
BIRT LIBRARY UI SPECIFICATION

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Draft 4

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1. Introduction

A library is a collection of ReportElements that can be re-used in multiple report designs. The elements include visual and non-visual components. When a report is created the library can be included and its components can be used in the report. The library file is represented by .rptlibrary extension.

Library support will be provided for the following ReportElements:

- All the visual Report Items like Label, Text, Table, Grid etc.
- DataSources
- DataSets
- Embedded Images.
- Master page
- Styles
- Parameters

Please refer to BPS10_BirtLibraryFeature_SPEC.doc for more details on the library feature. This document describes the BIRT Designer UI changes to support the library feature.

2. Library Management Operations

A library developer creates a library and places it in a shared location to be reused by other report developers.

Note: There is no separate perspective for a library file. The library file can be modified in the report design perspective. As a result all the default views are same for library and report design file.

2.1 New library

The File->New menu item will support a new option to create a library file

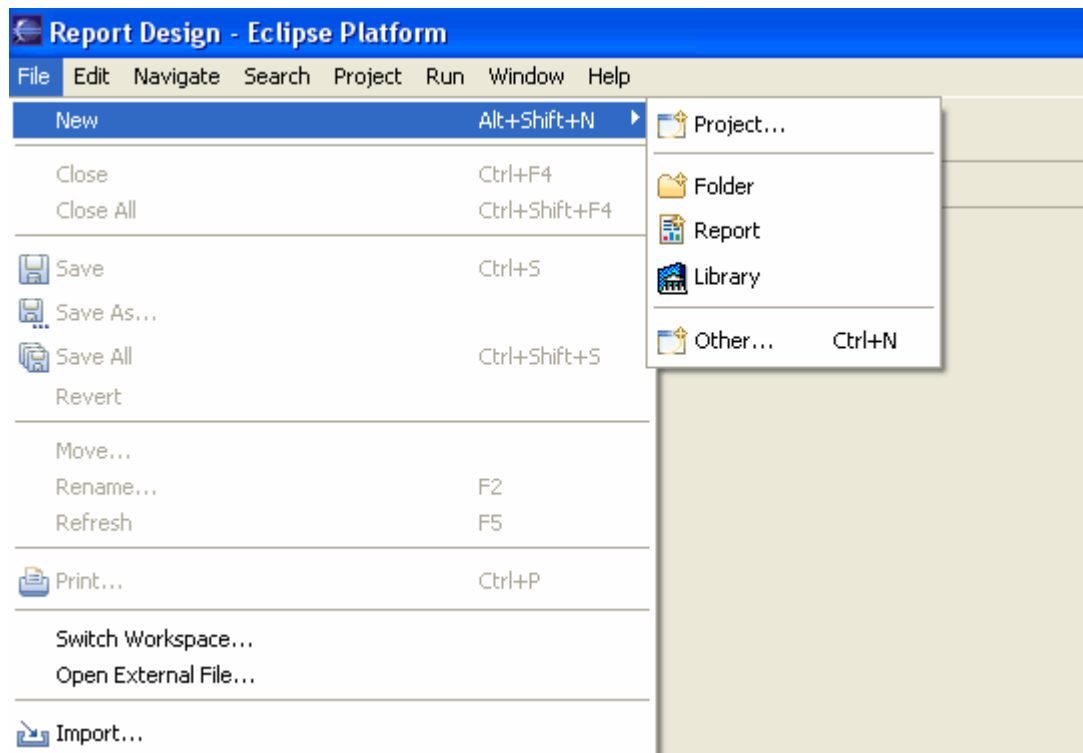


Figure 1

When the library file is empty the editor shows the following message -

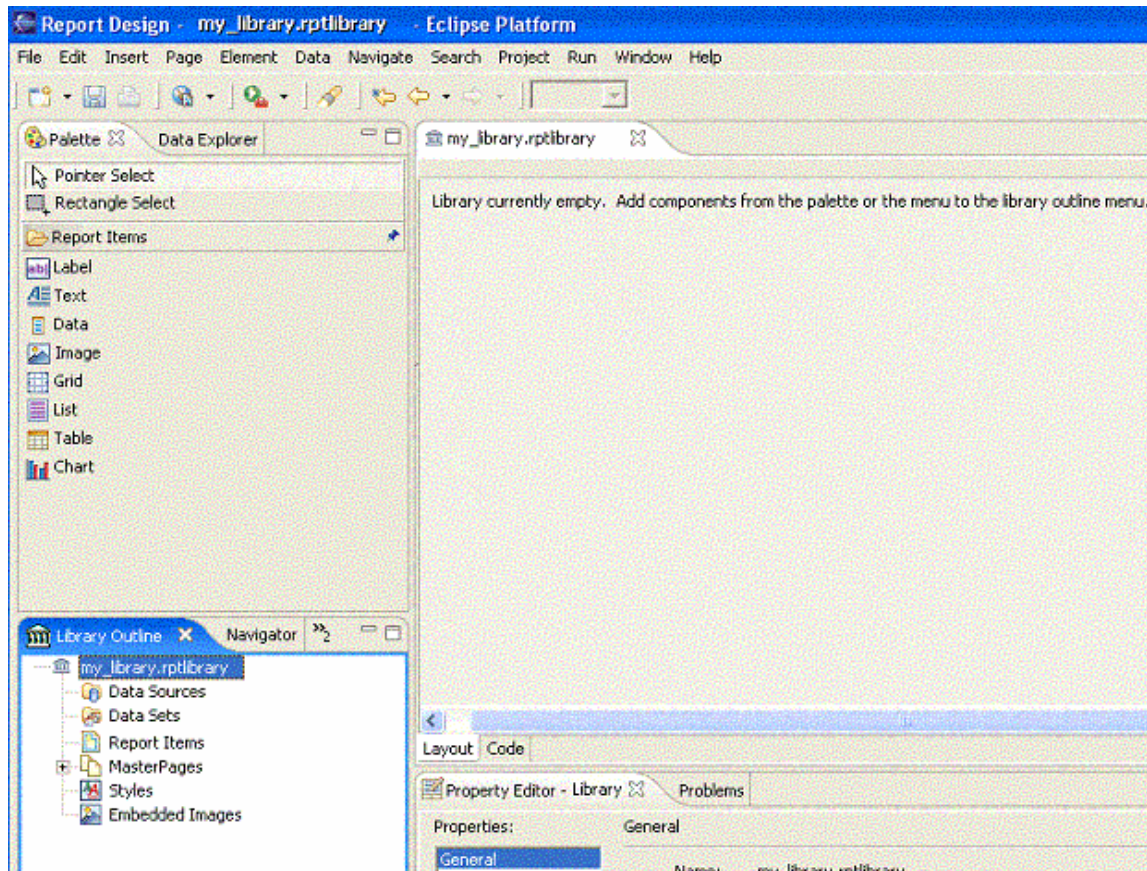


Figure 2

2.2 Library Outline View

User can browse different components in the library by using the library outline. This view will allow the library developer to view all the elements already defined in the library file.

The following operation are supported:

- Add new report items to the library by dragging visual items from the palette to the outline view
- Selecting a visual Report item in the outline will show the item in the layout editor
- Selecting a non visual Report Element in the outline will show the following message in the editor “Non visual element selected”
- Also selecting an item in the outline view will show the report element properties in the property editor.
- The outline view contains 6 categories – DataSources, DataSets, ReportItems, Styles, MasterPages, EmbeddedImages.

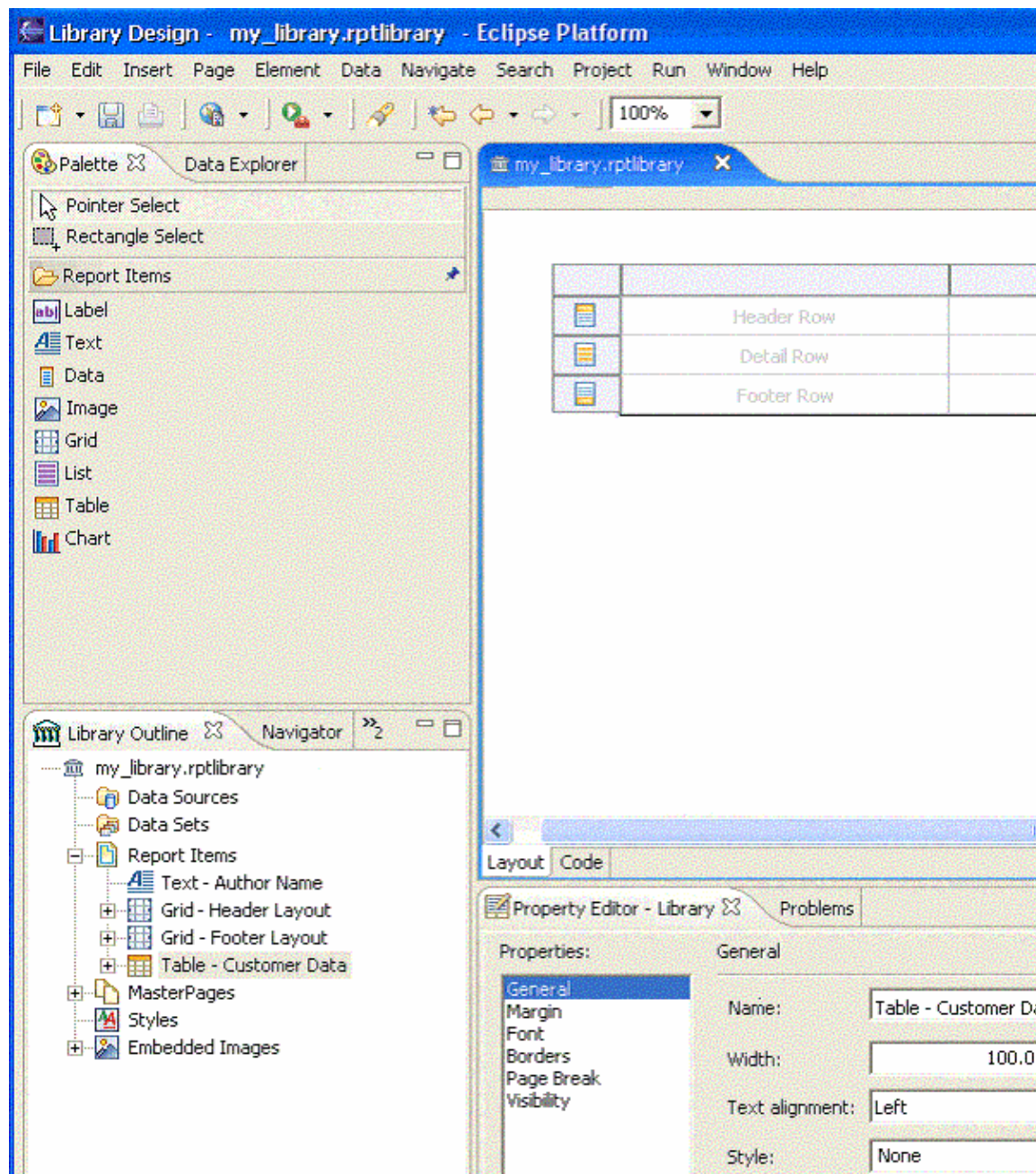


Figure 3

2.2.1 Add Report Elements to a library.

2.2.1.1 Add Report Items to a library

Report Items can be added to a library by dragging and dropping report items from the palette to the outline view

Drag the Report Item from the palette

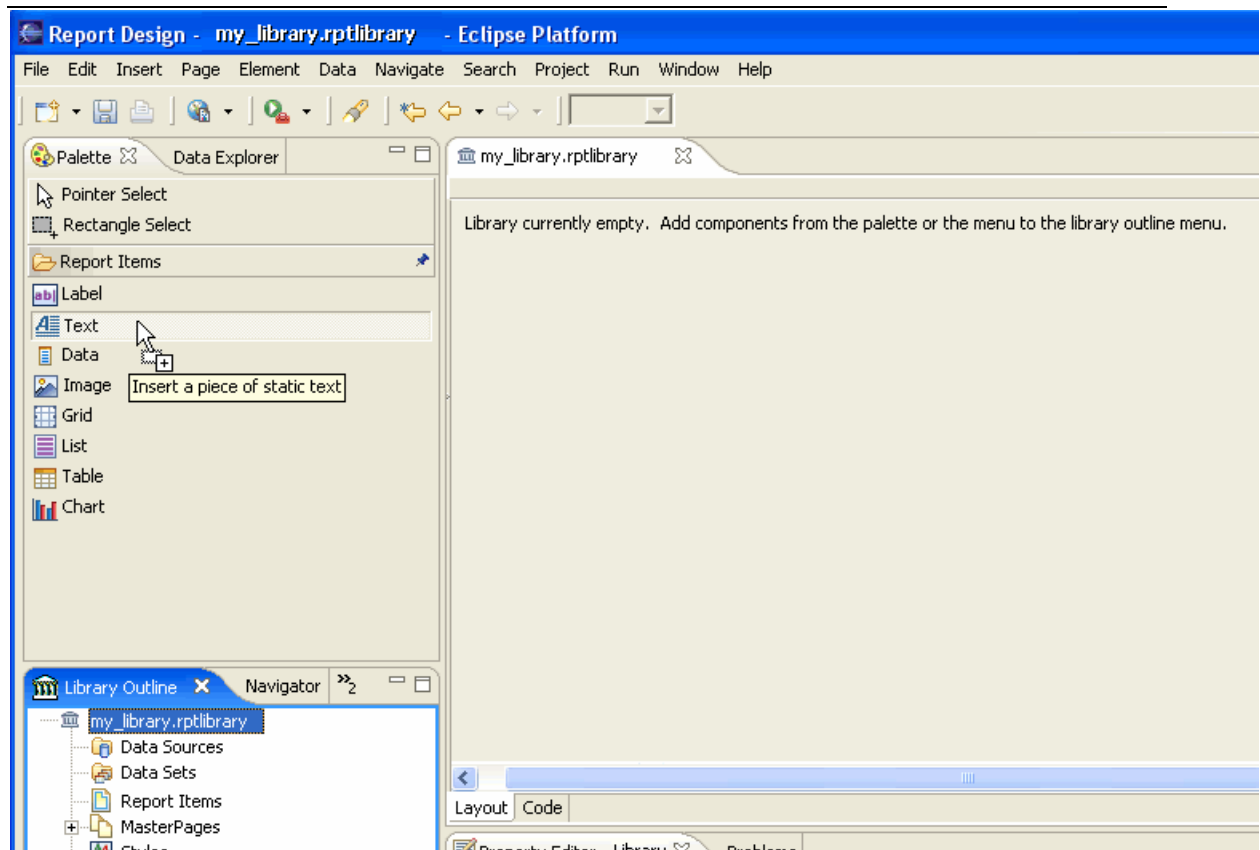


Figure 4

Drop the report item in the Outline view.

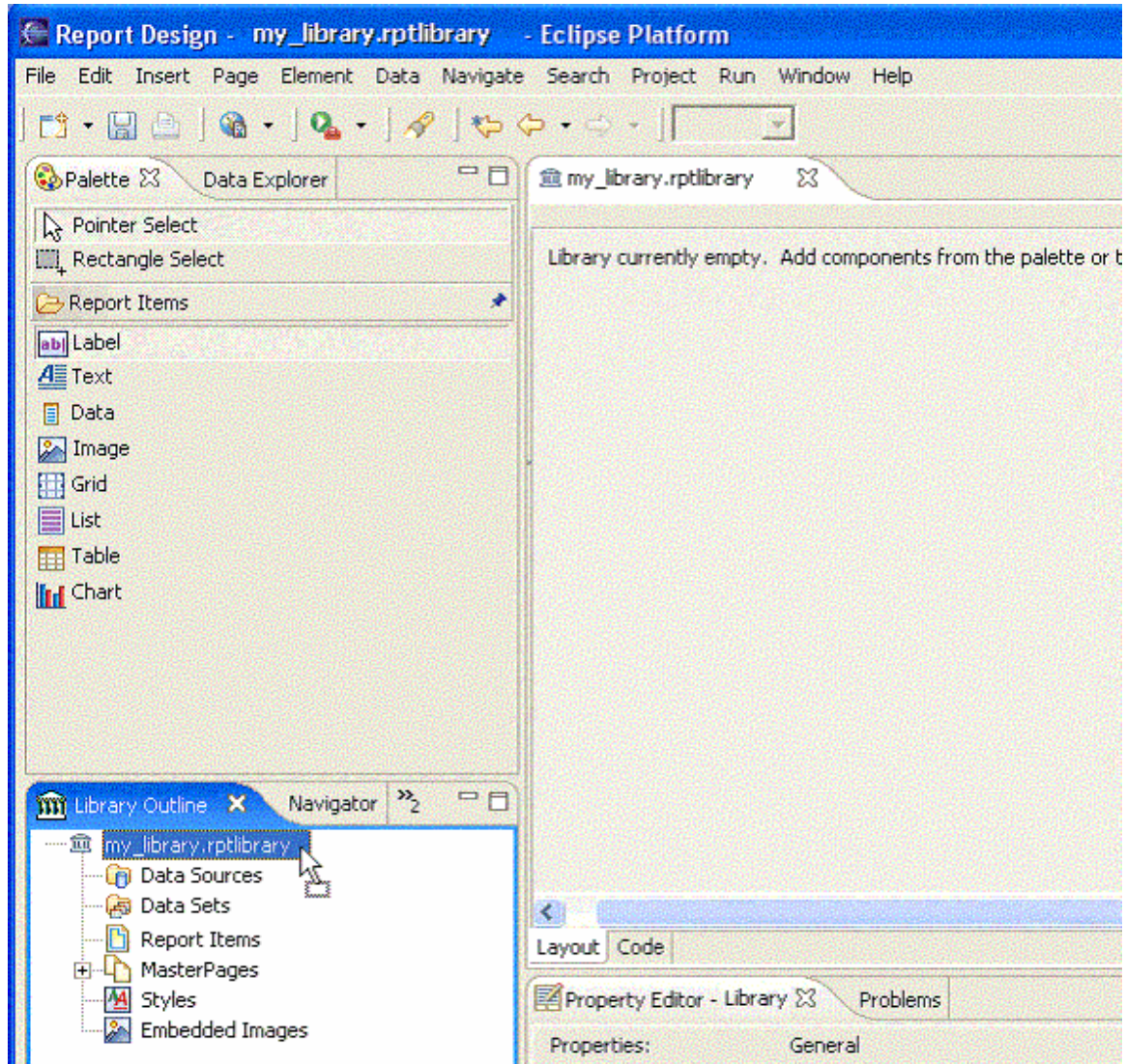


Figure 5

The Report Item shows up in the outline and the editor layout.

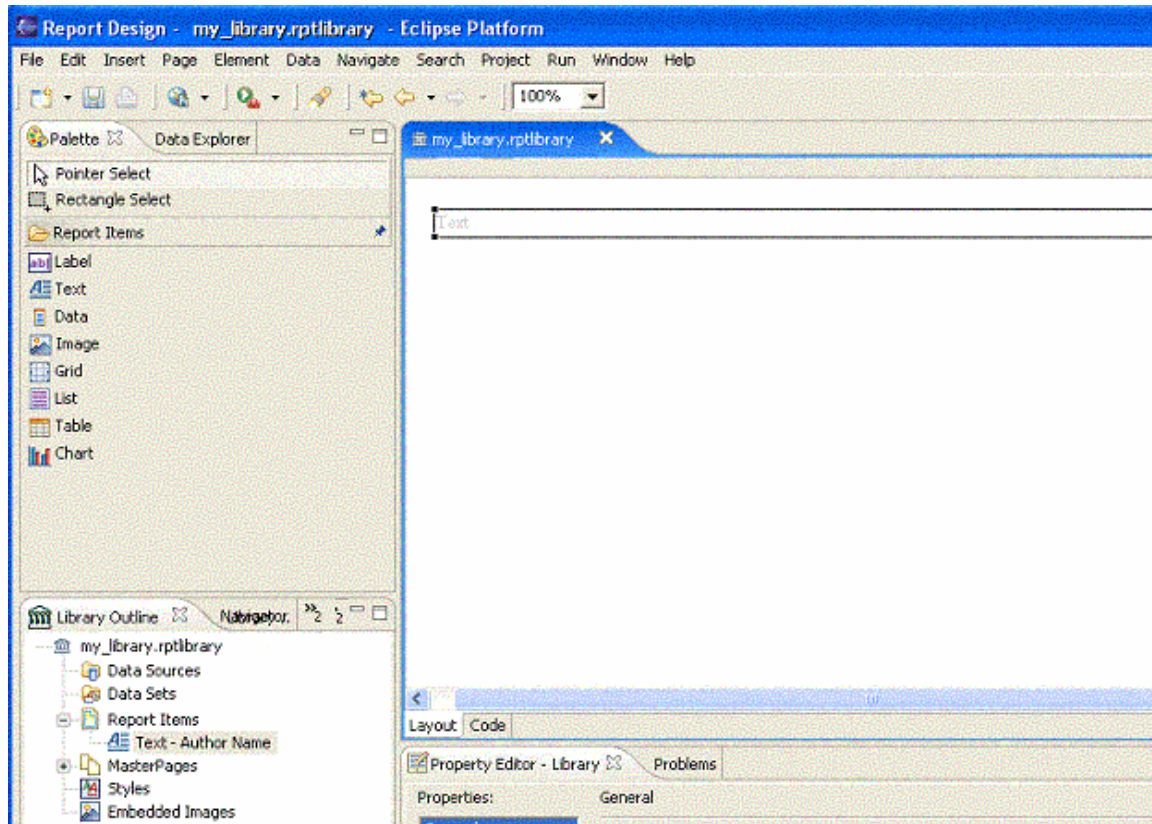


Figure 6

2.2.1.2 Add Report Elements from the Library Outline view.

Visual and Non-Visual ReportElements can be added to the library from the Outline view. The option to add a new ReportElement is provided by the right click menu options of the root library file node.

To add a new component to the library, the user will need to select what kind of item to add to the library and also the component name, which will identify components from one another

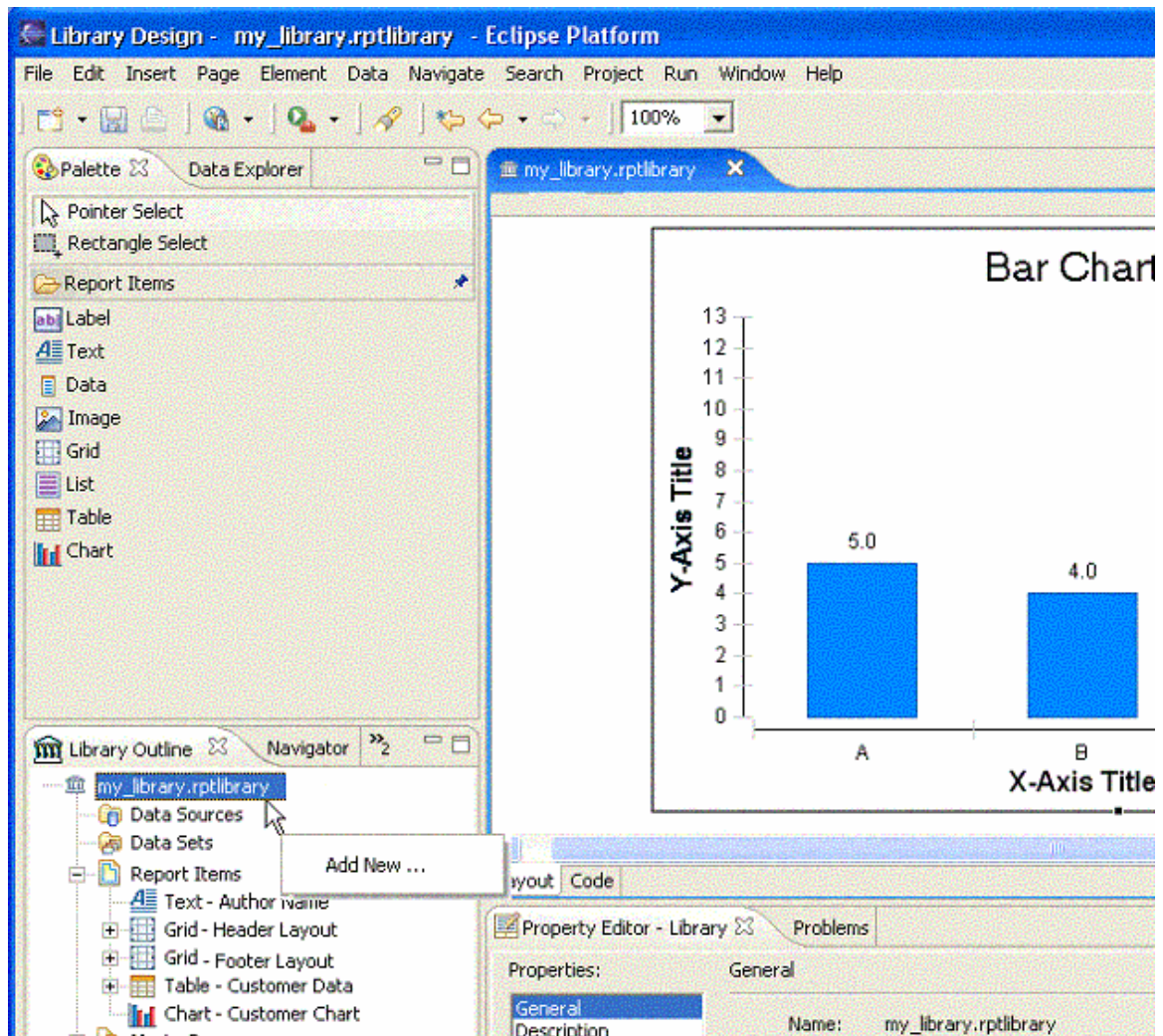


Figure 7

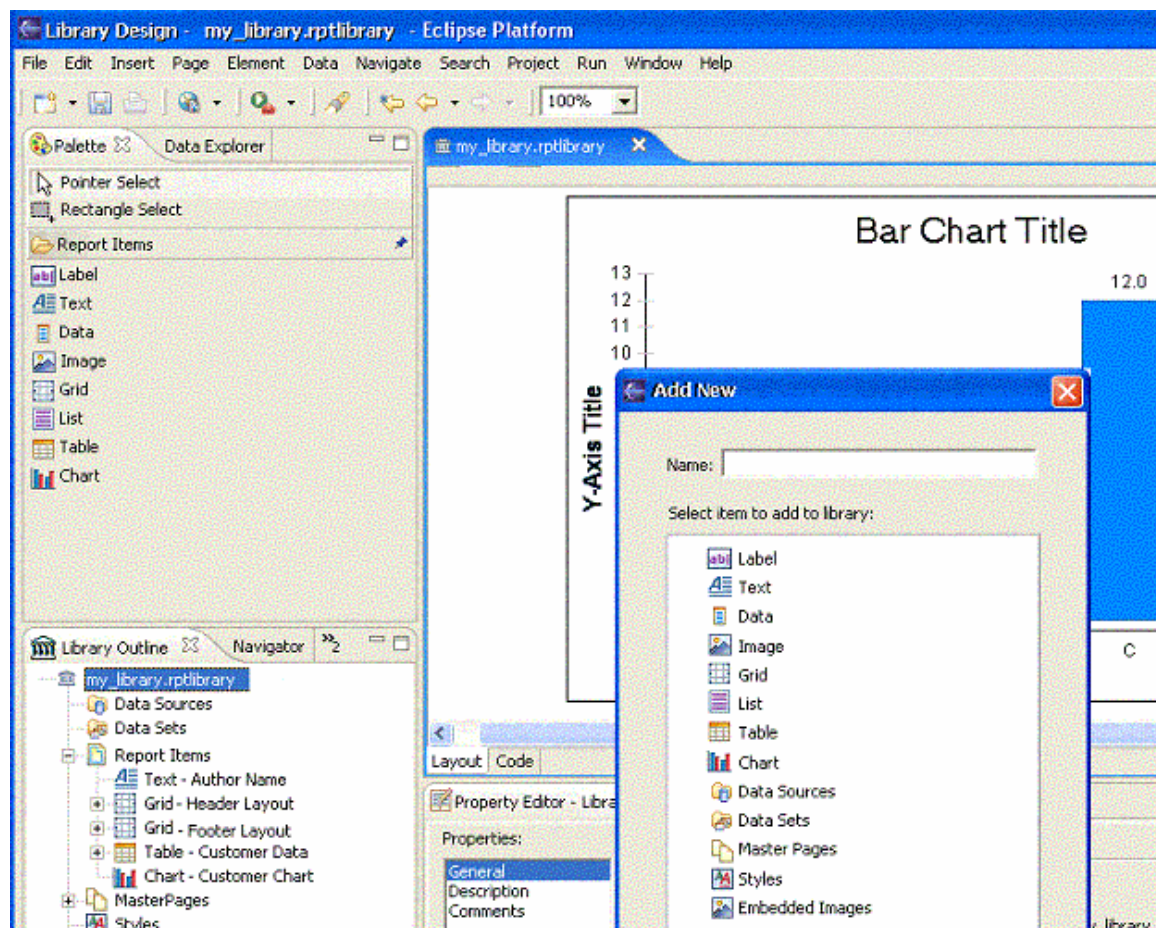


Figure 8

2.3 Library Editor layout view

The library editor layout view shows a single report item; it shows the report item selected in the outline view.

When a non-visual item (Data Sources, Data Sets, Master Pages, Styles) is selected from the library outline, a similar message will show telling the user that the item currently selected is non-visual.

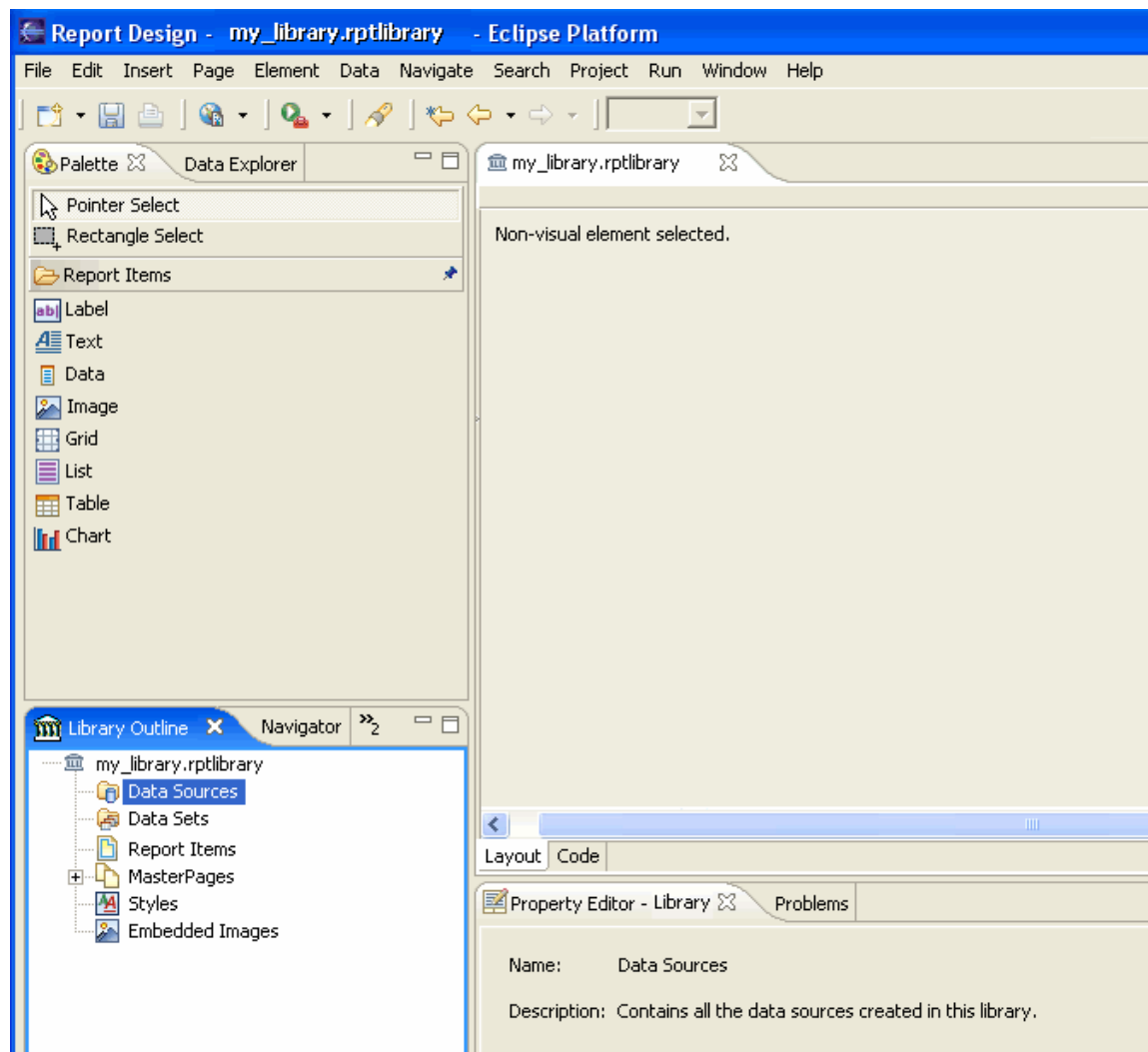


Figure 9

3. Library Explorer View

Library Explorer is a new view in the report design perspective. It allows report designer to browse the libraries and library components.

- For non RCP version the Library browser shows all the libraries in the current project and the external libraries explicitly added from the file system
- For RCP version the Library browser shows all the external libraries explicitly added from the file system
- Library browser allows user to browse the available components in a library file.
- User can add visual Report Items to a report design from a library by dragging the report item from Library browser into the report design.
- Library browser allows user to add/delete external library files.
- The external libraries added to a library browser are saved in eclipse preferences. The relative paths to the external library files are stored.

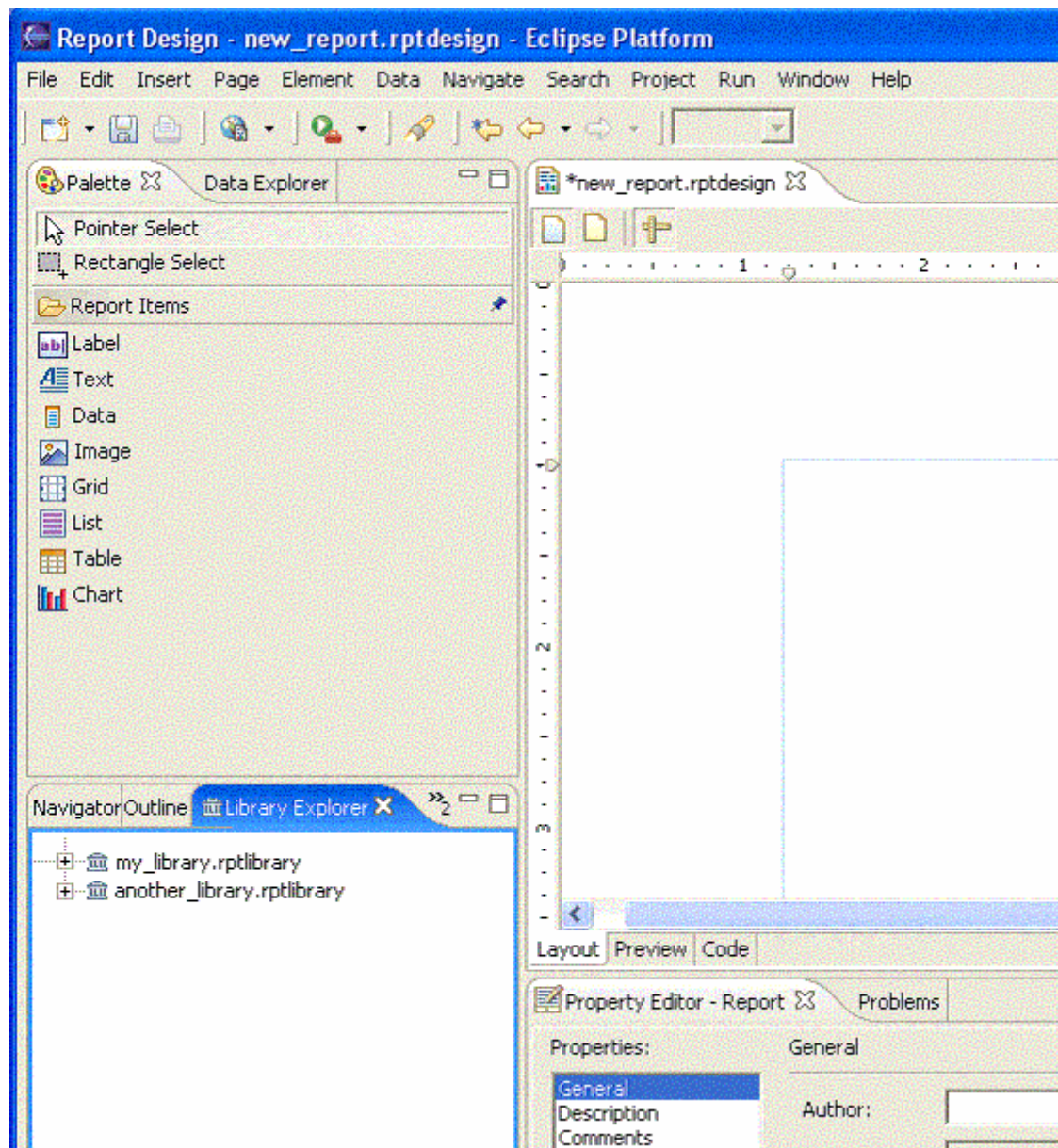


Figure 10

The following library operation are supported -

3.1 Add an external Library to the Library browser

- Right click and select the “Add” menu item.
- Browse the file system to select the library file

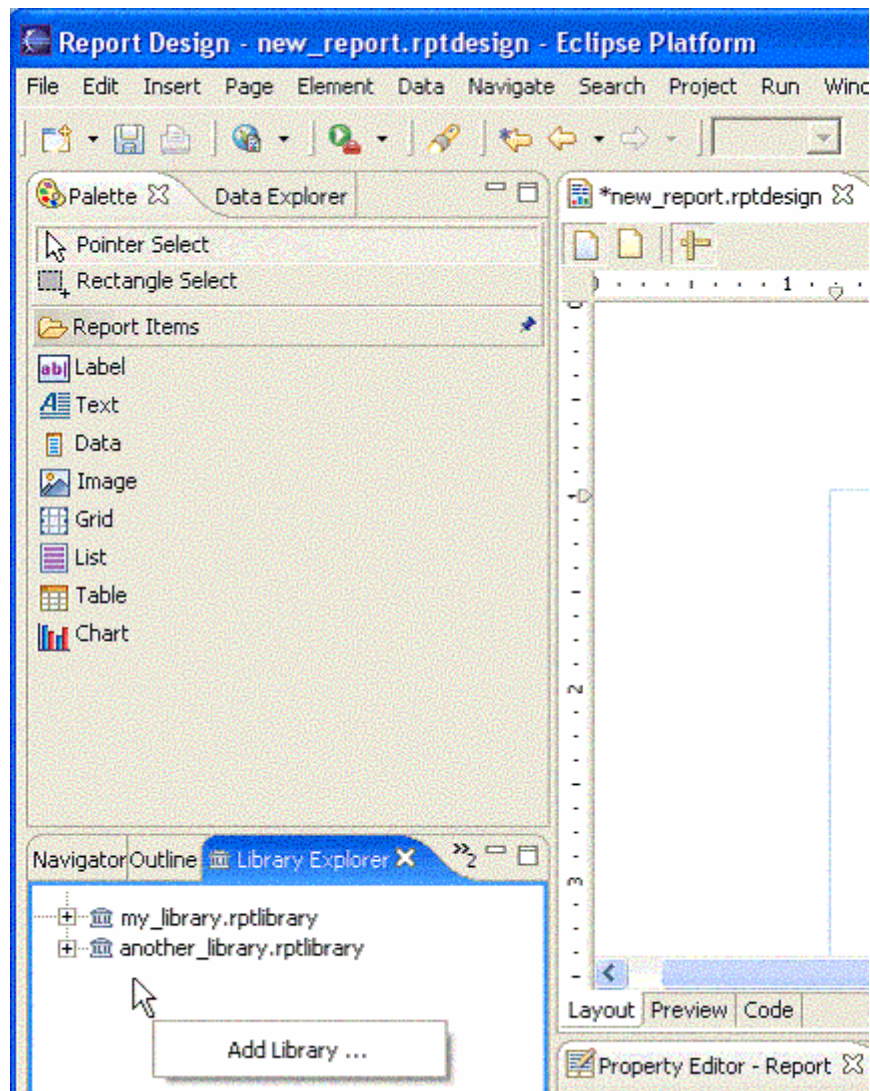


Figure 11

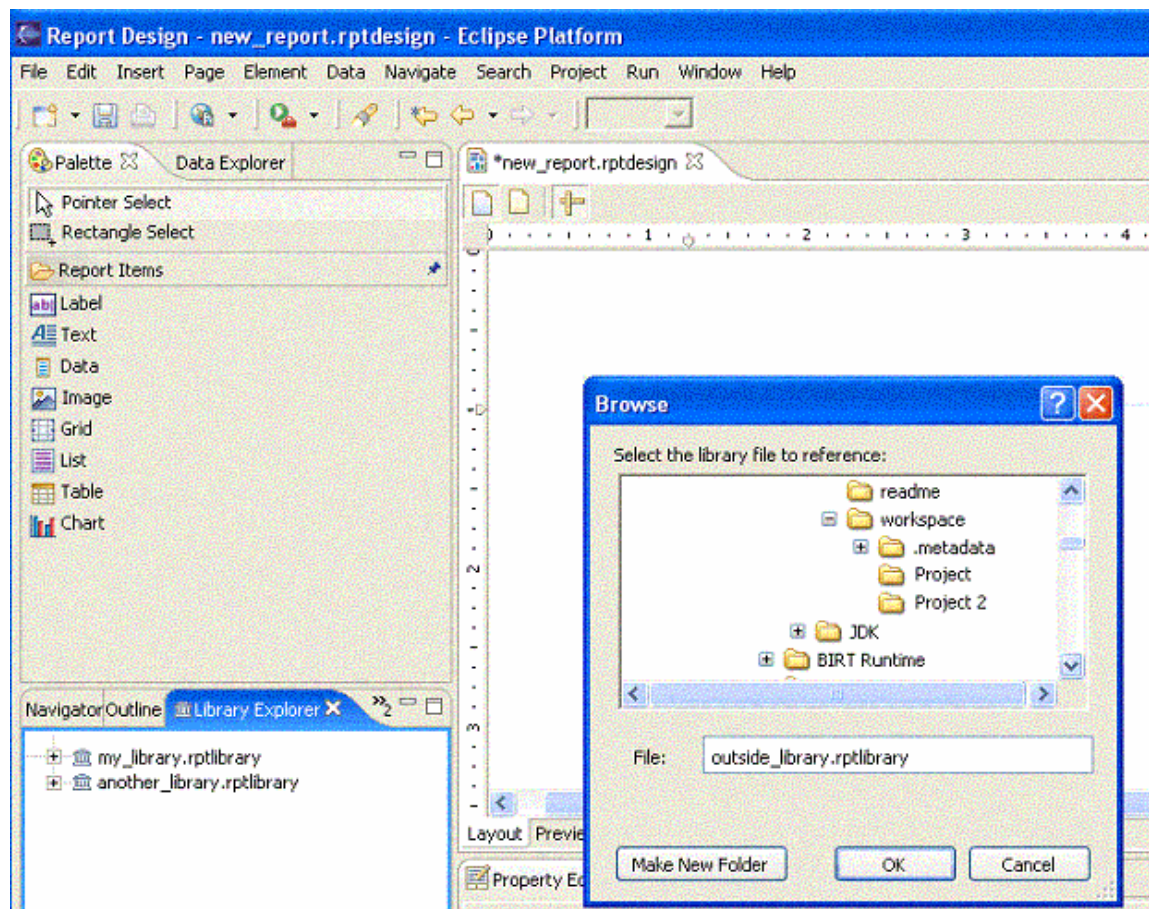


Figure 12

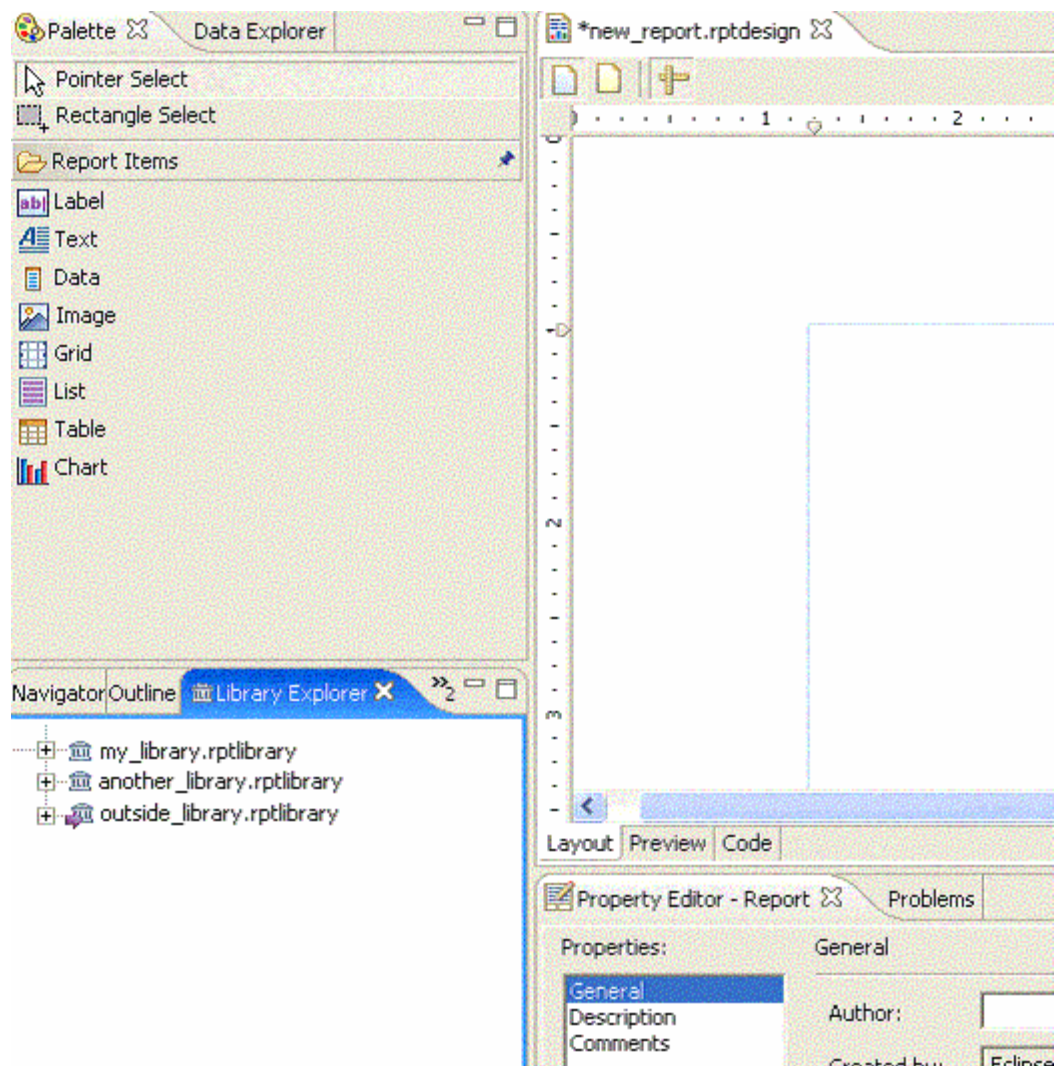


Figure 13

3.2 Delete a library file from Library explorer

To delete a library reference from the library browser use the delete menu item.

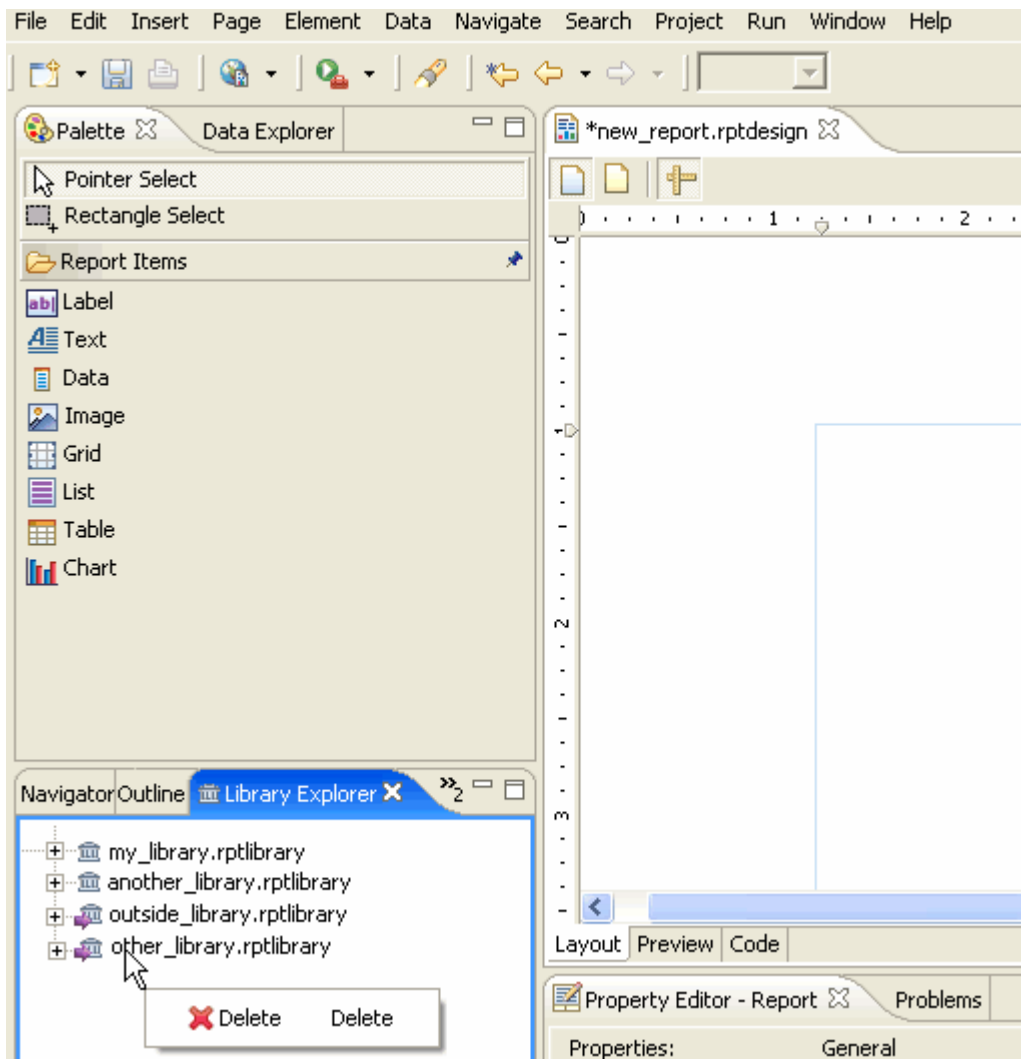


Figure 14

3.3 Browse library file

Expanding library file node allows user to view all the Report elements in the library file. The view is consistent to the outline view.

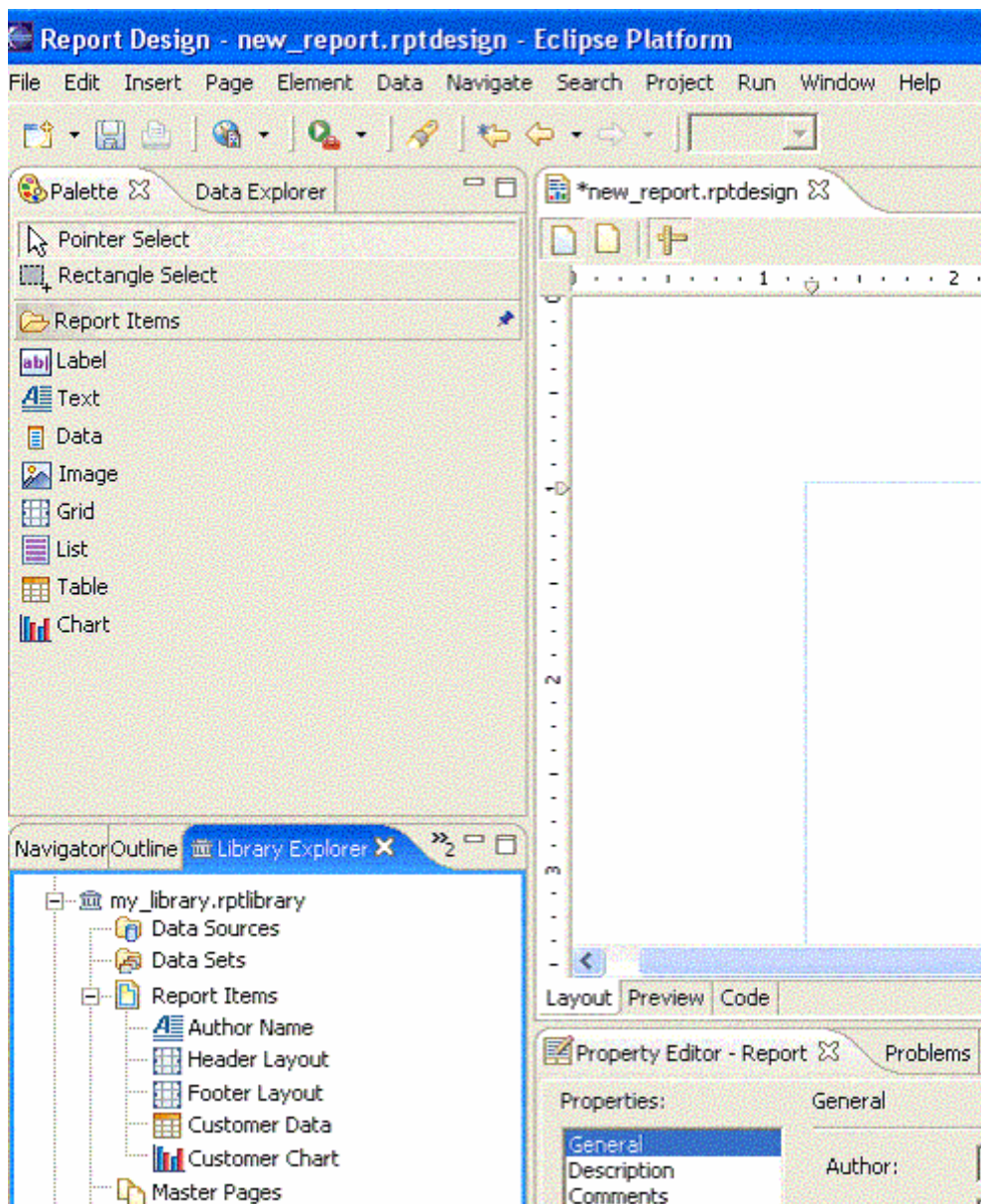


Figure 15

4. Using library items in a Report Design

A library could be used in multiple report designs. Following are the operations supported which are related to using library items in a report design.

4.1 Using a library ReportItem in a report design.

- A library ReportItem can be added to a report design, by dragging a visual Report Item from a Library Browser to the report design layout view.
- If the library file is not yet included in the report design, the user is prompted to choose if he wants to include the library. If the user chooses “yes” the library file is included and the report item is added to the report design file.

Drag a report item from the Library explorer to the report design layout.

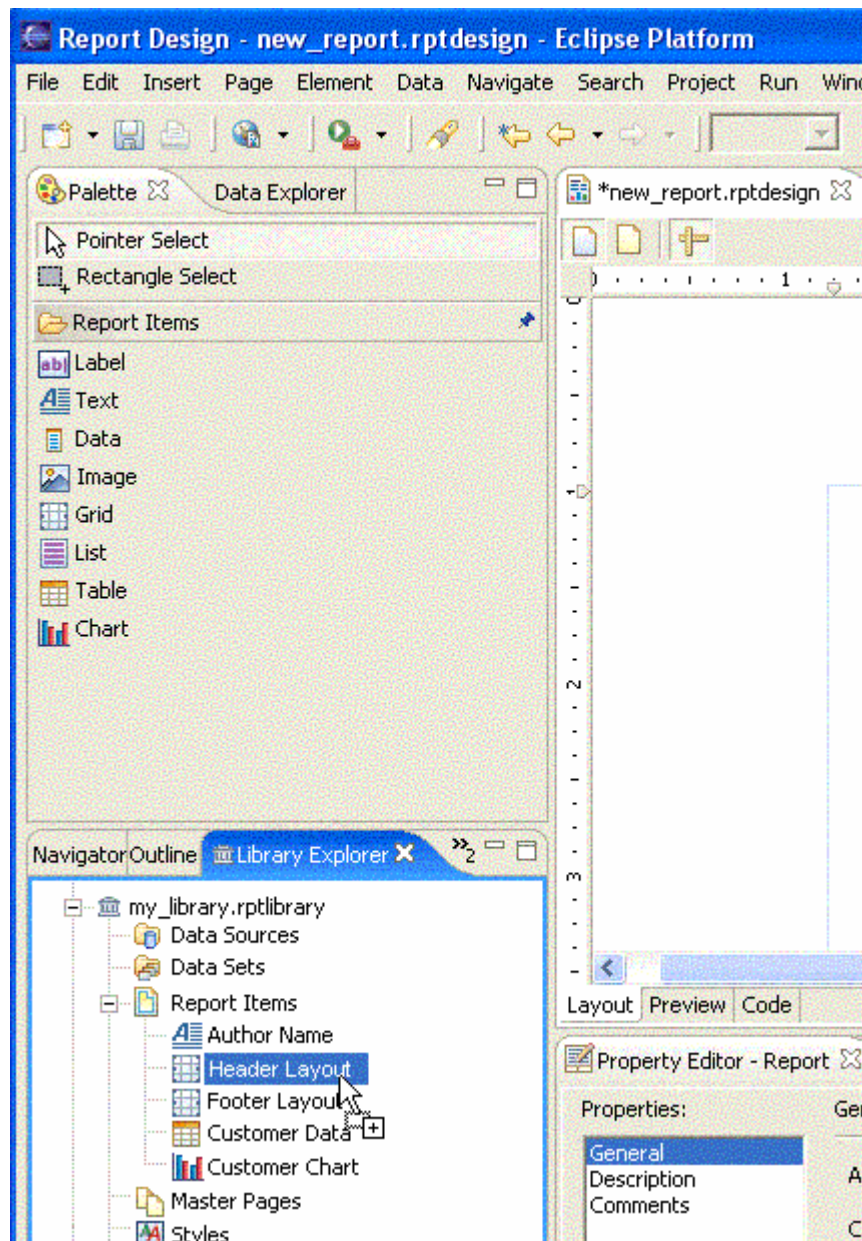


Figure 16

First time use of library element prompts the confirmation dialog. The user will need to enter a component prefix in this dialog. The prefix, or namespace, differentiates between components. It appears as a prefix to the component name everywhere the name appears. The user will also determine whether or not the setting of using the library upon dragging a component should be saved.

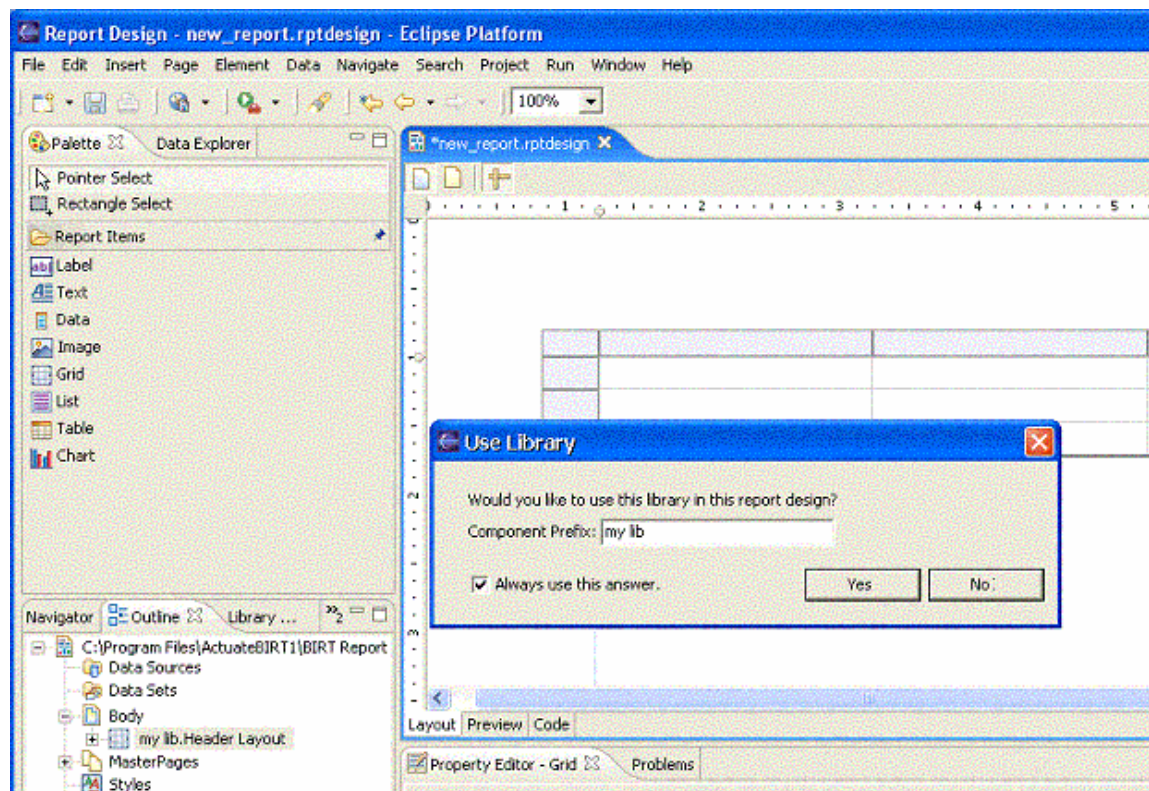


Figure 17

The report design outline view is updated, to show all the included libraries.

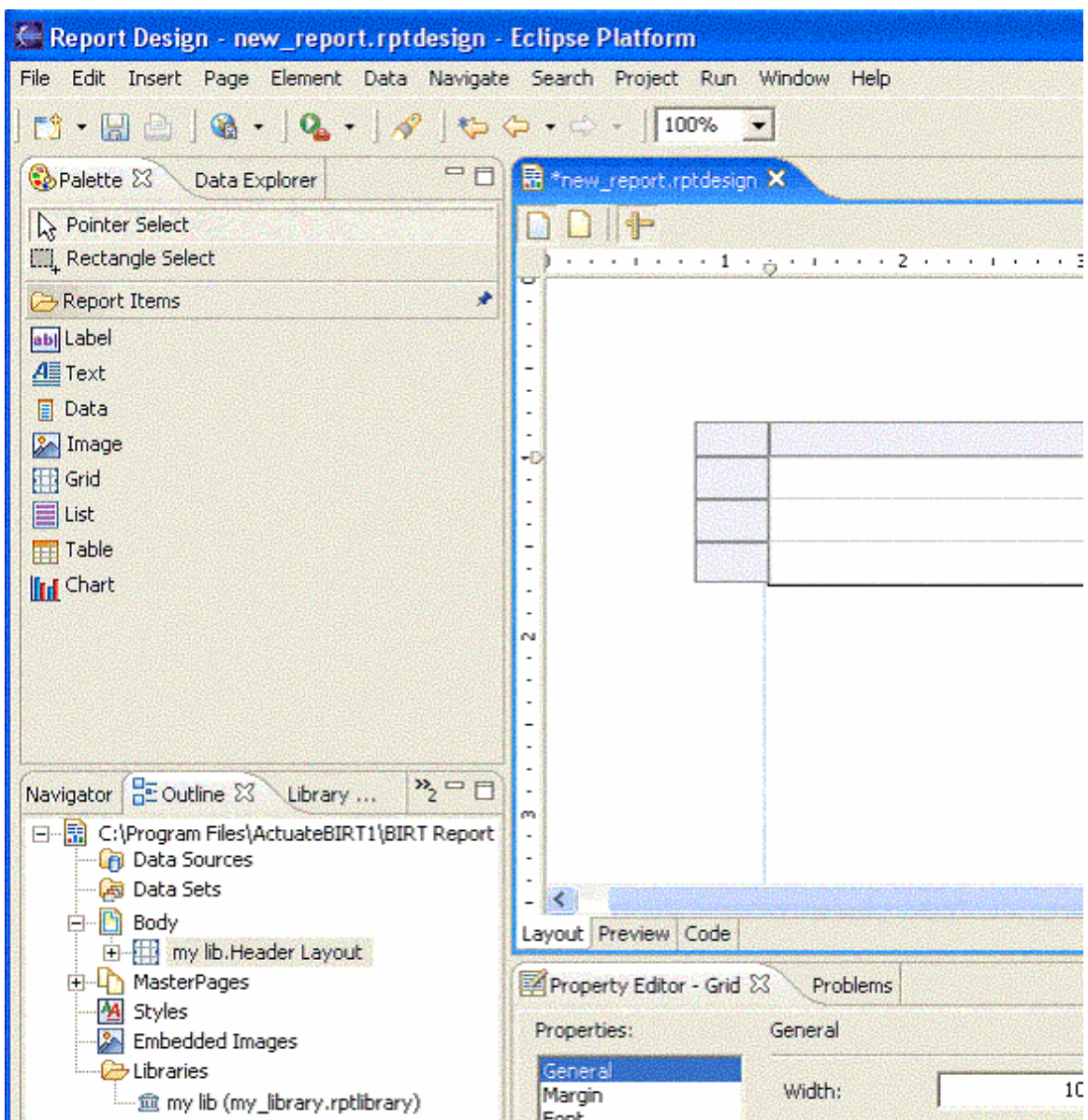


Figure 18

Selecting the included library file in the outline view shows the library properties in the property editor. The properties are not editable. The name, path, and prefix can be viewed, but not changed.

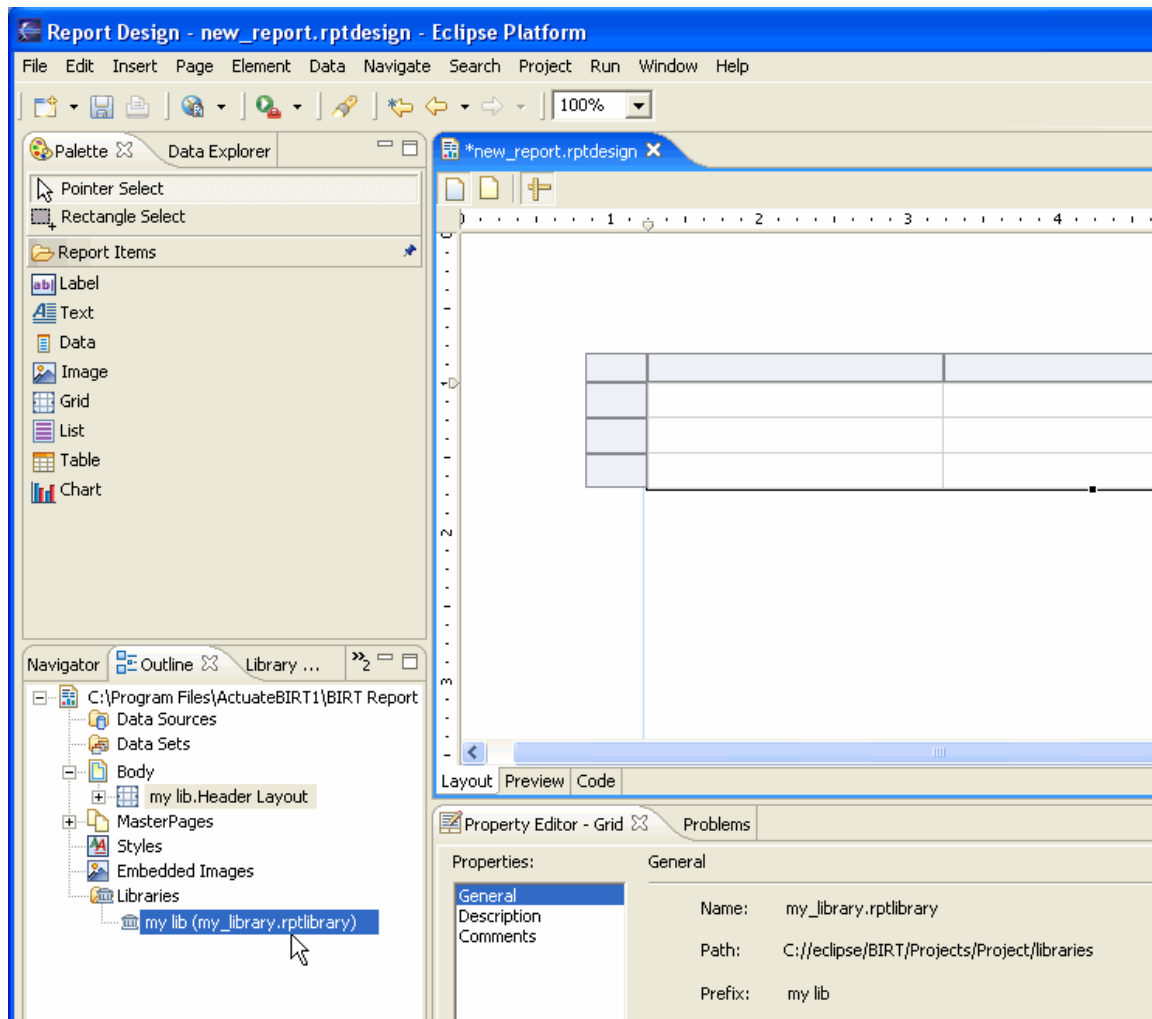


Figure 19

4.2 Explicitly add library to report design.

To add a library explicitly to a report design, the user can select the Use Library option from the Element menu.

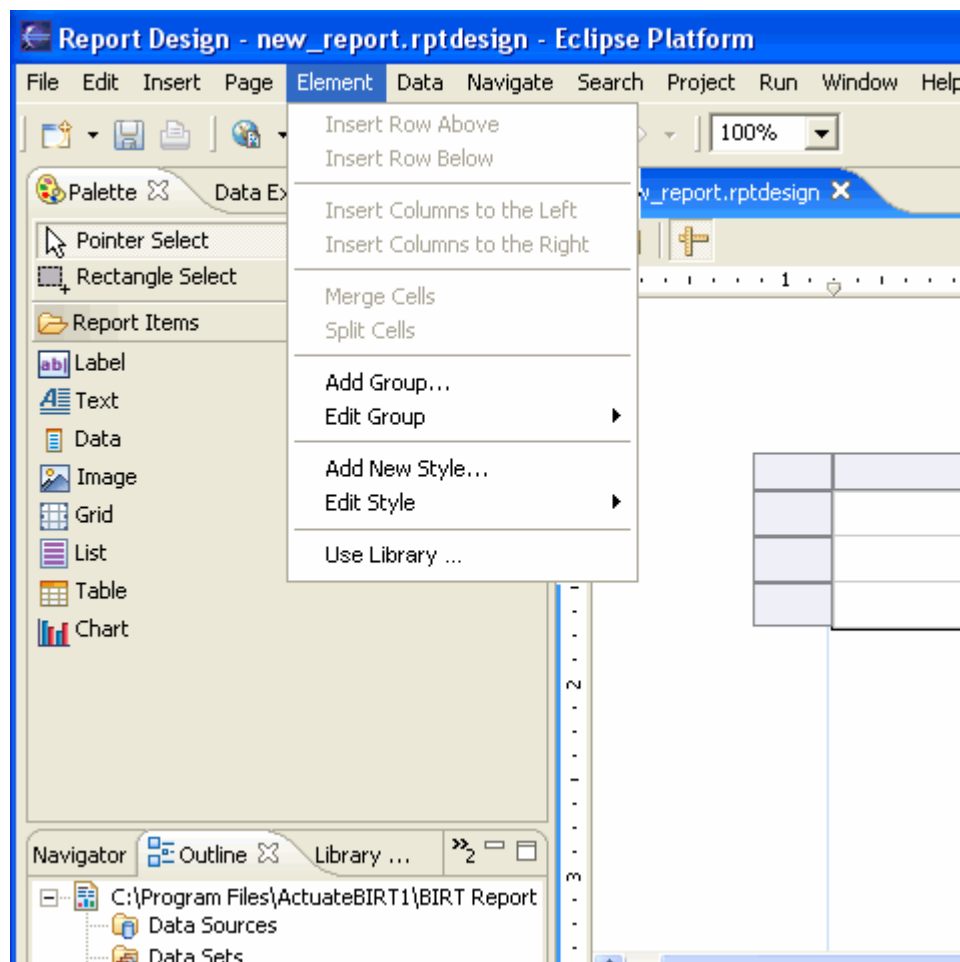


Figure 20

Then the user selects the library file to use and also a prefix.

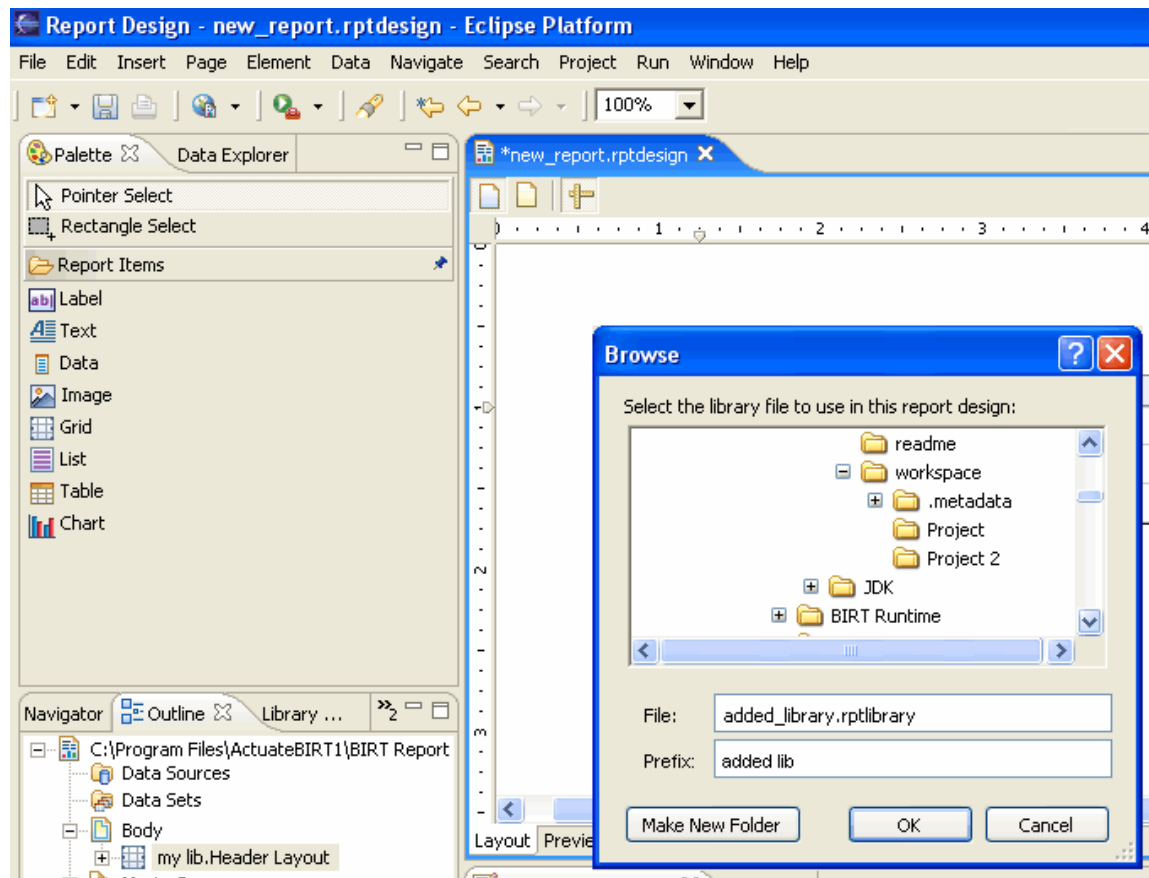


Figure 21

4.3 Remove library from a report design file.

If the report design references an element from the library, the unresolved references is flagged as error in the report design.

To remove the library from the report design, the user can right click on the library from the report outline view and select to delete the library.

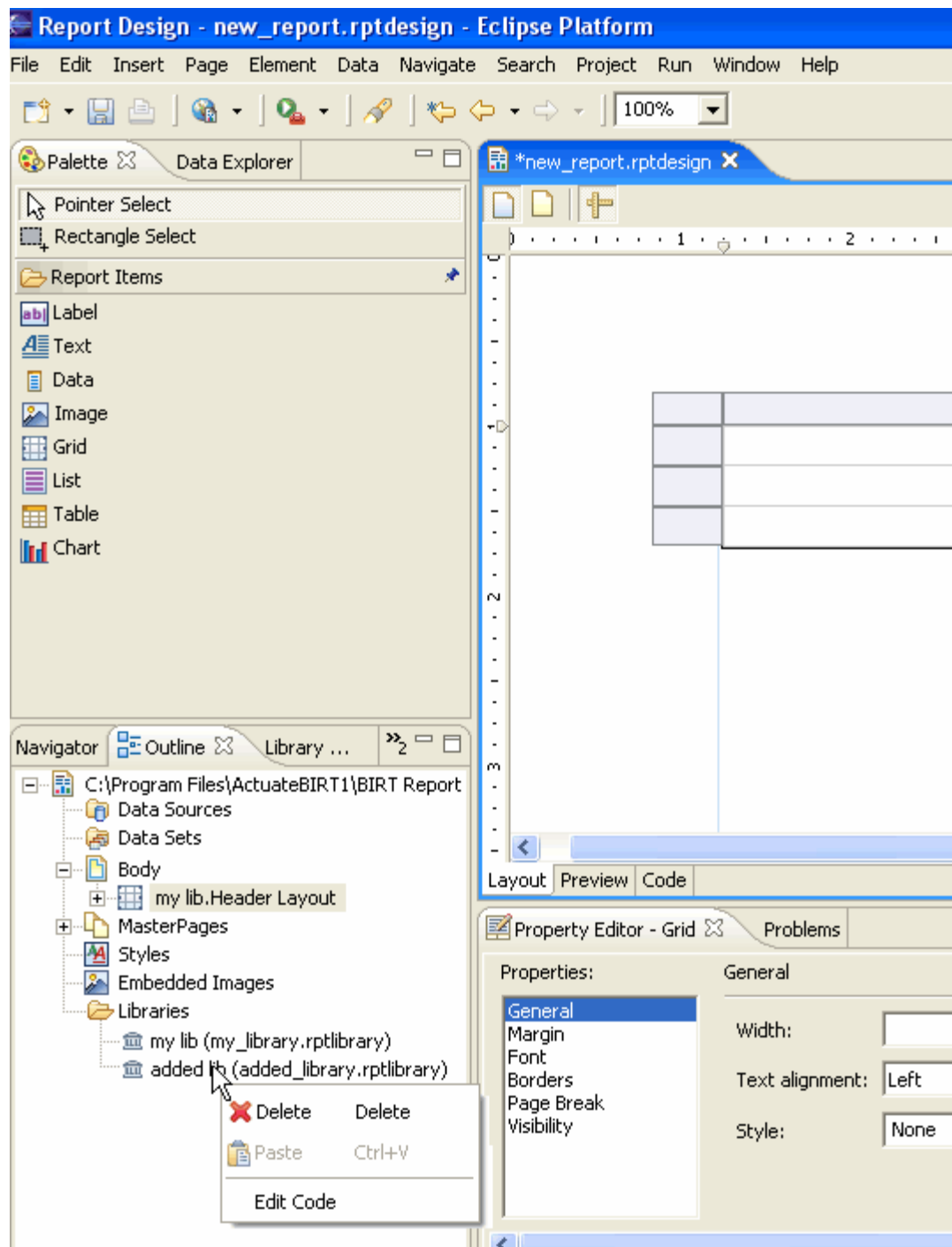


Figure 22

4.4 Using library non-visual report elements in a report design

4.4.1 Using datasource defined in a library

The dataset wizard shows all the datasources defined in the report design and in the included libraries. They are also shown in the data explorer view.

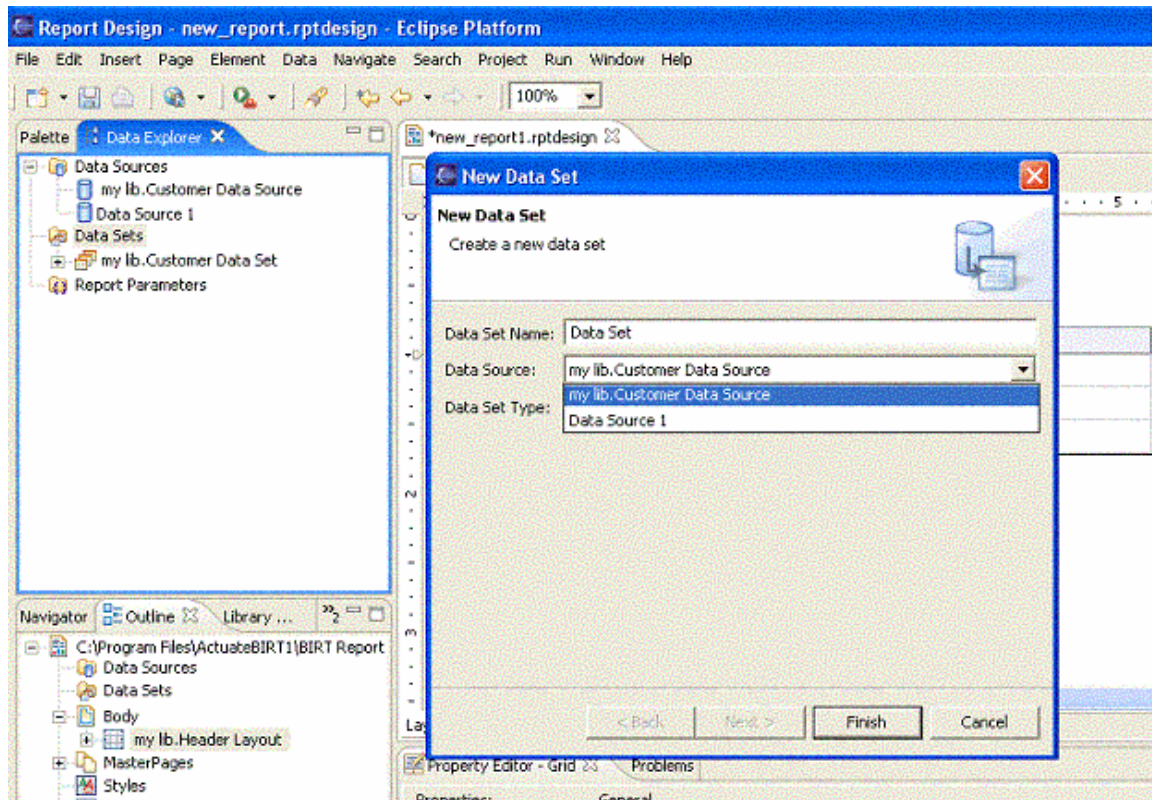


Figure 23

4.4.2 Using datasets defined in a library

The dataset binding property of table, list report item will show the datasets defined in the report design and all the included libraries

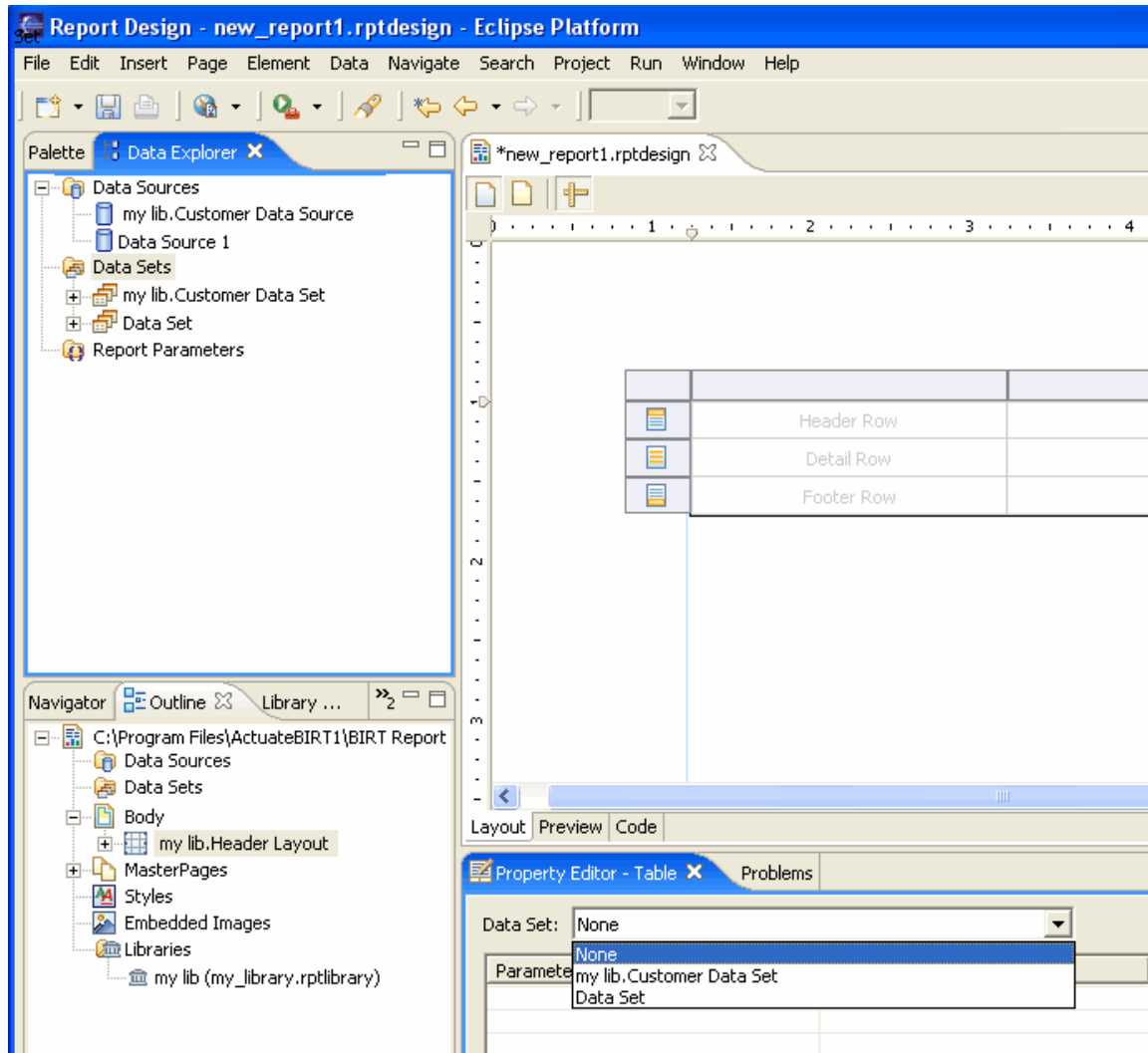


Figure 24

4.4.3 Using styles defined in a library

All the report item property editors, which allow user to apply styles to a report item, will be modified to show the styles defined in the included libraries in addition to the styles defined in the report design.

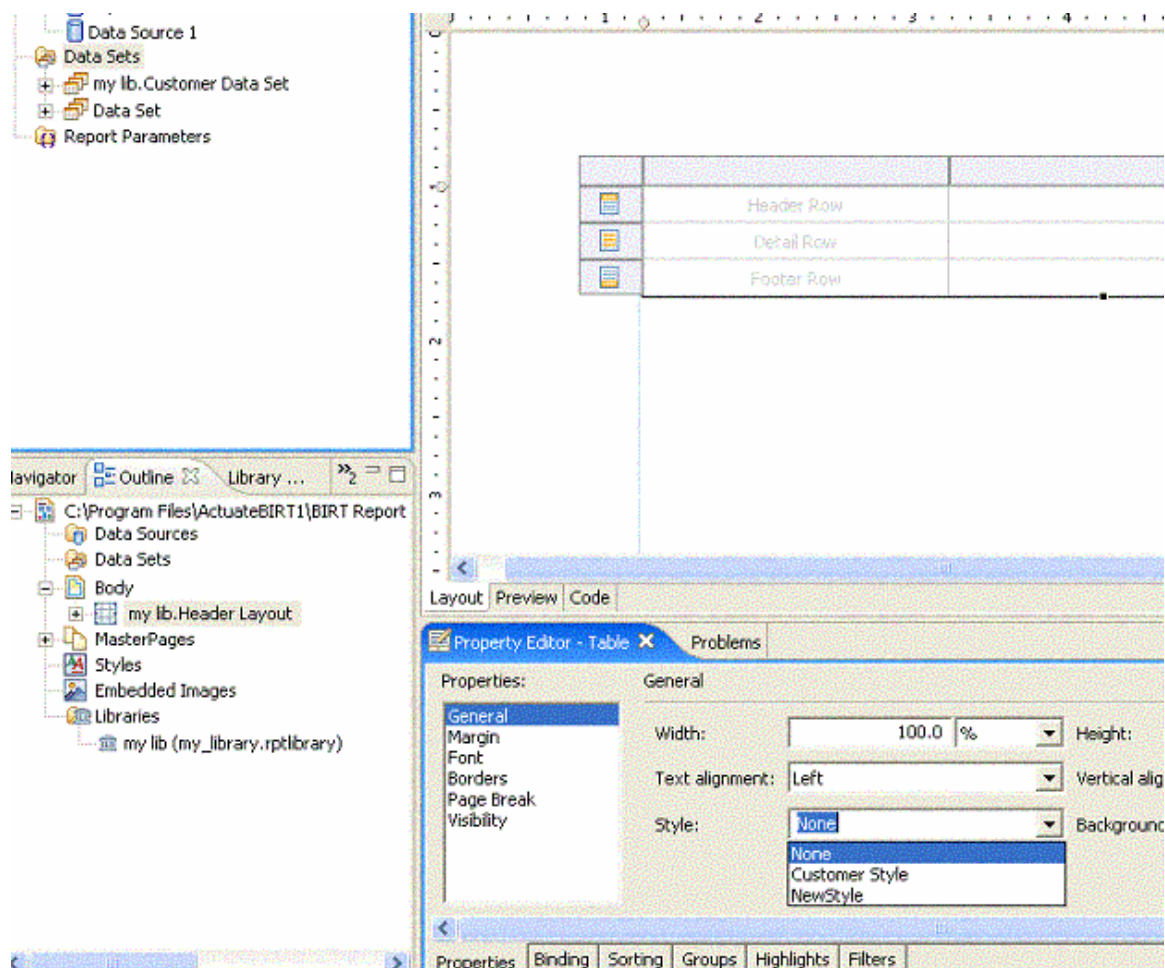


Figure 25

4.5 Export Report Items to a library file

User can export a report item from a report design to a library file.

The following is supported

- Export of a report element is only supported in non RCP version of the Report designer
- User can export a single Report Item from a report design to an existing library file
- User can export all the report elements from a report design to a new library file.
- When a report element is exported to a library, a copy of the Report Element is created in the library file. The copy behavior is similar to the existing copy behavior of a report element from a report design to another report design. i.e. the referenced elements are not copied.

4.5.1 Export entire report design to a library

The user can export the entire report design to a library file by right clicking on the report design in the outline view and selecting to Export Report Design menu item.

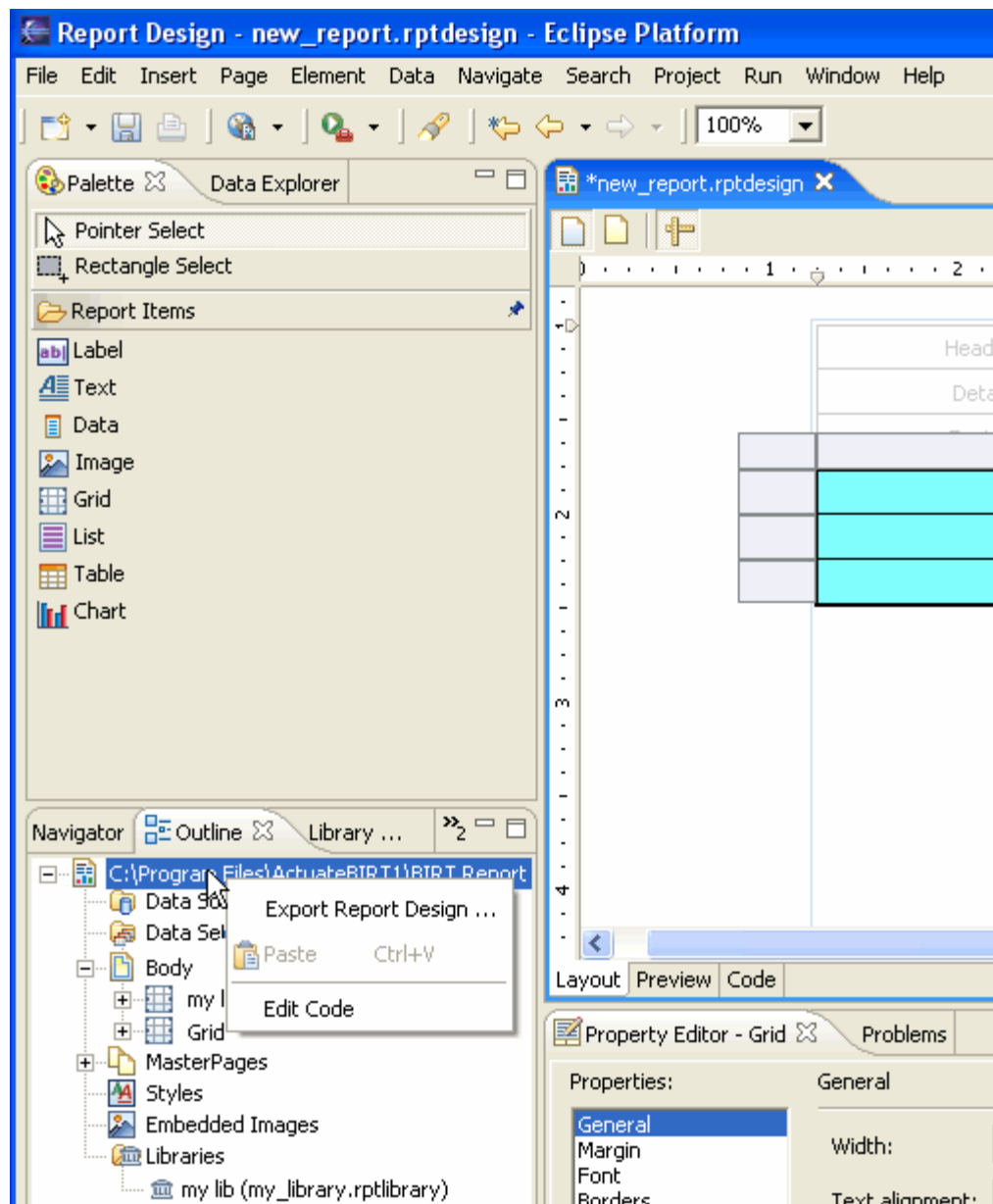


Figure 26

The user then selects a location and a name for the rptlibrary file.

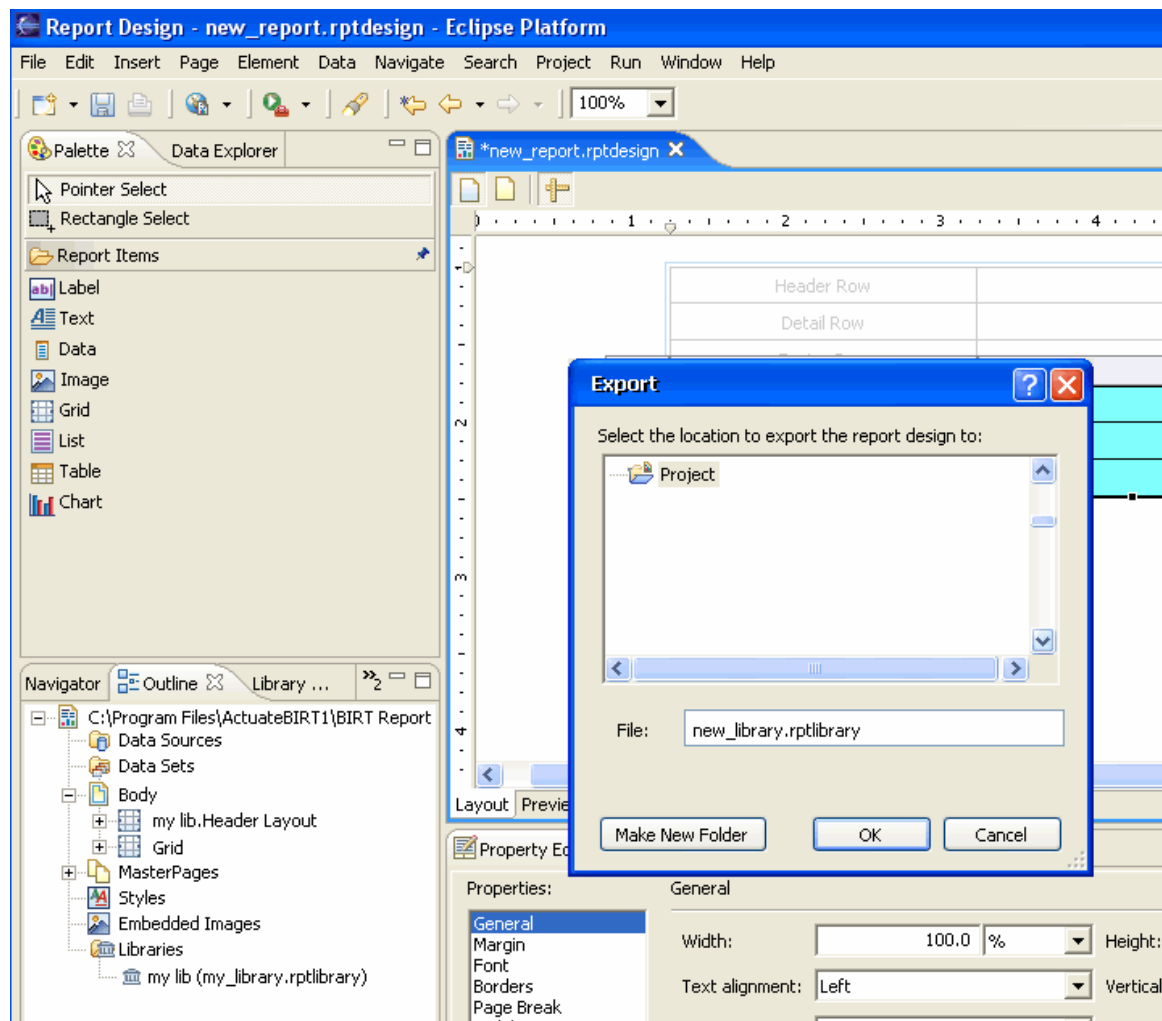


Figure 27

4.5.2 Export a report element to a library.

- Select an element to be exported to a library file, the user right clicks on the element and selects to Export to library.

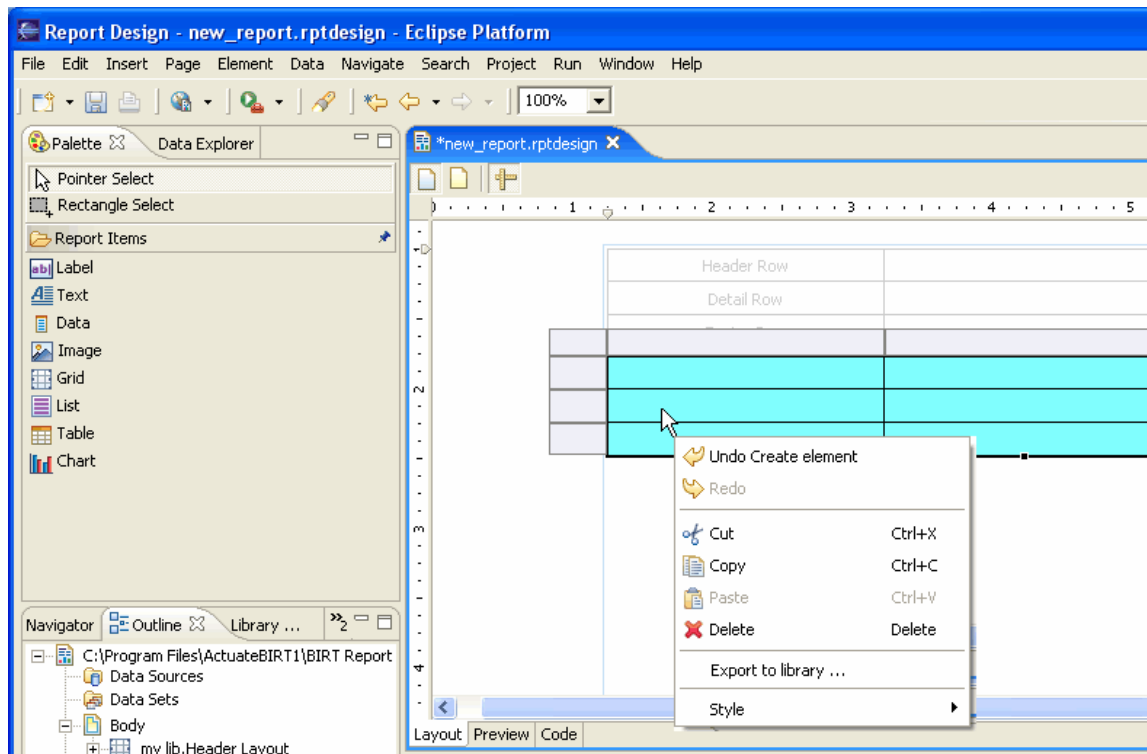


Figure 28

- Use the project browser to select the library file to which the item is to be exported. Then the user selects the library file from a project file and specifies a name.

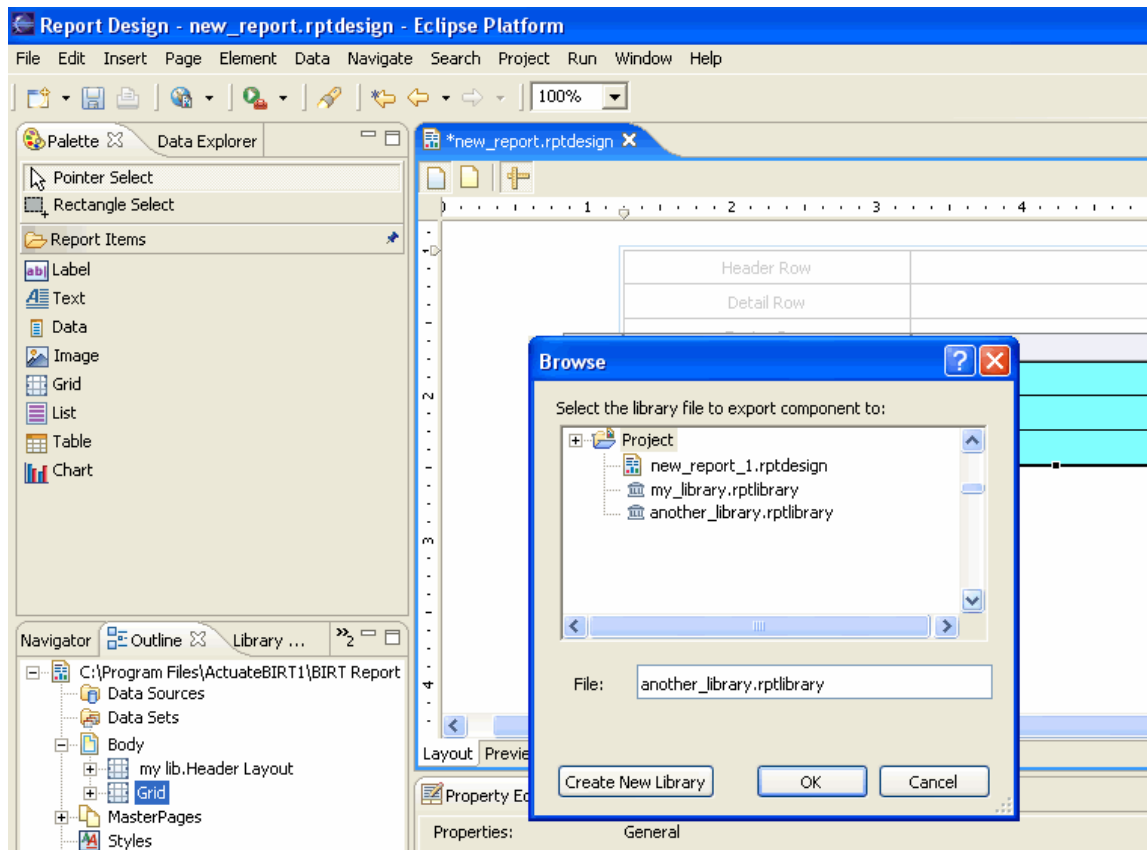


Figure 29

- If the report element already exists in the library file, the following error is shown.

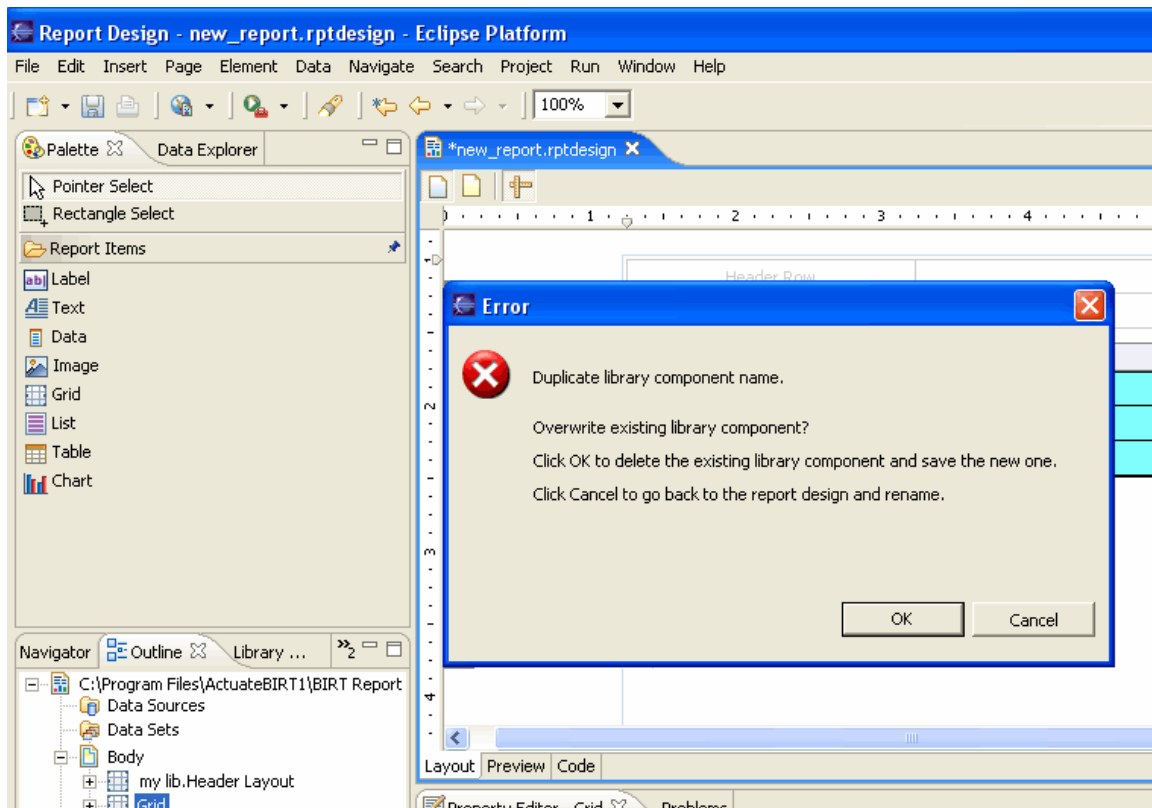


Figure 30