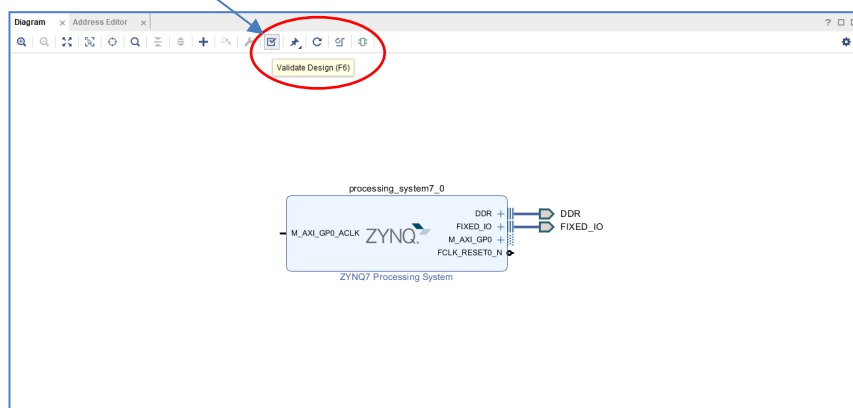


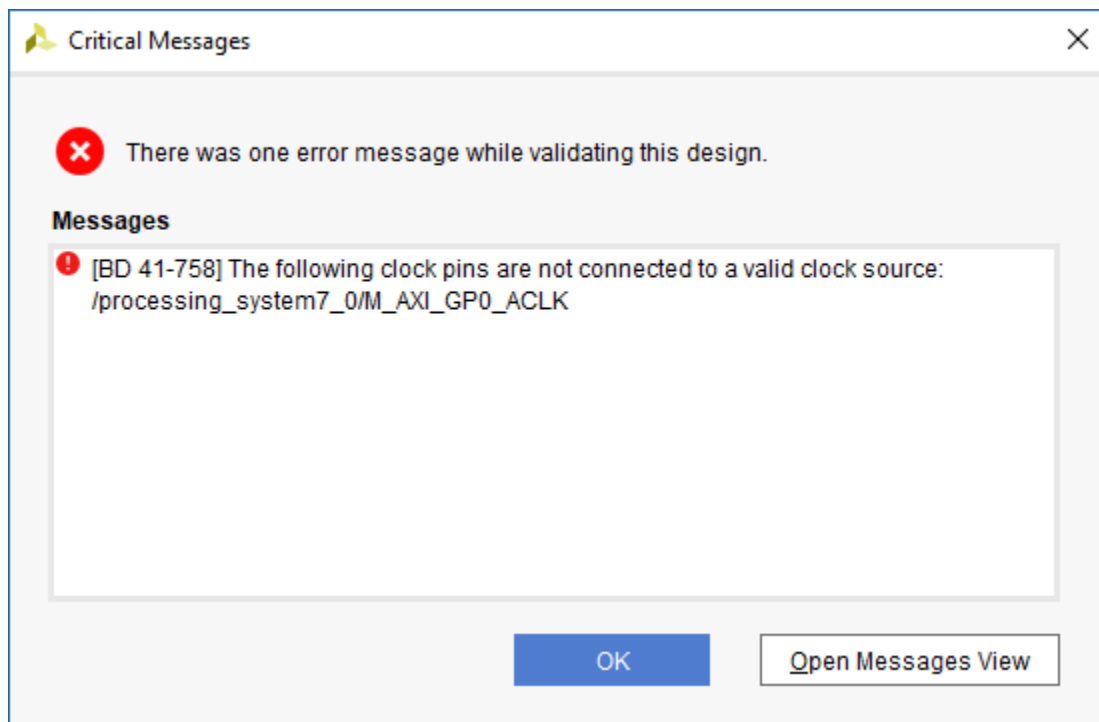
Figure 14. Updated Zynq Block

2-2-8. Click on the (Validate Design) button and make sure that there are no errors.



Click "OK". If there is any error, go back to previous steps and make sure each step is done correctly.

Following is an example of an error case: It is due to 2-2-6 not done properly.

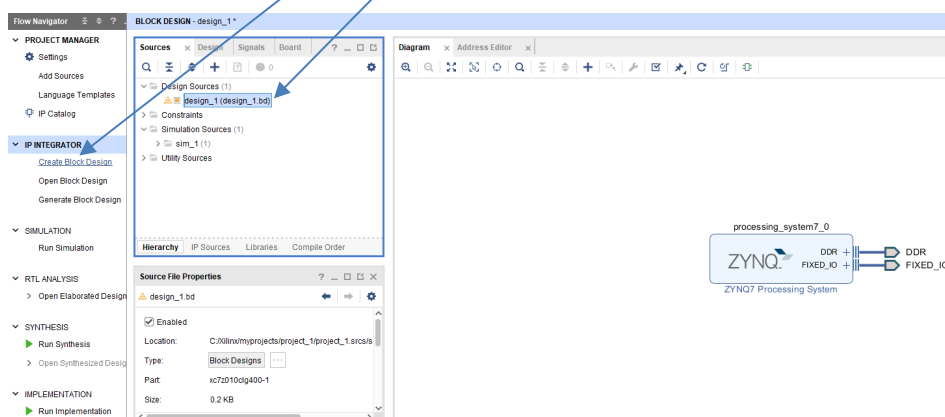


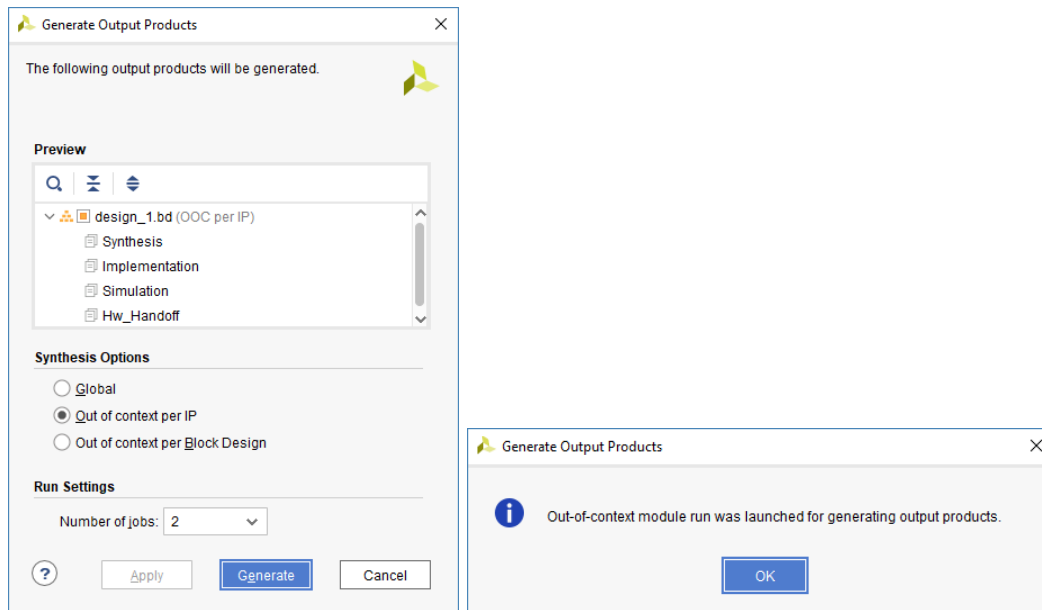
Generate Top-Level and Export to SDK

Step 3

3-1. Generate IP Integrator Outputs, the top-level HDL, and start SDK by exporting the hardware.

- 3-1-1. In the sources panel, right-click on *design_1.bd*, and select **Generate Output Products ...** and click **Generate** to generate the Implementation, Simulation and Synthesis files for the design (You can also click on **Generate Block Design** in the Flow Navigator pane to do the same)





Click “OK”.

- 3-1-2.** Right-click again on *design_1.bd*, and select **Create HDL Wrapper...** to generate the top-level VHDL model. Leave the *Let Vivado manager wrapper and auto-update* option selected, and click **OK**

The *design_1_wrapper.v* file will be created and added to the project. Double-click on the file to see the content in the Auxiliary pane.

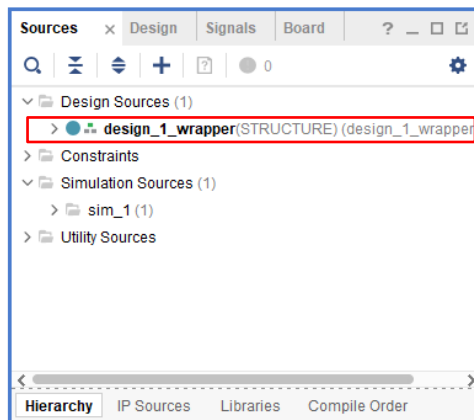


Figure 15. The HDL Wrapper file generated and added to the project

- 3-1-3.** Notice that the Verilog file is already *Set As the Top* module in the design, indicated by the icon

- 3-1-4.** Select **File > Export > Export hardware** and click **OK**. (Save the project if prompted)

Note: Since we do not have any hardware in Programmable Logic (PL) there is no bitstream to generate, hence the *Include bitstream* option is not necessary at this time.

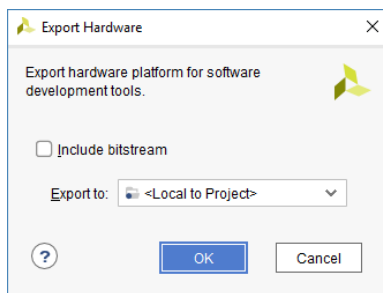


Figure 16. Exporting hardware

3-1-5. Select **File > Launch SDK** leaving the default settings, and click **OK**

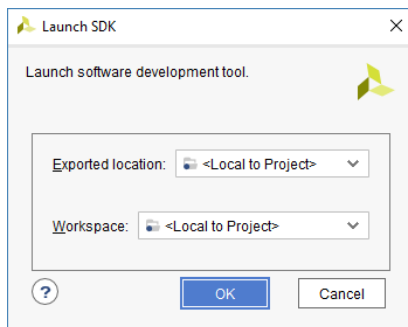


Figure 17. Launch SDK

SDK should now be open. If only the Welcome panel is visible, close or minimize this panel to view the *Project Explorer* and *Preview* panel. A Hardware platform project should have been automatically created, and the *design_1_wrapper_hw_platform_0* folder should exist in the Project Explorer panel.

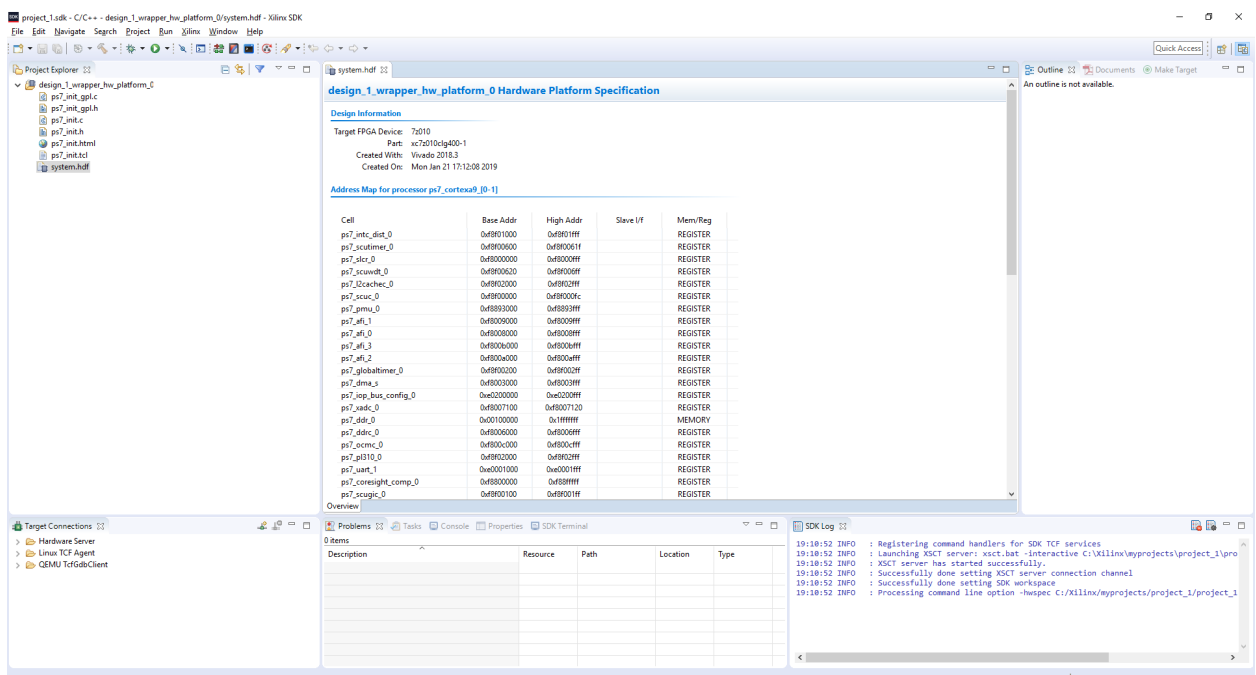


Figure 18. SDK C/C++ development view

The system.hdf file (Hardware Description File) for the Hardware platform should open in the preview pane. Double click system.hdf to open it if it is not.

Basic information about the hardware configuration of the project can be found in the .hdf file, along with the Address maps for the PS systems, and driver information. The .hdf file is used in the software environment to determine the peripherals available in the system, and their location in the address map.

Generate Memory TestApp in SDK

Step 4

4-1. Generate memory test application using one of the standard projects template.

4-1-1. In SDK, select **File > New > Application Project**

4-1-2. Name the project **mem_test**, and in the *Board Support Package* section, leave *Create New* selected and leave the default name *mem_test_bsp* and click **Next**. (Note that this application will run on ps7_cortexa9_0 i.e. core 0 of the two processor cores available.)

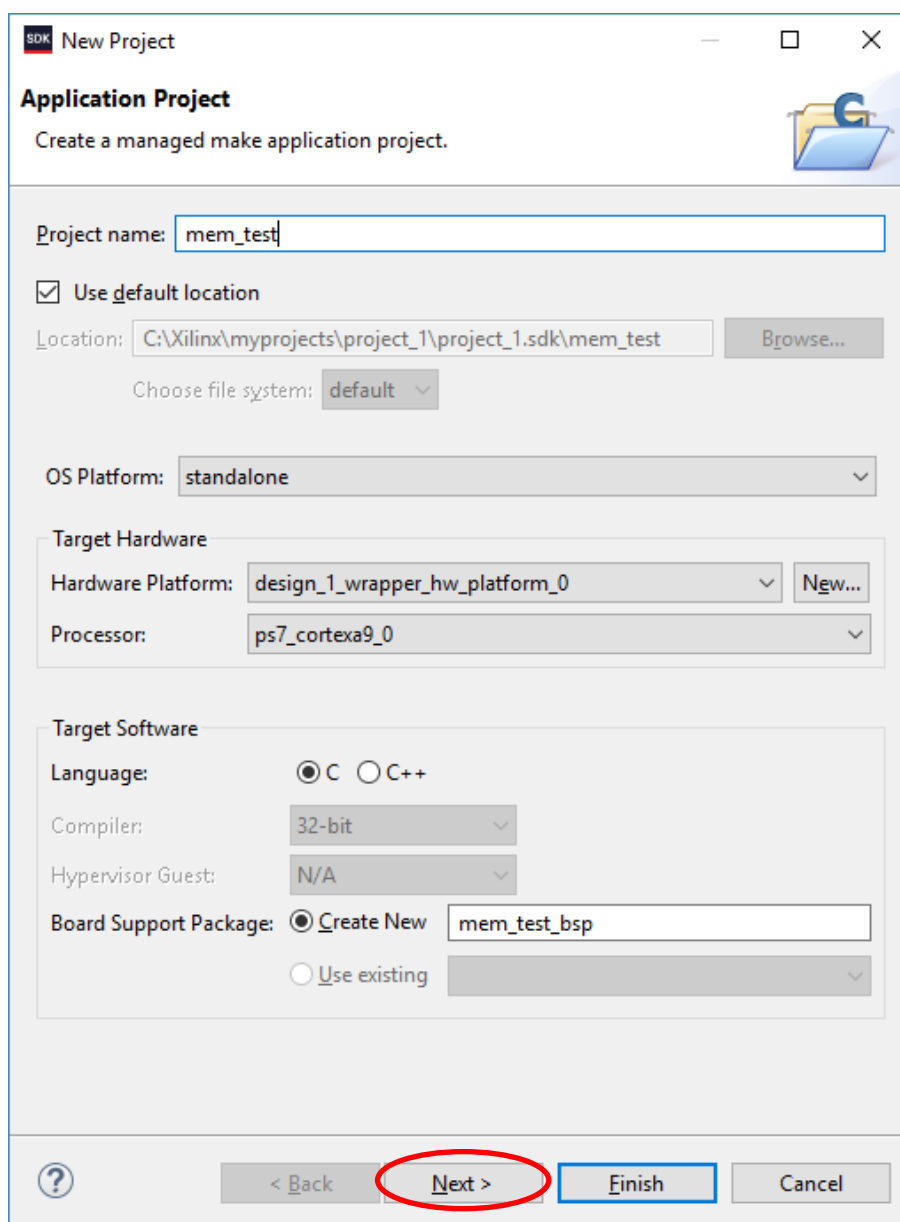


Figure 19. Create new SDK application project

4-1-3. Select **Memory Tests** from the *Available Templates* window, and click **Finish**.

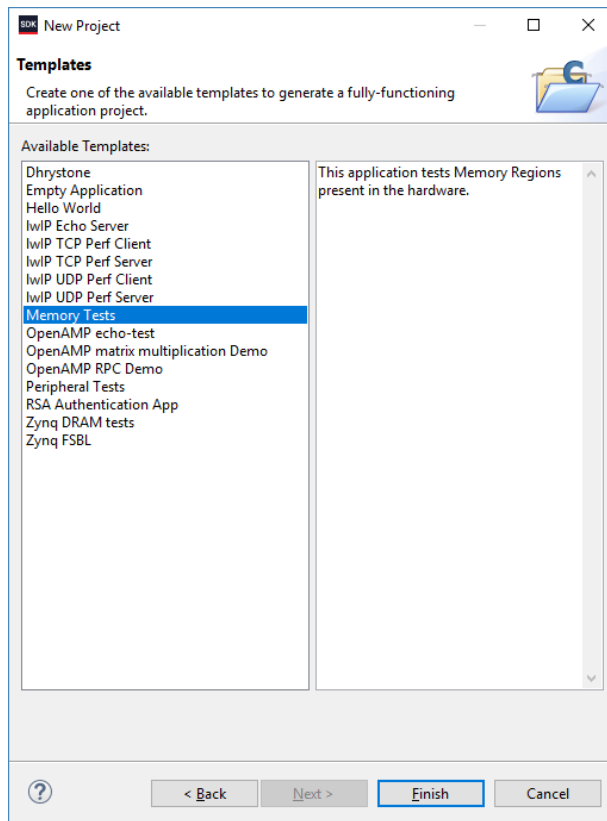


Figure 20. Creating Memory Tests C Project

The **mem_test** project and the board support project **mem_test_bsp** will be created and will be visible in the Project Explorer window of SDK, and the two projects will be automatically built. You can monitor the progress in the Console panel.

- 4-1-4.** Expand folders in the Project Explorer view, and observe that there are three projects – *design_1_wrapper_hw_platform_0*, *mem_test_bsp*, and *mem_test*. The *mem_test* project is the application that we will use to verify the functionality of the design. The *hw_platform* includes the *ps7_init* function which initializes the PS as part of the first stage bootloader, and *mem_test_bsp* is the board support package.

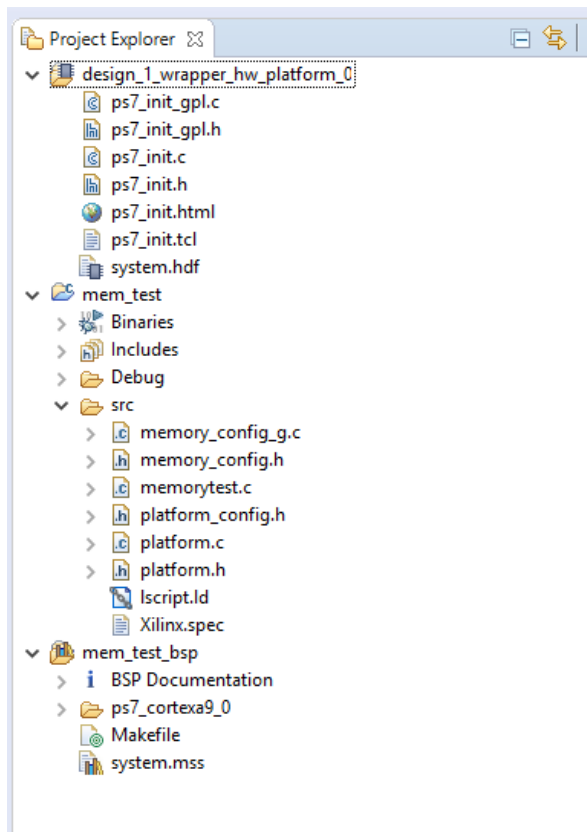


Figure 21. The Project Explore view

- 4-1-5.** Open the **memorytest.c** file in the **mem_test** project (under **src**), and examine the contents. This file calls the functions to test the memory.


Test in Hardware


Step 5

- 5-1. Zybo: Make sure that the JP7 is set to select USB power and JP5 is set to JTAG mode. Connect the board with a micro-usb cable and power it ON.**

Establish the serial communication using SDK's Terminal tab.

- 5-1-1.** Zybo: Make sure that the JP7 is set to select USB power, and JP5 is set to JTAG. Make sure that a micro-USB cable is connected to the JTAG PROG connector (next to the power supply connector). Turn ON the power.

- 5-1-2.** Select the  **SDK Terminal** tab. If it is not visible then select **Window > Show view > Terminal**.

- 5-1-3.** Click on  and if required, select appropriate COM port (depends on your computer), and configure it with the parameters as shown.

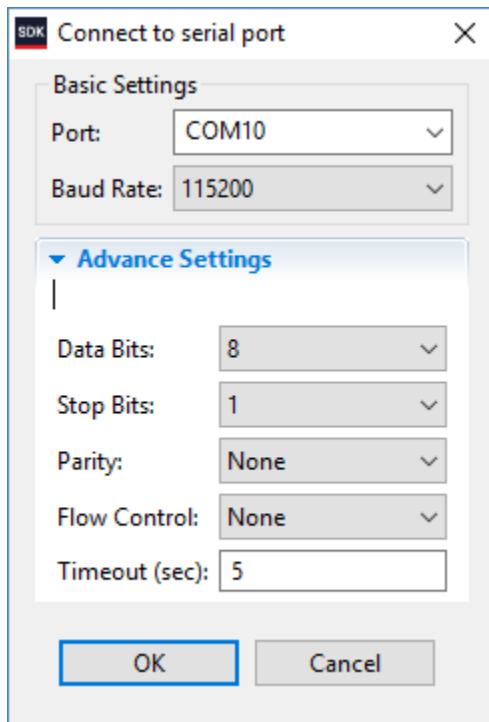


Figure 22. SDK Terminal Settings

You can find the COM port from the Windows Device Manager, in this case, COM10:

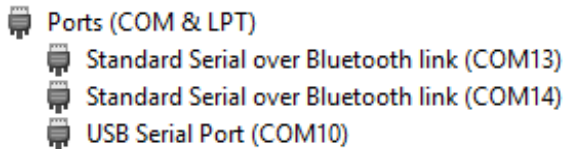


Figure 23. COM ports in Windows control panel

5-2. Run the mem_test application and verify the functionality.

- 5-2-1.** In SDK, select the **mem_test** project in *Project Explorer*, right-click and select **Run As > Launch on Hardware (GDB)** to download the application, and will execute ps7_init, and then execute mem_test.elf (user application).

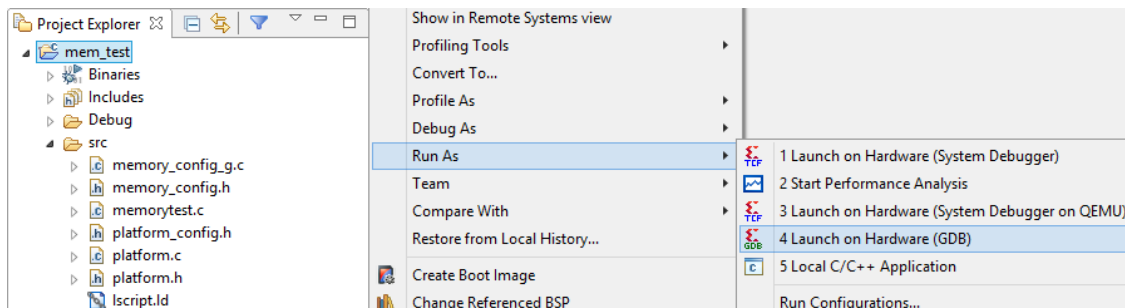


Figure 24. Launch Application

- 5-2-2.** You should see the following output on the *Terminal* tab.

```

NOTE: This application runs with D-Cache disabled.As a result, cacheline request
s will not be generated
Testing memory region: ps7_ddr_0
  Memory Controller: ps7_ddr
    Base Address: 0x00100000
      Size: 0x1ff00000 bytes
        32-bit test: PASSED!
        16-bit test: PASSED!
        8-bit test: PASSED!
Testing memory region: ps7_ram_1
  Memory Controller: ps7_ram
    Base Address: 0xffff0000
      Size: 0x0000fe00 bytes
        32-bit test: PASSED!
        16-bit test: PASSED!
        8-bit test: PASSED!
--Memory Test Application Complete--

```

Figure 25. SDK Terminal Output

5-2-3. Close SDK and Vivado by selecting **File > Exit** in each program.

Conclusion

Vivado and the IP Integrator allow base embedded processor systems and applications to be generated very quickly. After the system has been defined, the hardware can be exported and SDK can be invoked from Vivado. Software development is done in SDK which provides several application templates including memory tests. You verified the operation of the hardware by downloading a test application, executing on the processor, and observing the output in the serial terminal window.

Demonstrate the lab on your Zybo board to the instructor and submit your answers to the following questions to Beachboard. Submit it as a single file(word or pdf file) to Beachboard. Each team member is required to submit his/her own answers.

1. After which step we finished building the hardware platform for the embedded system?
2. Briefly describe the major components in the hardware platform.
3. What is the top-level description file for hardware platform? Copy the contents in this file that support the answer you provide in the previous question.
4. What does a bit stream file do? Is there a bit stream file generated for the hardware platform we built in this lab?
5. What is the step that transitions our design from hardware platform to software platform? What are the tools used for hardware design and software design respectively? What information are passed from hardware design tool to software design tool?
6. How many projects are created for building the software platform? Briefly describe the key design information provided in each one of them and the role each one of them play in the software platform.
7. What is a BSP? What information does it provide and what role does it play in building the software platform?
8. What is the top-level description file for software platform? Briefly describe the key information in this file and support your answer by copying the related contents in this file.
9. What is an .elf file? Is there an .elf file generated in this lab?
10. Please provide a screenshot of your embedded system output and block diagram of your hardware platform.